

Kitchen Sink Collective brings Harold Pinter's *The Lover* to the stage this weekend



[Calum O'Malley](#)

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Dozens of theatre groups and musicians have performed at West Plains United Church's smaller, more intimate venue. | Calum O'Malley

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Local theatre lovers with a taste for unique stage performances are in luck as one of Hamilton's newest actor-driven companies prepares to perform Harold Pinter's *The Lover* at West Plains United Church this weekend.

The show will be the first performance in Burlington of the recently formed Kitchen Sink Collective (KSC), after they got their start performing at several venues in Hamilton over the past year.

"It started with just my parents and I producing plays with professional actors in my parent's garage," Adam Iachelli, one of the founders of KSC, said. "We wanted to do plays that are in the classic contemporary genre or 'kitchen sink dramas' because we found that a lot of professional and community theatres don't favour that really actor-focused stuff. We wanted to focus on performances that were difficult and ambiguous."

The group tackles works that focus on domestic issues and family problems as a way of showing off the characters rather, as opposed to those that feature complicated plot lines, giving the audience time to get to know each character and struggle to understand who is in the right and wrong.

"We really like to focus on that character complexity," Iachelli said. "Complicated and ambiguous characters, scripts that aren't overtly political and more grounded than musical theatre, that's the sentiment of the kitchen sink movement that we're inspired by."

The Lover is a psychological drama that follows the rituals and games played by a married couple whose love lives are thrust into the spotlight in a mixture of humour, tension, suspense and intrigue.

"I'm really pumped for it," Nell Khayutin, another member of KSC, said. "It's a shorter production, only an hour long, so we're hoping to leave audiences wanting more. I hope people are enthralled and leave with questions and theories."

The play also touches on female empowerment and exploring vulnerable moments and intimacy in a safe, professional environment to create a place where difficult topics can be examined.



Adam Iachelli (left) and Nell Khayutin are looking forward to their first performance in Burlington. Provided by Adam Iachelli

Iachelli added that Pinter's works are exactly the sort of plays he and the KSC wanted to perform, as well as the works of David Mamet, Edward Albee and other contemporary American realists. *The Lover* will be the first work by a British author that KSC has performed.

"We're developing a better sense of what 'collective' really means," Iachelli said. "We hire a director, actors and a stage manager. We like to be organized but we function as a democracy. Actors who have ideas or want to help and contribute to the production in any way is more than welcome here, we're always having a group discussion about what we should do as a group."

Iachelli also said that KSC's actor-focused way of running the theatre company gives his actors more time to familiarize themselves with the script and the characters, keeping the production side of things light to make sure the deliveries have the weight they need to make an impact on audiences.

KSC is planning performances of some John Osborne's work later this year and to continue honing and touring with the plays they are already familiar with in the hopes of one day travelling and performing internationally.

The theatre company will be performing *The Lover* at West Plains United Church as part of the Live!@WestPlains event series starting this Thursday. Evening shows start at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and matinees start at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets for the performances are available [online](#) for \$30 each.

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