

Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes: Part One: Millennium Approaches Part Two: Perestroika

By Tony Kushner

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HBO Films will present *Angels in America*, directed by Mike Nichols from Tony Kushner's own adaptation of his Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes*. The remarkable cast features Al Pacino, Meryl Streep, Emma Thompson, Mary Louise Parker, Jeffrey Wright, Justin Kirk, Ben Shenkman, Patrick Wilson, James Cromwell, Michael Gambon and Simon Callow.

Angels in America is one of the most remarkable and celebrated plays of our time. Over 350,000 copies have been sold in paperback since their original publication in 1993.

Praise for the play:

"Angels in America is the broadest, deepest, most searching American play of our time."—Jack Kroll, *Newsweek*

"A vast, miraculous play . . . provocative, witty and deeply upsetting . . . a searching and radical rethinking of Ameri-can political drama."—Frank Rich, *The New York Times*

"Something rare, dangerous and harrowing…a roman candle hurled into a drawing room . . . "—Nicholas de Jongh, *London Evening Standard*

"Playful and profound, extravagantly theatrical and deeply spiritual, witty, and compassionate, furious and incredibly smart . . . It's impossible to imagine anyone captivated by the beginning not wanting—needing—to go back for the end."—Linda Winer, *Newsday*

"An enormously impressive work of the imagination and intellect, a towering example of what theatre stretched to its full potential can achieve."—Clifford A. Ridley, *Philadelphia Inquirer*

"Perestroika is a masterpiece."—John Lahr, *New Yorker*

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* is that rare entity: a work for the stage that is profoundly moving yet very funny, highly theatrical yet steeped in traditional literary values, and most of all deeply American in its attitudes and political concerns. In two full-length plays--*Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*--Kushner tells the story of a handful of people trying to make sense of the world. Prior is a man living with AIDS whose lover Louis has left him and become involved with Joe, an ex-Mormon and political conservative whose wife, Harper, is slowly having a nervous breakdown. These stories are contrasted with that of Roy Cohn (a fictional re-creation of the infamous American conservative ideologue who died of AIDS in 1986) and his attempts to remain in the closet while trying to find some sort of personal salvation in his beliefs.

But such a summary does not do justice to Kushner's grand plan, which mixes magical realism with political speeches, high comedy with painful tragedy, and stitches it all together with a daring sense of irony and a moral vision that demands respect and attention. On one level, the play is an indictment of the government led by Ronald Reagan, from the blatant disregard for the AIDS crisis to the flagrant political corruption. But beneath the acute sense of political and moral outrage lies a meditation on what it means to live and die--of AIDS, or anything else--in a society that cares less and less about human life and basic decency. The play's breadth and internal drive is matched by its beautiful writing and unbridled compassion. Winner of two Tony Awards and the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for drama, *Angels in America* is one of the most outstanding plays of the American theater. --*Michael Bronski*

Review

“*Angels in America* has proved to be a watershed drama, the most lyrical and ambitious augury of an era since Tennessee William’s *The Glass Menagerie*.” –John Lahr, *New Yorker*

"A vast, miraculous play... provocative, witty and deeply upsetting... a searching and radical rethinking of American political drama." -Frank Rich, *New York Times*

"Daring and dazzling! The most ambitious America play of our time: an epic that ranges from earth to heaven; focuses on politics, sex, and religion; transports us to Washington, the Kremlin, the South Bronx, Salt Lake City and Antarctica; deals with Jews, Mormons, WASPs, blacks; switches between realism and fantasy, from the tragedy of AIDS to the camp comedy of drag queens to the death or at least absconding of God…*Angels in America* is the broadest, deepest, most searching American play of our time." - Jack Kroll, *Newsweek*

“Few plays have captured the spirit of an age more powerfully than *Angels in America*…and the passage of time has not clipped *Angels’* wings.” –Paul Taylor, *Independent* (London)

“Something rare, dangerous, and harrowing…a roman candle hurled into a drawing room.” –Nicholas de Jongh, *London Evening Standard*

“*Angels* breaks all the rules to achieve the astonishing integrity of its vision…It is a play that has remained utterly of-the-moment.” –Jeremy Gerard, *Bloomberg*

“The most influential American play of the last two decades.” –Patrick Healy, *New York Times*

“That *Angels* came so close to the burning heart of the Zeitgeist left Kushner fearing he would never get there again. But in fact he has been there so often that he seems to have passed right through it…*Angels*, so much a cry in the dark about AIDS when it was written, seems now to be as much about the Earth’s potentially fatal illness as gay men’s.” –Jesse Green, *New York*

“The greatest American play of the waning years of the twentieth century.” –Chris Jones, *Chicago Tribune*

About the Author

Tony Kushner's plays include A Bright Room Called Day and Slavs!; as well as adaptations of Corneille's The Illusion, Ansky's The Dybbuk, Brecht's The Good Person of Szecguan and Goethe's Stella. Current projects include: Henry Box Brown or The Mirror of Slavery; and two musical plays: St. Cecilia or The Power of Music and Caroline or Change. His collaboration with Maurice Sendak on an American version of the children's opera, Brundibar, appeared in book form Fall 2003. Kushner grew up in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and he lives in New York.

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