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ARTS + CULTURE

PREVIEW: NEW THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS 'UNSETTLING AND HUMOROUS' THE LOVER

By Allison M. Jones / Apr 24, 2026

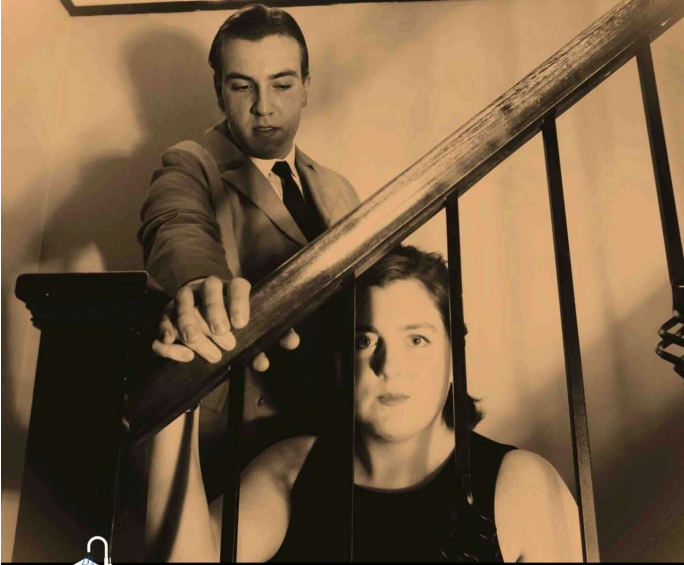


Hamilton-based independent theatre company The Kitchen Sink Collective is staging its third production in Harold Pinter's critically acclaimed one-act play.

Embarking on a limited run through April 26, Hamilton-based independent theatre company The Kitchen Sink Collective presents Harold Pinter's *The Lover* at West Plains United Church in Aldershot. Kitchen Sink promises an evening of theatre that showcases "sharp and simmering tension," humour, as well as Pinter's "signature style of suspense, wit and psychological intrigue."

The Lover was written by the influential British playwright, screenwriter, director and actor, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2005 and France's Légion d'Honneur in 2007. In a career spanning a half century, he dropped out of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art after two semesters but went on to write 29 plays beginning with *The Room* in 1957 and including *The Lover*, in 1962, his 10th play. Pinter was considered a top dramatist, writing for the stage, radio, television, and film.

The Lover is a critically acclaimed one-act play that was performed on stage but originally written as an hour-long program for British television. It won BAFTA Television Awards for Best Script, Best Actor and Best Actress as well as the Prix Italia. *The Lover* opened at the Arts Theatre on Sept. 18, 1963 as part of a double bill and closed after a short run on Oct. 5, 1963.




Harold Pinter's
THE LOVER
 April 23-25 8 pm April 25-26 2 pm 2026
 Bar opens at 7:15 pm & 1:15 pm tickets \$30
 West Plains United Church, Aldershot
www.ticketor.com/kitchensinkcollective

The IMDb website summarizes the play this way: "A sophisticated suburban couple try to enliven their sterile marriage with erotic role-playing, but find their new games even more repressive than before." The play can be interpreted both as an "ironic comedy" or a tense drama. In its press release, Kitchen Sink calls it "unsettling and humorous," a tableau which invites audiences to "question the roles we perform in our most intimate relationships." The cast of this production features Adam Iachelli, founder of Kitchen Sink, and Nell Khayutin.

The Kitchen Sink Collective, founded in 2025, gravitates towards stories showing "gritty realism" and focuses on "intimate, actor-driven productions of modern classics and contemporary works." Pinter is listed among David Mamet, Sam Shephard, Morris Panych, John Osborne, and Edward Albee on Kitchen Sink's website as some of the company's favourite playwrights, whose plays feature characters who are "darkly funny, poignant, triumphant, sad, pathetic, stupid, flawed yet lovable" within "timeless stories [that] teach us something about what it means to be alive and living in this modern, messed up world."

Asked about the specific motivation behind the company's choice of *The Lover* as its latest offering, Iachelli said the play, "has some very interesting themes that speak to a modern audience, mostly about female empowerment, about struggling with restrictive social pressure and expectations from others, and about finding a way to honour one another even when there's no room to truly express who we are."



Adam Iachelli and Nell Khayutin star in The Kitchen Sink Collective's *The Lover*. PHOTO: The Kitchen Sink Collective

"I think anyone in a long-term relationship, or having gotten out of one, will come away with a lot of thoughts and questions about the limits and expectations of these kinds of relationships," he says.

The Kitchen Sink Collective last staged American Sam Shepard's Pulitzer-nominated play *True West* in October at The Staircase in Hamilton. The production attracted positive critical attention. This time around, the stage is West Plains United Church, another popular choice among theatre companies, and Iachelli says that they "absolutely love" the new venue. "It's cozy, it's accessible, it's inviting and fun. And there's a ton of parking and fun restaurants and the Royal Botanical Gardens nearby."

The Collective is next looking to stage the play *Look Back in Anger* this fall. It's another play bubbling over with gritty realism, this time written in 1956 by John Osborne, the original "angry young man" of theatre. *Look Back in Anger* is considered the first of the "kitchen sink drama" genre, from which the Hamilton company takes its name.

Iachelli is a creative and ambitious young man, a Westdale Secondary grad and a McMaster University student now working on a third production with his collaborators. His advice to other emerging theatre creators is straightforward and determined: "Just get up and do it. Find good, like-minded people, borrow as much stuff from your parent's basement as you can, do fundraisers, do festivals, take it on the road – just do as much theatre as you can." For Iachelli, live performance is vital and necessary.

"We need theatre. It's one of the last bastions of human connection and community."

NEED TO KNOW

April 24, 25, 8 p.m.

April 25 & 26, 2 p.m.

Refreshment bar opens at 7:15 p.m. and 1:15 p.m.

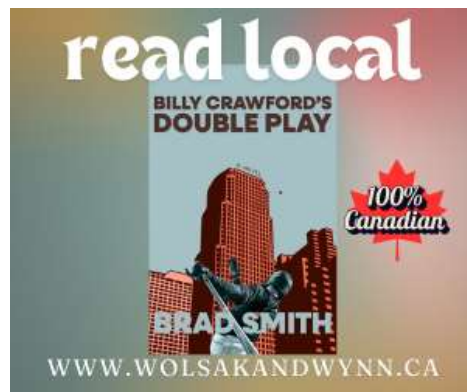
West Plains United Church

549 Plains Rd. W., Burlington

Tickets: \$30

Available [here](#)

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