



Wyong Drama Group Inc.

Proudly Presents

Home, I'm Darling

by
Laura Wade

Directed by
Liz Munro



*Darling,
are you happy?*

April 2024

Director's Note



**Liz
Munro**

I was very taken with this play on the first reading and thought this is so funny yet so tragic - I just didn't get Judy at all and I related to everyone else who has various levels of frustration with her. She seems delusional and somewhat in denial about the impact her choice has on those closest to her, particularly her husband. I began to understand that Judy wants to create the type of home life she craved as a child but she ends up with a marriage that is a series of role plays and the more she holds on to this the more damage is wreaked on her relationships. There is a reckoning in the marriage as a number of confronting issues rise to the top and cannot be ignored.

Obviously the actors show this deterioration in their relationships as the play progresses but I had this crazy idea to represent this in the set as well. Some of the pieces around the home are larger than life and cartoonish - this is what Judy sees in her head - but the reality of these pieces is soon revealed as things deteriorate.

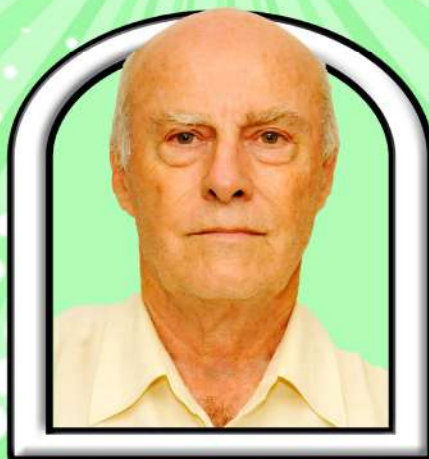
I also wanted the play to flow between scenes with no blackouts. As a result the characters go about their lives as the scenes transition. To make the necessary changes to the set I had to create a way for props to be changed in front of the audience so I hope you enjoy that innovation!

The music I chose helps to convey both emotion and the 50s era.

The audience is left wondering whether the marriage will last. Everyone will have their own view but a shaky compromise is reached and some of the 50s fantasy is dispelled - but for how long?

I do hope you enjoy my interpretation of this wonderfully written play and encourage you to form your own opinions about some of the issues raised.

President's Note



**Andy
Kabanoff**

It feels great to see this production about to hit the Red Tree Theatre stage. When we first read it we were blown away by its depth and daring and by the realities of life it explored. For some of us who had a taste of the 50s it spoke truth so eloquently, as encapsulated by Sylvia's monologue and by the pain Judy and Johnny experience.

It's been my privilege to be the 'buddy' and production manager to Liz Munro who has grabbed the directorial reins with WDG for the first time after considerable experience at the Genesian in Sydney. I've been able to see the production evolve, from auditions almost to opening. This cast is magic! And all the more so because it is largely comprised of actors new to Wyong Drama Group. This great theatrical work is evolving wonderfully and will be an achievement long remembered by cast and audiences alike. Thanks for being part of our audience once again.

And please join us in August for Agatha Christie's 'Appointment with Death' which has just been cast - again with many new faces - and in November for 'Get Smart' which will be the comedic equivalent of Krakatoa - would you believe a molotov cocktail? . . . how about a balloon popping?

The Playwright

Laura Wade was born in Bedford in 1970. She studied drama at Bristol University and was later a member of the Royal Court Theatre Young Writers' Program.

Her first play *'Limbo'* was produced at the Sheffield Crucible Studio Theatre in 1996. Later plays include *'16 Winters'*, an adaptation of W. H. Davies' *'Young Emma'*, *'Colder than Here'*, *'Breathing Corpses'*, *'Other Hands'*, *'Posh'* (and its film adaptation *'The Riot Club'*.) Wade adapted Sarah Waters' novel *'Tipping the Velvet'* into a stage play of the same name.

On 4 July 2018, Wade's play *'Home, I'm Darling'* premiered at Theatr Clwyd. The play transferred to the National Theatre for a summer 2018 run, to the Duke of York's Theatre in January 2019, and later won Best Comedy at the 2019 Laurence Olivier Awards.

Synopsis

Johnny and Judy have agreed to live their home lives as if they were living in the 1950s - a simpler, more wholesome time where everyone knew their place. He earns the money and she stays home tending to the smooth running of the household. But how happy are the happily married?

Every couple needs a little fantasy to keep their marriage sparkling, but behind the vintage curtains and the freshly aired bedrooms, the fantasy is unraveling. Were the 50s as effortless and fabulous as Judy believes?

The situation reaches breaking point for the couple. Compromise is the art of any relationship ... but does that mean nobody gets what they want? Can they make changes without breaking up?

Themes

1. Marriage as a series of role plays
2. Creating a safe space to deal with a sad adolescence
3. Crippling obsession with nostalgia
4. Wearing a mask to conceal pain
5. The realities and fantasies of gender
6. A challenge to rose tinted politics

Scenes

Set in London at the Martin household.

- Act 1 Scene 1 - *Home Sweet Home* - Early morning in Spring
- Act 1 Scene 2 - *Pizza* - Afternoon the same day
- Act 1 Scene 3 - *The Female Boss* - Evening on the same day
- Act 1 Scene 4 - *Cocktails* - Evening a few days later
- Act 1 Scene 5 - *Jivestock* - Sunday afternoon a few days later

INTERVAL

- Act 2 Scene 1 - *Flashback* - Three years earlier
- Act 2 Scene 2 - *Admission of Guilt* - 2am morning after cocktail party
- Act 2 Scene 3 - *Rude Awakenings* - A few days later
- Act 2 Scene 4 - *Don't Take My Man* - A day later
- Act 2 Scene 5 - *#metoo* - 2 days later
- Act 2 Scene 6 - *A New Dawn* - A few weeks later



Judy



Kelsey Hunter

In her 34 years, Kelsey has performed in countless productions, including Kathy in *'9 to 5: The Musical'* (Dolly Parton) Gosford Musical Society 2023, Carmen in *'Managing Carmen'* (David Williamson) Lane Cove Theatre Society 2019, and Carol in *'Catch Me If You Can'* (Terrence McNally) Berowra Musical Society 2019.

Despite her eccentricities, Judy is, at her heart, someone who only yearns to be loved. Kelsey hopes the audience can learn to love Judy as she traverses emotions and themes which are universally felt and experienced.

Prior to this play, Kelsey's only reference point for the 50s was Elvis. Her parents have joked that her 'theme song' is *'Devil in Disguise'*. Thanks, Dad.

Kelsey is on 'cloud 9' to be involved in this 'swell' production, bringing the 'Nifty Fifties' to life once more. She hopes her husband forgives her for the on-stage 'necking'!

Johnny



Kyle Walbank

I have a diverse background in the performing arts, with experience in both musical theatre and traditional theatre productions. Performance History: Johnny in *'American Idiot'* (Jopuka / Red Tree Theatre), Herr Zeller in *'Sound Of Music'* (Red Tree Theatre), Mr Cocker in *'Back to the 80s'* (Chookas Entertainment), Nick, Justin & Zac in *'Cos'* (Jopuka), Alex in *'End Of The Line'* (Wyong Drama Group).

In the enchanting world of this play, Johnny showers his wife with boundless love, yet he remains a good hearted soul trapped in her fantasy, wrestling with obstacles that challenge his journey towards self discovery, empowerment and a changed narrative. Sacrifice has a cost.

When I think of the 50s I think of the *'Pleasantville'* film and *'The Stepford Wives'*. I didn't know anything about the 50s only what I heard/assumed that 'everything seemed easier then'. But was it really? In these films not everything is always as wonderful as it seems. I did like the hairstyles and the fashion though.

I am grateful to collaborate with incredible talent, actively contributing to the creative journey of defining Johnny's character. Being heard in this process has been a privilege. Excited to bring a unique show to the Central Coast, hoping it sparks a wave of fresh new shows for the community and fresh new performances from inspiring like minded talents to explore the stage in innovative ways.

Fran



**Madi
Leidich**

'Home I'm Darling' by Laura Wade is Madison's first foray into theatre at Wyong Drama Group. Madi has been involved in 14 productions with Macquarie University's Theatre Society, Dramac, and the musical society, MacMS, since 2022, including playing Rosencrantz in 'Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead' (2022) by Tom Stoppard, Cecily Cardew in 'The Importance of Being Earnest' (2023) by Oscar Wilde and Miranda in 'The Tempest' (2023) by William Shakespeare.

Given that prior to the show Madi's main exposure to the fifties was music and 'Happy Days', getting to see how the facade of the fifties and the reality of it for women has changed has been an informative experience. 'Home I'm Darling' has been a phenomenal exploration of the stories we tell ourselves to get through the day and a fantastic dive into the real fifties aesthetic through the great props and costuming of this show.

Sylvia



**Ruth
Crawley**

Ruth has been working in drama education on the Central Coast for over 25 years, at both tertiary and secondary levels. She directed 'Little Shop of Horrors' and 'The Addams Family' and was Stage Manager and Assistant Director for 'Back to the 80s' and 'Grease' for St Peter's Catholic College where she works as the Drama Teacher.

Ruth has appeared as Kate Keller in 'All My Sons' and as Mrs Verinda-Gedge in 'Glorious' for Wyong Drama Group. She directed 'Cos' in 2010 for WDG in the Wyong Memorial Hall, before it was demolished to make room for The Art House, and recently, she branched out into the local community musical universe directing 'Xanadu' for Wyong Musical Theatre Company.

Ruth is excited to be playing Sylvia in 'Home, I'm Darling' and taking a not so nostalgic trip down the 50s lane. Being a woman in the 1950s was not all it was cracked up to be and Sylvia's part is to continuously remind her blissfully unaware daughter, Judy, of this fact.

Ruth has been relishing her character's ability to dish up her truth, no matter how much it goes against her daughter's unrealistic 'little housewife' dreams. Ruth is completely chuffed to represent Sylvia on the stage and to be included in such a stellar cast.

Marcus



Steve Burchill

Steve had a busy year of theatre on the Coast in 2023 with performances such as the clumsily charismatic Aldolpho in *'The Drowsy Chaperone'* (Wyong Musical Theatre Company), the despicable bigot Franklin Hart Jr in *'9 to 5 Musical'* (GMS) and as naive Lomper in *'The Full Monty'* (Wyong Drama Group).

Steve's really enjoyed exploring the character of Marcus in *'Home, I'm Darling'*, as he struggles to navigate and accept where boundaries and acceptable behaviour in a modern working world lay.

Steve says aside from the rockabilly music scene, delving into the Mad Men-esque home life, dinner on the table, retiring to the smoking room routine of the 50s, makes him appreciate the lifestyle he has today.

Steve has really loved having the opportunity to work alongside Liz Munro, Director, and such a talented cast and crew for this production and can't wait to bring this play to life.

Alex



Yvonne Adamski Feldt

Yvonne has always loved the theatre, admired actors' visions, costumes, make-up and the flair, and played in school plays in Germany, where she grew up. This is her first gig with WDG.

Alex is such a vivacious character, a real Power-Woman! She's all business and totally clueless that she has awoken feelings in Johnny.

Yvonne has been a fan of the 50s era ever since watching *'Great Balls Of Fire'* - Dennis Quaid as Jerry Lee Lewis. Oh, what a great performance!

Yvonne wants to be involved in making others happy, laugh, giggle and forget about their sorrows for a little while. Find your niche and go for it, dream big - and if you fall 56 times in life, you gotta get up 57 times. Keep on smiling!

Sound Track

Act 1

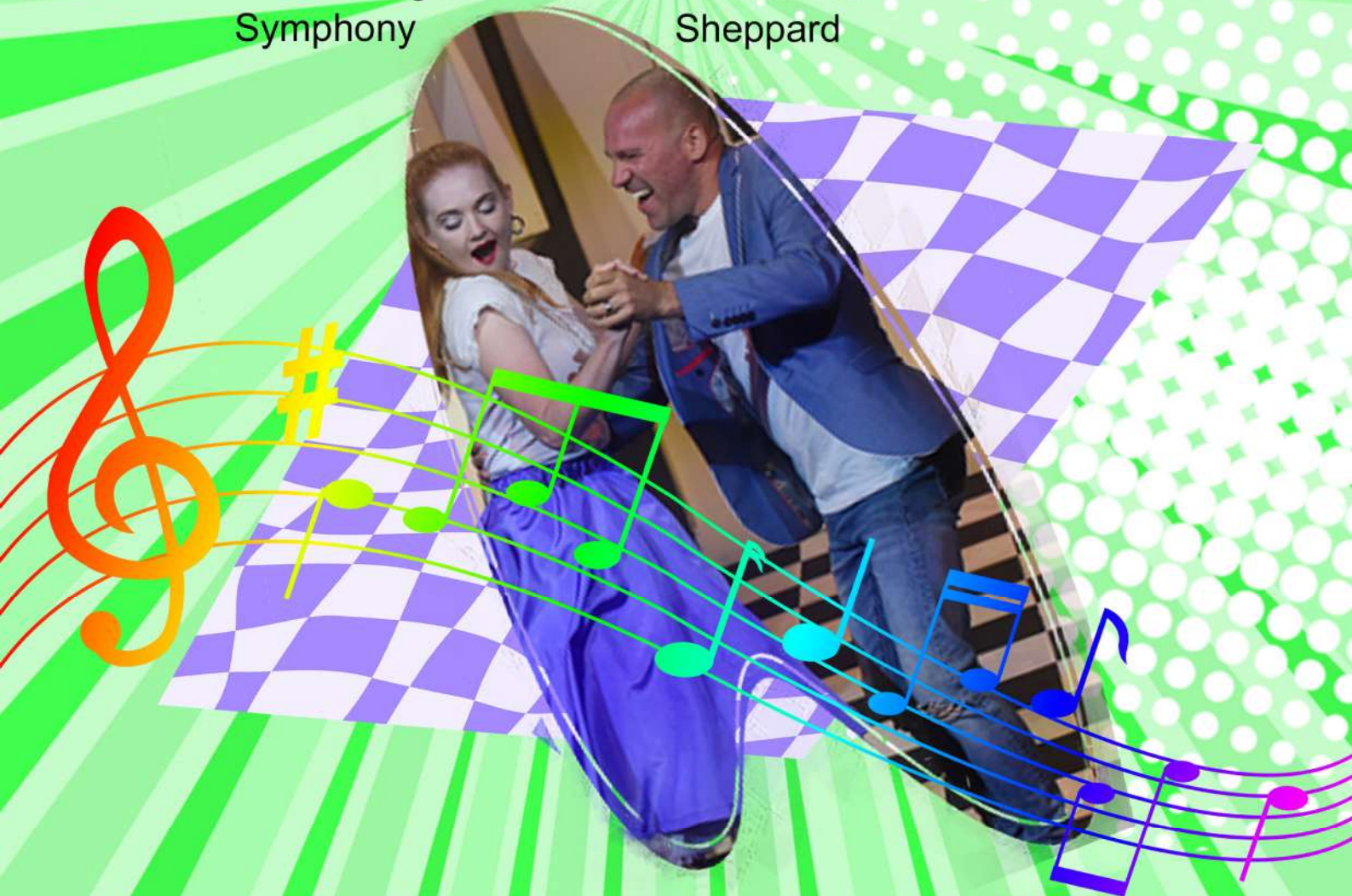
Tweedle Dee
How High The Moon
Wake Up Little Suzy
Somethings Gotta Give
Jump Jive Wail
Who's Sorry Now
Rock-A-Beatin' Boogie
Shake, Rattle n Roll

LaVern Baker
Les Paul and Mary Ford
The Everly Brothers
The McGuire Sisters
Louis Prima
Connie Francis
Bill Haley and his Comets
Bill Haley and his Comets

Act 2

Mr Sandman
Misty
Lonely Street
Cry
I've Got A Woman
Cry Me A River
You Belong To Me
Symphony

The Chordettes
Johnny Mathis
Andy Williams
Johnnie Ray
Ray Charles
Julie London
Jo Stafford
Sheppard



Cast

Judy	Kelsey Hunter
Johnny	Kyle Walbank
Fran	Madi Leidich
Sylvia	Ruth Clayton- Crawley
Marcus	Steve Burchill
Alex	Yvonne Adamski Feldt
Char Lady 1	Amelia Norton
Char Lady 2	Joanne Brearley,

Crew / Creatives

Director	Liz Munro
Production Manager	Andy Kabanoff
Set Design	Liz Munro
Lighting Design	Ruth Clayton-Crawley
Sound Design	Liz Munro
Set piece design & restoration	Bruce Gibbs
Costumes	Wendy Potter
Sound/lighting operator	John Czerniecki & Nikki De Vries
Stage Manager	Lynn McMullen
Assistant stage Manager	Narelle Norton , Amelia Norton, Joanne Brearley
Cartoon props design	Liz Munro, Roger Ward,
Set decoration	Liz Munro, Lyn McMullen, Anne Tucker, Kate Clark, Ruth Clayton-Crawley, Ros Ellis, Charlotte Dixon, Amelia Norton, Narelle Norton, Daryl Kirkness, Josh Munro, Bruce Gibbs, Grant Pavy
Set Construction	Daryl Kirkness, Andy Kabanoff, Stephen McLaren, Scott Wastell, Ugo Grassano, Bruce Gibbs, Paul Silversmith, Josh Munro Emmakate De Henau
Choreography	Nikki De Vries
Graphic Design	Nikki De Vries
Program (online)	Ian Abbott, Josh Munro,
Transport	Scott Wastell, Bruce Gibbs, Andy Kabanoff
Photography	Patrick Wells, Liz Munro
Publicity	Ros Ellis Sue Kielt
Raffle	Sammy Frerer
Poster model	Red Tree Theatre & WDG
Front of House	Members

Crew Bio's

Lynn McMullen - Stage Manager

Lynn is an active member of Wyong Drama Group and has been involved in many of the group's productions in the last four years. As well as creating props, doing back stage work including stage manager and dresser, she has appeared on stage in 'The Pram', 'To Kill A Mockingbird' and 'The Full Monty'. Lynn is happy to be part of this thought-provoking and stylish production of 'Home I'm Darling'. Cheers.

Bruce Gibbs - Set piece restorer, set & stage maintenance

Bruce was brought up as a teenager in the fifties, and has skilfully fabricated, restored, and decorated many of the stunning major props for this production, including the 50s stove made from an old sewing machine cabinet, true to style of the era that he lived. His skills come from many years in the veteran and vintage restoration industry.

A stalwart of WDG, Bruce first appeared in leading roles of Gilbert and Sullivan opera productions with Newcastle City orchestra and J.C. Williamson. At WDG 'Celebration of Theatre', he directed, and set built the famous British comedy *Dinner for One* playing the quirky James the Manservant, and played the Cop in the production *Clue*.

A Volunteer of the Year award winner, Bruce is in his element volunteering his time and talents for the benefit of theatre audiences. He trusts you will enjoy the staging of this production, set in a beautiful authentic panorama of the fifties, and encourage your friends and family to come and enjoy it as well.



Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

Wyong Drama Group would like to acknowledge the Darkinjung people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we perform. We would also like to pay respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge their cultural connection to this land through song, dance, ritual, storytelling, and language.

Andy Kabanoff for his generous support and advice as Production Manager

Wyong Musical Theatre Company and The Genesian Theatre Company for use of their props and costumes.

Gosford Musical Society for the use of their platforms

The WDG Committee (past and present) for their trust and support.

Ian Abbott for helping so much with transport of set pieces

Narelle Norton for prompting during rehearsals

Bruce Gibbs for his amazing restoration work and general stage assistance

Cameron Mitchell and Josh Maxwell for their invaluable lighting advice

Members of WDG for helping with painting and decorating of set

Klara Kaye at Coastal News for supplying advertisements - great Central Coast publication!

Ros Ellis and Sue Kielt for organizing the raffle

The staff at Red Tree Theatre: Ruth Jordon, Josh Maxwell, Kelly Maxwell, Martin Dunn, Daniel Craig for running the bar, fielding issues, ticketing, stage advice and a myriad of supports.

The wonderful WDG FOH volunteers.

Scott Wastell for his constant support through this project and for assistance at auditions and pretty much everything else!



Join WDG

Would you like to join WDG? It takes many people with a variety of skills to put a show on stage.

We'd love to have you along.

Great fun, creative projects and social connection.

Contact us if you'd like to help on our productions!

We always need:

Set builders, set designers, back stage crew, lighting and sound operators, costume designers, painters and decorators, social media gurus, fundraising volunteers, front of house assistants, directors, lighting designers, thespians and anyone who just loves theatre and wants to be involved!

Contact us at <https://www.wyongdramagroup.com.au/>

We'd love to meet you!

Coming up



Wyong Drama Group Inc.
Proudly Presents

**7th - 9th
June 2024**

**ONE ACT
PLAY FESTIVAL**

 RED
TREE
THEATRE

Session Bookings
www.wyongdramagroup.com.au
Tuggerah, NSW

APPOINTMENT WITH DEATH
by Agatha Christie



 **Wyong
Drama
Group**
Inc.

**August
2024**

Directed by **Andy Kabanoff**
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By Arrangement with ORIGIN™ Theatrical on behalf of Samuel French, A Concord Theatricals Company