



A PUBLIC READING OF
AN UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY
ABOUT THE DEATH OF WALT DISNEY



By Lucas Hnath



"You can't just let nature run wild."

– Walt Disney

SCENE 1

INT. YOUNG CENTRE, BAILLIE THEATRE - NIGHT

Mitchell (white, mid/late 30s, bearded, a little haggard), sits in the back of the darkened theatre, while a flurry of tech work occurs onstage. He is hunched over a laptop while holding a mug of tea, attempting to write his long-overdue director's note, so as not to (further) delay the printing of the program.

MITCHELL

Here is a non-exhaustive list of events that have occurred in the eleven years since this play first premiered, that have been on my mind throughout rehearsals: 1) Elon Musk tweets "Nuke Mars", and then nukes Twitter; 2) Donald Trump becomes President Donald Trump, but by all appearances, remains miserable; 3) Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson launch themselves into space just days apart - but refuse to carpool; 4) Google fails in its pilot for an "Experimental Prototype City of Tomorrow" on Toronto's waterfront; 5) We all learn the word submersible; 6) I read Evan Osnos' New Yorker article "Doomsday Prep for the Super-Rich", and then think about it on a near daily basis from then on. 7) In 2018, leading scientists warn the UN that we only have 12 years to mitigate climate catastrophe, and I realize that I am typing this at almost exactly the halfway point.

Mitchell gingerly takes a sip of his tea (earlier that day he noticed that the milk in the greenroom fridge was expired, but he's decided to live dangerously).

MITCHELL

I'm not sure whether it makes me feel better or worse to realize that so many of our billionaires seem to be gaping holes of emptiness - eternally searching for an escape, and yet also for the prolongement of their supremacy. I do wonder about what would happen if we could successfully crack the code on cryonics, and assure them that they could be first in line for the great thaw? That this pesky mortality business need not apply to them. Perhaps then they might focus a little more on how to sustain the health of the world around us, and a little less on what's up there in space, or lurking in the great depths of the sea?

I'm deeply grateful to our amazing team at OtM, our fabulous partners at Soulpepper, this incredible group of artists, my brilliant assistant director Lucy Coren, our dedicated donors and supporters, and most of all to-

CUT TO:

SCENE 2

INT. WEYNI MENGESHA'S KITCHEN, TORONTO - DAY

Weyni (Black, 40's, a multitasker and optimist)

Sits in her kitchen writing an AD note early in the morning, she sips her second cup of coffee and is frequently interrupted by her children, feeling pressured to make the program deadline, but happy that Mitchell's delayed director's note has bought her some more time.

WEYNI

We loved the idea of partnering with Outside the March on this timely play. The pairing of this company, who has made a name for themselves working outside of the box, and this incredibly inventive playwright, Lucas Hnath, felt like a very fruitful combination. We were thrilled with the impulse to transform the Baillie Theatre into an intimate space to experience a character that is larger than life in our collective imaginations. The title role being embodied by Soulpepper founding member Diego Matamoros was the cherry on top. We are happy to welcome back Tony Ofori, fresh off his run in our last play, Three Sisters, Anand Rajaram who last was seen in our production of The 39 Steps, and to welcome Katherine Cullen, a long time OtM collaborator, in her Soulpepper debut.

Watching Walt Disney write and edit the account of his life before our very eyes can draw parallels to our daily personal positioning of our own story via social media. As the world continues to go through so much upheaval, how will we be remembered, how will we be recorded?

We are grateful to OtM and to Mitchell Cushman for gathering us in a circle to hear this tale. We thank you for being here to support live theatre.

Enjoy the show,

Weyni Mengesha

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The artists and staff of Soulpepper, Outside the March, and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of this land—the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Wendat First Nations. We commit to honouring and celebrating their past, present and future.

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Director – Mitchell Cushman

Walt Disney – Diego Matamoros

Roy Disney – Anand Rajaram

Ron – Tony Ofori

Daughter – Katherine Cullen

Set Designer – Anahita Dehbonehie

Lighting Designer – Nick Blais*

Sound Designer – Heidi Chan

Costume Designer – Niloufar Ziaee

Assistant Director – Lucy Coren**

Production Manager – Tori Morrison

Technical Director – James McCoy

Stage Manager – Jeff Soucy

FOR OUTSIDE THE MARCH

Producer – Adriano Sobretudo Jr.

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FOR SOULPEPPER

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Lighting Operator – Ethan Robinson

Audio Operator – Andres Castillo-Smith

Audio Operator – Everett Dalingwater

Deck Hand – Chelsea Santiago

* Indicated designers on this production are represented by the
Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659

** Supported by the Metcalf Foundation's Performing Arts Internship

Content Warning: The show contains some explicit language and implicit references to capitalism's concentration of power in the hands of egoistic, emotionally-stunted men. It's appropriate for audiences 12+.

CONT'D

LUCAS HNATH

PLAYWRIGHT. Lucas Hnath's plays include DANA H., THE THIN PLACE, HILLARY AND CLINTON, A DOLL'S HOUSE, PART 2, RED SPEEDO, THE CHRISTIANS, A PUBLIC READING OF AN UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY ABOUT THE DEATH OF WALT DISNEY, ISAAC'S EYE, and DEATH TAX. He has been produced on Broadway at the John Golden and Lyceum Theatres; Off-Broadway at New York Theatre Workshop, The Vineyard, Playwrights Horizons, Soho Rep, and Ensemble Studio Theatre; and premiered work regionally at the Goodman, Center Theatre Group, Humana Festival of New Plays, Victory Gardens, and South Coast Repertory. He is a New York Theatre Workshop Usual Suspect, a member of Ensemble Studio Theatre, and an alumnus of New Dramatists. Awards: Whiting Award, Guggenheim Fellowship, Kesselring Prize, Outer Critics Circle Award for Best New Play, Obie Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Windham-Campbell Literary Prize, Lucille Lortel Award, and a Tony Nomination for Best Play.

MITCHELL CUSHMAN

DIRECTOR. Mitchell Cushman is a director, creator, & founding Artistic Director of Outside the March, one of Canada's leading immersive theatre companies. Past OtM Productions include: No Save Points, Trojan Girls & The Outhouse of Atreus, The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale, Lessons in Temperament, The Flick, The Tape Escape, Dr. Silver, Jerusalem, TomorrowLove, Mr. Burns, Vitals, Passion Play, Terminus and Mr. Marmalade. His work has been seen on stages as large as The Stratford Festival & The Royal Alexandra Theatre, in spaces as intimate as kindergarten classrooms and living rooms, and in locales as far-flung as London, New York, Argentina, Edinburgh, Munich, Finland and Japan. Mitchell has been the recipient of the Siminovitch protégé Award, two Dora Awards for Outstanding Direction, and his shows have received 4 Dora Awards for Outstanding Production, and 14 Toronto Theatre Critics Awards. Much love to Amy, Rosencatz and Guildenpurr (only one of whom is supportive enough to read this).

DIEGO MATAMOROS

WALT DISNEY. Diego Matamoros is a founding member of the Soulpepper Theatre Company and has, over the past 25 years, performed major roles in more than 70 of its productions. In an acting career now spanning more than four decades Mr. Matamoros has performed in theatres across Canada, in the United States, including Off-Broadway, as well as in London, England. In 2022 he played the role of Gloucester in KING LEAR opposite Kathryn Hunter (in the title role) at Shakespeare's Globe on London's South Bank. He has co-created, co-directed, and performed original works for Soulpepper, including a stage adaptation of Jorge Luis Borges' short story THE ALEPH and in 1917 another original piece entitled CAGE which he performed in New York City as well as at Soulpepper in Toronto. He is the recipient of several Canadian acting awards for his theatre and television work.

CONT'D

ANAND RAJARAM

ROY DISNEY. Anand is an improviser, actor, playwright, director, musician, teacher & puppeteer. Recently, he was in Mahabharata (Shaw Festival), Uncle Vanya (Crow's/Mirvish), Buffoon by Anosh Irani & Mustard by Kat Sandler (Tarragon, Dora award for both), 39 Steps & Noises Off! (Soulpepper), adapted/performed Rohinton Mistry's The Scream, (SummerWorks, Best Production), and has performed at Second City, Stratford, VideoCabaret, and others. He's an accomplished film & tv performer, voiceover artist for video games & cartoons, directed As You Like It (Canadian Stage's Dream in High Park), Low Pay Don't Pay (George Brown theatre school), and 3 Penguin Audiobooks (Swimming in the Monsoons & Mansions of the Moon by Shyam Selvadurai, Tell Me Pleasant Things About Immortality by Lindsay Wong), and narrated novels, including Kill The Mall by Pasha Malla and Tell It To The Trees by Anita Rau Badami. He is artistic director of @N@f@N@ (theatre) and Cardboard Dreams (digital media). Social media: HRH Anand Rajaram.

TONY OFORI

RON. Tony was born in Toronto, ON. He is a Humber College and York University Alumni. Want to know what's next for Tony? Check him out at www.tonyofori.com and catch Fat Ham at Canadian Stage. Past theatre credits include: Three Sisters (Obsidian/Soulpepper), Actually (Obsidian/Harold Green), Wildwoman (Soulpepper), Fall On Your Knees (NAC/Vita Brevis/Canadian Stage/Neptune/Grand), Bunny, Copy That (Tarragon Theatre), Serving Elizabeth (Western Canada Theatre). For his 2022 performance in Soulpepper's Pipeline he received a Dora Nomination – Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role. Film & TV credits include: Supergirl, A Royal Queens Christmas, Amazing Grace, The Boys, Coroner, Murdoch Mysteries, The Trades, Star Trek. Currently, Tony can be seen on Apple TV's season 3 of Daytime Emmy winning show Ghostwriter as Malcolm Turner.

KATHERINE CULLEN

DAUGHTER. Katherine is a founding member of Outside The March theatre company. Select theatre credits include Mr. Marmalade, Passion Play, Vitals (Dora nomination Outstanding Performance), The Prince of Homberg (Talk Is Free), Mr. Burns: A Post Electric Play (Outside The March), TomorrowLove (OTM; My Entertainment Theatre Award, Best Supporting Actress), The Nether (Studio 180 and The Coal Mine; Dora nomination Best Ensemble), Trojan Girl (Factory/Outside The March). Katherine has also performed her show Stupidhead! A Musical Comedy (Theatre Passe Muraille) which she co-created with composer and lyricist Britta Johnson. Stupidhead! was nominated for a Dora award for Outstanding New Play. Select TV/Film credits include: Fahrenheit 451 (HBO), The Handmaid's Tale, A Simple Favor (Dir. Paul Feig). This her Soulpepper debut and she is thrilled to be working with such an excellent company of artists. Special thanks goes to her husband Colin Doyle and daughter Lily.

ANAHITA DEHBONEHIE

SET DESIGNER. Anahita Dehbonehie is an Iranian artist currently based in Toronto. Her practice extends across design, direction and playwriting. Anahita's work has been featured across Canada and internationally, including at the Prague Quadrennial, The Vilnius Capital of Culture, and the Moscow Museum of Modern Art. Her work on both stage and screen has been recognized with multiple awards and nominations. She has twice appeared on Now Magazine's list of Top Ten Theatre Artists of the Year and is a former participant of Write From the Hip. Currently in residence at Tarragon Theatre under the Urjo Kareda residency, she is committed to work that questions positions of power and creates space for contemporary conversation. Anahita is a graduate of the California Institute of the Arts, the Norwegian Theatre Academy and the Soulpepper Academy.

NICK BLAIS

LIGHTING DESIGNER Nick Blais designs across Canada in all manner of discipline and venue: from theatres, parks, abandoned buildings, schools, storefronts, living rooms and concert halls. As Head of Design for Outside the March, Nick specializes in creating and facilitating thematic, impactful designs, and transforming unconventional spaces into immersive, dramatic environments. Nick has received Dora Mavor Moore Awards in Toronto for both set and lighting design, nominated for the Virginia Myrtle Cooper award in costume design, and various other awards and nominations across the country. Select credits: Wildwoman (Soulpepper); Things I Know to be True (Mirvish / Company); Lessons in Temperament, Trojan Girls, The Flick, Jerusalem, Terminus (Outside the March); Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime, Into the Woods (YES Theatre); The Effect, Antipodes, Marjorie Prime (Coal Mine Theatre); Rock of Ages (More); Noir (Frog in Hand); Human Animals, Dissidents, (ARC); Sweeney Todd (TIFT); Glass Menagerie (Grand); Vespers (Royal Winnipeg Ballet); West Side Story (Citadel); and Brantwood (Sheridan). nblaisdesign.com

HEIDI CHAN

SOUND DESIGNER. Heidi Chan composes and performs music and designs sound for theatre and dance. Heidi plays bamboo flutes, percussion (including Japanese taiko), and modular synthesizers. Past Outside the March include: Trojan Girls and the Outhouse of Atreus (2022), No Save Points (2023). Select theatre credits: Titus Andronicus 2.0, Macbeth (Tang Shu-Wing Studio-Hong Kong); Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare's Globe-UK); Iphigenia and the Furies (On Taurian Land) (Sagacollectif/Architect Theatre/Passe Muraille); The Tempest (Company of Fools); Wing Night at the Boot, Team on the Hill, Café Daughter (Blyth); She Kills Monsters (Daisy Productions); Anahita's Republic (Bustle & Beast), Into The Woods (Dead Name Theatre); A Number (That Arts Group), Waterfall (Theatre Gargantua). Upcoming: The Orphan of Chao (Shaw 2024); The Trials of Maggie Pollack, Onions & Peach Fuzz: The Farmerettes (Blyth 2024). <https://linktr.ee/heidiwychan>

CONT'D

NILOUFAR ZIAEE

COSTUME DESIGNER. Niloufar Ziaee is a filmmaker and multidisciplinary artist from Iran who has made Canada her home since 2016. Since then, Nilou has worked as an art director, costume designer, set dresser and painter across multiple mediums. She is passionate about the power of collective storytelling and relishes the opportunity to introduce her audience to new worlds. Previously, her work has been seen at the Miss Eco International Competition in Egypt. She holds a degree in Fashion Design from George Brown College.

LUCY COREN

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR. Lucy Coren is a theatre creator, producer and dramaturg. She received her MA in Dramaturgy at the University of Kent and worked in the UK for several years before returning home to Toronto in 2020. In Canada she's produced for Factory Theatre, Native Earth Performing Arts and Outside the March. She's the creator of Transfers (SummerWorks 2022) and How We play(ed) (Forward March 2023.) Lucy has been a Buzz Artist with Theatre Passe Muraille, was an artist-researcher with Project: Humanity where she created It's a Shame, and is currently the Acting Artistic Associate for the National Creation Fund. She is completing a Metcalf Internship with Outside the March in Artistic Direction.

TORI MORRISON

PRODUCTION MANAGER. Tori is the production manager for Outside the March. Her work takes an experimental approach, shaped by her interdisciplinary experience. She collaborates with writer David Gagnon Walker as Strange Victory Performance, and is 1/2 of the producing team for Tiny Bear Jaws (an independent theatre company with teeth). She has toured work around Canada and internationally bringing shows to France, Finland, the United States and Australia. She is an alumnus of the Canadian Film Centre's Slaughter Family Music Lab and the National Theatre School of Canada. She is a co-founder of Edmonton's annual Found Festival of site-specific and immersive art which has been running since 2011.

JAMES MCCOY

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR. James McCoy (he/they) is a queer theatre artist currently working in the Niagara region. A graduate of Brock University and the National Theatre School, James specializes in all areas of theatrical tech, design, and management. He also enjoys teaching and mentoring emerging designers and technicians, looking forward to when he can work alongside them. James has worked with a variety of companies in a variety of positions. Credits include Lighting Designer for "Nobody's Children" (Yellow Door Theatre Projects), Projections Designer and Video Editor for "Fever/Dream" (Brock University), Video Designer and Editor for "ARKangel (Hypothetical Bad Idea), Instructor in Brock University's Dramatic Arts program, and Technical Director for Suitcase in Point. James is currently working on combining their love for games, story, and performance by designing experiences similar to escape rooms and murder mysteries.

JEFF SOUCY

STAGE MANAGER. Jeff is honoured to be back for a fourth time in Mitchell Cushman's orbit. He is a bilingual stage manager with a creative and performance background, having graduated from Randolph College for the Performing Arts. Selected stage management credits include *The Effect* (Coal Mine Theatre), *No Save Points* (Outside The March), *Mamma Mia!* (Tweed & Co), *Les Zinspiré.e.s 11*, *Le club des éphémères* (TfT), *très loin* (BoucharDanse) *Sweeney Todd*, *Pal Joey* (TIFT), and *Heroine* (TNB).

ADRIANO SOBRETOD0 JR.

PRODUCER. Adriano is a theatre producer, stage & screen actor, and acting instructor. He is the current Co-Artistic Director of Dora-Award winning Litmus Theatre (*Brave New World*, *Birth of Frankenstein*, *Matchbox Macbeth*) as well as General Manager of Theatre Smith-Gilmour. A graduate of York University's MFA Acting Conservatory, Adriano has also been involved in several theatre and screen projects as a performer. Select stage roles include: Brutus in *Portia's Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare in the Ruff, Toronto Star Top Production); Mowgli in *The Jungle Book* (Manitoba Theatre for Young People); *The Container* (TheatreFix, MTA Best Supporting Actor Nominee). And for the screen: *Run the Burbs* (CBC); *The Strain* (FX, directed by Guillermo del Toro); recurring roles on *Covert Affairs* (USA) and *Alphas* (Syfy). Adriano also taught First Year Acting in York University's Theatre Department and currently freelances as an Acting Coach for theatre and film. adrianosobretod0jr.com

GRIFFIN MCINNES

MARKETING PRODUCER. Griffin McInnes is a theatre maker with a creation practice guided by the belief that form-how performance is experienced-is singularly powerful. He's an experienced producer and a core team member at Outside the March, and Tarragon Theatre's 2023 Bulmash-Siegel award recipient. Read more about his work at griffinmcinnes.com.

JOHN WAMSLEY

MARKETING ASSOCIATE. John Wamsley is of Anishinaabe-Ojibway and British descent, and a member of the Alderville First Nation. He is an actor, theatre creator and social media producer. Theatre credits include: *Richard II*, *Grand Magic*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, 1939 (Stratford Festival); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare BASH'd); *Timothy Findley's The Wars* (Grand Theatre); *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Hart House Theatre); *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Theatre Erindale). John has worked as a Social Media Producer and Community Manager for the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), *Pride Toronto*, and *Paprika Festival*, among others. John is a graduate of the Theatre and Drama Studies Program at the University of Toronto Mississauga and Sheridan College. For more: www.johnwamsley.ca

ABOUT OUTSIDE THE MARCH

Outside the March creates unforgettable immersive encounters—redefining the experience of theatre for a new generation of audiences. Since 2009 we've welcomed our audiences to over 20 critically celebrated, award-winning productions that seek to embody our values of Curiosity, Care, Thrills, Connection and Immersion.

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If we have erred in the spelling, listing or omission of your name, please accept our sincerest apologies and contact us at katherine@outsidethemarch.ca so we may correct our records for future publications.

ABOUT SOULPEPPER

Soulpepper creates powerful experiences that bring people together through art. We believe that stories connect us and can bring about social change. We have produced some of Toronto's most successful theatrical productions, seen by over 50,000 audience members each year, and have received over 30 awards. Soulpepper has produced some of Toronto's most successful theatrical productions, including Angels in America, A Streetcar Named Desire, Alligator Pie, 'da Kink in My Hair, and Kim's Convenience which was adapted into a successful television show by CBC.

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