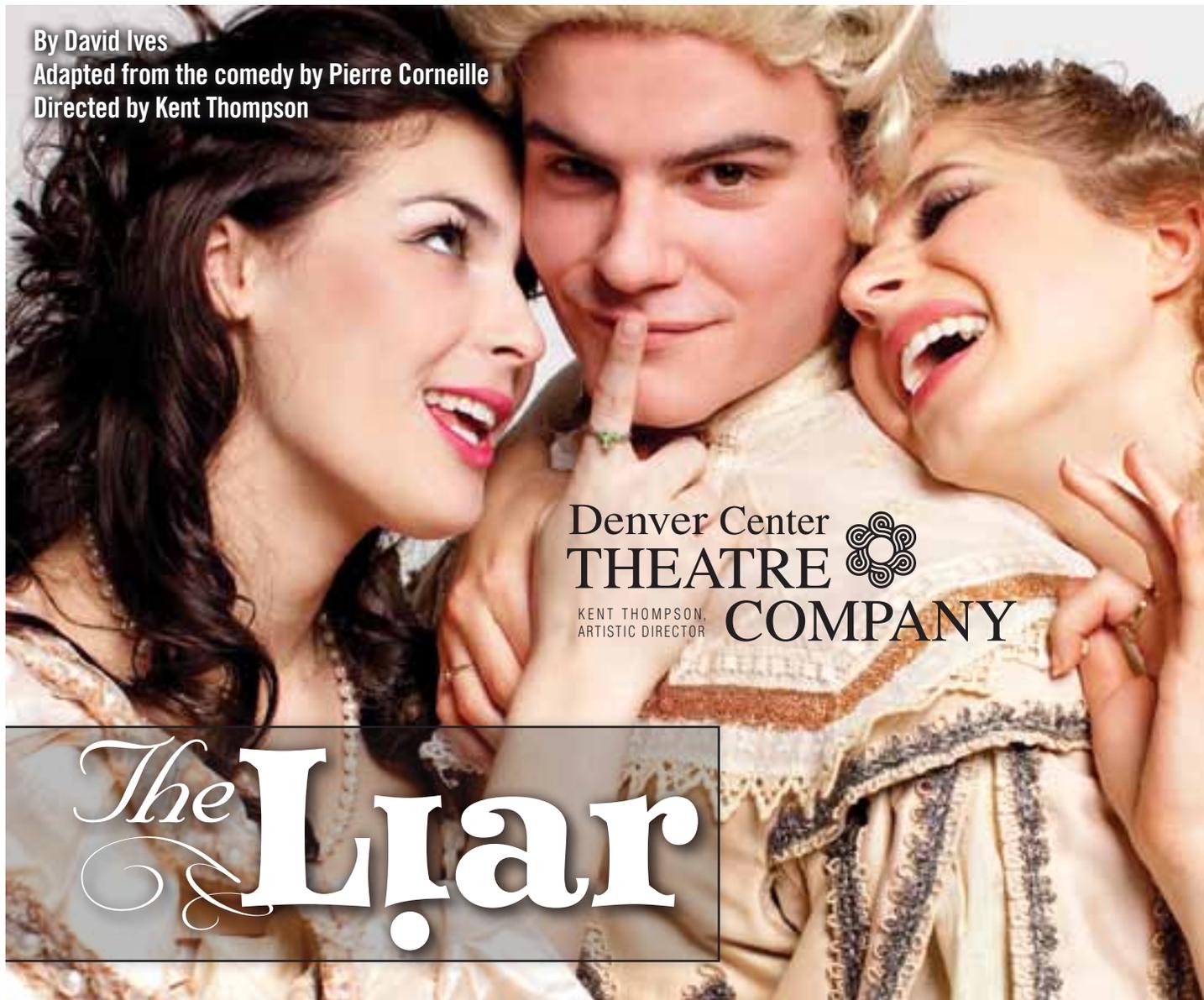


InsideOUT

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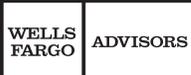
By David Ives
Adapted from the comedy by Pierre Corneille
Directed by Kent Thompson



Denver Center
THEATRE 
KENT THOMPSON,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR **COMPANY**

The **Liar**

2011/12
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InsideOUT

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Synopsis

*That solemn playwright Pierre Corneille assayed
To write a comic bauble that he prayed
Would bring his audiences laughter and fun—
A task simpler to try than to get done.
But try he did and wrote his comedy
Before switching his style to tragedy.
Four hundred years beyond comes David Ives
Commissioned to update and to revise
Corneille's *The Liar*, a company's choice.
Thus Ives applied his famed comedic voice
To rhyme each couplet and bring out each joke
With every verse his comic actors spoke.
He fooled around with character and plot,
Updating nimbly what Corneille had robbed
From a short Spanish story. That Ives fobbed
And took some liberties with Pierre's good stuff
Will be forgiven when seen as the rough
And tumble of a modern playwright's trade—
Whatever it takes to help him make the grade,
To find the humor, enhance the delight
And to deliver comedy tonight!*

Dorante, the quasi-villain of the play, meets Clarice and Lucrèce in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris. He impresses them with his claim to have returned recently from the wars in Germany and boasts of the vital role he played. After the girls leave, he decides to court Clarice, mistakenly thinking her name to be that of her friend, Lucrèce.

Géronte, Dorante's father, arrives and announces to his son that he has found a girl whom he should marry, who turns out to be Clarice. Dorante, wrongly believing that the girl he likes is Lucrèce, concocts an outrageous lie that he is already married in order to avoid marrying "Clarice." After more fabrications and complications (Dorante invents his "wife's" pregnancy), Géronte is furious when he discovers his son has lied to him. But Dorante eventually tells the truth and everything is resolved happily. ■

THE PLAYWRIGHT PIERRE CORNEILLE

A liar is always lavish of oaths. — Pierre Corneille

Born June 6, 1606 in Rouen, France, to a family of lawyers, Pierre Corneille followed in his father's footsteps. Educated by the Jesuits, he studied law and then entered the Rouen parliament in 1629. He served as the king's counselor in the local office of the department of waterways and forests for 21 years, but because of his poor diction he only argued one case. During this period he wrote 20 plays; after his retirement from the legal profession he wrote 12 more.

Although Corneille is considered by most critics to be the father of French tragedy, six of his first eight plays were comedies. His first play, *Melite*, was presented by a strolling troupe that happened to pass through Rouen in 1629. The play was well received, but it was not until the following year, when it was presented in Paris, that Corneille's career began to escalate. He followed this initial offering with a series of comedies and tragicomedies including *Clitandre* (1631), *The Widow* (1632), *The Palace Gallery* (1633), *The Maidservant* (1634), *The Royal Square* (1634) and *The Comic Illusion* (1636).

Among Corneille's many admirers was a political figure – the powerful statesman Cardinal Richelieu. Along with other playwrights, Corneille was invited by Richelieu to join a group known as the “society of the five authors” or Les Cinq Auteurs. The purpose of this group was to allow the Cardinal to supervise the creation of a new French drama. Much like a modern day movie executive, Richelieu would dream up ideas for plays, then present them to his playwrights who were expected to dramatize the events exactly as the Cardinal had outlined them. Corneille's temperament, however, was not suited to this rigid environment and he tended to stray from the Cardinal's outlines, often causing a heated clash between himself and the religious leader. So, after fulfilling his contractual obligations, Corneille left the group and returned to Rouen where he resumed his legal practice.

He did not remain in retirement long. The playwright soon began to experiment with the tragic form and the result was the well-received *Medea* (1635). Then, in 1637, Corneille stunned the French theatre with his first masterpiece, *Le Cid* (1637), based on the life of an 11th century Spanish hero. Even King Louis XIII and his queen sent Corneille their compliments. Not everyone, however, was so enamored of the play. Richelieu, still harboring a grudge against Corneille, staged a vicious campaign against it; he and his followers criticized the play for not observing the “classical unities” – a formula derived from Aristotle's *Poetics* that Richelieu was fond of imposing on all plays in order to

further to control the drama. At Richelieu's urging, the Académie Française even went so far "as to issue a document condemning *Le Cid* as dramatically implausible and morally defective." 1.

Corneille was deeply hurt by these attacks and did not write another play for three years. When he returned, it was with a vengeance. He wrote a string of tragedies that would secure him a place in theatre history and which would come to be considered his greatest works.

The first of these masterworks, *Horace* (1640), dramatizes the conflict of families divided by duty during a war between the ancient Romans and their Alban neighbors. This success was followed with *Cinna* (1641) which tells the story of a conspiracy against the first Roman emperor, Augustus Caesar, who outwits his potential murderers by granting them political pardon. Some critics consider *Polyeucte* (1643) to be Corneille's greatest work. It tells the story of a born-again Christian who discovers his wife is in love with another man.

In 1643, Corneille achieved success with a comedy of intrigue, *The Liar*. It was based on a Spanish short story and considered the finest French comedy written before the time of Molière. In 1647 Corneille moved to Paris with his family and was finally admitted to the Académie Française. He continued to write but found that public tastes had changed and audiences preferred the younger writers such as Jean Racine. He also had financial reversals when the pension he was granted by Richelieu simply disappeared. ■

1. www.imagi-nation.com Abraham, Claude. Pierre Corneille. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972.
<http://www.imagi-nation.com/moonstruck/clsc57.html>

WORKS BY PIERRE CORNEILLE

Melite (1629)
Clitandre (1630-31)
The Widow (1631)
The Palace Gallery (1631-32)
The Royal Square (1633-34)
Medea (1635)
The Comic Illusion (1636)
Le Cid (1637)
Cinna (1639)
Horace (1640)
Polyeucte (1642)
The Death of Pompey (1643)
The Liar (1643)
Rodogune (1644)
Theodore (1645)
Heraclius (1647)
Don Sauche of Aragon (1650)
Andromeda (1650)
Nicomede (1651)
Pertharite (1651)
Imitation of Jesus Christ (1656)
Oedipus (1659)
Three Discussions of the Dramatic Poem (1660)
The Golden Fleece (1660)
Sertorius (1662)
Othon (1664)
Agésilas (1666)
Attila (1667)
Tite and Berenice (1670)
Psyché (w/ Molière and Philippe Quinault, 1671)
Pulchérie (1672)
Surena (1674)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Corneille

A TIMELINE OF CORNEILLE'S LIFETIME

- 1606 – Corneille is born.
– Guy Fawkes arrested in the cellar of Parliament, accused of trying to blow up House of Lords.
- 1607 – Founding of Jamestown, Va., first English settlement on the American mainland.
- 1614 – Pocahontas, an Indian princess, marries John Rolfe.
- 1616 – William Shakespeare dies.
– Galileo is prevented from doing further work by the Catholic Church.
- 1619 – First African slave in North America arrives in Virginia.
- 1620 – Plymouth colony is founded in Massachusetts.
- 1622 – French dramatist Molière (Jean Baptiste Poquelin) is born.
- 1624 – The Dutch settle New Amsterdam.
- 1629 – The Colony of Massachusetts is founded.
– Charles I dissolves Parliament.
- 1632 – Baruch Spinoza, the Dutch philosopher, is born.
- 1635 – The colonization of Connecticut begins.
- 1636 – Harvard College is founded in Cambridge, Mass.
- 1641 – The English Civil War begins.
- 1646 – The English Civil War ends with the surrender of Oxford to the Roundheads.
- 1647 – King Charles I is imprisoned.
- 1649 – The trial of Charles I begins on Jan. 19.
– Charles is beheaded on Jan. 30.
- 1656 – Opening of the first London opera house.
- 1659 – Thomas Willis, English physician, is first to describe typhoid fever.
- 1660 – Water closets arrive from France to England.
- 1662 – Louis XIV begins to build his Palace at Versailles.
- 1664 – Britain renames New Amsterdam New York.
- 1665 – Isaac Newton experiments with gravitation.
- 1666 – Isaac Newton measures the moon's orbit.
– The first Cheddar cheese is developed.
- 1670 – Hudson's Bay Co. is incorporated by royal charter to trade in the region of North America.
– First Italian Commedia dell'Arte companies appear in Germany.
- 1683 – First German immigrants arrive in North America.
- 1684 – Corneille dies. ■

Grun, Bernard. *The Timetables of History*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991.

THE ADAPTER

DAVID IVES

But comedy to me is not less serious than serious plays.
— *David Ives*

A native of South Chicago, Ives attended a Catholic seminary and Northwestern University and, after a few years' interval, the Yale School of Drama, where he received an MFA in Playwriting. In the interval between studies at Northwestern and Yale he worked for three years as an editor at *Foreign Affairs* magazine.

In the mid-1990s, after having been a contributor to *Spy Magazine*, Ives wrote occasional humor pieces for the *New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker* and other publications. In that same period *New York* magazine named him one of the “100 Smartest New Yorkers.”

Many of Ives' early plays are one-act comedies. His first play produced in New York was *Canvas*, staged at the Circle Repertory Company in 1972, followed by *Saint Freud* at the same theatre in 1975. In the late 1980s his one-act comedies began to appear annually in the Manhattan Punch Line's yearly one-act play festival. Among them were: *Mere Mortals*, and *Lives of the Saints*. His most frequently produced play is *All in the Timing*, a collection of one-acts that includes *Sure Thing*, *Words, Words, Words*, *Variations on the Death of Trotsky*, *Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread* and *The Universal Language*.

All in the Timing premiered at Primary Stages in 1993, then moved to the larger John Houseman Theatre where it ran for 606 performances. The production received the Outer Critics Circle John Gassner Award for Playwriting.

His full-length plays written prior to 2005 are collected in *Polish Joke and Other Plays*. He is also known for translations such as Georges Feydeau's classic farce, *A Flea in Her Ear*. In 2008 he had two plays running in New York: one was an adaptation of Mark Twain's rediscovered play, *Is He Dead?* and the other *New Jerusalem*, which concerned the excommunication of Spinoza.

In 2010 Ives adapted Corneille's comedy *The Liar* for the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C. He freely adapted the French plot and added his own satiric, witty language.

In the early 1990s Ives started working in musical theatre writing the libretto for an opera based on Frances Hodgson Burnett's book *The Secret Garden* (music by Greg Pliska). It premiered in Philadelphia in 1991 at the Pennsylvania Opera Theatre. He then

became a regular adapter in New York's celebrated "Encores" series of classic American musicals in concert, working on two or three a year for the next dozen years. He continues working on the series to this day.

His "Encores" adaptation of *Wonderful Town* moved to Broadway's Al Hirschfield Theatre in 2003, directed by Kathleen Marshall. He also co-wrote the book for Irving Berlin's *White Christmas*, which premiered in San Francisco in 2004 and then went on to tour across the country. It opened on Broadway in the winter of 2008 and 2009.

After revising *The Liar*, Ives said: "The play is partly a social satire about how lies work within a society.... In the same way that Shakespeare's *The Tempest* uses magic to talk about art, *The Liar* uses lying to discuss art. Because, basically every artist is in some sense a liar, creating truth out of fiction." 1. ■

1. www.playbill.com [http://www.playbill.com/features/articles/13811-David-Ives-Adapts-Corneille-The Liar-in-DC](http://www.playbill.com/features/articles/13811-David-Ives-Adapts-Corneille-The-Liar-in-DC)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/13/AR201004130410.html>

WORKS BY DAVID IVES

All In the Timing

Ancient History

Don Juan in Chicago

Four Short Comedies

Land of Cockaigne

Long Ago and Far Away

Mere Mortals

Monsieur Eek

Polish Joke and other plays

Red Address

Scrib

Time Flies and other short plays

Variations on the Death of Trotsky and other short comedies

Voss

The Liar

<http://www.ranker.com/list/david-ives-books> and stories-and written-work

A GLANCE AT 17th CENTURY FRANCE

L'Etat c'est moi. (I am the state.)
— *Louis XIV*

The *Liar* was written in 17th century France. During that era France functioned under the control of an increasingly powerful monarchy, fought in a series of wars and developed a thriving literary culture.

By 1624 it was obvious to the court that Louis XIII needed assistance. The king was moody, suffered from a lack of confidence and chronic maladies. He found guidance in Cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu; by 1626 the king had complete trust in this Catholic minister. Richelieu directed affairs of state and built up a strong army and navy. This act stood him well because in 1618 the Bohemians rebelled against the Austrian Hapsbergs, starting the Thirty Years War. France remained aloof until 1635 when it declared war on Spain. As Spain's difficulties mounted with revolts at home, Richelieu began negotiations. He died in 1642, a year before Louis XIII, and he remains one of the most remarkable statesmen in European history.

After Louis XIII's death, Louis XIV was too young to govern; therefore, France came under the control of the boy's mother and Giulio Mazarini (Jules Mazarin in France) who succeeded Richelieu. "He was an adventurer of genius and his career was one of the most extraordinary in European history." ¹ He took charge of foreign affairs himself, bypassing the Secretaries of State. By doing so, he brought on another war with Spain to a successful end in 1659. Secure in Louis's fidelity, Mazarin acquired a fortune in gold, jewels and art. When he was dying in 1661, he lingered lovingly among his paintings, the pride of his collection.

Louis XIV took control of the monarchy after Mazarin's death. His intelligence was limited, but he had an admirable temperament and was extremely extroverted. In his memoirs he claimed that "kings are absolute lords, and naturally can dispose fully and freely of all property." ² In 1662 he adopted the device of the sun's dial and came to be known as "the Sun King." He made a gorgeous display of greatness and surrounded himself with a brilliant court of nobles who could not function without his favors.

As a part of both its social and intellectual scenes, Paris hosted a growing collection of salons, gatherings that fostered lively

conversations about literature and language. Though men were welcome, women predominated in these salons. In the midst of a society that tended to restrict females, salons gave ladies of all ages an opportunity to participate in learned discussions. ■

1. Brown, p. 93.
2. Ibid, p. 129.

Briggs, Robin. Early Modern France 1560-1715. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.
Brown, W.E. The First Bourbon Century in France. London: University of London Press, 1971.
<http://www.centerstage.org/cyrano/Digital-Dramaturgy/Glimpse-of-17th-century-France.aspx>

FRENCH THEATRE IN THE 17th CENTURY

A learned fool is more foolish than an ignorant one.
— Molière. (*The Learned Ladies*, Act IV, iii)

Corneille's tragedies have unquestioned merit, but his later ones lost audience favor because their plots hinged on the conflict of love and duty. With Jean Racine (1639-1699) French tragedy reached its peak. Racine's plays found more favor with modern audiences because they dealt with the internal conflicts of his characters. For example, *Andromache* (1667) concerned the "insoluble quadrangle of unrequited love in the aftermath of the Trojan War."¹ Orestes loves Hermione who loves Pyrrhus who loves Andromache whose only concern is the safety of her young son. In *Phaedra* the heroine is consumed with lust for her stepson, Hippolyte. Racine's greatness came from his ability to develop compelling dramatic actions between his characters. "In contrast with Corneille's use of simple characters and complex plots, Racine constructed simple plots with complex characters."²

French comedy reached its culmination in the 1660s and 1670s. As Racine represents the summit in tragedy, so Molière (1622-1673) epitomizes comic writing. His central theme was generally the ridicule of the pretensions and hypocrisies of contemporary society, which usually provoked outrage from some aspect of that society. In *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (Affected Ladies) (1659), the play makes fun of two provincial ladies who visit Paris and take on all the affected manners of the capital. *Tartuffe* stimulated much controversy because it featured a religious hypocrite who displayed much false piety when a nobleman entrusted him with his daughters and property. Many interpreted the play as a condemnation of all religion. Molière also breathed new life into stock Commedia dell'Arte characters such as *L'Avare* (The Miser). In 1673, life imitated art when Molière played the lead in *Le Malade Imaginaire* (The Imaginary Invalid), fell ill on stage and died late that night. Thus, Molière, Corneille and Racine are France's great trio of classic dramatists.

The Comédie Française (Molière's company) was able to acquire a new home in 1689 when it remodeled the Etoile tennis court. The architect, Francois d'Orbay, constructed a horseshoe shaped auditorium within the exterior walls. A standing pit was backed by an amphitheatre raised six feet above it. The stage was about 41 feet deep by 54 feet wide, but the acting area was restricted by 5 rows of benches on either side of the stage. When musicians were needed, they were placed in a box at the rear of the auditorium.

Corneille, Molière and Racine all wrote in a verse form called the alexandrine, a line of poetic meter comprising of twelve syllables. Most English translators, including David Ives with *The Liar*, render the alexandrine into iambic pentameter, the line with five stresses favored by Shakespeare and other Elizabethan playwrights. ■

1. [www.discoverfrance](http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/Theatre/DF_theatre.shtml) http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/Theatre/DF_theatre.shtml

2. Brockett, p. 265. Brockett, Oscar G. *History of the Theatre*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1982.

THE THREE CLASSICAL UNITIES

The Three Unities – of time, place and action – are the hallmarks of French classical tragedy. Based upon the unities in Aristotle’s *Poetics*, they were reinstated by Cardinal Richelieu in 1634 and continued after his death by Louis XIV. Richelieu hoped the unities would bring about the creation of a new kind of drama that emphasized virtue. The neo-classical unities are:

1. Unity of action: a play should have one main action that it follows, with no or few subplots.
2. Unity of place: a play should cover a single physical space and should not attempt to compress geography.
3. Unity of time: the action in a play should take place over no more than 24 hours.

Most 17th century French playwrights chose to bend these rules from time to time. For example, Corneille’s *Le Cid* took place in Seville, Spain, but in four different settings: the king’s apartment, that of the Infanta, the street, and another character’s house.

Lough, John. *Seventeenth Century French Drama: the Background*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.

LYING

DORANTE: Liars aren't born, Cliton. They're fabricated.

— *The Liar*

Lying is a surprisingly common and complex phenomenon. According to Leonard Saxe, a polygraph expert and professor of psychology at Brandeis University “lying has long been a part of everyday life. We couldn't get through the day without being deceptive.”¹ Until recently, though, lying was ignored by psychologists and the serious discussions were left to ethicists and theologians.

Bella De Paulo, PhD, and her colleagues studied 147 people and had them keep a weekly journal. From their diaries, she found most people lie once or twice a day. “Both men and women lie in approximately a fifth of their social exchanges lasting ten or more minutes; over the course of a week they deceive about 30% of those with whom they interact one-on-one.”² Some types of relationships, such as those between parents and teens or those couples in a romantic relationship, are a virtual magnet for deception.

Although men and women lie with the same frequency, women are prone to stretching the truth in order to protect someone's feelings. Anyone who is under pressure will lie. But in a study by DePaulo and Deborah Kashy, PhD of Texas A&M University, the researchers found that “frequent liars tend to be manipulative... not to mention overly concerned with the impression they make on others.”³ Extroverts and sociable people are more likely to lie while those with high self-confidence and physical attractiveness are very skilled at lying.

Those least likely to lie are depressed people. Psychiatrist Charles Ford, author of *Lies! Lies! Lies! The Psychology of Deceit* suggests “individuals in the throes of depression seldom deceive others... because they seem to perceive and describe reality with greater accuracy than others.”⁴ They feel they have no control over situations and little effect on other people. Researchers cite findings that a certain amount of self-delusion – basically, lying to oneself, is a useful tool to good mental health. For example, in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*, lies are self-sustaining. The heroes become tragic figures when the lies are stripped away.

Little “white lies” are minor lies which could be considered harmless, or even beneficial in the long term. Puffery is an “exaggerated claim typically found in advertising and publicity announcements.”⁵ If something is advertised as the highest quality

at the lowest price, the consumer is expected to find out.

Dorante is a compulsive liar, someone who lies out of habit. He lies all of the time, yet his deceptions do not hurt or embarrass anyone and his tales can be entertaining. He bends the truth about everything, whether large or small. Most importantly for Dorante, telling the truth is awkward and uncomfortable; deception feels like the right thing to do. For Dorante lying has become second nature, addictive and difficult to stop. ■

1. psychologytoday.com
2. Ibid
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid
5. Ibid

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/199705/the-truth-about-lying?>

<http://www.truthaboutdeception.com/lying-and-deception/confronting-a-partner/compulsive-lying/types-of-liars.htm/>

<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/traits-of-a-habitual-liar.html>

[http://www.ehov.com/about-5117545-definition-pathological-liar.html.](http://www.ehov.com/about-5117545-definition-pathological-liar.html)

PLACES MENTIONED IN THE PLAY

Ghent— a city and municipality located in the Flemish region of Belgium. It is the capital and biggest city of the East Flanders province.

Palace of Versailles—a royal château in Versailles, located in the Ile-de-France region of France. When the château was built, Versailles was a country village; today it is a suburb of Paris, some 20 kilometers southwest of the French capital. The court of Versailles was the center of political power in France in 1682 when Louis XIV moved from Paris. The royal family of Louis XVI was forced to return to Paris in October 1789 after the beginning of the French Revolution.

Champs-Élysées—this promenade stretches from the Place de la Concorde to the Place Charles de Gaulle, the site of the Arc de Triomphe. It is used for all major celebrations.

Poitiers—a city on the Chain River in west central France.

Tuileries—a public garden located between the Louvre Museum and Place de la Concorde. It was once the site of a royal palace before the palace was torn down in 1871.

Pont-Neuf—oldest standing bridge across the Seine river in Paris. Connects the Rive Gauche (Left Bank) with the Rive Droit (Right Bank).

Place Royale—palace and garden which stands opposite the north wing of the Louvre.

Bois de Boulogne—large park located close to the Arc de Triomphe.

Mt. Aetna—located on the island of Sicily, Mt. Etna is the largest active volcano in Europe. ■

OTHER TERMS MENTIONED IN THE PLAY

Baldaqin — cloth canopy carried over an important object or person.

Fourth position — in ballet left foot placed in front of the right about a step apart. Right arm above head while left arm is in front of the body.

First position — in ballet, heels together, toes turned out. Arms held in front with fingers about to touch.

Adonis — archetype of a handsome youth.

“The unimagined life’s not worth living.” — A take on Socrates’ words “The unexamined life is not worth living,” which he spoke at his trial for heresy.

CONNECT

A series of free discussions providing a catalyst for discussion, learning and appreciation of the productions

Perspectives – Denver Center Theatre Company’s own “Creative Team” and community experts host interactive, topical discussions with attendees that provide a unique perspective on the production. This provides an in-depth connection that makes the stage experience even more rewarding.

Sep 16, 6pm, Jones Theatre

Talkbacks – Perhaps the best way to fully appreciate a production is by engaging in a stimulating dialogue with your fellow audience members and the actors who bring it to life.

Sep 25, Post-show

DCTC@The TC: The Art of Making Art – Discover the secrets behind the art and the artist at the DCTC. Gain deeper insight into the artist’s journey to the creation and development of their work. Gregory Smith, Director of Audience Development for the Denver Center for the Performing arts, hosts these lively and engaging discussions with directors, writers or cast members of the current DCTC productions.

Sep 27, noon at the Tattered Cover LoDo (1628 16th St.)

Higher Education Advisory Discussions – Audience members gain scholarly insight into the productions through discussions, facilitated by faculty members from regional colleges and universities.

Oct 2, Post-show

Theatre & Theology – In our continued partnership with Pastor Dan Bollman with the Rocky Mountain Evangelical Lutheran Synod and cast members, this discussion examines the relevant connections to the productions through a theological lens.

Sep 27, Post-show

Student Nights – College students will enjoy a cheap night out including a Perspective, theatre ticket and a post-show mixer. \$10 with promo code STUDENT.

Sep 16

THE LIAR

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS

- 1) What is a lie? Are there different types of lies? Why do people lie? Are there different circumstances that allow for lies?
- 2) What are characteristics of French farce? Give an example of where we see vestiges of farce in today's media.
- 3) David Ives writes, "Basically every artist is in some sense a liar, creating truth out of fiction." Explain what your interpretation of this quote.

POST PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

- 1) David Ives calls this play a "translaptation." This would be a part translation and part adaptation. Which parts of the play are directly from Corneille and which parts do you believe Ives manipulated to suit his purposes?
- 2) How does the play adhere to the Three Unities of Drama? Refer to the section in the study guide and give examples.
- 3) Are you able to identify some of the references to William Shakespeare's works in the *The Liar*?
- 4) Which elements of farce are included in the performance and which elements are missing?
- 5) How would you describe the characters in the play? How would you characterize the relationships between the characters in the play?
- 6) How does Dorante's first lie lead to the next lie? Can you track Dorante's lies through the play and the subsequent lies that take place?
- 7) Why does Dorante lie to his father? Knowing the ending of the play, was he justified in his lie?
- 8) What advice does Dorante give Cliton about lying?
- 9) To what purpose are mistaken identities used in the play? How were the mistaken identities portrayed in the performance in regards to Clarice and Lucrece? Isabelle and Sabine?
- 10) How would you describe the duel between Dorante and Alcippe?

ACTIVITIES

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Have the students sit in a circle. They must think of three statements to tell the group about themselves. Two of these statements must be true and one statement must be false. The group must guess which statement is false. The objective is for the student to create a false statement that could be probable.

Raise the bar: Make it two lies and one truth or make it two truths and something that they wish to be true.

New Colorado Drama and Theatre Arts PG: Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles.

LOVE LETTERS IN IAMBIC PENTAMETER

A Note About the Verse by David Ives

“Iambic pentameter means (if you don’t know it already) that every line is made up of ten syllables with the accent on every second syllable. To put it crudely, the rhythm is: “Bum-BUM, bum-BUM, bum-BUM, bum-BUM, bum-BUM.” Sometimes that rhythm is varied. Sometimes an unaccented eleventh syllable hangs off the end of a line, a so-called “weak rhyme.” I have to admit that I cheated here and there, and that a few of the lines in this adaptation are not-quite-perfect iambic pentameter. So be it. The point is not verse. The point is not to speak the line at jogtrot rhythm. The point is expression. The point is character. The point is naturalness. Not to mention the biggest point: fun.

Besides—Shakespeare took his liberties with pentameter, and if that’s not permission, I don’t know what is.”

Write a love letter from one character to another character in *The Liar*. As the character, describe your feelings, your hopes, how the other treats you and what you desire from the relationship. As the entire play is written in rhymed iambic pentameter, try writing the letter in this meter and use rhyming couplets.

New Colorado Writing PG: Effectively use content-specific language, style, tone and text structure to compose or adapt writing for different audiences and purposes.

New Colorado Writing PG: Write with clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail.

Three Unities: A Day in the Life

Create a false history for yourself by writing a day in your life. Refer to *The Liar* study guide about Aristotle's Three Unities of Action, Place and Time. Adhere to these unities as you create a fictional short story about a day in your life. Remember that your story should contain one simple plotline (action), take place in only one location (place), and within a 24 hour time period (time). Take a cue from Dorante and make the story as wild and fantastical and yet as believable as possible. Start by creating an outline of events and fill in some details and then write your story.

From this short story, adapt the story into a short monologue and either read it or tell it to the class. Use Dorante's advice to Cliton, make sure your monologue flows, is full of irrelevant details and "never, ever tell the truth."

New Colorado Writing PG: Write with a clear focus, coherent organization sufficient elaboration, and detail.

New Colorado Writing PG: Implement the writing process successfully to plan, revise, and edit written work.