



HOWICK LITTLE THEATRE

THE COTTAGE

**A comedy by
Sandy Rustin**

**Directed by
Laurie Mills**



Where secrets spill faster than the tea

12 SEPT - 3 OCT 2026



Original Broadway production produced by Broadway Beyond Theatricals, Cornice Productions, Martian Entertainment, Paige Price, Scott Mauro, Malcolm Gosling/Dan Gottfried, Gayle Seay/Tony Nation, Cornice Productions Fund 1, Michael Saperstein, Rick Costello, Jonathan Demar, Paul Youngquist, Tom & Judy Kleinman, Marjorie Morrissey, Mark Reardon, Shapiro Jensen Productions, Nina Tassler, Dale & James Young, and 7Sennotts LLC.

THE COTTAGE

SYNOPSIS

In a cosy English cottage, Sylvia arrives to confront her lover, determined that they come clean about their affair to their unsuspecting spouses. But one revelation leads to another, and soon skeletons tumble out faster than anyone can hide them. This hilarious whirlwind of tangled romances and gleeful self-awareness unpicks the ridiculous ways we love and lie, and proves the truth is rarely neat and tidy.

*By permission of **ORiGiN™ Theatrical** on behalf of **Dramatists Play Service, Inc**
- a **Concord Theatricals Company**.*

CAST

Sylvia

Cher Hoosen

Beau

Cameron Smith

Marjorie

Dominique Pritchard

Clarke

James Calverley

Dierdre

Ruby Allcott

Richard

Arthur Young

CREATIVE

Playwright

Sandy Rustin

Director

Laurie Mills

Set designer

Rebecca Isemonger

Lighting designer

Ian Di Fiore

Sound designer

Rhys Owen

PRODUCTION

Production co-ordinator/

Prompt

Debbie Allen

Stage manager

Carolyn Loader

Assistant stage managers

Lou Yang

Bruce Wighton

Costume co-ordinators

Judy Rankin

Ginny Jones

Props/décor

Sue LaFleur

Jan Aitken

Lighting & sound operators

Caitlin Flower

Tiffany Hu

Daniel Wong

Intimacy adviser

Emma Love

Hair & makeup

Ruby Liu

Set construction crew

Nathan Hey (set foreman)

Matthew Cousins

Rios Hey

Doug Johnson

Ian McMahon

Laurie Mills

Dan Vlad

Andrew Walden

Chris Woodhead

Set painting

Rebecca Isemonger

Angela McLaughlin

June Tong

Hirushi Perera

Photography

Andrew (AJ) Johnson

Graphic designer

Emma Love

Special Thanks: HLT 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

After directing some heavier material in recent years, it's a delight to change genres and approach *The Cottage*. My first impressions of this play were its similarities to the sophisticated comedies of the writers back in the 1920s, including Noël Coward, but noting how the playwright modernises the genre so that the situations – though set 100 years ago – have a very 21st-century feel, including – at last – a female protagonist who gets the better of all the males! In its original concept *The Cottage* was heavily into farcical elements, but in my production, I've attempted to tame those aspects and, despite some very farcical moments, ground the characters in reality.

I have a wonderful cast and thank them for their belief in my direction. I'm also delighted to see new members of the HLT discovering an environment where their creative talents have free range, whether that be sourcing props and furniture or creating the lighting design. A special thanks to Rebecca Isemonger, my set designer, who managed to combine all that work with her main roles of full-time teacher, partner and mum.

Laurie Mills



SANDY RUSTIN

Playwright

Sandy is an actress, playwright and mum. Her background as an actress informs her writing, with earlier credits including the Off-Broadway musical *Rated P for Parenthood*. Her plays often explore themes of identity, societal roles, and absurdity through witty dialogue and intricate plots. With *Clue: On Stage*, co-credited with additional material from Hunter Foster and Eric Price, Rustin brought timeless mystery-comedy to new audiences, solidifying her reputation for accessible yet sophisticated theatrical adaptations. She is a Northwestern University graduate and Artistic Director of Midtown Direct Rep.

Her Off-Broadway musical *Rated P for Parenthood* is in development for TV with ABC Studios/ABC Family. Sandy regularly appears in UCB's *Gravid Water* (Best Improv Show, Time Out NY). Other New York credits include *Modern Orthodox*; *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*; *Jolson & Company*; *Sarah, Plain and Tall*; and Neil Simon's *Hotel Suite*.

TV: *The Amy Schumer Show*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *As the World Turns*, *All My Children* and *Guiding Light*. sandyrustin.com



LAURIE MILLS

Director

Laurie has been involved with community theatre throughout his adult life in Auckland and *The Cottage* is his 23rd production for the Howick Little Theatre since he became a member in 1976. Nearly all these have been period pieces of one kind or another, ranging from Agatha Christie to Brian Friel, Tennessee Williams to Noël Coward. Laurie readily acknowledges a fondness for “period” theatre; it combines his love of history with his passion for theatre as an enduring art form.

Laurie also has an active interest in drama as a creative outlet for young people. He has directed many plays and musicals for the Howick Children's & Youth Theatre and is the proud patron of that organisation.

Laurie is currently President of the HLT and was privileged to receive a King's Service Medal for services to theatre in the 2026 New Year's honours.

CAMERON SMITH

Beau

This is Cameron's third HLT appearance following thrillers *The Girl on the Train* (2021) and *Wait Until Dark* (2023). Cameron graduated from the Unitec School of Performing and Screen Arts in 1998, debuting the following year at Wellington's Downstage in the Ian Cross play *The God Boy*. Theatre includes *As You Like It* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Legacy Shakespeare Co, Theatre in Education tours, and playing Ed Hillary in the 2022 premiere of *The Sherpa and the Beekeeper* at Hamilton's Meteor. Feature films include *Her Majesty* and *Not Only But Always*.



CHER HOOSEN

Sylvia

Making her HLT debut, Cher has a passion for acting, filmmaking and theatre that is evident in her recent achievements: in film she has performed in *Daisy Chain*, *Settling*, *Sitcomland* (48hr Challenge), *Hitman Holiday* (48hr Challenge), *Notes from a Fish*, and *Spartacus: House of Ashur*. In theatre, she has done *It's a Wonderful Life* (Dolphin), *Georgy Girl* (Papakura), *Auckland Improv Festival* (Covert), *Dirty Work: An Ode to Joy* (Q), *60's 70's Rock Musical* (Torbay), and been in the World Kizomba Dance Team NZ. A qualified teacher and health educator, Cher is completing her acting diploma at Actors Lab Studio. She enjoys her work, family, Coco her cat, friends, dancing and the outdoors.



DOMINIQUE PRITCHARD

Marjorie

Dominique is delighted to be back onstage at HLT. She has been a member of HLT for over a decade - in the office many years ago, at Front of House and Bar, and onstage in several shows. She was last on stage at HLT in *The Viewing Room*, and at Dolphin Theatre, performing in *Much Ado About Nothing* along with her daughter. By day, Dominique works at APRA AMCOS. She enjoys pub trivia and spending time with her family.



JAMES CALVERLEY

Clarke

James returns to the cottage industry of community theatre, where all the talking has thankfully been written down for him. He was last seen at HLT in last year's *The Case of the Frightened Lady* and earlier this year in *Murder on the Nile* at Dolphin Theatre. This is his 37th attempt at growing a moustache. Reviews are mixed. Offstage, he lives a determinedly cottagecore existence that's heavy on cardigans, cottage cheese and cottage pie. Weekends are reserved for ironing cravats and existential dread. Please send all feedback via telegram to his mother. Anything less would be terribly undramatic.



RUBY ALLCOTT

Dierdre

Although Ruby has had experience both acting on screen and as a circus performer, this is only her second play. After acting in short films, TV series like *Sweet Tooth* and *Shortland Street*, and her own projects alongside her Screen Production degree, Ruby dipped her toe in the theatre world with AUT Performing Arts' production of *Sherlock Holmes*. She caught the theatre bug, and now hopes that this will be the first of many Howick Little Theatre productions she is a part of. When she isn't acting, Ruby works as an administrator, and writes, directs, and produces screen productions.





ARTHUR YOUNG

Richard

While Arthur did a lot of acting in high school and university back in the 80s and 90s, he took a break from it all when he finished his studies and went to get a “real” job. He came back to the theatre in 2008. Since then, he has been pretty consistent with theatre endeavours, most recently in *Murder on the Nile* at Dolphin Theatre and *The Case of the Frightened Lady* at HLT.

Aside from his theatre activities, Arthur’s other hobbies also lean into his need to perform. Firstly, there are the roleplaying games like Dungeons & Dragons and Call of Cthulhu. Secondly, there are the pole-dancing classes.



REBECCA ISEMONGER Set designer

Rebecca is delighted to be back designing for HLT, having previously created the sets for *The House* and *Worst Wedding Ever* (where she also appeared on stage as Alison). She is a high school art teacher with a long-standing love of theatre, and *The Cottage* marks her third set design for HLT, bringing together her love of art, storytelling and creating spaces where a little theatrical chaos can unfold. She thanks all the set builders, painters and decorators who brought this cottage to life.



IAN DI FIORE Lighting designer

Ian is a passionate artist who has very recently pivoted from film and animation to theatre, and he’s hoping to make lighting design and operation into his day job. The main two companies he works for are Stray Theatre and HLT.

Right now, he’s still working on video games and short films while on the hunt to get his name on more theatrical productions. He’s also a big lover of fashion, the outdoors, animals, and anything creative.





HOWICK LITTLE THEATRE

Patron

Jennifer Ward-Lealand, CNZM
Te Atamira

Founder

Alma Woods, MBE

Management Committee

Laurie Mills, KSM (*President*)
Matthew Cousins (*Vice President*)
Roger Mudford (*Treasurer*)
James Calverley
Judith Clarke
Trevor Hynes
Linda Lehrke
Alison Mudford

Administration

09 534 1401 | info@hlt.org.nz
hlt.nz

1 Sir Lloyd Drive, Lloyd Elsmore Park

PO Box 82-003 Highland Park,
Auckland 2143

Box Office

09 361 1000
support@iticket.co.nz
iticket.co.nz

Follow Us on Social

Facebook: [@howicklittletheatre](https://www.facebook.com/howicklittletheatre)
Instagram: [@howicklittletheatre](https://www.instagram.com/howicklittletheatre)



Best for Print



Best for Labels



Best for Signage



Best for Design

SAVE 10% SITE WIDE

only at www.printplus.co.nz

Use coupon Code **HLT10** for discount off your online order

Valid until 19 December 2026



Solutions that Stick

Labels



PRINT



0800 377 468 WWW.PRINTPLUS.CO.NZ



HOWICK LITTLE THEATRE

presents

Fireflies

A comedy by
Matthew Barber

From the novel
Eleanor and Abel by
Annette Sanford

Directed by
Tracey Holdsworth

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR A LITTLE LIGHT

14 NOV - 5 DEC 2026

iTICKET

HLT.NZ/FIREFLIES

Howick
Local Board
Auckland Council

