

Look, a big purple *rectangle!*  
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## Tijuana Cure

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### *To Cure with love*

At the heart of this solo drama lies a real-life Toronto tragedy.

In 2000, noted writer Carole Corbeil died of ovarian cancer. Tijuana Cure is her husband, Layne Coleman's, candid account of their final trip together, a hail-Mary journey to a Mexican cancer clinic to undergo a controversial diet treatment.

Coleman, played by Ieva Lucs, speaks honestly, and often humorously, of his struggle while guiding his wife through airports, hotels, buses and otherwise mundane hurdles. His undying devotion to Carole is conveyed along with his penchant for narcotics, temptation by Mexican hookers and mixed-up feelings of guilt over his wife's condition.

The quirky narrative is interrupted by flashbacks to important moments from Coleman's past. His childhood introduction to the Beatles, an awkward night with a drunken French-Canadian tourist and his first kiss with Corbeil all paint a portrait of a man outwardly devoted yet internally divided. This realistic depiction has the ring of truth, which underlines his everyday heroism in the face of hopelessness.

Ashlie Corcoran directs this extended monologue, whose centre is definitely Coleman's voice. Having Lucs, who is obviously female, play Coleman purposefully obfuscates any basic visual connection between actor and subject, smartly channelling the audience's attention deeper into the text so that every action and word Lucs utters is granted extra consideration.

Jason Hand's solid lighting design has levels that light the almost barren stage in slow, nearly imperceptible fades – essentially mimicking the arduous progress of cancer itself.

More than an elegy, Tijuana Cure is a portrait not of the sick but of the partners who struggle and journey alongside them.

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