

THE EVOLUTION OF A PLAY: DEVELOPMENT & PRODUCTION HISTORY

YICHUD (Seclusion) began as a twenty-minute scene between Rachel & Chaim in the Yichud Room.

This scene was written by **Julie Tepperman** and performed and self-directed by **Julie Tepperman** and **Aaron Willis**. It took place in a small room on the top floor of Toronto's Factory Theatre for about 15 people at a time as part of the Lab Cab Festival on May 31st & June 1st, 2008.

This scene was subsequently performed by Julie and Aaron at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre for a much larger audience as part of the Ashkenaz Festival on August 31st & September 1st, 2008.

The scene was subsequently expanded into a 75-minute one-act titled "*Yichud/Seclusion*" and was produced by Convergence Theatre as part of the Toronto Fringe's Next Stage Theatre Festival at Factory Studio Theatre, running January 8th-18th, 2009 with the following company:

Linda Kash as Malka
Paul O'Sullivan as Mordechai
Julie Tepperman as Rachel
Michael Rubinfeld as Menachem
Adam Lazarus as Ephraim
Daniel Karasik as Noam
Aaron Willis as Chaim
Neil Naft as The Rabbi
Aviva Chernick as The Cantor

Klezmer Band: **Ronen Segall** (accordion) and **Tom Howell** (violin)

Playwright: **Julie Tepperman**
Director & Dramaturge: **Aaron Willis**
Set, Lighting, Costume, and Prop Designer: **Beth Kates**
Musical Director: **Aviva Chernick**
Stage Manager: **Sandy Plunkett**

Following the Next Stage presentation, the play was developed and almost entirely re-written over the course of one year. During this time, Theatre Passe Muraille funded two hugely fruitful workshops in August and December of 2009. The playwright also acknowledges a Level One Playwrights Grant from the Toronto Arts Council, and is especially indebted to **Richard Greenblatt** as Dramaturge and **Shira Schwartz** as the Orthodox Jewish Project Consultant, as well as the following people who participated in these two workshops and contributed to the play's development by asking important questions and offering invaluable feedback, ideas, and suggestions: **Aviva Chernick, Ari Cohen, Diane Flacks, Tanya Greve, Beth Kates, Jordan Pettle, Sandy Plunkett, Michael Rubinfeld**, and especially **Aaron Willis**.

YICHUD (Seclusion) premiered in Toronto at Theatre Passe Muraille's Mainspace, playing to sold-out houses from February 6th-27th, 2010. It was produced by Theatre Passe Muraille in association with Convergence Theatre, with the following company:

Diane Flacks as Malka
Richard Greenblatt as Mordechai
Jordan Pettle as Ephraim
Michael Rubenfeld as Menachem
Julie Tepperman as Rachel
Aaron Willis as Chaim

Klezmer Band:

Ronen Segall (accordion), **Christopher Willes** (clarinet), and **Jeff Wilson** (percussion)

Female Chorus of Wedding Guests: **Sochi Fried, Kate Kudelka, Teresa Labriola, Ruthie Pytko-Jones, Sasha Singer-Wilson,** and **Norah Smith**

Male Chorus of Wedding Guests: **Kevin Chiao, James Fanizza, John McNeill, Michael Orlando, Noah Schwartz,** and **Adrian Shepherd-Gawinski**

Written by **Julie Tepperman**

Directed by **Aaron Willis & Richard Greenblatt**

Production Design (set, lights, props) by **Beth Kates**

Musical Direction & Original Compositions by **Aviva Chernick**

Project Consultant: **Shira Schwartz**

Stage Manager: **Sandy Plunkett**

Apprentice Stage Manager: **Suzan Balogh**

YICHUD (Seclusion) was re-mounted at Theatre Passe Muraille in producing partnership with Convergence Theatre, May 21-29, 2011, after which it traveled to Ottawa to open the 2011 Magnetic North Theatre Festival, June 3-6, 2011.

The cast remained the same, except for the following changes:

Bob Stevenson (replacement clarinet)

Ottawa Chorus of Wedding Guests: **Diego Arvelo, Steven Bowa, Stefani Di Gaetano, Emma Ferrante, Sochi Fried, Michael Kosowan, Andrea Massoud, Jodi Morden, Chris Shackleton,** and **Noah Spitzer**

YICHUD (Seclusion) was listed as **#5** in **NOW Magazine's "Top Ten Productions of 2010"** and was **nominated for an Ottawa Capital Critics' Circle Award for Outstanding Production** in 2011.