



HOWICK LITTLE THEATRE

Bloomsday

A dramatic romance by **Steven Dietz**
Directed by **Penel Keegan**

11 JULY - 1 AUGUST 2026



Principal Funder: Howick Local Board

A big thank you to the Howick Local Board for a grant towards replacing HLT's glass/dish steriliser.



HLT extends grateful thanks to Colin Nunweek of Puriri Hills Clevedon, for the barrels used in this production.

BLOOMSDAY

SYNOPSIS

Years after a brief, life-changing encounter with an enchanting Dublin tour guide, Robert returns to the city, unable to forget the woman he let slip away. As memory and reality intertwine, younger and older versions of Robert and Cait retrace their steps through Dublin's streets in a tender and time-twisting story of what was, what wasn't, and what might still be.

An Amateur Production By Arrangement with ORIGIN™ Theatrical, on behalf of BROADWAY LICENSING.

CAST

Robert

Richard De Luca

Cait

Jo Crichton

Caithleen

Liv Costello

Robbie

Aaron James

CREATIVE

Playwright

Steven Dietz

Director

Penel Keegan

Set designer

Emma Bishop

Lighting designer

Matthew Cousins

Sound designer

Peter Webster

PRODUCTION

Production co-ordinator

Rosalind Elder

Stage manager

Trevor Hynes

Costume co-ordinators

Judy Rankin

Linda Petrie

Props

Sue LaFleur

Nicole Hill

Intimacy advisor

Emma Love

Lighting design assistants

Clementine Zhang

Thomas Haigh

Vic Leilua

Lighting & sound operators

Ian Di Fiore

Clementine Zhang

Daniel Wong

Tiffany Hu

Hair & make-up

Ruby Liu

Rehearsal prompt

Ruth Blair

Set construction crew

David Gifford (*set foreman*)

Nathan Hey

Pat Hudson

Doug Johnston

Ian McMahon

Dan Vlad

Andrew Walden

Chris Woodhead

Set painting

Emma Bishop

Jacqui Whiteside

Norman Whiteside

Sue LaFleur

June Tong

Nicole Hill

Laurie Mills

Stephen Moratti

Photography

Andrew (AJ) Johnson

Graphic designer

Emma Love

Special Thanks: Judy Rankin, Linda Petrie, and Michael Cooper, ONZM. HLT also acknowledges the work of AT Technician/Supervisor Glenn Horan.

This production is two hours, including a 20-minute interval.
It contains adult themes and is recommended for ages 13+.
Please remember to switch off all mobile phones
and noise-emitting devices.



WELCOME AND DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Having directed *The Case of the Frightened Lady* last year, I couldn't have imagined anything more different than this play. Though truth be told both of them have had their challenges! Every read through has brought more admiration for how beautifully it is written. It is so evocative - of time and place, and human frailties and strengths. Love lost, memory, regret, age.

Bloomsday tackles many heavy themes, but does so with grace and humour. It does not rely on the physical but is a place of strength and reflection. Interactions across time serve more like whispered memories and nostalgic recollections. We often think of ghosts as incarnations of the deceased, but *Bloomsday* is a strong reminder that the living can haunt us with as much consistency and sadness as the dead. A quote from the play: "We have to decide where to put people in our heads and hearts. It's not up to the dead to find the place - it's up to us."

I have been blessed with a wonderful cast - their input, dedication, talent and hard work have been so appreciated and I count myself lucky to have worked with them. And to those you don't see, who are just as indispensable to any production as those on stage, my loving thanks. And thank you to you, our audience - we appreciate you coming to see this production, for without you all this would be a slightly pointless exercise!

Penel Keegan



STEVEN DIETZ

Playwright

Steven Dietz is one of America's most produced playwrights. Born in Denver, Colorado, he has written over 40 plays and adaptations, which have been performed at over 100 regional theatres across the United States, Off-Broadway, and in 25 countries internationally. He's been memorably described by a critic as "the most ubiquitous American playwright whose name you may never have heard".

His work ranges from political drama and comedy to thriller. But what runs through all of it is a precise ear for human longing and the way people talk around the things they most want to say. Among his best-known works are *Lonely Planet*, *Becky's New Car*, and *This Random World*. His play *Shooting Star* was adapted into the 2023 Meg Ryan film *What Happens Later*.

For *Bloomsday*, Dietz turns his attention to love, memory, and the single day that defined a lifetime. It stands among his finest work - intimate, bittersweet, and subtly devastating.

PENEL KEEGAN

Director

Penel has been round the traps for some years now, both on stage and as director. It's nearly 30 years since her first appearance at HLT in *The Darling Buds of May*. Being of retirement age, she is lucky enough to be able to do a couple of volunteer jobs, stave off the inevitable by a minimum of three gym visits per week, and help her family whenever needed. She is currently helping one of her grandsons to learn to drive! Her five grandchildren are all taller than her, so finally she is the shortest member of the family – no more measuring needed!



RICHARD DE LUCA

Robert

Richard is delighted to be back at Howick Little Theatre for this wonderful show. He was last seen in *Cosi* at The Playhouse and last at Howick Little Theatre along with Jo for *Things I Know To Be True*. He says *Bloomsday* is another great exploration of what it means to be human, to second guess your decisions and to reflect on your life choices. When not at the theatre, Richard can be found teaching mathematics at Glendowie College.



JO CRICHTON

Cait

A life member of HLT, Jo has appeared in a number of plays here since *The Dresser* in 1987. She is really happy to be working again with Penel (*Waking Eve* in 2002 and *Hilda's Yard* in 2022) and Richard (*Things I Know To Be True*, 2024) and a little anxious to be working with an Irish accent (last heard in *Dancing at Lughnasa* in 1996). By day Jo lives with her musical-theatre-loving family and works as a freelance book editor and proofreader in the ever-larger gaps between sporadic TV work. She hopes you love this play as much as she does.



LIV COSTELLO

Caitheleen

Liv has been performing on stage and screen from a young age. Represented by GCM, she has built professional experience across a range of productions, including New Zealand's leading drama series, *Shortland Street*. Liv has also collaborated with theatre and production companies throughout the country. A recent graduate of the University of Auckland with a Bachelor of Communications, she plans to continue developing her theatre practice next year. Alongside performing, Liv works as a drama tutor in schools across Auckland. This is her first production with HLT, and she is thrilled to share the stage with such a talented cast.



AARON JAMES

Robbie

Aaron began acting in short films at the beginning of his university studies in Holland, before moving to the United States where he continued acting. There he discovered live theatre and began acting professionally before moving again to begin his Master of Applied Social Work in Auckland. Aaron is very excited to take the stage for his first time in New Zealand and hopes this is his first show of many.





EMMA BISHOP

Set designer

Emma has been involved in theatre for the past three years, discovering a passion for set design. Her husband, Mark, is a familiar face on local stages, so it wasn't long before the theatre community discovered Emma's hidden talents, too.

Her last set at HLT was *The Case of the Frightened Lady*, a striking black-box contrast to the realism of *Bloomsday*. Her most recent production was *Murder on the Nile* at Dolphin Theatre this year.

For *Bloomsday*, Emma wanted to recreate several of Dublin's real iconic locations - Davy Byrnes, McDaid's, Sweny's and 7 Eccles Street (the fictional home of Leopold and Molly Bloom in *Ulysses*). After the show, we encourage you to look them up and see how Emma and the team have captured these famous landmarks.



PETER WEBSTER

Sound designer

This marks Peter's 51st year of HLT membership and his first time designing sound for one of the theatre's productions. However, it was a role he took on for Dolphin Theatre's *Gasping*, for which he received their award.

He says, "Sound design - both crafting effects and selecting music - is an activity I would encourage young people to explore, as the process is technology-rich, and the work opens pathways into the technical and artistic worlds behind concerts, live performance, and film.





HOWICK LITTLE THEATRE

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the cottage

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Sandy Rustin

Directed by
Laurie Mills

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