

A woman with dark hair is looking upwards with a slight smile. She is in a dark room with blue lighting. Behind her are wooden benches. The background shows a wall with horizontal siding and a wooden door.

THE ZAHIR · HOLI SHAMOLI PRODUCTIONS

APPREHENSION

ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU'RE NOT PARANOID.

A paranoid psychological thriller by L.B. Deyo. World premiere at Hyde Park Theatre, Austin, Texas – the most commercially successful play in that theatre's last 28 years.

PRESS & PRAISE

“Have you ever stared at Niagara Falls? It is beautiful in its chaos, so mesmerizing you can't help but feel enchanted and overwhelmed at the same time. It's impossible to stand there without imagining what it would feel like to jump in. This is the feeling I had while watching the theatrical spectacle *Apprehension*.”

– CTX LIVE THEATRE

“*Apprehension* dares to explore the slippery terrain between perception and madness.”

– SUN NEWS AUSTIN

“Such a great and wild and fun play. Equally sinister and hilarious. We had a blast watching it unfold.”

– MACON BLAIR, FILMMAKER

“This is not a joke when I say this, we just got back from New York. I had a great pleasure of seeing Keanu and Alex in *Waiting for Godot*, and it truly was excellent, as Bill and Ted would say, but I think *Apprehension* might be my favorite that I've seen in a long time.”

– TIMOTHY BRAUN, AUTHOR AND PLAYWRIGHT

THE SHOW

Apprehension is a paranoid psychological thriller about Joe Dempsey, a man tormented by memory lapses and gnawing doubts about

his own past. During a period of emotional collapse, Joe begins to suspect that his wife and friends are not who they seem to be. As

his grasp on reality wavers, he struggles to determine whether he's uncovering a horrific truth or falling prey to delusion.

Set in a world of shifting loyalties, buried traumas, and eerie disappearances, *Apprehension*

explores the line between paranoia and insight. It is a Hitchcock-style thriller offering audiences the chance to recognize and explore the depth of our own fears, to see them reflected on stage, and to feel less alone in the experience.

"In a world obsessed with remakes and reboots, *Apprehension* stands out as an authentically original work that dares to show the uncomfortable side of depression and delusional paranoia, as well as the psychological distress that plagues so many people in our current dystopian landscape. Deyo set the bar with his deeply personal and resonant script."

— BRIAN SCIPPIONE, CTX LIVE THEATRE



PRODUCTION HISTORY

World premiere produced by Holi Shamoli Productions at Hyde Park Theatre, October 9 – November 2, 2026. By closing night the production was turning away half a dozen people per performance at the door.

10 / 12

PERFORMANCES SOLD
OUT

95%

OF ALL TICKETS SOLD

28 yrs

HYDE PARK THEATRE'S
BIGGEST HIT IN OVER
28 YEARS

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

APPROXIMATE RUN TIME 1:45 · NO INTERMISSION

CAST – NINE

Joe Dempsey	Husband of Ava, father of Katie. Unemployed, depressed and increasingly paranoid.
Ava Dempsey	Wife of Joe, mother of Katie. Increasingly resentful of having to work full time while caring for Joe and Katie.
Katie Dempsey	Daughter of Joe and Ava. Troubled by her parents' marital breakdown and her father's bizarre behavior.
Dr. Paul Wozis	Husband of Charlotte, psychiatrist to Joe. Friends with the Dempseys.
Charlotte Wozis	Wife of Paul. Friends with the Dempseys.
Charles	Husband of Lisa. Friends with the Dempseys.
Lisa	Wife of Charles. Friends with the Dempseys.
Bookstore Employee	Creepy, hostile stranger.
Woman	Possibly insane stranger.

CREW

Producer	Director	Stage Manager
Lighting Designer	Sound Designer	Scenic Designer
Costume / Wardrobe	Board Operator	Front of House Manager

STAGING

Main set

The Dempseys' backyard. A lawn with a picnic table, a house with a sliding glass door entrance. The main set, especially the house background, should be darkened when the characters aren't in the backyard.

Partial set – office

Dr. Wozis' office. Two chairs, a small end table or a desk, a small painting of Moloch, a small white board or chart. All can be struck when not in use.

Partial set – bookstore

Several bookshelves. All can be struck when not in use.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

When I sat down to write *Apprehension*, I had a single goal: To bring people together in conversation and a shared emotional experience. *Apprehension* was my first play. I wrote it after completing a novel that took me over three years to write and was read by perhaps half a dozen people. I write to communicate ideas, sentiments and my inner life, and I knew that writing novels wasn't accomplishing that. I wasn't looking to send a message in a bottle to strangers. I wanted to engage people and have a two-way conversation. I knew that was only possible from the stage, and it would only work if I could capture hopes and fears that people were out there really feeling. And in a disconnected, isolated and paranoid world, that meant writing a conspiratorial thriller in which every character was suspicious and no fact could be trusted.

I have long experience with psychological difficulties. My experience of depression and anxiety is that it's extremely difficult to share with others. Depression doesn't have outward signs that convey to people why you're behaving in the way you

are. Why you don't seem to be able to do the things that other people can do easily. It feels very urgent, at least to me, to succeed at this difficult task of communicating those things. It seems like almost a matter of survival to say "I'm not myself right now. I'm not able to do the things that I normally would be able to do, handle the things I would normally be able to handle, and I need you to understand that and understand why that is."

I believed I could express these ideas and feelings if I were willing to expose myself and be absolutely vulnerable. If I could frankly project the most private and painful aspects of my own life. And I also believed that people would be receptive to this, but only if it could be done with a sense of humor and irony that would keep it from feeling too raw.

I didn't know how ready people really were for this kind of material, so I was very pleasantly surprised. Not just that it was the most commercially successful play in Hyde Park Theatre history, but more importantly that each and every performance led to a post-

show conversation in which
audience members would linger in
the theater to talk with me, the
cast and crew, and each other,
about what the play had meant to
them, what they'd been through in

their own lives that had been
reflected on the stage. This was
what true success felt like to me,
and it's brought me more
satisfaction than any other
artistic effort I've ever made.

— L.B. DEYO

PLAYWRIGHT

The Zahir founder L.B. Deyo is a playwright whose play *Apprehension* premiered at Hyde Park Theatre. He is the author of several books, including, with David “Lefty” Leibowitz, *Invisible Frontier: Exploring the tunnels, ruins & rooftops of hidden New York*. He's acted in such Austin plays as *The Intergalactic Nemesis* and *Dance, Cupcake, Dance*.

LICENSING &
INQUIRIES

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PHOTOGRAPHS

PRODUCTION STILLS BY CHRIS SHEA · HIGH-RESOLUTION FILES ON REQUEST



THE COMPANY



JOE, AVA, PAUL, LISA



THE BACKYARD

APPREHENSION

THE ZAHIR · LB@THE-ZAHIR.ORG
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