

David Mamet in Conversation

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To David Mamet I acknowledge the kindness that he has shown me in this, and other, endeavors. And to Pamela, David, and Stu, my love.

Chronology

- 1947 November 30, born Chicago.
- 1963–65 Works as waiter at Second City and backstage at Hull House Theatre, Chicago.
- 1965–69 Pursues B.A. degree in English Literature at Goddard College, Plainfield, Vermont. During his junior year, studies acting with Sanford Meisner at the Neighborhood Theatre, New York. While at Goddard, completes the first drafts of *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, *The Duck Variations*, and *Reunion*. Works as a dancer in Maurice Chevalier extravaganza, *Toutes voiles dehors!!!* staged at the Autostade at Montreal's Expo '67. Writes *Camel* as senior thesis.
- 1969 Graduates from Goddard and joins theater company at McGill University, Montreal, performing in Pinter's *The Homecoming*. Stage-manages *The Fantasticks*.
- 1969–70 Works as office manager in a real estate office on North Side of Chicago.
- 1970 Offered position of acting instructor at Marlboro College, Vermont. *Lakeboat* first produced at Marlboro.
- 1971 Returns to Goddard College as Artist-in-Residence, where he teaches acting. While at Goddard forms the St. Nicholas Theatre Company with students William H. Macy and Steven Schachter, who perform first versions of *Duck Variations* and *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*.
- 1972 Returns to Chicago. *Duck Variations* and *Litko* performed at the Body Politic Theatre.
- 1974 *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, directed by Stuart Gordon, performed by the Organic Theatre, Chicago. Serves as Artistic Director of the St. Nicholas Theatre Company, whose members include Steven Schachter, William H.

- 1975 Macy, and Patricia Cox; they perform *Squirrels. Sexual Perversity in Chicago* wins Joseph Jefferson Award. *American Buffalo* under direction of Gregory Mosher premieres October 23 at the Goodman Theatre's Stage 2, Chicago. *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* opens off-off-Broadway on a double bill with *Duck Variations* at the St. Clement's Theatre, New York. Wins an Obie Award for Best New Play. St. Nicholas opens theater space on Halstead Street, opening season with *American Buffalo*, transferred from Stage 2. *Marranos* staged at the Bernard Horwich Jewish Community Center, Chicago. Writes *Revenge of the Space Pandas* for St. Clement's Theatre. Contributing editor for *Oui* magazine.
- 1976 *Reunion* staged at St. Nicholas Theatre. *American Buffalo* opens at St. Clement's Theatre, winning an Obie Award and Jefferson Award for its Chicago run. Resigns as Artistic Director of the St. Nicholas Theatre Company.
- 1977 *American Buffalo* opens on Broadway, winning New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. Yale Cabaret Theatre performs *All Men Are Whores*, directed by Mamet. *A Life in the Theatre* premieres at Goodman Stage 2; enjoys extended run at Théâtre de Lys, New York. *Water Engine* staged by St. Nicholas. *Reunion* opens in double bill with *Dark Pony* at Yale Repertory Theatre. Directs premiere of *Woods* at the St. Nicholas. *The Revenge of the Space Pandas or Binky Rudich* and *The Two-Speed Clock* staged at the St. Nicholas Children's Theatre and Flushing Town Hall, Queens, New York. *Duck Variations* and *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* performed at the Regent Theatre, London.
- 1978 Joseph Papp produces *The Water Engine* at the New York Shakespeare Festival Public Theater; transfers to Plymouth Theatre (Broadway) with *Mr. Happiness*. Appointed Associate Artistic Director and Writer-in-Residence of the Goodman Theatre by Gregory Mosher, Artistic Director of the Goodman. *American Buffalo* receives European premiere at the National Theatre. Wins Outer Critics Circle John Gassner Award for Distinguished Playwriting. *Prairie du Chien*

- broadcast on BBC and National Public Radio; *The Water Engine* broadcast on National Public Radio.
- 1979 The Public Theater stages *The Blue Hour: City Sketches* and *The Woods*. *Lone Canoe, or the Explorer* premieres at the Goodman Theatre. *A Life in the Theatre* broadcast on PBS Television and premieres in London at the Open Space Theatre.
- 1980 Revised version of *Lakeboat* performed by Milwaukee Repertory Theatre. Revival of *American Buffalo* staged at Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven.
- 1981 Mamet writes first screenplay for Bob Rafelson's film adaptation of James M. Cain's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. Begins work on *The Verdict*. *Dark Pony* and *Reunion* staged in London.
- 1982 *Lakeboat* staged at the Long Wharf Theatre and Goodman Theatre. *Edmond* premieres at Goodman Theatre and opens in New York. Wins Obie for *Edmond*. Earns an Academy Award Nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay for *The Verdict*.
- 1983 Adaptation of Pierre Laville's *Red River* produced at the Goodman Theatre. Goodman Studio stages *The Disappearance of the Jews* in a triple bill with Elaine May's *Hotline* and Shel Silverstein's *Gorilla*. *Glengarry Glen Ross* premieres at the National Theatre, London. Wins the Society of West End Theatres' Award (SWET) for Best New Play and an Olivier Award.
- 1984 American premiere of *Glengarry Glen Ross* staged at Goodman Theatre; transfers to Broadway, where it runs for 378 performances. *Glengarry Glen Ross* wins Pulitzer Prize, the Drama Critics' Award for Best American Play 1984, a Joseph Dintenfuss Award, and four Tony nominations, including Best Play and Best Director. Mamet and Mosher found the New Theatre Company (NTC). *The Frog Prince* opens at the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; the Ensemble Studio Theatre mounts *Vermont Sketches*.
- 1985 New Theatre Company opens season with Mamet's adaptation of *The Cherry Orchard*. NTC moves to Brian Street Theater, where it mounts *The Shawl* and a one-act play, *The Spanish Prisoner*. *Goldberg Street* and *Cross Patch* broadcast on WNUR Radio, Northwestern

- University. *Prairie du Chien* premieres with *The Shawl* at the Mitzi Newhouse Theater, Lincoln Center, New York, under direction of Gregory Mosher. *Edmond* receives European premiere at Newcastle Playhouse, a coproduction of the Royal Court Theatre. Founds Atlantic Theater Company with William H. Macy.
- 1986 Wins Academy Institute Award in Literature. Adaptation of *Vint* mounted at the Ensemble Studio Theatre. *Prairie du Chien* and *The Shawl* staged at Royal Court Theatre, Upstairs.
- 1987 Writes screenplay for *The Untouchables*. Writes and directs *House of Games*, selected to close New York Film Festival. *House of Games* earns a Golden Globe Nomination for Best Screenplay.
- 1988 Adaptation of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* staged at the American Repertory Theatre. *Speed-the-Plow* opens on Broadway at the Royale Theatre. Writes (with Shel Silverstein) and directs *Things Change*, which opens London Film Festival. Directs *Sketches of War* at Colonial Theatre, Boston. Earns a Writers Guild Award Nomination for Best Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium for *The Untouchables*.
- 1989 *Speed-the-Plow* staged at the National Theatre, where play-in-progress, *Bobby Gould in Hell*, receives a reading, later opening at the Mitzi Newhouse Theatre, New York. *The Water Engine* receives British premiere at the Hampstead Theatre. United Kingdom tour of *A Life in the Theatre* followed by West End run at Theatre Royal, Haymarket. Writes screenplay for Neil Jordan's film, *We're No Angels*.
- 1990 Adaptation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters* is performed by the Atlantic Theater Company at the Festival Theatre, Philadelphia. Mamet's version of *Uncle Vanya*, staged at Harrogate Theatre and at the Goodman Theatre, is filmed by BBC in association with WNET, New York. Completes screenplays *Hoffa*, *The Deer Slayer*, *High and Low*, and *Ace in the Hole*.
- 1991 Writes and directs *Homicide*.
- 1992 *Oleanna* premieres at the American Repertory Theatre, reopening at the Orpheum Theatre, New York. Mamet writes screenplay for *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

- 1993 *Squirrels* receives British premiere at King's Head Theatre, Islington. *A Life in the Theatre* filmed for American television network TNT. *Oleanna*, directed by Harold Pinter, staged at the Royal Court Theatre, London; later transfers to Duke of York's Theatre.
- 1994 Writes and directs film version of *Oleanna*. *The Cryptogram* directed by Gregory Mosher premieres at Ambassadors Theatre, London. Sam Mendes directs a revival of *Glengarry Glen Ross* at the Donmar Playhouse. *Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants* performed at the Promenade Theatre, New York. Andre Gregory's film, *Vanya on 42nd Street*, based on Mamet's adaptation of *Uncle Vanya*, opens.
- 1995 *The Cryptogram*, directed by Mamet, receives American premiere at the C. Walsh Theatre, Boston, and the Westside Theatre Upstairs, New York. *An Interview*, one of three one-acts comprising *Death Defying Acts* (includes Woody Allen's *Central Park West* and Elaine May's *Hotline*), staged at the Variety Arts Theatre, New York. Directed his adaptation of J. B. Priestley's *Dangerous Corner* at the Atlantic Theater Company, New York, following earlier premiere at the Burlington City Arts Festival, Burlington, Vermont. *Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants* televised on HBO.
- 1996 Revival of *Edmond* opens at the Atlantic Theater Company. The Ensemble Studio Theatre stages five one-acts and monologues, including *No One Will Be Immune* and *Joseph Dintenfass* (New York premiere) in celebration of its twenty-fifth anniversary and long collaboration with Mamet. Filmed version of *American Buffalo*, from a Mamet screenplay, opens the Boston Film Festival. Cowrote lyrics for *Randy Newman's Faust*.
- 1997 *The Old Neighborhood* premieres at the American Repertory Theatre, Cambridge, Massachusetts, followed by a run on Broadway at the Booth Theatre. *Wag the Dog*, from a screenplay by Hilary Henkin and David Mamet, nominated for a Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture, Best Screenplay, and Best Actor, also earns nominations for an Academy Award for Best Writing Based on Material from Another Medium and Best Screenplay by the Writers Guild of America. Writes

- and directs *The Spanish Prisoner*, which opens the Toronto Film Festival. Original screenplay, *The Bookworm*, filmed as *The Edge*.
- 1998 The British premiere of *Lakeboat* is staged at the Lyric Studio, Hammersmith, London. *The Old Neighborhood* has British premiere at the Royal Court Theatre Downstairs at the Duke of York's. *Jade Mountain* opens at the New York Ensemble Theatre's Marathon of One-Acts 1998. John Frankenheimer's film *Ronin* produced, from a screenplay by Mamet. Directs adaptation of Terence Rattigan's *The Winslow Boy*, which films in England. Coproduces his screenplay *Lansky*, broadcast on HBO. Completes screenplay for a remake of *Dr. Jekyll / Mr. Hyde*.
- 1999 *Boston Marriage*, directed by Mamet, premieres at American Repertory Theatre. Directs *State and Main*, from original screenplay; writes screenplay for *The Cincinnati Kid*. *Lakeboat*, directed by Joe Mantegna, is produced.