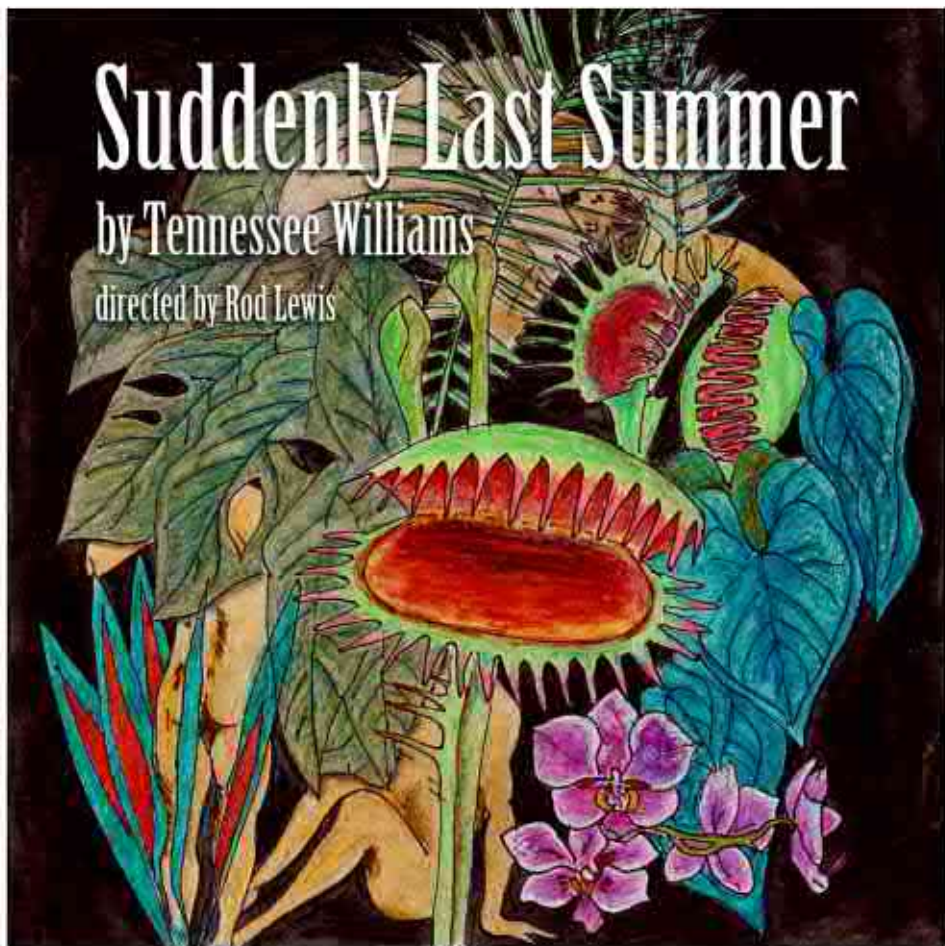


Suddenly Last Summer

by Tennessee Williams

directed by Rod Lewis



NVT

**NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE**

Bedford Place,
Brighton BN1 2PT

Friday 19th - Saturday 27th May 2023 at 7.30pm
Matinee: Sunday 21st May at 2.30pm

www.newventure.org.uk
www.facebook.com/NewVentureTheatreBrighton

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Suddenly Last Summer

Better known for his major plays *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *The Glass Menagerie*, Tennessee Williams finds perhaps greater subtle and poetic depth in his 1957 masterpiece *Suddenly Last Summer*.

At the core of *Suddenly Last Summer* is a battle of destruction and survival between Mrs Venable and Catherine Holly: one determined to defend the prized, golden image of her beloved son at all costs, the other fighting desperately to bring the truth to light and to protect her sanity.

Arguably, Williams is one of the best writers of female roles, able to reach into the core and bring out the deepest emotions of his conflicted characters. His world is one in which love is distorted - a mother's love of her son, a niece's love of her cousin - yet he is a champion of those who suffer distortion and repression, sexual and social, and he invites the audience in to experience each character's desperation. Williams' dialogue attains a level of dramatic eloquence that few other playwrights of the time were able to reach. He was a brave, outspoken man who lived in dangerous times for men who were hiding their sexuality.

Williams was also not afraid to embrace the surreal in set, sound and lighting design, innovating a form that brought in fresh elements, and creating a space for a new and invigorating expressionistic theatre.

As a director, I've been a huge admirer of his work and drawn to it many times. Williams' work is exciting to explore, and he remarked that *Suddenly Last Summer* was his most poetic work. To work with a fine cast and company is a privilege, to enable the emergence of the characters from the text and to bring the issues to life.

Rod Lewis
May 2023

CAST

CATHERINE HOLLY: Bridgett Ane Lawrence

VIOLET VENABLE: Sheelagh Baker

DOCTOR CUKROWICZ: Aaron Coomber

MRS HOLLY: Amanda Harman

GEORGE HOLLY: Frank Leon

SISTER FELICITY: Zoe Edden

MISS FOXHILL: Sarah Donnelly

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR: Rod Lewis

SET DESIGN: Michael Folkard

PRODUCTION & STAGE MANAGER : Gabrielle Bowring

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER: Bryony Weaver

COSTUME & HAIR: Richi Blennerhassett

MAKE-UP: Emese Csoma

SET CONSTRUCTION: George Walter, Simon Glazier, John Everett, Mark Snipe, Laura Nuppola & Steve Hutton

SET PAINTING: Michael Folkard & Fiona Hewitt

LIGHTING DESIGN: John Everett & Neil Hadley

SOUND DESIGN: Alistair Lock

LIGHTING OPERATOR: Tamsin Mastoris, Neil Hadley & Philip Castle

SOUND OPERATOR: Matt Foster

PROPS: Gabrielle Bowring, Bryony Weaver & John Everett

POSTER & PROGRAMME : Tamsin Mastoris

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR: Ian Black

PHOTOGRAPHY: Strat Mastoris

PUBLICITY & MARKETING: Gaby Bowring & Maxine Joyce

HEALTH & SAFETY: Ian Black

With many thanks to:

To Katie Brownings, Ian Black, Judith Berrill, Barry Purchase, Gerry McCrudden, Ayshen Irfan, Aldo Henriquez for the accent coaching, Strat Mastoris, Gladrags for their wonderful help with the costumes, Yoga in the Lanes for the rehearsal space, and, as always, to the Front of House and Box Office teams, without whom no show would ever go on.



Bridgett Ane Lawrence - Catherine Holly

At the NVT, BA has performed in *Farragut North*, *The Language Archive*, *Proof* and *The Homecoming*. Her stage work in Chicago includes *A Christmas Carol*, *Right As Rain*, *The Public* and *The Trial*, whilst her New York credits include *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Top Girls*, *In Search of a Goddess* and *Brimstone & Treacle*. She also wrote, produced and performed in her own one-woman choreo-poem, *An Evolution of Love*. BA received a BFA in Acting from Ithaca College and, along with her husband, runs Yoga in the Lanes in Brighton.

Sheelagh Baker - Violet Venable

Sheelagh is a long-standing member of the NVT, having appeared in over 50 productions. These have been varied and wide-ranging, including roles in drama, Shakespeare, comedy, farce and, just occasionally, musicals! There have been many favourite roles, some disappointments, and some awards along the way. Sheelagh is only too happy to be still involved with the company, and revelling in the energy and talents of our new members.



Aaron Coomber - Doctor Cukrowicz

Suddenly Last Summer is Aaron's third NVT production. Despite being new to the NVT, he's no stranger to the stage, having spent most of the last decade working as a teacher and performer (and even longer desperately seeking attention). He's enjoying the challenge of playing Doctor Cukrowicz-Sugar, and performing alongside such a fabulous cast. Aaron has recently acquired a puppy called Shirley Basenji, and spends the majority of his offstage time raising her to be a fine upstanding citizen of Brighton's dog community.



Amanda Harman - Mrs Holly

Amanda has been with the NVT for over ten years, making her debut as the nurse in *Medea* in 2012. She has since appeared in many productions, most recently as Margaret in *Gabriel* and Mary in *Turpin*, and in *It's a Wonderful Life* playing several different roles, albeit somewhat unrecognisable in a magnificent silver/white wig! At other times, Amanda can be found helping out on the NVT Box Office.

Frank Leon - George Holly

Frank is a drama graduate from the University of Greenwich. He has performed as Eugene in *Biloxi Blues* and Hal in *Loot* at the NVT, as well as Prince Harry in *King Charles III* at the Brighton Little Theatre. Frank also directed *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* at the NVT in 2014.



Zoe Edden - Sister Felicity

Zoe first appeared at the NVT in the BT Biennial production of *Nasty Neighbours*, with other performances since including Mrs Drudge in *The Real Inspector Hound*. She has played lead roles in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *The Gingerbread Lady* at Brighton Little Theatre, amongst a variety of other roles there, and for the Ifield Barn Theatre, Archway Theatre, Drip Action Theatre, Wick Theatre Company and Southwick Players. She recently appeared in the Wick Theatre Company's *A Christmas Carol* and The Devil's Party Theatre Company's musical *Paradise Rocks* at BOAT. Zoe's delighted to be back on the NVT stage.

Sarah Donnelly - Miss Foxhill

Suddenly Last Summer will be Sarah's second NVT stage role, following her debut in *A Kind of Alaska* last year. These performances mark a return following a long break from dramatic roles, as she has more recently performed in cabaret shows, including as a compere and singer for the Sassy Cabaret Club. Sarah is relishing her return to these dramatic roles, and becoming a part of the lovely NVT community.



Rod Lewis - Director

Pretty much all my working life has been in theatre, film or TV as crew, stage management, an actor, director or writer. Many hats! I've been in so many productions over the years that they've now all merged in my mind into one vast, kaleidoscopic mass. I've become a sort of ancient theatre mongrel. Clear in my memory though is the pleasure and privilege of working with fine, talented teams when I've been lucky enough to direct previous NVT productions: *The Price*, *The End of the Beginning*, *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *The Messiah* and Barry Purchase's dramatisation of Dickens' *Pickwick and Weller*. And now, the latest treat, Tennessee Williams' *Suddenly Last Summer*!



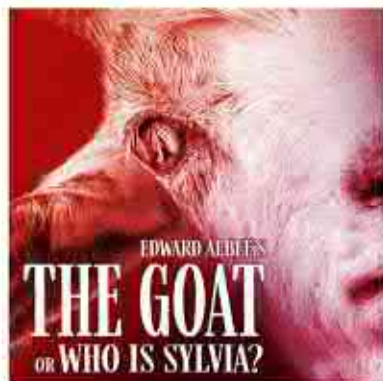
Bridgett Ane Lawrence as Catherine Holly

Friday 2nd June 2023
In the Studio Theatre

Frogmore at 40

Frogmore Poets in association with NVT.

Join us for one night only, as local poets read from forty years of Frogmore publications.



16th - 24th June 2023
In the Theatre Upstairs

The Goat or Who is Sylvia by Edward Albee directed by Martin Malone

Three-time Pulitzer Prize-winner Edward Albee's most provocative, daring, and controversial play

since *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *The Goat* won every major award for best new play of the year. This mischievous comedy drama centres around Martin, a middle-aged architect at the peak of his fame, whose life is thrown into complete turmoil when he reveals to his best friend that he has fallen in love, spiritually and physically, with a goat named Sylvia.

21st - 29th July 2023
In the Studio Theatre

NSFW by Lucy Kirkwood directed by Kirsty Elmer

NSFW is a sharply satirical play about power games, privacy and gender politics in the media. Specifically, the world of magazines.

'Carrie's getting them out for the lads, Charlotte's just grateful to have a job, Sam's being asked to sell more than his body and Aidan's trying to keep Doghouse from going under. Money, sex and Photoshop. Lucy Kirkwood's sharp new comedy looks at power games and privacy in the media and beyond.



by Lucy Kirkwood

directed by Kirsty Elmer

Supporting The New Venture

We all need a little 'care and maintenance' from time to time and our lovely Grade II listed theatre is certainly no exception. Whether it's fixing the roof or upgrading equipment it is all increasingly expensive. So any donation you can make to help keep the New Venture alive and kicking will be hugely appreciated, and you can do it either via the donations box by the fireplace in the bar, or using the Donate Button on the homepage of our website - www.newventure.org.uk

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Contacting the NVT

For ticket information only, call the Box Office - 01273 746118. To book tickets or for other information check our website at www.newventure.org.uk. All other enquiries 01273 808353

NVYT - Youth Theatre

NVT welcomes all young people (12-17) with a passion for or an interest in theatre. Fridays 4.30-6.30pm. £50 per 10 week term, first session is FREE!

NVT Acting Class

Monday evenings at 7.30pm for all levels of acting skills. It will cost you just £5 per session (£2.50 for NVT members) First visit is FREE! See website for details.

Become a Sponsor

£250: Advertise on the website, in each programme and our newsletter for one year. Plus two free tickets per show. Contact fundraising@newventure.org.uk for details.

Or why not become an Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. For further information please contact the Angels Coordinator Gerry McCrudden: angels@newventure.org.uk.

Membership

Company membership - £15 a year. Full participation, discount on tickets & newsletter. Student/Unwaged - £10 a year. As above... *Proof of status is required.*