

By Christopher Durang

Directed by Tracey Holdsworth

WINNER OF THE 2013 TONY AWARD FOR BEST PLAY

OLD GRUDGES. NEW PROBLEMS. SAME OLD FAMILY.

5 - 26 JULY 2025

iTICKET

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Howick
Local Board
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VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE

Setting: A farmhouse with a pond in the near distance in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

The time: a weekend in 2012.

Act I, Scs I-II: the morning room; early evening before a party at the neighbour's.

There will be a 20-minute interval between Acts One and Two.

Act II, Sc I: later that same evening.

Act II, Scs II-IV: the next morning; later that afternoon.

THE CAST

Vanya

Mark Bishop

Sonia

Jo Crichton

Cassandra

Cristine Della Barca

Masha

Emma Love

Spike

Ethan Carruthers

Nina

Stephanie McIntyre

PRODUCTION CREATIVES

Director

Tracey Holdsworth

Production

Co-ordinator/

Rehearsal Prompt

Alison Mudford

Set Design & Decor

Tim Skinner

Tracey Holdsworth

David Gifford

Stage Manager

Trevor Hynes

Assistant

Stage Manager

Rosie Elder

Lighting Design

Blake Ingram

Lighting Assistants

Parag Londhe

Vic Leilua

Sound Design

Nicole Ashley

Wardrobe Design

Jenny Connors

**Wardrobe
Assistants**

Bairón Falado

Ginny Jones

Linda Le Verne

Properties

Ruth Goldsack

**Technical
Operators**

Crystal Livingston

Caitlin Flower

Intimacy Adviser

Nick Martin

Graphic Design

Emma Love

Photography

AJ Johnston

**Set Construction
Crew**

David Gifford

(Set Foreman)

Nathan Hey

Doug Johnston

Ian McMahon

Tim Skinner

Dan Vlad

Andrew Walden

Chris Woodhead

SPECIAL THANKS

To Dolphin Theatre for the artificial grass; to Eastgate Christian Centre for the loan of the shepherd's crook; to Bairón Falado for his Spike stand-in work; and to Nick Martin for his help and support.

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike was originally produced on Broadway by: Joey Parnes, Larry Hirschhorn, Joan Raffae/Jhett Tolentino, Martin Platt & David Elliot, Pat Flicker Addiss, Catherine Adler, John O'Boyle, Joshua Goodman, Jamie deRoy/Richard Winkler, Cricket Hooper Jiraneck/Michael Palitz, Mark S. Golub & David S. Golub, Radio Mouse Entertainment, ShadowCatcher Entertainment, Mary Cossette/Barbara Manocherian, Megan Savage/Meredith Lynsey Schade, Hugh Hysell/Richard Jordan, Cheryl Wiesenfeld/Ron Simons, S.D. Wagner, John Johnson in association with McCarter Theatre Center and Lincoln Center Theater.

Originally commissioned and produced by McCarter Theatre Center, Princeton, N.J. Emily Mann, Artistic Director; Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director; Mara Isaacs, Producing Director; and produced by Lincoln Center Theater, New York City, under the direction of André Bishop and Bernard Gersten in 2012.

Here Comes the Sun was written by George Harrison. Published by Harrisongs, Ltd. (ASCAP) Used by Permission. All Rights Reserved.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Author Christopher Durang described this quirky and clever play as being Chekhovian characters and themes 'put through a blender'. We have Vanya and Sonia (*Uncle Vanya*), Masha (*Three Sisters*), the lovely Nina (*The Seagull*), a cherry orchard and someone writing a play within a play. But I promise that you don't need to be a Chekhov scholar to enjoy this heartfelt, comedic, modern-day drama that revolves around the relationships of three middle-aged siblings.

Thanks to my six wonderful actors who have brought the characters to life, PC

extraordinaire Alison, my talented creative team Jenny, Nicole, David, Blake, Trevor, Ruth and Rosie, and the rest of the hard-working HLT crew. And to my husband Tim – set designer, décor guru, chief cook and bottle-washer – thanks for all your support while we put this production together and love you lots!

Now, just sit back and join us in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for a weekend of rivalry, resentment, regret and revelation.

Tracey Holdsworth
Director



TRACEY HOLDSWORTH

Director

Tracey is originally from the UK but has lived in NZ for about 25 years. She works in the performing arts, marketing the Auckland Philharmonia. Tracey has been involved with community theatre in Auckland for about 20 years, both on and off stage. At HLT she has appeared in *Steel Magnolias*, *Sitting Pretty* and *California Suite*. She directed her first production, Donald Margulies' *Dinner with Friends* for HLT Studio in 2021. In November 2023 she directed HLT's season of Norm Foster's *Old Love*, which jointly won HLT's Best Production of the Year.



MARK BISHOP

Vanya

After appearing in Dolphin Theatre's *Clue* last year, Mark is happy to be back at Howick Little Theatre in 2025. He last appeared in *Old Love* at HLT and very much enjoyed working with Director Tracey Holdsworth, so was thrilled to have been cast in the role of Vanya. When not at rehearsals, Mark can often be found in the Hauraki Gulf attempting to catch a few fish with the ever lovely or cooking up a feast in a quiet bay or campground.



JO CRICHTON

Sonia

HLT has been part of Jo's DNA since she saw her first play here in 1982. Since 1987, she has performed in more than 20 plays here, with last year's *Things I Know To Be True* the most recent. Jo has wanted to be in this quirky play since she read it 10 years ago with the play selection team and was very grateful not to be too old by the time HLT finally got the rights.

She looks forward to reprising a line from her 2004 role of Jean Brodie, with apologies to the late, great Dame Maggie Smith.

CRISTINE DELLA BARCA

Cassandra

Beware of Greeks (or Poms!) bearing gifts. Cristine says this prophecy should have raised alarm bells when Tracey offered her the role of Cassandra. She feels like she's not set foot on a stage for "ten and twenty" - but it was actually 10 years ago in *Sitting Pretty!* Before that came *Looking* and *Ladies for Hire*. She says, "To play a character less ordinary like Cassandra has been a real challenge. It's been fun, but if I hear 'dismal moans rise' from the audience, I remind you that 'these words come not from me but from the' ... pen of Christopher Durang!"



EMMA LOVE

Masha

Emma has been active in Auckland's community theatre scene for many years, as an actor and director. Last year, she directed HLT's *Things I Know To Be True*, and she has most recently appeared in *Clue* at Dolphin and *Calendar Girls* at Papakura. Emma loves the energy, camaraderie, and creativity of theatre, and has enjoyed diving into the drama (and delusion) of Masha.

By day, she runs her own business as a celebrant and graphic designer - because juggling multiple identities isn't just for the characters she plays!



ETHAN CARRUTHERS

Spike

Ethan Carruthers is an actor building a presence across both local and international screens. He trained at the Howard Fine Acting Studio in both Los Angeles and Australia, building a strong foundation in emotionally honest and connected performance. Ethan's screen credits include the US series *La Brea*, the Australian drama *Triple Oh*, and the comedy series *Spreadsheets*, where he's brought both range and nuance to every role. Whether it's high-stakes drama or something a little more offbeat, Ethan brings a sharp presence and clear sense of character to every project. Huh? Huh? Huh? You want some more ... just ask him.



STEPHANIE MCINTYRE

Nina

It has been a while since Stephanie was last seen on stage, having most recently appeared as Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors* in 2018. She works as an early childhood educator and recently completed a two-year stint as an au pair in the UK. She is ecstatic to return to the stage, especially with Howick Little Theatre. She hopes you enjoy the show as much as she has enjoyed bringing it to life for you all.



THE PLAY

Vanya and Sonia have led quiet and uneventful lives while taking care of their ageing parents in their family home. However, their peaceful existence is upended when their glamorous movie-star sister Masha unexpectedly arrives with her much-younger boyfriend in tow and a plan to sell the house. Insecurities and old resentments boil over in a weekend of wild costume parties, hilarious misunderstandings and unexpected romance.

THE PLAYWRIGHT

Christopher Durang (1949-2024) was an American playwright renowned for his razor-sharp satire, absurdist humour, and unflinching commentary on family, culture, and modern anxieties. Emerging as a distinctive voice in American theatre in the late 1970s, Durang built a body of work that is both wildly funny and poignantly insightful. His most acclaimed plays include *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*, *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, and *Beyond Therapy*, each showcasing his gift for turning dysfunction into biting comedy. In 2013, he won the Tony Award for Best Play for *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, a Chekhov-inspired



comedy that blends farce with existential reflection.

Durang's work has been produced extensively on and off Broadway, as well as internationally, earning him both critical praise and a devoted following. A graduate of the Yale School of Drama, he was also a long-time educator and advocate for new theatrical voices. His contribution to American theatre is marked by a fearless willingness to provoke, entertain, and explore life's absurdities with humour and heart.

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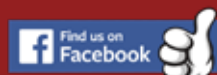
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COMING NEXT TO HOWICK LITTLE THEATRE

RABBIT HOLE

**LOVE IS THEIR ONLY
WAY BACK**

6 - 27 SEPTEMBER

A drama by David Lindsay-Abaire/US/2006

Directed by Anna Baird

Winner of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Drama

Becca and Howie Corbett are struggling to find their way after losing their young son in a tragic accident. As they drift apart, the teenage driver involved in the accident reaches out, and the family are forced to confront their loss. Adult language and content.

RABBIT HOLE is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

**HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS!
HELL...**

8 - 29 NOVEMBER

A comedy by Bernard Farrell/Ireland/2005

Directed by Matthew Cousins

Irene and Arthur have decked out their modest Dublin farmhouse for the holidays in anticipation of their friend Declan's return from New Zealand. A self-made millionaire, Declan is the focus of their meticulously crafted image of prosperity, which hides a cunning plan to secure their financial future. However, the festive cheer turns to disquiet as secrets start to unravel.



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