

# Dysfunction Done Right in The Family Creetin

april 19, 2026

*Reviewed by Jo-Anne Bishop.*



*(Pictured: Cast & Crew of The Family Creetin. Photo by Ross Davidson)*

Every so often, a local production comes along that makes you rethink your expectations entirely. ***The Family Creetin***, presented by Banished by the King Productions, is one of them.

I'll admit it, I went in cautiously. Locally written shows can be hit or miss, and sometimes the humour leans too heavily on inside jokes. Not here. Patrick Brennan has written something that feels bigger than that—and funnier, too.

The setup is classic: a group of siblings gathered in an English country house, all carrying a ton of baggage and very little patience for one another. From there, things unravel quickly (in the best way). The comedy comes from character, not gimmicks, and it lands because it feels familiar. If you've ever survived a tense family gathering, you are in on the joke.

It's not without its bumps. A lot is going on, and at times the play can feel like a ping-pong match, your head constantly turning to keep up with the action. A bit of tightening would sharpen some of the bigger moments. That said, Brennan's direction keeps things impressively controlled. The pacing is tight where it needs to be, and even when the script edges toward chaos (which it does – a lot!), the staging keeps it from tipping over. There's a clear sense that this is a play that has evolved over time, and if this is the result of that evolution, it's very much in the right direction.



*(Photo by Ross Davidson)*

The production makes smart use of the black box space in Procuiner Hall at the Palace Theatre. The set is simple, tasteful, and exactly what it needs to be, no more, no less. It fits the space beautifully while leaving plenty of room for the performances to breathe. But if I'm to be honest, this is a show that feels ready for a larger stage; it has the legs for it.

And it's the performances that really carry it. This is a strong cast across the board, and more importantly, they work as a true ensemble—feeding off each other, building momentum, and clearly enjoying the ride. That sense of connection translates directly to the audience.

A big part of what elevates the production is the physicality and facial work. Reactions are sharp, expressions are doing just as much work as the dialogue, and it adds an extra layer of comedy that keeps scenes lively even in quieter moments. The casting feels particularly well matched—these actors fit their roles in a way that makes the dynamics feel natural and fully lived-in.



*(Photo by Ross Davidson.)*

Dylan Rock as Frederic is a standout, with a strong physical presence and consistently engaging reactions. Ben Kennes's Reginald is equally memorable, bringing excellent timing and expression that make every moment count. And Kevin Avram nearly walks away with the show as Bertrand. His portrayal of the perpetually drunk brother is fully committed and genuinely hilarious, especially with his repeated, perfectly timed "Oh mother" lines, which somehow get funnier every time. His final moment ties everything together beautifully.

The sisters—Sophie Thompson (Victoria) and Sue Harrington (Gloria)—land some big laughs with their sharp back-and-forth, while Jennifer Groulx's Sybil provides a sweet, grounding counterbalance to the chaos. Rachel Sherret's prim, all-knowing Mary (who has a quote for everything) is crisply timed and consistently funny, and Nicole McTeer nails the Hollywood starlet as Ginger.



*(Photo by Ross Davidson.)*

Luis Marin turns up the heat as Latin lover Raul, while Dustin Didham's Nigel—a sooty, slightly suspect chimney sweep—adds another comic layer. Ryan Starkweather's Roger, the curious banker, doubles as narrator, punctuating the action with a clicker that freezes the stage in well-executed tableaux—timing the cast delivers to hilarious effect. Rounding out the ensemble is Patrick Hoffer as Archibald, the family patriarch with a watchful eye.

Costumes by Tanis Daoust suit the period nicely, and the technical team—stage manager Jeremy Hewitson, assistant stage manager Eric Curtis, sound by Doug Deschenes, and lighting by Mark Mooney—keep everything running smoothly behind the scenes.



*(Photo by Ross Davidson.)*

What's most impressive is how easily this play connects. It doesn't feel small or niche. It feels like something with real staying power. You could see it on a bigger stage, in a longer run, or picked up by other companies around the globe—without missing a beat.

Bottom line:

A sharp, funny, and well-played ensemble comedy that proves local theatre can punch well above its weight. It is busy at times, but consistently entertaining, and the kind of show that makes you hope someone is already planning the encore.

# PALACE THEATRE

710 Dundas Street London, ON palacetheatre.ca 519.432.1029

BANISHED BY THE KING PRODUCTIONS  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

## THE FAMILY CREETIN

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED  
BY PATRICK BRENNAN

APRIL 16<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> 2026



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IF YOU GO:

What: The Family Creetin, written by Patrick Brennan and presented by Banished by the King Productions

**When:** April 16<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Where:** Procnier Hall, Palace Theatre, 710 Dundas Street, London, Ontario

**Tickets:** Adults: \$33 \* Students/Seniors (55+): \$30 \* Youth (under 18): \$20

[Tickets | The Family Creetin | The Palace Theatre Arts Commons](#)

\*This is a wheelchair accessible facility.



Check out The Beat Magazine's Q&A Interview with the play's author and director, Patrick Brennan, at: [Q&A Interview with Patrick Brennan, Author and Director of The Family Creetin. – The Beat Magazine 2025](#)

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