

CHELSEA WOOLLEY'S

P A I N T M E
T H I S H O U S E
O F L O V E

April 11 - May 7,
Extraspace

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Please Note: titles highlighted in pink may be of particular interest to educators.

About the Play

Synopsis

"Why shouldn't a dream be just as much a truth? A fantasy be just as deep a reality?"

After twenty-five years estranged, Cecelia and her father, Jules, are attempting reconciliation. Unable to communicate past shames and shortcomings, the pair become dependent on increasingly dramatic fantasies to explain away their pain.

Paint Me this House of Love is a rhythmic, yearning, experiment of language, exploring the threads that stitch together our shared family narratives, and asks how we communicate "I Love You", when the words alone are not enough.

About the Playwright

Chelsea Woolley is a playwright whose work includes: *Paint Me This House of Love* (Tarragon Theatre), *Enormity, Girl, and the Earthquake in Her Lungs* (Nightwood Theatre's Groundswell Festival), *Hey May Hey* (Forward March Festival), *The Mountain* (Geordie Theatre, Spinning Dot Theatre), *The Ugly Ones* (In participation with UNICEF Canada), and *These Peaceable Kingdoms* (New Words Festival). She is the creator of the Mixed-Arts Performance Partnership Program connecting young artists living in precarity to professional artistic mentorship. She was also the creator of a writer's unit for teens at Red Door Shelter where she and they co-wrote a script titled, *One Day*. Chelsea has been recognized through a number of awards including: Tarragon Theatre's RBC Emerging Playwright, The Playwright Guild of Canada's SureFire List, The Ellen Ross Stuart Opening Doors Award, and the Toronto Fringe New Play Contest. She has attended the Banff Playwright's Lab, and the National New Play Network's Playwright's Workshop at the Kennedy Centre in Washington DC. Chelsea is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada's Playwriting Program.

Playwright's Note

I read Pinter's *Betrayal* a lot when I started writing this play. Like a lot. Like during a first workshop of this script back in 2019, an actor said, "I'm not sure why, but I think this family is British," kind of a lot.

I love *Betrayal* because of what is written, but more so because of what isn't. There is a quiet yearning in that text. To me, it is a play about three people desperate for love, who just can't figure out the formula.

In 2018, as a fresh Torontonionian, I audited Richard Rose's directing class here at the Tarragon Theatre. I don't recall the play in discussion, but I remember Richard saying, "A parent becomes more present in their absence. When you lose a parent, you see ghosts." *House of Love* is about the after. If a parent is absent, but then returns, what happens to the ghosts? And what were they made of to begin with? Memories? Promises? Fantasies? Lies?

Playwright's Note Con't

Much of this play is written in fragments. The words missing are the ghosts. They are Pinter's unsolvable formula. They are canyons in the way of reconnection. I really love words. And I have loved removing them for you in this play.

Lastly, any script takes time to grow. Thank you to: Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster, Shakura Dixon, Joanna Falck, Jessica Greenberg, Helen King, Myekah Payne, Karen Robinson, Tom Rooney, and Richard Rose for your care with seedling versions of this story.

And to you. I hope you enjoy the complicated and tender lives of this (not British) family.

Chelsea Woolley

Cast



Jessica B. Hill
Cecilia



Tanja Jacobs
Rhondi



Jeremiah Sparks
Jules

Creative Team

Mike Payette - Director

Carolyn Fe - Assistant Director

Ken MacDonald - Set Design

Julia Surich - Costume Design

Tim Rodrigues - Lighting Design

John Gzowski - Sound Design

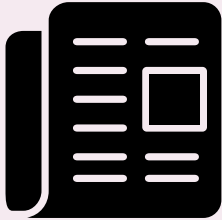
Anya Perry - TMU Sound Mentee

Emilie Aubin - Stage Manager

Hazel Moore - Apprentice Stage Manager

Madeline Borg - Queen's Leadership
Production Shadow

Family Dynamics



1

**Only Parent, Only Child:
An Ode to Our Small Family**
Writer Julia Cho shares personal reflections on her family of two.

2

Family Dynamics Within the Play
Playwright Chelsea Woolley and Registered Psychotherapist Katherine Jun speak about love, families, self acceptance and more!



3



How We Get Wired to Love and Be Loved
In this episode of *Absent Father Podcast*, Dr. Gary Salyer discusses a new take on attachment theory, based on his groundbreaking research into this science of how our brains gets wired.

Lying

 [Click here](#)

1

When Does Lying Become Compulsive or Pathological?



Occasional dishonesty is natural. But when does lying become a problem? Find out in this medically reviewed article from *PsychCentral*.

2

The How and Why of Lies

Two episodes from NPR's *Hidden Brain*.

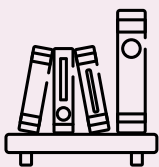
Everybody Lies, And That's Not Always A Bad Thing

With *The New York Times* bestselling author and Professor of Behavioral Economics at Duke University, Dan Ariely.



Loving the Lie

Stories of fakes, phonies, and con men – and the people who fall for the false worlds they create.



Check out *The Honest Truth About Dishonesty: How We Lie to Everyone - Especially Ourselves* by Dan Ariely here.





3

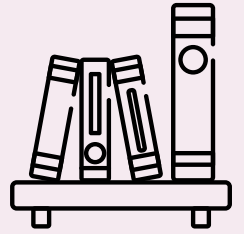
Honest Liars

The psychology of self-deception with psychologist Cortney Warren at TEDxUNLV.

4

Useful Delusions: The Power and Paradox of the Self-Deceiving Brain

From the *New York Times* best-selling author, and host of *Hidden Brain*, comes a thought-provoking look at the role of self-deception in human flourishing.



Listen to a podcast about the book here.



5

PsyPost

Being lied to by your parents in childhood predicts social challenges in adulthood.



Check out the academic article *Parenting by lying in childhood is associated with negative developmental outcomes* by clicking here.

Maladaptive Daydreaming

1



Maladaptive Daydreaming

This medically reviewed article from *healthline* explains what is it and why it happens.

2

What is Maladaptive Daydreaming?

Learn about this psychiatric phenomenon from *Psyc2Go's* educational 3-minute video..



3



When Daydreaming Gets In The Way Of Real Life

Hosts of NPR's *Invisibillia* podcast speak to "M" about her personal experience of maladaptive daydreaming.

Please note: the story about maladaptive daydreaming begins 32 minutes into the episode.

Rhythm and Language

1

Staccato Sentences



Staccato sentences are short sentences written back to back for literary effect. Learn about the grammar of this device in this short article from *Grammar Monster*.

2

Feel the Beat

How does rhythm shape the way we use and understand language?



3

Understanding the Psychology of Interrupting

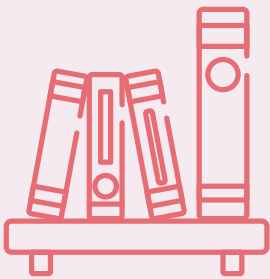
The causes and effects of interrupting.



Learn about how the power dynamics of interrupting play out in the US Supreme Court in this episode of *More Perfect*.

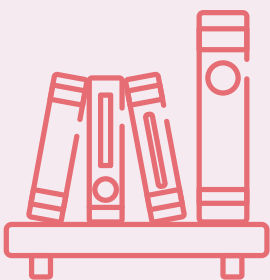
Further Reading

Interested in reading the plays that helped inspired *Paint Me This House of Love*?



***Betrayal* by Harold Pinter**

The classic dramatic scenario of the love triangle is manifest in a meditation on the themes of marital infidelity, duplicity, and self-deception. Pinter writes a world that simultaneously glorifies and debases love.



***Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?* by Caryl Churchill**

Jack would do anything for Sam. Sam would do anything. And around this simple premise, Caryl Churchill slyly crafts her new play depicting a deeply dysfunctional gay relationship—which is actually all about America.

Conversation Starters

Do you think that any of the lies/stories/daydreams told by the characters are redeemable?

Why or why not?

Do the lies told by each character make them irredeemable?

What do you think inspires each character need to make-up these stories and lie to each other?

How does the final scene between Jules and Rhondi effect your understanding of the character's experiences and motivations?