

# MEDIA RELEASE



9<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## For immediate release

### [Lysander's Aunty](#)

Written by Ralph McCubbin Howell

Directed by Dan Bain with Hannah Smith

Dates: 28 March – 18 April 2020

Location: The Court Theatre's mainstage

Show Sponsor: The Court Supporters

In collaboration with: Trick of the Light Theatre

By arrangement with: Playmarket

### Short show description:

The course of true love never did run smooth. Especially out in the sticks... This radical new comedy reworks one of Shakespeare's best loved plays, taking the characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and transporting them into the New Zealand bush. There will be sword-fights. There will be Tim Tams. You're not in Athens now, Dr. Ropata.

## SHAKESPEARE COMES DOWN UNDER IN NEW KIWI COMEDY

### IN-BRIEF:

Audiences can expect plenty of sword-fights and Tim Tams from The Court Theatre's latest comedy, combining the worlds of Shakespeare and New Zealand to hilarious effect.

A collaboration with award-winning theatre company Trick of the Light (*The Bookbinder; Tröll*), *Lysander's Aunty* is a radical comedy that takes beloved characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and transports them into the New Zealand bush.

Nominated for the prestigious Adam New Zealand Play Award, this quirky comedy is written by multi award-winning writer Ralph McCubbin Howell and is directed by The Court's Associate Director Dan Bain and Trick of the Light co-founder Hannah Smith.

You don't have to be a Shakespeare fan to enjoy this comedy, with plenty of fun whether you're a bard buff or not.

"If you are incredibly familiar with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* you will enjoy this; if you vaguely know it, you will enjoy this; and if you don't know it at all, there's still plenty in *Lysander's Aunty* to love. Ultimately, this is just a rompy New Zealand comedy that uses Shakespeare characters and situations as a springboard," explains Bain.

Hilarious, unique and a little bit magical, *Lysander's Aunty* will be taking audiences on a journey that puts a fresh Kiwi spin on one of the greatest stories ever told.

Principal Sponsor



Core Funder



Season Sponsor



The Court Theatre

PO Box 268

Christchurch 8140

New Zealand

Email: [admin@courttheatre.org.nz](mailto:admin@courttheatre.org.nz)

[www.courttheatre.org.nz](http://www.courttheatre.org.nz)

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***Lysander's Aunty runs at The Court Theatre from 28 March – 18 April 2020.***

## IN-DEPTH:

Audiences can expect plenty of sword-fights and Tim Tams from The Court Theatre's latest comedy, combining the worlds of Shakespeare and New Zealand to hilarious effect.

A collaboration with award-winning theatre company Trick of the Light (*The Bookbinder; Tröll*), *Lysander's Aunty* is a radical comedy that takes beloved characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and transports them into the New Zealand bush.

Nominated for the prestigious Adam New Zealand Play Award, this quirky comedy is written by multi award-winning writer Ralph McCubbin Howell (recipient of the 2014 Bruce Mason Playwrighting Award) and is directed by The Court's Associate Director Dan Bain (*A Christmas Carol; Stephen King's Misery*) and Trick of the Light co-founder Hannah Smith (Most Promising Director at the 2013 Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards for *The Road that Wasn't There*).

Explaining the plot of this imaginative play, McCubbin Howell says, "Reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* a few years ago, I was struck by the fleeting mention of Lysander's Aunt. She is introduced as someone who might help the young lovers defy Athens law and elope in the woods, but the plot then takes another turn and she never gets mentioned again. Shakespeare is littered with characters like this, but this one in such a well-known play seemed particularly intriguing. Who is this law-snubbing, free-loving aunty? Why is she in the woods? And what's she doing helping runaway lovers elope?"

Fascinated by this idea, McCubbin Howell crafted *Lysander's Aunty*, transporting a collection of Shakespeare's most famous characters (like Lysander, Hermia, Helena and Demetrius) to Aunty's house in the New Zealand bush, imagining what *A Midsummer Night's Dream* might have looked like in an alternate universe.

"Shakespeare is full of characters - often women - who don't get a fair suck at the sav. The idea of fleshing out Lysander's Aunty's life and potential influence on the story is what led us to this," adds Smith.

You don't have to be a Shakespeare fan to enjoy this comedy, with plenty of fun whether you're a bard buff or not.

"If you are incredibly familiar with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* you will enjoy this; if you vaguely know it, you will enjoy this; and if you don't know it at all, there's still plenty in *Lysander's Aunty* to love. Ultimately, this is just a rompy New Zealand comedy that uses Shakespeare characters and situations as a springboard," explains Bain.

He and Smith have assembled a fourteen-strong cast with serious comedic chops: Julie Edwards, Elle Wootton, Hannah Kelly, Manuel Solomon, Millie Hanford, Chris Symon, Trubie-Dylan Smith, Gregory Cooper, Hillary Moulder, Adam Brookfield, Emily-Jane Cull, Lauren Heaysman, Paris Thornley and Stella Cheersmith.

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## Cast



*Aunty*  
[Julie Edwards](#)



*Helena*  
[Elle Wootton](#)



*Jocelyn Dogberry*  
[Hannah Kelly](#)



*Lysander*  
[Manuel Solomon](#)



*Hermia*  
[Millie Hanford](#)



*Demetrius*  
[Chris Symon](#)

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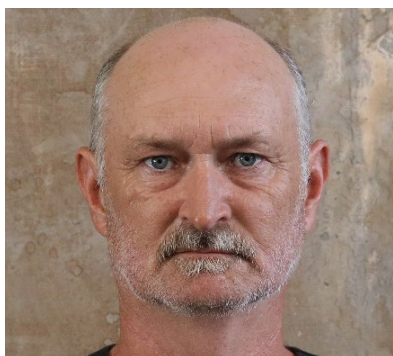
*Ricky*  
[Trubie-Dylan Smith](#)



*Theseus*  
[Gregory Cooper](#)



*Hippolyta*  
[Hillary Moulder](#)



*Egeus*  
[Adam Brookfield](#)



*Old White Man*  
[Emily-Jane Cull](#)



*Old White Man*  
[Lauren Heaysman](#)



*Old White Man*  
[Paris Thornley](#)



*Old White Man*  
[Stella Cheersmith](#)

## Creatives Directors

[Dan Bain](#) & [Hannah Smith](#)

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Set Designer	<a href="#">Harold Moot</a>
Costume Designer	<a href="#">Hayley Douglas</a>
Lighting Designer	<a href="#">Giles Tanner</a>
Sound Designer/Composer	<a href="#">Hamish Oliver</a>
Stage Manager	<a href="#">Mandy Perry</a>

## Ticket Prices

Adult	\$56 - \$64
Senior (65+)	\$49 - \$57
Group (6+)	\$49 - \$57
Supporter	\$47 - \$54
Child (under 18)	\$27 - \$30
30 Below (limited numbers)	\$30

## Show Times

- Monday & Thursday 6:30pm
- Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat 7:30pm
- Forum 6:30pm Monday 30 March
- Matinee: 2:00pm Saturday 18 April

**Bookings:** phone 03 963 0870 or visit [www.courttheatre.org.nz](http://www.courttheatre.org.nz)

Images can be found at The Court Theatre's [Media Centre](#)

**For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:**

**Mally Goldberg, Marketing Manager**

**The Court Theatre, 03 963 0884**

[mally.goldberg@courttheatre.org.nz](mailto:mally.goldberg@courttheatre.org.nz)

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