



DIANE
FLACKS'

GUILT

A LOVE STORY

DIRECTED BY ALISA PALMER

Season Sponsor:

BMO



TARRAGON THEATRE

FEBRUARY 6 - MARCH 3, 2024

Guilt (A Love Story)

by Diane Flacks

Produced by permission of the Playwright and Marquis Literary (Colin Rivers) www.MQlit.ca

Guilt (A Love Story) was developed by Mything Inc, with support from the Canada Arts Council and Tarragon Theatre (Toronto, ON) and One Yellow Rabbit (Calgary, AB) which presented a limited run workshop production in 2022.



Tarragon Theatre is an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA), and engages professional artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement.

Cast

Diane Flacks

Creative team

Diane Flacks

Playwright

Alisa Palmer

Director

Rebecca Harper

Movement Coach

Jung-Hye Kim

Set and Costume Designer

Leigh Ann Vardy

Lighting Designer

Aurora Torok

Associate Lighting Designer

Deanna H. Choi

Sound Designer

Jacob Lin 林鴻恩

Associate Sound Designer

Sandy Plunkett

Stage Manager

Angela Mae Bago

Apprentice Stage Manager

Land acknowledgement

Tarragon Theatre acknowledges that we all are a part of a larger ecosystem within our community, Tkaronto, where our theatre lives and operates – and that we also commit ourselves and in turn energize our audiences to continually reflect on and respond to our relationship to the land around us. This country has been cared for by generations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nations, and the land on which Tarragon rests and is able to share this story has been cherished and protected by, the Anishnabeg, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Toronto is a word that originates from the Mohawk word “Tkaronto,” meaning “the place in the water where the trees are standing,” which is said to refer to the wooden stakes that were used as fishing weirs in the narrows of local river systems by the Haudenosaunee and Wendat. The paths we still walk today, from Davenport to Dupont, are built on the portage trails first established and walked by Indigenous peoples. It is in the spirit of being on the portage route that we invoke our local Indigenous oral history – though covered up by the industrial progress of Toronto – and maintain that those stories are not lost.

We are committed to engaging with these communities in meaningful ways that open dialogue, while acknowledging our own history. We look towards a recognition of our shared humanity to create deeper community connection and accountability. Tarragon’s recognition of the contributions and the historic significance of Indigenous peoples to this land is directly connected to our promise to meet the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation. Making our commitment real in our work and through our community building. Please do check out the QR codes in the lobby to find out how you can extend your support.

Welcome to the show

Happy 2024 and welcome back to our mainstage season at Tarragon!

After an electric month of creativity with our Greenhouse Festival, we are excited to have you back with the powerful Diane Flacks, and her newest offering *Guilt (A Love Story)*. Deeply personal, funny, and enchanting, this piece captures the scope of that overwhelming and inescapable feeling of guilt that we all experience at some point in our lives. At once poignant and deeply human, *Guilt (A Love Story)* is a story of a mother's experience dealing with the end of her relationship and its impact on her family, and the re-discovery of her own sense of self worth. Her experience is compounded by the many intersections she lives, ultimately unpacking the onion-like layers of what encompass that persistence of guilt.

All this beautifully revealed through Diane's immensely comedic and insightful lens, and guided by director Alisa Palmer's vision.

We are proud to share this story with you as we continue our 2023-24 season. Thank you, as ever, for joining us on our theatrical journey of new and untold Canadian stories.

We hope you enjoy the show!
Bon spectacle!

Mike & Andrea

Mike Payette and Andrea Vagianos
Artistic Director & Managing Director

Playwright's note

Guilt came about as I was wrestling with this state of being that had paralyzed me after my divorce. In trying to understand it, I realized that my perspective: as a seemingly self-sacrificing mother who exploded her life with a mid-life crisis, was not well-represented in research or media. Divorcing women in media were either presented as “the evil other woman” or the one-who-was-betrayed, victim. And I wasn’t either of those and felt like there was a perspective to be examined. I researched, interviewed, and investigated this perspective and the origins and utility of guilt. In time, I realized the way through, both personally and artistically, was diving in.

I originally presented a rough, short version of this before Covid at the We’re Funny That Way comedy festival in Toronto, and the response of the audience encouraged me to keep going. During Covid, with the help of director Alisa Palmer, we continued developing the piece, and did a zoom reading for Blake Brooker from *One Yellow Rabbit* in Calgary and for GCTC, with the support of Nightwood Theatre and Buddies in Bad Times Theatre. Blake described the feeling of doing a zoom one-person show as performing into a black plastic garbage bag, and he is right. So, we were incredibly grateful to be invited to do a live work-in-progress performance at the High Performance Rodeo.

In the meantime, I was invited to present a few minutes of material at Tarragon Theatre’s big birthday bash. That marked the first time a live audience saw any of this new iteration of *Guilt*, and it was a blast. The response of many in the audience was a whispered, “You’re telling my story”, which encouraged us all to keep going.

note continued on next page

Playwright's note cont'd

Thank you for being here for this deep dive into a complex, uncomfortable, and highly human feeling. A state of being that most of us, especially parents, wrestle with in our lives. This exploration may not pull punches, but don't worry, it's accompanied by laughs - because how else do we get through anything? In this time where being together in a room is still a struggle and a risk, we are grateful to you, the audience, the show's other actor, for opening yourselves up to imagine.

A word on solo shows: it's a lotta work. And a privilege and a responsibility. This is my fifth. Every time I do one, I remember how difficult and rewarding they are, and every time, I say, "this is my last one". And then a story that feels like it could only be told in this way presents itself. I've come to accept that, like in dreams, you are everyone in your solo show. Even if it's not at all autobiographical. And it's a way to use everything you have in your arsenal as an artist to connect in an intimate way with an audience so that we all feel less alone. It's a contract - "trust me, we're going surfing together. I'll take care of you. Let's go on this ride, because I think it will do us all good."

Diane Flacks

Special thanks

The Tarragon for being home. The Toronto Arts Council, The Ontario Arts Council, and especially the Canada Council for the Arts. Blake Brooker and the OYR team, Eric Coates from GCTC, Andrey Tarasiuk and Pleiades theatre, Wei Qing Tan, Bruce McCulloch, Sunny Drake, Shoshana Sperling, Richard Greenblatt, Nightwood Theatre, Ari Weinberg, David Gale, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, National Theatre School, Maggie Cassella, Kayleigh Mundy, Rabbi Aviva Goldberg, Julie Tepperman, Mai Amit for the art installation and Katie Ford from We're Funny That Way. Thank you to Monica Parker for the title, and Kelly Thornton for the subtitle, and her always tremendous support. To Eda Holmes and Centaur for launching us into the East, and to Fanny Britt for her beautiful transliteration for surtitles.

Huge gratitude to Alisa Palmer, for the kindness, ferocity and the deepest, most fascinating well of talent, skill, wit and wisdom, and belief in me and in this project. Plus, all the laughs and friendship. It could not have happened without you. To the brilliant, vulnerable, wise design team and to the stage management pillars of strength.

Finally, to Tommie, for her faith and love.
And to my remarkable boys, always.

Diane Flacks

Director's note

I was thrilled when Diane approached me with the news that she was working on a new piece. Or rather, that a new piece was working on her. This is how important stories seem to emerge; like *The Truth*, they will out. *Guilt (A Love Story)* is a work of fiction but is inspired by personal experience and infused with Diane's incredibly insightful and savvy observations of humanity. Over the years, as Diane and I worked to bring the story to fruition, our circle expanded to include the incredibly gifted creative team that has brought the production that you see today to life. Thank you to Mike Payette for his commitment to the piece and to the Tarragon for being such a warm and nurturing home for *Guilt's* world premiere. It's wonderful to be back and we look forward to sharing *Guilt* with audiences in Montreal at The Centaur Theatre and in Winnipeg at The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre.

In this era of heightened insecurity, when we are financially stressed, emotionally overwhelmed, and justifiably heartsick, we can respond by donning masks of invincibility. Or we can gather to look, listen, and share our struggles. The courage to accept our mutual vulnerability is potentially transformative, even world-changing.

Alisa Palmer

Thank Yous

Thank you to the Pedagogical Team and students of the English Section, National Theatre School of Canada.

Thanks to my wife, Ann-Marie and our daughters Lora and Isabel for their love and kindness.



DIANE FLACKS

Playwright / Actor

For Tarragon: *Theory of Relatives, By a Thread, Gravity Calling, Waiting Room, Sibs, Care.*

Diane was a member of Tarragon's Playwrights Unit and has appeared in and written for numerous Spring Arts Fairs back in the day.

Selected Theatre Credits: *Fall on Your Knees* (Canadian Stage, NAC, Neptune, Grand); *PALS*, *25 Questions for a Jewish Mother* (WJT); Playwright and actor in *Unholy* (Dora nomination, Nightwood). *Unholy* was remounted three times, and filmed for TV. Nathan in *Nathan the Wise* (Stratford Festival); *Body Politic* (Dora nomination for outstanding performance, Buddies in Bad Times); *Yichud* (Theatre Passe Muraille); *Smudge* (Nightwood). Four previous solo shows: *Myth Me, By a Thread, Random Acts*, and *Bear With Me* (based on her book).

Selected Film and Television Credits: Diane writes and produces TV, including as a key creative on *Workin' Moms, Baroness von Sketch Show, Working the Engels, Listen Missy* and *Kids in the Hall* - for which she was nominated for an Emmy.

bio continued on next page



DIANE FLACKS

bio continued

Selected Film and Television Credits (cont'd):

Diane was the supervising producer of *Qanuril*, an Inuit language series for APTN for its last three seasons. She has acted on numerous screens including playing the lead in the independent queer film *Portrait of A Serial Monogamist*, and in the reboot of *Kids In The Hall* on Amazon Prime.

Upcoming: Diane was part of the Stratford playwright residency, and is working on a new play called *Blessed* which received the Elliot Hayes playwright Award, as well as a new musical *Does My Ass Look Fat?*, an international collaboration about body image.

Other: Diane works as a dramaturge and story editor. She was a long-time national parenting columnist for CBC radio, as well as a contributor to DNTD and Tapestry, and was a feature columnist for the Toronto Star and Globe and Mail among others. She is a mom of two beautiful boys, and does high intensity weight-training like a boss.



ALISA PALMER

Director

For Tarragon: *SIBS, East of Berlin, Mimi or A Poisoner's Comedy, The Children's Republic, Anything That Moves.*

Selected Theatre Credits: World Premieres of *Fall On Your Knees Part 1 Family Tree* and *Part 2 The Diary* (Canadian Stage/NAC/Grand Theatre/Neptune Theatre/Vita Brevis Arts) and *Hamlet9-11* (Stratford Festival). Ms Palmer spent 8 years at the Shaw Festival, and has had the privilege of directing shows across the country and beyond including *'Night Mother* and *Top Girls* (Soulpepper) which was the subject of a documentary film *Girls on Top* (Fightingfish Productions), *Cloud 9* (Mirvish Productions), and *The Body Politic* (Buddies in Bad Times Theatre).

Awards: Multiple Dora and Chalmers Awards, three time Siminovitch Finalist, Award of Excellence in the Arts from her home province of New Brunswick and a Harold Award for Independent Theatre (House of Knaapen).

Other: Ms Palmer has been Executive Artistic Director of the National Theatre School of Canada and Director of the Acting Program since 2013. She currently lives in Montreal with her wife and daughters. Palmer's creative collaboration with Diane Flacks spans decades. What a privilege.



REBECCA HARPER

Movement Coach

For Tarragon: Debut.

Selected Theatre Credits: Head of Movement at the National Theatre School of Canada and Movement Coach for graduating productions since 2014, *The Tashme Project* (Tashme Productions), *Richard III* (Metachroma), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Regent's Park Theatre UK), *Elizabeth Rex*, *One Night, Humans*, *Adult Entertainment* (Tableau D'Hote Theatre), five seasons as Movement Coach at The Stratford Festival.

Selected Film and Television Credits: *Love's Labour's Lost* (Stratford Festival).

Awards: Bernard Amyot Teaching Award.



JUNG-HYE KIM

Set and Costume Designer

For Tarragon: *If We Were Birds, After Akhmatova.*

Selected Theatre Credits: *Lady M* (1S1 Theatre), *The Chinese Lady* (Studio 180), *The Nightingale of A Thousand Songs* (CCOC), *Hamlet-911* (Stratford Festival), *An Imm-Permanent Resident* (Why Not Theatre), *Hilot Means Healer* (Cahoots Theatre), *Now You See Her* (Quote Unquote Collective).

Upcoming: *Mary Poppins* (Theatre Sheridan).

Awards: *The Chinese Lady* (Dora award for outstanding costume design).



LEIGH ANN VARDY

Lighting Designer

For Tarragon: *What a Young Wife Ought To Know, The God That Comes.*

Selected Theatre Credits: *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* (Neptune, Mirvish), *Come From Away* (Rubinoff Prod. & Nfld Govt. A&CCs), *Richard II*, *Hamlet 911*, *The Neverending Story* (Stratford Festival), *Fall On Your Knees* (Canadian Stage), *February* (Opera on the Avalon), *The Secret Life of a Mother* (Crow's Theatre, The Theatre Centre).

Upcoming: *The Lehman Trilogy* (Belfry Theatre).

Awards: 7 Merritt Awards (NS Theatre), nominated for the Siminovitch Prize.

Other: Leigh Ann lives in Halifax, NS but leaves the maritimes for the excellent projects. She is honoured to part of this monstrously talented creative team.



AURORA TOROK

Associate Lighting Designer

For Tarragon: Debut.

Selected Theatre Credits: *English* (Soulpepper Theatre Company and Segal Centre for Performing Arts Co-Production), *Counter Offense* (Teesri Duniya Theatre), *Sky Dancers* (A'nó:wara Dance Theatre), *Celestial Bodies* (Young People's Theatre and Geordie Productions).

Upcoming: *Dominoes at the Crossroads* (Infini theatre).

Other: Thanks to my partner and family for all your support!



DEANNA H. CHOI

Sound Designer

For Tarragon: *Cockroach*, *Light*, *Three Women of Swatow*.

Selected Theatre Credits: *A Wrinkle in Time* (Stratford Festival), *The Darkest Dark* (Young People's Theatre), *Appropriate* (Coal Mine), *Beautiful* (Arts Club), *Things I Know To Be True* (Company Theatre/Mirvish), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Citadel).

Selected Film and Television Credits: *Gray* (Paramount/Lionsgate), *Relax, I'm From The Future* (Universal/Wango), *The Nature of Things* (CBC).

Upcoming: *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* (Mirvish/Neptune), touring *Love You Wrong Time*.

Awards: Recipient of 2 Dora Awards, Pauline McGibbon Award, SOCAN Foundation Award; nominated for 2 Merritts, Louis Applebaum Award, Canadian Screen Music Award.

Other: www.splitbrainsound.com



JACOB LIN 林鴻恩
Associate Sound Designer

For Tarragon: *Post-Democracy, The Hooves Belonged to The Deer, Withrow Park.*

Selected Theatre Credits: *It's a Wonderful Life* (Young People's Theatre), *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* (Howland Company/Crow's Theatre), *Otihew* (Shakespeare In Action), *Prodigal* (Howland Company/Crow's Theatre), *Ok, You Can Stop Now / X and Da Spirit* (Theatre Passe Muraille), *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (Crow's Theatre), *Cast Iron* (Factory Theatre).

Upcoming: *The Wrong Bashir* (Crow's Theatre), *The House That Will Not Stand* (Shaw Festival), *Doubt* (Thousand Island Playhouse).



SANDY PLUNKETT

Stage Manager

For Tarragon: *Withrow Park, Post Democracy, Orphan Song, Bunny, The Circle, The Trouble with Mr Adams.*

Selected Credits: *The Donnelly Trilogy, The Drawer Boy, Berlin Blues, Ipperwash* (Blyth Festival), *Sir John A: Acts of Gentrified Ojibway Rebellion* (The Globe Theatre), *New* (Necessary Angel), *The Fish Eyes Trilogy, Boys with Cars* (Nightswimming), *The Flood Thereafter* (Canadian Stage Company), *Dividing Lines, Madre* (Aluna Theatre), *Public Servant, Weather the Weather, The Story* (Theatre Columbus / Common Boots), *Gladstone Variations, Yichud (seclusion)* (Convergence), *The Silicone Diaries* (Buddies in Bad Times), and *7 summers with Dream* in High Park.

Upcoming: The Blyth Festival.

Other: Sandy is the great-grandson of Morley Plunkett of the almost forgotten WW1 Canadian Vaudeville Troupe, The Dumbells.



ANGELA MAE BAGO

Apprentice Stage Manager

For Tarragon: Debut.

Selected Theatre Credits: *Prison Dancer The Musical* (National Arts Centre); *Canoe* (Unsettled Scores); *Alice In Wonderland*, *Salt-Water Moon* (Guild Festival Theatre); *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* (Thousand Islands Playhouse); *The Seagull*, *Draw Me Close* (Soulpepper); *15 Dogs* (Crow's Theatre); *Carmen* (COC); *Little Women* (Stratford Festival).

Upcoming: The Blyth Festival.

Other: Angela Mae Bago is a first generation Filipino-Canadian woman. She has been very fortunate to come across this amazing cast and crew and wishes them all the best.

Tarragon Theatre Staff

Mike Payette

Artistic Director

Jeff Ho

Associate Artistic Director

Gerry Egan

Director of Production

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Interim Technical Director

Remington North

Technical Coordinator

Karen Elizabeth

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Jackson Nair

Patron Services Representative & Family Series Coordinator

Up next at Tarragon



3 Fingers Back

From celebrated artist Donna-Michelle St. Bernard we present a double bill of plays from her 54ology.

When we run out of options, we find out who we really are. In *Give It Up*, two women strategize to survive interrogation, and the cost of freedom. In *The Smell of Horses*, three soldiers plot to extract information through their humanity and the confines of duty.

February 27 – March 24, 2024

Up next at Tarragon



El Terremoto

Twenty years have passed since the three Jurado sisters lost their parents, and life just seems to continue on in their East Vancouver home. A birthday party, a failed proposal, and a missed connection fill the days and months until an earthquake nearly destroys the city, and brings forward a shocking turn of events that splits their world wide open.

A dramatic comedy from Dora-Award winning playwright Christine Quintana.

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The logo for The Slaight Family Foundation is centered within a white rectangular border. It features the word "THE" in a small, white, sans-serif font above the word "SLAIGHT" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below "SLAIGHT", and the words "FAMILY FOUNDATION" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below the line. The entire logo is set against a solid red background.

THE
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FAMILY FOUNDATION

During these extraordinary times, The Slaight Family Foundation Theatre Initiative has helped Tarragon invite artists and audiences back to the creation and experience of live performance.

Over two years this initiative is supporting commissions, Tarragon's Indigenous Dramaturgy Circle, artistic process, production and marketing.

Tarragon is thankful for this transformational gift from The Slaight Family Foundation.

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Thank you Tarragon donors

The Rose Directing Fund

The Rose Directing Fund, developed to continue Richard Rose's vision of bringing excellence to the creation and development of Canadian theatre by celebrating a professional director each season. We are grateful to the individuals whose gifts to this fund will support the future of directors at Tarragon over the next 10 years.

Anonymous (6)	Murray Moore
Gayle Abrams OAZ	Pauline G. Morris
Sherri & William Appell in Honour of	Suzanne Murphy
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Tarragon Theatre is extremely grateful for the support of our donors, which allows Canadian stories, education, and community to remain at the heart of our work. Donations to Tarragon allow us to develop meaningful, enriching stories that speak to our audiences today in an environment that welcomes all voices and perspectives within our theatre.

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Tarragon Theatre is honoured to recognize the following for committing to support our work of rigorous play development, best possible first productions and Canadian playwrights through their estate plans.

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Tribute gifts

We are grateful for donations made by family and loved ones.

In honour of:

Sherri and Bill Appell's 50th Anniversary

In memory of:

Abbie Buktaw
Robert Fothergill
Colin Krivy
Margaret Stevens
Ronald Youd

Thank you, enjoy the show

If we have made any errors in the spelling, listing or omission of your name please accept our apologies and contact Courtney Fiddis, Director of Development at: courtney@tarragontheatre.com

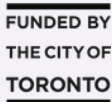
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Canadian Theatres



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