



T.I.C.

(TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON)

BY PETER SINN NACHTRIEB



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T.I.C (Trenchcoat in Common)
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Encore Theatre Company
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through a generous grant from the Wallace Gerbode Foundation
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For San Francisco

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AUTHOR'S NOTES

The play is an adaptation of Kid's blog, a theatrical representation of her writings, recordings and links to other materials she has found.

IMHO, the "stage version" of these digital transmissions should use as much traditional, "organic" stagecraft as possible. The mechanics of the stagecraft need not be concealed. In the world premiere version, we were thinking of the speed and energy of vaudeville as a jumping-off point, with presented fragments coming fast and furious with as little "in between" time as possible. Fun physicality, fun props, and hands emerging from off-stage holding the fun props are all highly recommended.

MUSIC/SOUND

Lots! The sounds computers make to indicate an accomplished task. The noise of the world. There are suggestions for certain songs and feelings in the text. Please substitute, embellish, what have you.

MOOD

Lively transmissions beaming through the vacuum of space.

T.I.C. (TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON) received its world premiere by Encore Theatre Company (Lisa Steindler, Artistic Director) in San Francisco, California, on January 5, 2009. It was directed by Kenneth Prestinizi; the set design was by James K. Faerron; the costume design was by Kaibrina Sky Buck; the lighting design was by Heather Basarab; the props design was by Jacquelyn Scott; the sound design was by Sara Huddleston; and the production stage manager was Angela Nostrand. The cast was as follows:

KID	Rebecca White
DAD	Michael Shipley
CLAUDIA	Anne Darragh
SABRA	Arwen Anderson
SHYE	Lance Gardner
TERRENCE	Liam Vincent

T.I.C. (TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON) was commissioned, developed and originally produced by Encore Theatre Company (Lisa Steindler, Artistic Director) through a generous grant from the Wallace Gerbode Foundation, San Francisco, California, supported by the New Works Fund, a grants program of Theatre Bay Area.

CHARACTERS

KID — More like a senior in high school.

DAD — Kid's father. Late 40s.

CLAUDIA — Upstairs neighbor, 50s–60s — Female.

TERRENCE — Another upstairs neighbor, dressed in classic flasher garb (trenchcoat, bare legs, creepy) 30s–40s — Male.

SHYE — Downstairs neighbor, 20s — Male.

SABRA — Downstairs neighbor, 30s — Female.

The characters are of unspecified but diverse cultural backgrounds.

SETTING

A “Tenancy in Common” building (T.I.C.)* in San Francisco, California, and numerous locations on the Internet.

*A T.I.C. is a way for rental housing to be converted to owner-occupied housing in San Francisco and is a workaround for the city's nuanced condo laws. Just in case you were wondering. There's more about that online.

TIME

A summer between junior and senior year. Some archival information linked in posts may be from longer ago.

*Every man is surrounded
by a neighborhood of
voluntary spies.*

—Jane Austen
(found googling “neighbor quotes”)

T.I.C. (TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON)

Prologue

Darkness.

The hum of a streetlight.

The sound of an oscillating fan.

The sound of a man, Terrence, breathing heavily. The kind of breath you wouldn't want to hear when answering the phone alone at night.

The sound of a woman, Sabra, crying.

The sound of a man, Dad, making quiet noises of pleasure.

The sound of a man, Shye, lightly beating a drum in a heartbeat.

Claudia lights a match, puts it to the end of a joint. Embers.

The growing sound of a keyboard clacking. Urgent clicking.

The sound of whispers of evil plots and deepest fears. A chorus that gets louder and louder.

Four phones ring loudly, break the noise. Clicks.

In darkness:

CLAUDIA. The green apples at Trader Joe's are always rotten.
SABRA. The duck has made its migration.

SHYE. There will be no second encore.
TERRENCE. Pancakes.
DAD. Oh.
CLAUDIA. Yes?
TERRENCE. Yes?
SHYE. Yes?
SABRA. Yes?
DAD. Yes.

First Post: Sunday, 3 A.M.

A loud lick of music.

A light clicks on Kid.

She is looking at us.

KID. Something isn't right. And I'm not talking about the general, universal incorrectness of everything. Something deeply deeply isn't right here. Like on this property. Like this bed. (*Lights click on a bed, or a picture of a very soft bed.*) It feels like I'm being swallowed in a swamp made of Charmin. Seriously, nineteen pillows of varying size? It's a little too soft, a little too fancy, a little too gay, IMHO. As is the floor treatment. (*Lights click on nicely designed rug layout or picture of one.*) And the dresser. (*Lights click on a nice dresser or picture of one.*) My "dad" has "good taste." (*A shift. Dad, smiling at Kid.*)

DAD. Is this going to be all right for you?

KID. It's fine.

DAD. Good. Good good. This was going to be my bedroom. But ...

KID. Yeah.

DAD. I'll take the couch for now. It's a comfy couch, so don't feel bad.

KID. Thanks.

DAD. This used to be my bed.

KID. Mmm.

DAD. In my old place. I slept in it.

KID. That makes sense.

T.I.C.

(TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON)

by Peter Sinn Nachtrieb

3M, 3W

In a summer devoid of friends, money and fun, a teenage girl, Kid, starts a blog about her apartment building. Using photography, recordings, and online searches she begins to pry deep into the lives of the neighbors that surround her, including her father that she never knew existed. The deeper she goes, the more oddities and mysteries emerge, and soon Kid is forced to emerge into the real world, and what began as a lark soon becomes dangerous. T.I.C. (TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON) is a wild yet sweet comedy about grappling with adulthood, grief, and surviving in a culture of voyeurism and exhibitionism and where privacy is no longer an option.

"Vastly entertaining! Nachtrieb is a particularly skilled observer of the flotsam and jetsam of everyday life, illuminating minutiae in a way so that it becomes significantly faceted. He also has a wry, likable sense of humor that pulls an audience happily into the action."

—The Bay Area Reporter

"Nachtrieb's script is packed with comic creativity. Sure, all adults can seem creepy to a dislocated teen, but the other tenants in Peter Sinn Nachtrieb's hilarious T.I.C. (TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON) may be not only stranger but also more dangerous than their observer imagines."

—The San Francisco Chronicle

"As he's riffing wildly on contemporary issues and big ideas, humanity sneaks in; the stories are at once outlandish and very real."

—American Theatre Magazine

"[A] stunning new play ... Nachtrieb has a keen eye for popular culture as lived on the streets and subdivided properties of San Francisco, where people are willing to give up much privacy and a fair share of dignity to hang on and live la vida urban in the city that is the spiritual home of cable cars and Rice-A-Roni."

—The Contra Costa Times

"The show has a forward-thinking, shiny flair. Basically we're all 'voyeurs' when going to the theater, and T.I.C. (TRENCHCOAT IN COMMON) becomes eye-opening, indeed."

—The Fresno Bee

Also by Peter Sinn Nachtrieb

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