



## **Evidence to the Contrary / La Déposition**

Playwright: Helene Pedneault

Co-produced with Théâtre la Seizième

The story opens with a young woman, 35 year old Lena Fulvi, giving a statement to a police inspector regarding her mother's death on the night of her 65th birthday. It's a meandering testimony, full of childhood car rides and points of interest in the Quebec Countryside. We soon find out as a matter of fact the mother and daughter were far from close. In fact, she hated the old woman, and is the prime suspect in the death of her mother

Director: Michelle Cook & Sandhano Schultze

Cast: Nicole Robert, Jean Stephane Roy, Therese Champagne, and Mary Mancini

Set Designer: David Roberts

Costume Designer: Nicole Dextras

Lighting Designer: Del Surjik

Sound Designer: David Rimmer

Stage Manager: Jessica Chambers

Apprentice Stage Manager: Margarita Miniovich

Technical Director: Harry Vander Schee

Dialogue Coach: Ian Raffel

Photography: Tim Matheson & Pierre Longnus

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### **Awards**

Jessie Richardson Award:

Outstanding Lighting Design, Del Surjik

Jessie Award Nominations:

Outstanding Performance (lead), Nicole Robert

Outstanding Set Design, David Roberts

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### ***a review from our archives...***

EVIDENCE PLUNGES INTO HEART OF DARKNESS

BY JO LEDINGHAM

IT'S OFTEN A THIN, SHARP LINE that separates love and hate. Love, unrequited or betrayed, can suddenly lose its sweetness and become the bitterest potion. Perhaps there is no hatred as searing as that of a child unloved by its mother. Many believe that the most fundamental birthright is unconditional, maternal love. Some are disappointed.

With the precision of open-heart surgery (metaphorically, that is exactly what *Evidence to the Contrary* is), Quebec playwright H el ene Pedneault probes the love/hate relationship between L ena Fulvi and her mother. L ena (Nicole Robert) describes with increasing intensity bordering on the unbearable, the troubled relationship she had with her mother. Most daughters who hate their mothers, however, don't kill them.

L ena is about to stand trial for matricide. There is a witness, a nurse who found L ena clutching a hypodermic needle at her mother's bedside. Adding to the accumulating body of evidence, L ena's sisters speak angrily to the investigator about her hatred for their mother. L ena coolly confirms their accusations; within the family, it was common knowledge. "So I hated my mother. What could be more banal than that?" L ena asks and laughs.

Set designer David Roberts picks up perfectly on the audience's voyeurism. The play takes place in the inspector's office, defined by concrete exterior walls and veiled by venetian blinds. Part of the action is viewed imperfectly through the slats of the blinds, making the audience, in effect, uninvited spectators. L ena becomes the fish in the goldfish bowl, the specimen under the microscope, the patient under the scalpel.

Robert's performance as L ena is intelligent, intense and unrelenting. Lean and loose-jointed, she portrays her as acute, articulate and controlled. In Act I, there is a playfulness in Robert's portrayal, a kind of teasing, that makes L ena very appealing, as in the small, crooked smile lingering over her face as she spars with the inspector.

In Act II, the distinction between love and hate blurs and the ending, intended to take you by surprise, does. This is serious stuff - no ordinary "whodunnit." *Evidence to the Contrary* plunges deep into the heart of darkness.

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