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# TOM AT THE FARM

Rodak/Adamczak

Based on „Tom à la Ferme”  
by **Michel Marc Bouchard**,  
translated into English by  
**Linda Gaboriau**.  
Polish translation: Jacek Kaduczak

## Debut TR

premiere: 24.04.2022  
TR Warszawa/Marszałkowska 8

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costumes:  
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music:  
**Karol Nepelski**  
choreography:  
**Wojciech Grudziński**  
video:  
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deputy technical manager:  
**Kacper Stykowski**  
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prop master:  
**Mariusz Basiak**  
installers:  
**Lukasz Winkowski**, **Piotr Gromek**,  
**Tomasz Trojanowski**, **Grzegorz Zielski**,  
**Mariusz Puanecki**  
sound operators:  
**Andrei Pogoriolov**, **Jakub Sapka**  
video operator:  
**Lukasz Karzewski**  
lighting operators:  
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**Jędrzej Jęćkowiak**  
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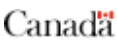
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TAX ADVISOR



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The performance uses excerpts from the book  
“All the Strength I Have for Living”  
by Karakter publishing house.

## Michel Marc Bouchard FOREWORD

Every day, gay youth are victims of aggression in schoolyards, at home, at work, on playing fields, in both urban and rural environments. Every day, they are insulted, ostracized, attacked, mocked, humiliated, wounded, beaten, taxed, soiled, isolated, tricked. Some recover, others don't. Some become the mythmakers of their own lives. Homophobia is not the obsolete subject some would like to believe it is, especially those who are tired of hearing about it or those who believe that if the media are covering the issue, like so many others, someone must be taking care of it.

I experimented with several happy endings for this play, but stories of reconciliation too easily relieve us of our responsibility to find solutions to conflicts. The moral of those stories is prefabricated. Let me propose that we can all lend an ear to the pain of love, somehow, in some way, every day. Homosexuals learn to lie before they learn to love. We are courageous mythomaniacs.

MICHEL MARC BOUCHARD, Preface to *Tom at the farm*, Montreal, 11 November 2010

## Walt Odets ARE GAY MEN HOMOSEXUALS?

There are two different perspectives on what makes a man “a homosexual.” The first—the heterosexual perspective—is that homosexuals are “men who have sex with men.” The gay man's perspective, briefly put, is that he is “attracted to other men.” The difference between the two descriptions is important: the heterosexual identifies a single, objective behavior, the gay man an entire internal life of feeling. While the straight man may feel support, indifference, fear, or contempt for the idea of “the homosexual,” the gay man has more complex feelings, in part because the term has historically been used to stigmatize. “Are you a homosexual?” is easily, often correctly, experienced as the opening salvo of an attack. The majority of gay-identified men do have at least a marginally conscious sense that being gay is about more than sexual attraction or sex; but many gay men have been swayed by the heterosexual definition and have accepted the narrow, behaviorally defined identity. In today's gay assimilationist politics, gay men often explain themselves to heterosexuals with the idea that they are “attracted to men, but otherwise just like you.” In that assertion, the gay man is accepting the heterosexual perspective on who he is: the gender of his sexual partner defines him as gay and is his only distinguishing difference. From a psychological perspective, this is simply not the whole truth, and the claim often does a serious disservice to gay lives. For gay men, sexual attraction to other men is only one expression of something more fundamental, something that might be called a gay sensibility. As I am using the term, gay sensibility describes both the man's internal experience of himself, and his characteristic external expression of self to others. Together, the two constitute “a sensibility,” and a gay sensibility is often different from that of heterosexual men. Sexual attraction is not the cause of gay sensibility, although it may influence and inform it; nor is the simple idea of the homosexual an adequate characterization of that sensibility. The question I am raising—whether or not gay men are homosexuals and should be characterized as such—is not at all intended to dismiss the importance of gay sexual lives. Sexuality is of central importance in all human life, whether acknowledged or not.

What it means to “be gay” has for too long been defined by others, and too much of that imposed definition has been incorporated into gay self-experience. Being gay offers important opportunities that can only be realized if gay people can free themselves of societal and internalized stigma, much of which stems from the conventional idea of the homosexual. Freed from this narrow characterization, gay people have lives that are, in some ways, like heterosexual lives and, in other ways, appreciably different. Lives that express such complexity are often better, fuller, more authentic lives.

WALT ODETS, *Out of the Shadows: Reimagining Gay Men's Lives*, Penguin Books, 2020

## Sarah Schulman THE OPPRESSED WILL ALWAYS BELIEVE THE WORST ABOUT THEMSELVES (Frantz Fanon)

The betrayal of gay people by their heterosexual family members is as effective as it is undeserved. This confusing combination leaves us with a lifetime burden of having to try to come to terms with and understand the experience. One coping mechanism is to pretend that nothing is happening. Many gay people will say that their families are “fine.” But when you ask for details, this means, basically, that the gay person has not been completely excluded from family events. Or that their partner, if they have one, is allowed in the house. Very few experience their personhood, lives, and feelings to be actively understood as equal to the heterosexual family members. Often parents or siblings keep the person's homosexuality secret from others, or euphemize it. They vote for politicians who hurt gay people; they contribute to religious organizations that humiliate gay people; they patronize cultural products that depict gay people as pathological. They speak and act in ways that reinforce the idea of gay people as “special interest.” In many ways the message is clear that the gay person is not fully human. But because many gay people know others who have been more severely punished by their family's prejudices, they look on their own continued compromised inclusion to be miraculously positive and a product of their own correct behavior.

(...)

In order for us to come to a cultural agreement that homophobia within the family is wrong, we need one basic shared assumption: homophobia is not the fault of gay people. Homophobia is not caused by gay people. There is nothing that a gay person can ever do to justify it. Homophobia is a pathological manifestation of heterosexual culture. As a pure prejudice, it is wrong and as social currency within and outside of the family, it is despicable. If a straight person does not like a gay person or is competing with a gay person, whether in the marketplace or in sibling rivalry, it is never appropriate to use homophobia as a leveler.

The manifestations of familial homophobia can take many forms:

- Some families entirely and thoroughly exclude gay and lesbian members through outright ban.
- Some allow them a partial participation provided that the person never shows or discusses his or her own life.
- Some allow a lover to be present as long as that person is not fully acknowledged in his or her actual role.
- Some allow full physical participation by the gay person and their lover but constantly enforce a clear message that they are not as important as the heterosexuals in the family and/or

that their relationship is lesser than heterosexual relationships or the consequence of pathology.

- Some rely on repeated humiliations and diminishments.
- Some enforce the above with more degrees of subtlety.

None of these possibilities are acceptable or reasonable. All have long-term destructive effects on the gay person as their diminishment is regularly reinforced. That gay people have to tolerate this or be complicit with it in order to be loved is very distorting. And many of these diminishments are played out later by gay people on each other. All of these options have long term destructive effects on the lives of homosexuals within the family because they reinforce the heterosexuals' own investment in homophobia. In the end, the family is the training ground and model for other social institutions in which homosexuals are expected to acquiesce.

(...)

The reason that the existence of homophobia and the practice of homophobes are able to render good, honest, caring, productive, dignified people as pathological is because homophobia itself is the pathology. It is an anti-social condition that causes violence and destroys families. It not only makes society punish and exclude people, but it punishes these same people for trying to restore the larger society to sanity. The perpetrators, who are the destructive ones, are described as the neutral standard of behavior, while the people, who are not only victimized but have the decency to fight back (which is the most beautiful model of social responsibility), are described as expendable and undesirable. The final ironic twist is that whenever a situation does arise in which homophobia is pointed to as being socially destructive or personally wrong, the homophobe tends to actually blame his own behavior on gay people themselves. And there are always gay people willing to point the same finger, gay people who have been persuaded that tolerating or being complicit with prejudice in order to be “loved” is love.

I believe in, am committed to, and am working toward a cultural agreement that homophobia is a social pathology and that society's best interest is served by any program or practice that mitigates homophobia. The family is the best place to start because the family is where people first learn its power. That is why the commitment to eradicating homophobia must begin with the family.

SARAH SCHULMAN, *Ties That Bind: Familial Homophobia and Its Consequences*, The New Press, 2009