



# Lips Together, Teeth Apart

*Terrence McNally*

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## Lips Together, Teeth Apart Terrence McNally

The author of such critically acclaimed plays as *The Lisbon Traviata* and *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, Terrence McNally has graced the American theater with a voice that captures our fear of intimacy in the modern age with dead-on insight, wit, and poignancy. But never has he blended these disparate elements into such a brilliantly cohesive whole as he has in *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*, hailed by Frank Rich of the *New York Times* as McNally's "most ambitious and most accomplished play yet." At the heart of this haunting play is a dramatically incisive portrait of two married couples - the Trumans and the Haddocks.

Uncomfortable with themselves and each other, they are forced to spend a Fourth of July weekend at the Fire Island house that the brother of one of the women left his sister when he died of AIDS. Though the house is beautiful, it is as empty as their lives and marriages have become, a symbol of their failed hopes, their rage, their fears, and of the capricious nature of death. Acerbic and haunting, *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* probes the stifled

lives of people and their prejudices with a stunning clarity that resonates long after.

## Lips Together, Teeth Apart Details

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## **Kaethe says**

Sometime after college, but before I left Atlanta, there was a bit of a bruhaha over the staging of this play in Marietta (home of the Big Chicken). Although I'd otherwise stopped reading so many scripts, I had to pick this one up, just to see what the problem was. Apparently, the problem was the title itself. I hate people sometimes.

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## **Jaykumar Buddhdev says**

sometimes this play is excellent, and sometimes it seems like a group of heterosexual misfits in the midst of a gay holiday spot which ultimately peels off the layers of their anxieties, anger, prejudices, insecurities, coping mechanisms, and general their desire for normalcy, which ironically seems out of place given the location and their own pretentious personas...

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## **Playwright42 says**

Oh dear god. One of the worst plays I've ever read. Why. . .

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## **Kristen Lo says**

The dialogue is flawless and inner monologues are haunting. Wonderfully written for people who lived in the early 1990's (back when homophobia was accepted), but now the characters feel a bit more stereotyped. It would be a huge acting challenge. I didn't love this script, but I feel like it's story will stay with me for awhile.

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## **Andrew says**

Sometimes very good, but can get a little confusing.

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## **Sara says**

I think it was good but then again I don't know anything about plays and don't particularly enjoy reading them

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**Danielle says**

I found this play insufferable

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**Kristian says**

Good. But I wanted more interaction between the straights with the gay neighbors. Those moments brought out an intriguing look into the straight psyche and how they really feel about gays. I wanted this to be a critique on homophobia--but that was overshadowed by infidelity and an illness (cancer) that is brought up in the beginning and forgotten about until the last scene.

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**Marlaina says**

normal play how two couples get together for fourth of July. and of course there is going to be cursing, cheating, and fighting. personally, i wanted to smack Chloe, but that is my opinion. i also feel that you could tell who were the characters on the cover with the play

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**Tiffany Day says**

Not my cup of tea - slow, repetitive, not a lot to it -- I've loved some of McNally's work, but not this. The set sounds amazing, though, and there'd be some fun tech challenges for smaller theaters. It had some moments that pulled me in, but overall, this is a no.

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**Phanesia Pharel says**

Masterful work. Very little resolution

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