



The Designated Mourner - Acting Edition

Wallace Shawn

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“The play nicely combines Pinterian menace with caustic political commentary.” –*Time*

“Acerbic, elusive, poetic and chilling, the writing is demanding in a rarefied manner. Its implications are both affecting and disturbing.” –*Los Angeles Times*

“In his exquisitely written dramatic lament for the decline of high culture. . . . [Shawn] offers a definition of the self that should rattle the defenses of intellectual snobs everywhere.” –*The New York Times*

Writer and performer Wallace Shawn’s landmark 1996 play features three characters—a respected poet, his daughter, and her English-professor husband—suspected of subversion in a world where culture has come under the control of the ruling oligarchy. Told through three interwoven monologues, the Orwellian political story is recounted alongside the visceral dissolution of a marriage. The play debuted at the Royal National Theatre in London, in a production directed by David Hare, who also directed the film version, starring Mike Nichols and Miranda Richardson. The play’s subsequent New York premiere was staged in a long-abandoned men’s club in lower Manhattan, directed by Shawn’s longtime collaborator André Gregory.

Wallace Shawn is the author of *Our Late Night* (OBIE Award for Best Play), *Marie and Bruce*, *Aunt Dan and Lemon*, *The Fever*, and the screenplay for *My Dinner with André*. His most recent play, *Grasses of a Thousand Colors*, premiered last year in London.

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