

# TRAPPED IN PARADISE, a western by Alexis Chevalier

## Statement of intention

End of the 19th century, in an expanding city in Western North America. Sean Shine, wealthy and schizophrenic owner of the Paradise brothel, is running for governor's office. He hires Tom Nino, his double coming from out of town, giving him the assignment to kill a woman knowing too much about his past and compromising his chance of winning the election.

I wanted to write a story about power leading to madness and self-destruction. Regarding the self-destruction theme, I thought about the madness of Shakespearean hero, who destroys himself and people who are the closest to him, completely blinded by his power. This self-destruction theme is to be found in Sergio Leone's western movies, which also inspired me a lot with the character considered as the "Stranger". I've also found inspiration in Clint Eastwood's movies such as High Plains Drifter for the illusion theme - like in a mirage - the stranger and the double. Alfred Hitchcock also inspired me for doubles (Strangers on a train) but overall for split personality and schizophrenia (Psycho). Finally, I've based my story on myths from American History, such as the western expansion and Billy the Kid.

I created a character and his double fighting each other in a duel, that the western movie genre would help emphasized. Sean Shine is in politics but doesn't seem to be where he belongs: his brothel Paradise, in which are locked up his fantasies and his schizophrenia, shows both his greatness and his decadence.

I've played on illusions: the characters are some kind of ghosts destroying each other. I've also adapted the "stranger" theme, typical of the western genre. Tom only seems to be a stranger. I've made sure that nobody pays attention to him, except Sean who is his creator and seems to see him as a famous outlaw. Madness is expressed in both characters names: Sean Shine is the anagram of HE'S INSANE, and Tom Nino stands for NO, I'M NOT. From this point, I added ambivalences and hints on Sean's double personality, in the dialogues, costumes and locations as well as in the title of the movie.

Sean Shine is the character that causes Tom's arrival, but the audience should see the scenes from Tom's point of view. The audience then identifies with a ghost and is consequently "trapped in Paradise" too. Sometimes, Tom's point of view will be seen through a subjective camera. The audience will see Sean through Tom's eyes. Tom's reactions and movements will be seen through an exterior camera. Exterior lighting will have to be harsh, and interior lighting subdued in order to leave Sean Shine in the shadows. We will indeed see Sean Shine as a shadow, or with backlighting.

I have imagined the movie soundtrack to be halfway between the Shadows style and the traditional American bluegrass music.

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## Crew members

(in the process of being selected)

ACTOR Bruno Rosaz  
ACTRESS Sandra Leclercq



**Sandra Leclercq** is a French actress, author and director. She began her career at the Cours Florent (acting school) and starting playing parts on various Parisian theater stages as well as developing her career on TV. She got the leading role for the French TV series *Ma Terminale*, and the movies *Histoire de Cœur*, *Pression Maximale* and *Dedans*, which she also co-directed.

**Alexis Chevalier** is a French actor and director. He's also a movie buff, great admirer of Alfred Hitchcock, Sergio Leone, Stanley Kubrick and Brian de Palma. He's been influenced by theater as well, and particularly by Shakespeare and Williams. He has worked for several theater companies, and on the movie *La Machine Infernale*. Starting January 2014, Alexis Chevalier study at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Movie Institute, prestigious New York acting school founded by Lee Strasberg, iconic director of the Actors Studio.

*Light on ...*



ALEXIS CHEVALIER