



BAD JEWS

**UPSTAGE
GUIDE**

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**EDUCATION AT
ROUNABOUT**

UPSTAGE CALLBOARD

Bad Jews

Bad Jews is a world premiere comedy by Joshua Harmon about the holy and the holier-than-thou. Daphna Feygenbaum is a Real Jew—just ask the Israeli boyfriend she met on Birthright. So when her cousin Liam brings home his shiksa girlfriend Melody and declares ownership of their grandfather's Chai necklace, it sparks a viciously hilarious brawl over family, faith and legacy.

a note from Artistic Director Todd Haimen

To me, the play is intriguingly difficult to pin down. In fact, that's part of its charm. Somehow, playwright Joshua Harmon has found a way to be both reverent and irreverent on the subject of religion. At the same time, he creates characters who will feel like part of your own family but can express themselves in far funnier ways than most. I suppose that calling the play a comedy is closest to the truth (because the laughs are indeed plentiful), but that characterization shouldn't make you think that this writer isn't getting down to serious business. What could be more serious than being stuck in a studio apartment...with your family?

when **March**, not quite
 winter, not quite
 spring

where **New York City**,
 Upper West Side

who

Daphna Feygenbaum, 22, Liam & Jonah's first cousin. 2/3 body, 1/3 hair. Thick, intense, curly, frizzy, long brown hair. Hair that clogs a drain after one shower. Hair you find on pillows and in corners of the room and in your refrigerator six months after the head from which it grew last visited. Hair that could not be straightened even if you had four hours and three hairdressers double-fisting blow driers in each hand. Hair that screams: Jew.

Liam Haber, 25. Daphna's cousin: his mother is the sister of Daphna's father. U of Chicago Asian studies

PhD student. Former Fulbright scholar in Japan. Has as much of a sense of humor as an overdue library book.

Jonah Haber, 21, Liam's younger brother. Sometime-UVM sophomore. Less lanky than his brother. Less brainy. More brawn. More heart.

Melody, 24, Liam's girlfriend. Stick-straight blonde hair. Which she wears with a barrette. To be extra cute. Mousy. She looks like someone who would have been abducted when she was nine but returned to her parents unharmed. Works for a non-profit.

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INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT JOSHUA HARMON

Before rehearsals began, Education Dramaturg Ted Sod asked playwright Joshua Harmon to discuss his work on *Bad Jews*.

Ted Sod: Tell me about yourself.

Joshua Harmon: I was born in Manhattan, and spent what I like to call my formative “year” in Brooklyn before my parents basically ruined my life and moved us to the suburbs, which is where I grew up. The suburbs are fine, but I think I understood from an early age that if I ever had a shot at being cool, I would have had to stay in Brooklyn.

TS: At what point did you know you were going to be a writer?

JH: I’ve always wanted to be a writer. In middle school and high school I wrote poems and short stories, and some of them were published in the school’s literary magazine, but in secret I was also writing plays which almost no one saw. When I was 14, I started writing my first full-length play, about an anorexic girl who is best friends with her housekeeper. I wrote it in longhand in a speckled notebook which I carried with me everywhere. One night I left it in my backpack in my Dad’s car and someone broke into his car and stole my bag and that was the end of my play. I’m sure the thief took my discman (yes, this was the 90’s) and then just threw away my bag, but in my mind I imagined large circles of erudite intellectuals sitting around on fancy sofas drinking fancy drinks reading my play aloud, mocking me. It didn’t occur to me that the notebook was probably decomposing in a landfill somewhere.

I went to Northwestern for college, and even though I had thought of myself as this young writer, when I got to college, I stopped. I didn’t come from an artistic family, so I couldn’t imagine how you would pursue that as a career. I loved theatre, and Northwestern has a great theatre program, but that felt totally impractical, and I loved music but I didn’t think I was talented enough to be a music major. I spent a long time feeling lost. I tried on several more practical majors but none of them felt right and I didn’t know what to do and then one night I was surfing the Northwestern website, so depressed, looking for anything that might speak to me. I stumbled upon this major I never knew existed, a little program in the English Department called the Drama program (which is different from the Theatre program—different college, different building, etc.) which let you design your own course of study. Even though it was “theatre” it was still in the English Department, so it felt safer somehow than being a full-fledged theatre major and so I finally signed up for that. I never consciously decided to be a playwright, but I think becoming a Drama major ultimately sealed my fate. And that’s when I got to study with Mary Zimmerman—she really changed my life. She taught a class called Performance of Poetry that just lit my brain up like a pinball machine. In my final project for that class I spliced an Adrienne Rich poem called “For Ethel Rosenberg” with historical text from the actual trial and at the end of it I basically electrocuted a photo of Ethel Rosenberg with my eyes. Very intense. But a total game-changer for me. And I took a great playwrighting class with Penny Penniston and completed my first full-length play, and then I graduated and came back to New York and worked for several years as an assistant in film and



theatre. Then I moved to Pittsburgh and got my MFA at Carnegie Mellon, and then I moved to Atlanta for a year because I won this very cool fellowship from the National New Play Network to be the Playwright-in-Residence at Actor’s Express. Then I went back to Pittsburgh to work as an assistant again, and then I quit that job and came back to New York and was living with my parents, unemployed, terrified about the future, trying to remember what had compelled me to get an MFA in Playwriting and how useless that degree is and how stupid it was to pursue playwriting at all, and of course, that’s when I got the call that Roundabout wanted to meet to discuss my play.

TS: What inspired you to write *Bad Jews*?

JH: I didn’t realize it at the time, but the seed for this play was planted at a depressingly unmoving Yom Hashoah service I attended my sophomore year of college. The theme of the service was “Grandchildren of Survivors,” so instead of a survivor speaking, a group of fellow students whose grandparents had survived the Holocaust spoke. It was strange and sterile and laden with clichés but lacking in genuine feeling and it scared me. A year or so later I came up with the title *Bad Jews* and started taking notes about the characters during my senior year, but then I put that notebook away for many years (fortunately it wasn’t stolen). I think I felt like this play would either be the worst thing I would ever write, in which case, what was the rush; or, it might be the best thing I had ever written, and I somehow understood at 21 that

I wasn't good enough to write something really good. So I sat on it for many years, like a chicken a little bit, you know, hatching my eggs.

In December of 2010, I went to the MacDowell Colony, in New Hampshire. I felt embarrassingly unworthy, like I had somehow conned these very nice people into thinking I was a legitimate writer, so to prove myself worthy of the honor, I felt like I needed to write a Really Important Play, which, word to the wise, when you set out to write a Really Important Play you wind up writing the opposite, i.e. the WORST PLAY EVER. I brought this piece I had been working on about gay bullies and whales, and I spent three and a half weeks trying to write it, but it just wasn't happening, it was terrible, and I felt horrible about myself, churning out junk in the same studio where Alice Walker had worked. So I had a little ceremony to say goodbye to the gay whale play: I spent a night watching Schindler's List, which is my go-to movie when I'm depressed, and I sobbed, and the next day I said to myself, you know, I have to leave here with something so I looked at my list—I make "Plays I Want to Write Before I Die" lists every so often—and *Bad Jews* kept making the list going on six years and I guess I got tired of seeing it stare back at me, unwritten, so I figured why not, and I left MacDowell with the first thirty pages and finished the first draft later that spring. Is it worth noting that when I finished the first draft I had a serious panic attack because I felt in fact I had just written the worst thing I'd ever written? My friend Libby talked me off the ledge. I was seriously ashamed of this one. Several workshops and readings later, here we are.

TS: What would you say the play is about?

JH: Purely in terms of plot, the play is about a young woman named Daphna Feygenbaum who comes to New York for her grandfather's funeral and has something of a battle royale with her cousin over an object which belonged to their grandfather which they both want very badly, albeit for very different reasons. And though there is nothing in that humorless description to indicate the play is a comedy, it's supposed to be funny. If any larger ideas or themes are at work, I really don't feel it's my place to lead that discourse. My job as the writer is to tell a story and then get out of its way. What resonates with the audience is for them to discover for themselves, not for me to dictate. The play, like all my writing, comes from a very personal place.

TS: What kind of research did you have to do in order to write this play?

JH: Eudora Welty has a great quote about this: "I am a writer who came from a sheltered life. A sheltered life can be a daring life as well. For all serious daring starts from within." Which is to say, I didn't do any research. I just lived my life and thought about the world around me and the world I know and then I wrote about it. And by no means am I putting myself in the same

category as the people I'm about to mention, but I consider them some of my heroes, and I don't think Tennessee Williams had to do much research to write *A Streetcar Named Desire* except maybe familiarize himself a little bit with the Napoleonic code, and Wendy Wasserstein might have had to reference a few art history books to write *The Heidi Chronicles* but no research was required to understand the challenges and fears that Heidi faces, and Alfred Uhry didn't have to research too much to write *Driving Miss Daisy*, he just had to live in the South when he did and then be brave enough to write about what that was like. And yes, I say brave, because Welty's right: daring starts from within. Always. Our interior lives are so much more terrifying than anything outside ourselves. But I think that's where the best material lives.

TS: What was the most challenging part of writing your play? What part was the most fun?

JH: The most fun part was writing those insanely angry monologues. I'm not a very angry person in my day to day life, so trying to tap into all of that rage was new for me, and kind of thrilling to discover.

The most challenging part is the fact that the play takes place in one room, in one night, in real time. At one time, *Bad Jews* was going to take place over a weekend, but my friend Molly Smith Metzler wrote a killer one room/one night play called *Elemeno Pea*, and she encouraged me to give it a shot. It's daunting to try to imagine how an entire story can be told in an hour and a half in one room, and to let the audience feel like they've really gone on some kind of journey, without any

tricks or magic or scene changes. Just, come sit in this living room and watch what happens. That sounds unbearably boring to me, which is why it's such a challenge, to try to find the ecstasy in that situation.

TS: Can you describe what you look for in a director?

JH: The writer-director relationship is a sort of marriage, because the goal is to procreate and make a little baby-play and raise it right and get it back on track when it veers off course and then send it out into the world. So you want someone who will balance you out and bring a set of skills you lack, someone you can trust to co-parent your kid. I guess the playwright is the mother because the writer really has the longest period of gestation and then gives birth and feels waves of post-partum depression while everyone else stands around and looks at this thing that has lived inside you and judges it. I'm not going to pursue this metaphor any further. I'll just say I feel extraordinarily lucky to have Daniel Aukin as my co-parent. He has a genius mind and a light, delicate touch, and he has devoted his entire career to working on new plays, so I know I'm in the most capable, excellent hands.

INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT JOSHUA HARMON

CONTINUED

TS: Are there any changes you anticipate making to the script as the play moves into another venue?

JH: There are. I'd like to make a few changes, and we'll see how that works in rehearsal. But the changes have more to do with the play itself, and less to do with the new venue. The question of how the play will work in a much larger space won't be something we'll really know until we get into the Pels. I'm excited to see it in such a big theatre. But I'm most excited just to get to see everyone again. A lot of really lovely friendships formed during the run in the Underground. It will be wonderful to reunite.

TS: Who are your favorite playwrights?

JH: Wendy Wasserstein is my favorite. Which is not very hip to say. You really won't find a lot of emerging playwrights who are huge Wasserstein lovers, I promise you. But she is my icon, guru, touchstone—call it what you will. Her plays are so personal, and so funny, and so heartbreaking, and that's a combination that I have always held up as the holy trinity of playwriting. Which is probably why I love Kenneth Lonergan, David Lindsay-Abaire, Annie Baker, Alfred Uhry, and many others. I also love Tennessee Williams—early on I wrote a lot of bad beginnings of plays that had atrocious southern accents because I thought if you wanted to be a playwright, your characters had to be either southern or British. William Inge is an amazing example of someone who found his subject matter and kept attacking it from every angle possible. I'm leaving a lot of writers I love off this list; I'll be kicking myself later. And so many emerging/younger/youngish playwrights are writing such beautiful plays. I saw Stephen Karam's *Speech & Debate* three times at Roundabout Underground. I just kept coming back. I can't believe my play was produced in the same space.

TS: Do you find seeing plays helpful?

JH: Seeing plays is helpful, but reading plays is valuable, too (and cheaper). Laughing at a play in a theatre is great, but when you laugh out loud alone in your room reading a play, there's no greater feeling. I think we often laugh when we recognize something is true—so when someone you have never met has been able to look at the world and find a way to express something that is true to her and she writes it down and has her play produced and then published and then you find that published manuscript and read it and it makes you laugh because it rings true for you, too, what's better than that?

TS: What advice would you give to a young person who wants to write for the theatre?

JH: Oh boy. Ugh. Advice? I mean, good luck. I guess for starters, don't listen to bad advice. Really. Or don't feel like a failure if someone else's good advice isn't useful to you. Like "write every day"? I certainly don't do that. I don't have something to say every day. Yes, you have to force yourself to write, because if you just waited until you were inspired or whatever, you'd write for ten minutes a month, but don't hate yourself if you don't write every day.

I'll just tell you what I did when I was first starting out but frame it

as advice and we can pretend that's my advice, ok? Read and see a lot of plays. Don't over-analyze them, not yet, but hold onto the ones you absolutely love, the ones that speak to every bone in your body, and when you have a nice stack of those, take another look at them, and try to figure out what the connective tissue is, what commonalities exist among this disparate collection of plays that all speak to you? Because whatever it is, that is going to be your trinity, your north star, the thing you aspire to. You should aspire to write plays that belong in the stack of your favorite plays, that are as good—not imitative, but equally exceptional. It will take you a long time to write anything that even remotely comes close, and most of what you write won't. That's ok. But aim high. You can't aim higher than your own personal definition of what is great. Aspire to write the kind of play you want to see.

TS: What are you working on now besides the production of *Bad Jews*?

JH: I'm going into my second year of the Playwrights Program at Juilliard, and they expect you to be writing, writing, writing, which is good for me because I have a lot of writing to do. I'm trying to finish up a re-write of one play, and I have 2 commissions now, including one from Roundabout (which I think is officially overdue), so it's a busy time, but I'd much prefer to be busy than the alternative. But I know that the opportunities which have presented themselves in the last year all stem from the Roundabout Underground production of my play. I feel tremendous gratitude to them for taking a chance on me and my play. I know that's what the Underground was designed to do—to give someone their first NY production is an inherently risky proposition—but the magic of that leap of faith still hasn't worn off. •



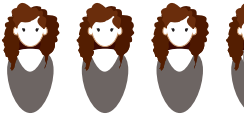
Tracee Chimo,
Phillip Ettinger and
Michael Zegen.

DAPHNA VS. LIAM

41%



33%



26%



In *Bad Jews*, Daphna and Liam have a bitter, polarizing argument about the place of religion and tradition in their lives and in the future of their family. We polled the Roundabout staff to find out if, after watching the play, people found one side more convincing than the other. We discovered passionate feelings from both the Daphna sympathizers and those leaning towards Liam, as well as strong arguments from those who couldn't quite decide.

ON THE FENCE

"There's no easy answer — if there were, there wouldn't be a play. Daphna feels there is a larger cultural story she's a part of, and Liam believes in living in the now. Both points of view are valuable — it's finding a way that they can coexist that is difficult."

"I understand Daphna's point about preserving culture, particularly a culture that values achievement and education. But on Liam's side a culture that promotes exclusivity limits its ideological evolutionary possibilities."

"Though Daphna is utterly obnoxious and unlikeable, I agree with her and feel that traditions and beliefs are important — without them, where would any successful society be?"

"My Uncle proposed to his wife with a family heirloom. He gave her my Great Grandmother's engagement ring, which was irreplaceable. This woman ended up not only cheating on him, but also divorcing my Uncle and then SELLING the ring that was part of OUR family's history. This is why I am on Daphna's side. Marriages come and go (and clearly Liam and Melody are not right for each other at all). Divorces are messy. The family heirlooms should stay in the family."

TEAM DAPHNA

TEAM LIAM

"Although I understand why Daphna feels so strongly about preserving a very powerful family tradition, the act of passing the chai down to someone who is not Jewish carries with it the idea that the Jewish culture should be celebrated and preserved by everyone. By educating others about the Jewish experience and sharing those traditions outside of the Jewish faith, Liam is actually preserving the faith more instead of keeping it insular and contained."

"Daphna's argument that our generation has to maintain traditions so the next generation has a choice is flawed logic: by her standards, the next generation will have the same obligation, making religion an inescapable duty rather than something to choose, cherish, and share. It doesn't matter who you marry— if you want to preserve a tradition for your children, you will."

INTERVIEW WITH ACTOR TRACEE CHIMO

Before rehearsals began, Education Dramaturg Ted Sod spoke with Tracee Chimo about her role in *Bad Jews*.

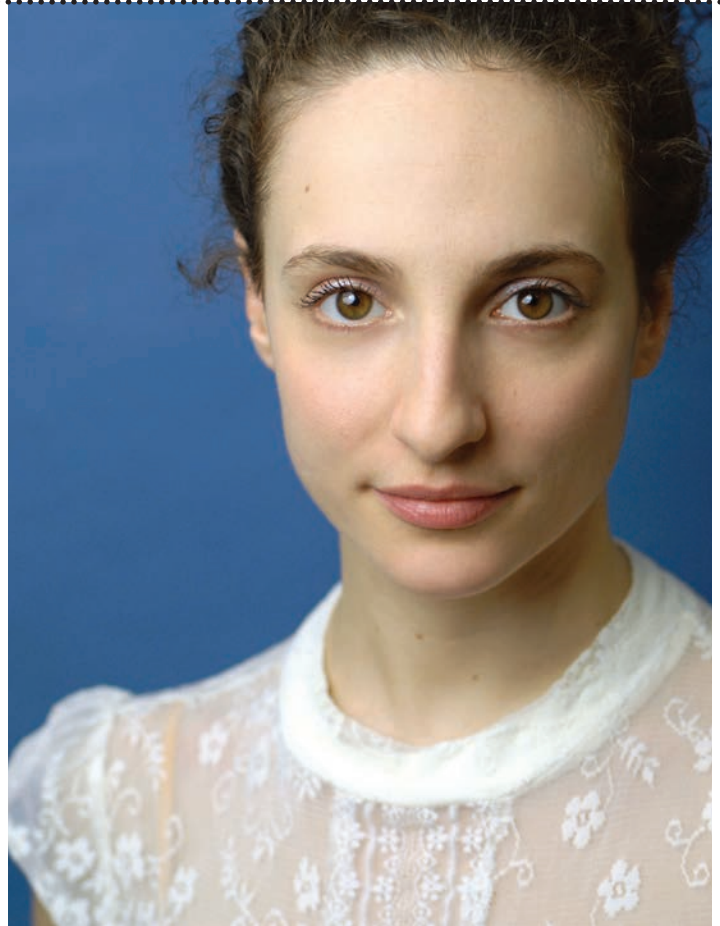
Ted Sod: Please tell us a little about yourself. You started your career as a dancer, correct? When did you decide to become an actor?

Tracee Chimo: I was born in a suburb of Boston, Massachusetts called Saugus. My parents were both born and raised in pretty tough neighborhoods of the city and are both products of ethnic, blue collar families. My Dad's family came here from Albania, and they spoke no English. I have big admiration and respect for my Dad, how he was brought up, how he conducts himself, and how he's worked for everything our family has. He raised us good. So did my Mom. She busted her ass to be a great mother. She gave up a lot to be with us. My parents both pushed me to leave Saugus right after high school because it wasn't the best town to grow up in, as far as "making something of yourself" was concerned. Acting was just something I liked, not something I thought I could do for a living. I was supposed to become a choreographer, or teach dance classes like my Mom. It was the only thing I thought I was good at. At the time, I saw acting as fun and awesome. I didn't really know how to "be an actor." Come senior year, I was all set to go off to college on big dance scholarships. One night in the middle of a dance performance, I blew out my left knee. In one week, I lost all my dance scholarships, could no longer attend the school of my choice, and was told by doctors I'd never dance again. After my injury, I learned the only school that accepted late submissions was Salem State College. So that's where I went. I auditioned to be in their BFA program, but because of my strong Boston accent, they wouldn't accept me without dialect training. So I had private dialect sessions after school to learn how to speak properly. I re-auditioned the following semester and got in. It was great. After school I moved to NYC and thought I'd try my hand at dance again. I missed it. So I went on some auditions and was offered a 10 month contract dancing for Carnival Cruise Lines. After the contract was up, I came back to NY and said, "Well, that was fun. I think I'm done now." So I hung up my dance shoes and poured everything I had into pursuing acting.

TS: Why did you choose to do this play and the role of Daphna?

TC: To be honest with you, I did not choose this play or Daphna. She chose me. I was sent the script and read the first two lines and thought, "Oh my God. I know her. I know this girl." That was it. Truly. It was simple. I just fell in love with her immediately. I agree with her way of thinking and I like how bold she is. She's unapologetic. I wish I was that unapologetic. I've only just begun to embrace not apologizing for myself all the time. I've only just begun to stop doing that. I admire how she owns who she is. That's a tall order in this day and age. It can be hard to stay yourself in this world. You've got to work at that every day. For Daphna, it's effortless. I love that about her.

TS: When we did post-play discussions during the Roundabout Underground run, audiences were always surprised that you are



not Jewish. What kind of preparation or research did you have to do in order to play Daphna?

TC: No, I'm not Jewish, but I do come from an Eastern European background. My Mom is Italian and Irish and my Dad is 100% Albanian, so I'm a good mix. I found myself focusing less and less on the religious aspects of this play, and more and more on the family dynamic. To me, this play is not about Judaism. It's about doing what's right by your family. Being loyal to your blood, where you're from, where your family's from. That's what this play's about in my eyes. Yes, of course I did research on the significance of the Chai and the Israeli Army and things like that, because they mean something to Daphna. She wants to join the Army. She's got big dreams. I wanted to have a full understanding of why those things mean something to her. I try to understand Daphna's upbringing and family life in the same way I recognize certain things from my home and my past in Boston. Jewish, Catholic, Albanian Orthodox, Hindu, this play is about family. The religious aspect to it is deeply important to Daphna, but it's certainly not the crux of this particular story.

TS: Can you talk about the relationship between Daphna and her cousins, Liam and Jonah? What do you feel is happening between Daphna and Melody?

TC: I'm a little private about what I think the specific dynamics are between Daphna and her cousins. But I will say that she loves them both immensely. Her problem is expressing that love. She doesn't

do that well. She doesn't know how. But she loves them. They're family. Blood runs deep with her.

In regards to Melody, I think Daphna sees Melody and sees a bug. In the same way that we see a fly in the house and think, "Aaaah, shit, somebody pass me the fly swatter before this stupid fly pisses me off, mates, and gives birth to other dumb ass baby flies who will just annoy the shit out of me." She's a pest to Daphna. She's just in the way.

TS: How do you collaborate with a director?

TC: I collaborate with directors in different ways. It's different with every director. Daniel Aukin and I have a particularly great working relationship. We're similar in the sense that we're private about our process and we take it seriously, but it is fun. He and I are not afraid to do something "badly." Sometimes that's how you get to the good stuff, you know? We work well together.

TS: Public school students will read this interview and will want to know what it takes to be a successful actor. What advice can you give young people who want to act?

TC: Becoming a successful actor in this business is an ongoing process even when you've found success. The struggle changes as you reach different levels, but it's always a fight. I don't think that ever goes away. When I first decided to truly pursue this, I would buy Backstage every week and comb through it for auditions that called for females. I went out on everything. Didn't matter to me if I was right for it or not, I just wanted to meet people. I came here with no connections. No hookups. I didn't know anybody. It's pretty scary here when you're completely alone with no one to

guide you. At one point I had 4 survival jobs, and that's where I started meeting people. I walked dogs, waited tables, bartended, cut keys at a hardware store. You name it. That's how I paid the rent. It took me about six years to book an acting job. I mean one that actually paid me something. People back home would say to me, "You still doin' that actin' thing, Tracee?" And my other favorite, "Boy, you're on a wink and a prayer, kid." I was broke for a long time. And I didn't know how I was going to be able to do this and make this my career, but I knew I would. I knew I had to. It's my heart. It's what gets me up in the morning. It's what I live for. Work and Happiness. They co-exist for me. I had to make it happen. Get it going. Make people see me. It took a long time. There was no room for doubts. And you have them. Everyone does. But you push them aside and leave them on the curb. They're bullshit. If this is what you want to do with your life then you simply find a way to do it. You make it work for you. Let people doubt you or worry about you or think you're crazy. Let them. If you know you'll make it, then you will. You will. You have to believe in yourself, yes,

"IT CAN BE HARD TO STAY YOURSELF IN THIS WORLD. YOU'VE GOT TO WORK AT THAT EVERY DAY. FOR DAPHNA, IT'S EFFORTLESS. I LOVE THAT ABOUT HER."

that's completely true, but in my opinion—this makes more of a difference than anything—you have to love this. You have to love it more than everything else. If you love it, if you really love it, if your whole heart leaps with happiness at the mere thought of doing this every single day until the day you die, then you will make it. And "making it" is different for everyone. Success has many different faces. Don't ever let anyone tell you that you can't do this. You can. But you can't be afraid of making a fool of yourself. That's how it gets done. You've got to be willing to fall on your ass and make mistakes. That's how you

learn. You've got to breathe through the pain to feel relief. Push yourself further than you think you can go. Follow your own heart. Be brave. And see what happens. •



Tracee Chimo and Molly Ranson

THE HOLOCAUST: LEGACIES IN AMERICA

Bad Jews illuminates the diverse perspectives held by grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Daphna, Liam, and Jonah are considered 3G (third generation). As the last generation of Americans who will know a living Holocaust survivor, they hold an important place in Jewish-American culture.

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, Jewish people who had survived the concentration camps were classified as “displaced persons” by international relief organizations. Most did not want to return to their pre-war European hometowns or countries due to fears of ongoing anti-Semitism. With the help of Allied governments, many emigrated out of Europe. Between 1946 and 1950, over 100,000 Jewish people migrated to the United States. Like Poppy, the grandfather in the play, many immigrants were the sole survivors of their extended families: their parents, siblings, spouses, and children had all been killed.

In the U.S., Holocaust survivors could join a thriving Jewish community. In 1946, there were 5 million American Jews, 3.66% of the country’s total population. Jewish families who had immigrated to the U.S. during late 19th and early 20th centuries had moved into the middle class and were integrating into mainstream American culture. American anti-Semitism, which peaked in the 1920s and 1930s, was declining, and synagogues and Jewish institutions supported the culture and religion. In America, survivors made educational and economic progress, earning college degrees and entering professions at nearly the same rate as their American-born Jewish peers. Many went on to marry and raise families.

As parents, Holocaust survivors took varied approaches to sharing their personal stories with their children. Many never spoke of the past to their children; however, their experiences during the war influenced their outlook, their faith, their everyday thoughts and actions, in ways their children often couldn’t understand. Survivors rarely received therapy or sought counseling in the decades immediately after the war, which may have left cases of post-traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety untreated. With few exceptions, no efforts were made to collect or publicize survivor testimony during these years.

During the 1950s and 1960s, as survivors were rebuilding their lives, a majority of Jewish-Americans observed the religious customs—marrying within the faith, observing holidays and the sabbath—even as neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces became more integrated. By now, there were three distinct branches of Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, giving American Jews choices about how to embrace the tradition. But many people who had experienced the Holocaust lost their faith in God and no longer embraced religion in any form.

The 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann, a high-ranking Nazi who had gone into hiding following the war, marked a turning point in worldwide awareness of the Holocaust. The court proceedings were the first ever fully televised. Approximately 100 survivors

ISRAEL

After the Holocaust, many survivors left Europe for Palestine, an area of the Middle East encompassing the Land of Israel as described in the Hebrew bible. The migration of Jewish people to Palestine began in 1882 as part of a movement called Zionism that sought to establish a national homeland for Jewish people. Zionism sought to create a safe homeland free of anti-Semitism and to reunite the world’s scattered Jewish population.

In 1948, Britain officially left Palestine and the State of Israel declared itself a nation. Many survivors of the Holocaust immigrated (or “made aliyah”) to Israel, and Jewish people from around the world continue to do so. The Hebrew word aliyah (literally: ascent) describes a Jewish person’s immigration to Israel.

The establishment of Israel started the first of many wars between Israel and its neighboring territories, angered by what they perceived as an illegitimate takeover of their homelands. Initially, most Jewish-Americans were strong supporters of Israel. Solidarity deepened in the wake of the 1967 Six Day War when Israel, convinced that an attack by its Arab neighbors was imminent, launched a preemptive attack on their air forces. Israel was then able to quickly defeat the opposing armies and seize additional lands in and around Jerusalem. However, the escalation of conflict between Israelis and the Palestinians has caused a deep divide in how Jewish-Americans now perceive Israel.

Today, a younger generation of liberal American Jews, like Liam, are moving away from Zionism. They are skeptical about Israel’s militancy, and they weigh the need for human rights and peace as importantly as the need for a Jewish homeland. Less identification with the Jewish religion in general and increased empathy with the Palestinians contribute to diminished support for Israel by some sections of the Jewish-American community.



testified, and the full details of the Holocaust, as told through personal stories, were broadcast into living rooms across the globe.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, American society had begun to address the Holocaust more openly in art, literature, film, and civic life. In 1978, NBC's miniseries *Holocaust* spread awareness of the events to American TV viewers, although it was critiqued for its melodramatic portrayals. That same year, President Jimmy Carter established the President's Commission on the Holocaust, and Congress established Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust. The first National Civic Commemoration of the Holocaust was held in the Capitol Rotunda in April of 1979. It was timed to occur on the Sunday before Yom Hashoah, the religious Holocaust Memorial Day established by Israel in the early 1950s. Soon after, planning began for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which opened in 1993. In 1994, Steven Spielberg established the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation with a goal of video taping the testimonies of 50,000 Holocaust survivors and witnesses. To date, the Shoah Foundation has a catalog of 51,696 indexed interviews, and is now recording testimony from eyewitnesses of genocides in Armenia, Cambodia, and Rwanda.

In 1977, the children of Holocaust survivors entered into the conversation with a *New York Times Magazine* article titled "Heirs of the Holocaust." A 1984 documentary, *Breaking the Silence*, focused on young adults as they explored their parents' lives during the Holocaust: events that had shaped their own lives but which they did not experience firsthand. At the time there were an estimated 200,000 "second-generation" (2G) survivors of the Holocaust.

The increased public dialogue about the Holocaust, combined with age and distance from the events, prompted more survivors to speak out about their experiences. Speakers' Bureaus were established to bring survivor testimonies to schools and community organizations. Some survivors found it easier to share their pasts with their grandchildren, and members of the third generation (3G) often grew up having a better understanding of these experiences than their parents. As Holocaust survivors have aged and died, institutions like the Zachor Foundation were created to ensure that the events will never be forgotten.

On a personal level, grandchildren of survivors must find their own approach to honor the legacy and share their understanding of the Holocaust with future generations. A small number of young people go so far as to have their arms tattooed to match the tattoo numbers inflicted upon their grandparents in the concentration camps. Less radically, new organizations like 3GNY strive to build a community for grandchildren of survivors to connect and explore their family histories. Some, like Daphna, seek connection to their grandparents' experience through a renewed commitment to the Jewish faith; however, others, like Liam, feel a strong bond to their ancestors but choose not to observe the religion. •

To learn more about how grandchildren of Holocaust survivors connect with their past and each other, visit 3GNY: <http://www.3g-ny.org>

THE CHAI

In *Bad Jews*, Daphna and her cousin Liam both want their grandfather's chai necklace. Judaism is one of the oldest religions in the world today, with roots dating back over 5,000 years. Hebrew symbols, words, and stories have been passed down within the Jewish tradition for many generations. It is part of what makes Judaism more than a religion, more than a race, but an identity that people feel strongly connected to.

The chai (pronounced like "hi" in English) is a popular Jewish symbol that many Jews, young and old, traditional and liberal, recognize and understand. The two Hebrew letters, Het (ח) and Yud (י), make the chai. The literal translation of the chai is "live," "living," and/or "The living God." It is a command: a command to live by God's laws, to survive, and to live a life worth living. To the Jewish people, the chai is a reminder to value the time you have on earth: do not simply exist, but work, struggle, laugh, cry, smile, and love.

The chai also has numerological meaning. The gematria is a mystical tradition that assigns a numerological value to Hebrew letters. The Hebrew letters that make up the chai, Het (ח) and Yud (י), add up to 18 (Het= 8 Yud=10), thus making 18 a lucky number and a spiritual number. At Jewish weddings, guests often give the bride and groom gifts of money in multiples of 18, symbolizing a gift of luck or life.



INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR DANIEL AUKIN

Education Dramaturg Ted Sod interviewed director Daniel Aukin to discuss his work on *Bad Jews*.

Ted Sod: Would you tell us a little about yourself?

Daniel Aukin: I was born in London. My father, David Aukin, was Artistic Director of several theatres, including the Hampstead Theatre in London, and he also ran the Haymarket in Leicester, England. Later he ran the National Theatre with Richard Eyre. My mother, Nancy Meckler, is American and a theatre director. She has directed all over the UK and internationally. For about 20 years, she was the Artistic Director of the Shared Experience Theatre Company in London.

TS: Did you know you wanted to be a director from an early age?

DA: It was buried if it was there at all. I ended up going to college in the United States. I went to the University of Chicago. There was no theatre major per se, but there was a vibrant student-run theatre organization. Because it was student-run, none of it was tied in academically. I was able to direct a play in my first semester.

TS: Did you come to New York immediately after finishing school in Chicago?

DA: I went from Chicago to Austin, Texas and started a theatre company there called Physical Plant with Steve Moore and Mike Martin. A year later, I came to New York and had various jobs and temped and did script coverage and tried to make a living, but by then I did know I wanted to be a theatre director. I was a resident director at Jim Simpson's Flea Theatre close to when it was starting. At the time, there was a thriving theatre and performance scene on the Lower East Side around this organization called Todo Con Nada. It was one of the few places where you could perform something and they just took the money from the first few tickets sold every night and everything else was yours. You couldn't really make any money, but you weren't losing money either. That was my first experience self-producing in New York.

TS: How did you get involved with *Bad Jews*? Who approached you with the play?

DA: I was asked to read it and I thought it was an extremely personal, painful, and very funny piece of writing. At that point, Roundabout Underground had already committed to doing it. It just struck a huge chord for me. I first met with Josh at Robyn Goodman's office. She was there as well as Jill Rafson, the Literary Manager at Roundabout, and Josh Fiedler, Robyn's associate. We talked for a bit about the play and they told me about its development to date. They asked me some questions about it, how I responded to it. Then Josh and I went out and just had coffee and talked. That was really it. But as in all of these things, collaboration is a delicate thing and you just go with your gut.



TS: Can you talk about how the script resonated for you personally?

DA: I was instantly struck by what a confident voice Josh has as a playwright. The strength was apparent from the first pages. The play deals with the specifics of a very particular family and the legacy of the Holocaust on subsequent generations. Yet I would never call it an "issue play." It all feels very specific and pointed. He's exploring many sides of a complicated issue. It deals with the legacy of history and how we live authentically in the present in relationship to the past. I also felt like it was a piece of writing—and you'd have to ask Josh if this is true—that the writer had to write, needed to write, and that he was using to try to understand something for and about himself.

TS: Will you talk about casting *Bad Jews*?

DA: Auditions can be great opportunities to provoke all kinds of discussions with the playwright about the play. Casting for *Bad Jews* was blissfully difficult. There were many, many incredible actors who came in for it.

TS: Can you talk about choosing and collaborating with your design team? How will the play manifest itself visually?

DA: For this play it seemed like the most important thing was for design to get out of the way. One of the considerations that we had when we were looking at floor plans of the apartment was: is

it useful for there to be as much room as possible for the actors to move around in so that they can easily get from one section of the stage to another? Or is there greater value in there not being quite enough room for people to move around in, creating obstacles and difficulty? A lot of design meetings were spent talking about the family that bought this apartment and why they bought it, how long they've had it, what their income and socioeconomic background is, how they see this apartment and how it might be furnished to reflect all that. We looked at various moments in the play and tried to imagine how they might work in different configurations.

TS: When working on a new play, do you have a certain way in which you approach a writer when something isn't working?

DA: It depends where the play is in its development. It depends on whether I've just been asked to read a play and give feedback or if it's actually something that I'm going to direct. If I have the sense that something isn't working, I point it out. I don't think it's necessary to be completely prescriptive. And I don't think that it's always about an opportunity to fix something that's broken. Sometimes it's something that I don't understand. I might say, "I don't understand this moment and it isn't working for me and here's why. Can you help me understand it better?" And sometimes the playwright will help me understand it and I'll say, "Oh...oh! That's really what they're talking about." And then that section that seemed problematic to me suddenly becomes understood. Or the playwright might say, "I agree." And it might begin a conversation about rewriting.

TS: I want to talk about the contrast between the characters of Liam and Daphna. What do you think motivates them?

DA: I don't know if Josh would agree with this, and it may be too simplistic, but one way to look at it is that they're both people who are trying to live very conscious lives and that means completely different things to each of them. To Daphna, that means a wholesale immersion in, and living through, what she understands as the legacy of her religion, and, I think, the Holocaust. Daphna sees that as a deeply authentic way to live and to be a conscious human. I think Liam might say that a lot of those things are empty of value and not meaningful to him. To pay lip service to something that isn't meaningful to him would be inauthentic. So, in his own way, he's living an authentic life even though to Daphna that comes across as a wholesale rejection of her choices. As a director, I'm looking to validate all of it.

TS: What about the relationship between Daphna and Liam's brother, Jonah—what is your take on that?

DA: I feel that however outrageous Daphna's behavior is at times, she is struggling with the same issues that Jonah is; and just as deeply. It's just uncomfortable to be around. And Jonah is a character who is somewhat easy to dismiss as not part of the main thrust of the piece. And when the audience learns that Jonah, who is somebody who seems somewhat peripheral, is actually right in the middle of all the same stuff, I think it's amazing. In Josh's writing, your opinion of the characters evolves and changes as the play goes on. And that's really exciting.

TS: What are the challenges of restaging the play in a larger space?

DA: Whenever something works, there's an aspect to its workingness that is mysterious and not entirely planned or controlled. Moving *Bad Jews* from the space for which this production was originally conceived—the intimate 62-seat Roundabout Underground—into the much more expansive Laura Pels, provokes questions. Okay, we're in a new space with new demands, new strengths and new weaknesses. Bigger is sometimes better but not always. How do we hold on to what we perceive as the strengths from its jewel-box incarnation and invite it to sing in this new room? Do we keep everything the same? It turns out you can't. The rooms are just different. So, what do you keep? What do you jettison? What are the critical values of the piece? Of the room? Of the room and the piece in conversation? Is the design for the larger space a hopeless clinging to elements that sang in a shoebox and will drown in this larger room? Are we holding on too tight to our darlings? Should the design approach start from scratch? How will the performances need to modulate to read in a different, larger room? Should they? What is lost? What is gained? Some part of me hopes that for many of the people who will see *Bad Jews* in both its Pels incarnation and at the Underground, any difference will be negligible. But know it is a translation. And if the translation is invisible, then maybe we will have done a good job. And it might be because we've done a lot of work to make it so. Or not. It's a bit of a mystery.

TS: What advice would you give to young people who want to direct for the theatre?

DA: I feel like I learned most about being a director from doing it. But it's really through self-producing that I got to direct at all. And some of the things I failed most at, I learned so much from. I would say the more you can do on your own, even if it's just for a handful of friends, the better. Especially early on, while nobody is paying attention. It may be lonely as hell. But the obstacles to taking risks and exploring the areas you feel most unsure of may never be lower. •



Molly Ranson and Michael Zegen

INTERVIEW WITH SET DESIGNER LAUREN HELPERN



Phillip Ettinger, Molly Ranson, Tracee Chimo and Michael Zegen

Education Dramaturg Ted Sod spoke with Set Designer Lauren Helpern about her work on *Bad Jews*.

TS: Tell us a little about yourself. When did you decide to become a designer?

LH: I was born and educated here in Manhattan. I went to college at Brown University, where I was in the theatre department, and then grad school at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. I started going to theatre when I was very young. It was considered a special treat, and we would get all dressed up. We would go for my birthday or for other special occasions. I saw some amazing productions, mostly musicals. One of the reasons I fell in love with scene design was the first five minutes of the original production of *Sunday in the Park with George* — that was my "aha moment."

My father is an architect so I've always been exposed to building design and, at one point, I considered following in his footsteps. I even did a summer program in architecture, but I realized I cared more about creating illusions than real spaces and how the plumbing and electricity worked behind the walls. I like telling stories and being able to explore different periods and styles.

I had lots of wonderful teachers along the way but two people who were particularly encouraging and helpful in grad school were Campbell Baird and Lee Rand. Mentors are also important. Robin Wagner, whom I worked for before I even went to grad school, has always been extremely supportive. And I rely on my production management friends for their technical advice.

TS: What is it like working with the director, Daniel Aukin?

LH: I think Daniel is fabulous. He knows what he wants to accomplish and he is very analytical and clear about it. We collaborated earlier on *4000 Miles*, which was another realistic interior, produced by Lincoln Center Theatre. Our discussions are always interesting and productive and have a lot to do with the greater world of the play. He comes up with ideas that go beyond what you read on the page, which pushes me to think differently. I have learned new tricks from working with him, which has made my designs stronger. For Daniel every detail has to ring true and be

defensible, particularly if the space is based on reality, which can be tricky when you are designing for the theatres we've worked in. It's important to both of us that the audience knows exactly where they are and believes the characters in that space. He can be very bold and unorthodox in his choices. The sofa placement and red carpet in *Bad Jews* were his requests, which turned out to be incredibly dynamic decisions. And not too many directors would consider having actors walk into a room moving away from an audience.

TS: The set for *Bad Jews* presents very specific challenges. Can you talk about them?

LH: It's a very specific setting. The story I created for myself was that the apartment was purchased within the past year by Liam and Jonah's parents. They set it up to be a place for their kids and also a guest room, so the personality of the space is pretty neutral. I felt there was a certain level of investment — maybe not completely gut renovated, but significantly spruced up with a new, relatively high end, kitchen and bath — but not completely top of the line. I designed it as something they could easily flip if they wanted. We know the apartment has a view of the Hudson River that's from the bathroom so the question becomes about its orientation toward Riverside Drive and where the windows and doors are located. The biggest challenge in the show is the building hallway and how it relates to the apartment. We tried all different scenarios. Because the scenes that take place in the hallway are important, it ended up downstage. I kept it as narrow as possible so the apartment would not feel remote from the audience. Some atypical choices that Daniel pushed for, like the couch and front door facing upstage, help create the physical boundary between the acting areas. He was also very specific that he wanted the room to feel like an obstacle course, that people had to climb over things, like bouncy airbeds and sleeper sofa mattresses. He wanted to create a space that allowed for physical comedy while also having a sense of claustrophobia.

TS: How are you going to maintain that feeling of claustrophobia in the Pels, which is a larger space?

LH: Surprisingly, the Underground and the Pels have almost the same stage dimensions but the audience configuration and the sight lines are extremely different, so it's impossible to just pick up the set and move it upstairs. We knew we wanted to hold onto as much of what we had before as possible, but the longest discussions were definitely about the claustrophobic feel of the room and how to keep the intimacy when you have to reach a much larger audience. The Underground has a very low ceiling that closed in the set and the Pels has so much air. I changed some proportions, which might not be noticeable if you didn't know about them, raised the wall height so people in the balcony could see, and added in a ceiling beam to cap the space. I'm looking forward to seeing how it translates.

TS: What was your response after first reading the play?

LH: I felt like I knew these people. There were so many parts that hit home. I think Josh's writing is phenomenal. It's an amazing piece of theatre. His language is so rich for someone so young. The audience is constantly on edge about whose side they should be taking and where the play is going. Among other things, the play investigates what is a good Jew versus a bad Jew and what is it to be a secular Jew versus an observant Jew. I think that there are a lot of questions that Josh brings up that I've certainly grappled with.

TS: That monologue that Daphna has about Jewish men and specifically her cousin, Liam, being attracted to "inferior women," did you relate at all to that?

LH: I think everyone has known couples where they don't understand the pairing. But so many unknown factors go into attraction and different things are important to different people. Liam dates the anti-Daphna—uncomplicated, non-confrontational, and non-Jewish women—and Daphna really looks down on him for his choices of girlfriend. She's tough and judgmental, but I think she genuinely feels he is not dating his equal in personality and intellect. While some of her speech is argumentative for the sake of argument, she's adamant about maintaining Jewish traditions and Liam doesn't seem to care. I've been involved in so many discussions that pertain to these choices. I know a lot of Jewish people who have married outside the faith and I also know Jewish

people who would never marry someone who isn't Jewish. Both the melting pot and maintaining the bloodline arguments are valid. My mother talks about her grandfather who immigrated to this country from Romania in the 19th century and how many in that generation wanted to assimilate as quickly as possible. Others held onto the language and traditions of their home country. But I'm digressing. Daphna wants Liam to see things her way and, since he won't, she picks a fight.

TS: Do you have any advice for young people who want to become a set designer?

LH: You have to love creating other worlds, whether they are realistic or abstract, contemporary, historic, or completely imagined. One day you may be designing a living room and the next you may be doing an awards show. You also have to enjoy collaborating. That's one of the reasons I went into theatre. I love working with interesting people who have varied expertise. It's exciting to have everyone's work come together to create a holistic production.

On a practical level, set design is a visual medium, and it's important to expose yourself to as much art, architecture, and culture as possible. You want to have a broad knowledge base and be as curious as you possibly can. Inspiration is everywhere. The key is to know where to start looking. *Bad Jews* is a realistic setting, so I spent days pouring over real estate ads trying to picture the apartment. The internet is incredibly useful for this type of research. For other shows I've turned to paintings or photographs. Most of the time it's a combination of ingredients that get you where you have to go.

You need to develop skills, from researching to drawing to drafting. You need to learn how to contextualize. I went to a liberal arts college and I would highly recommend that, but I know there are people who decide very young what they want to do and go into a conservatory program instead. But, no matter where you are studying, it's important to have a broad background. Keep sketchbooks and scrapbooks, paper or digital. Travel as much as possible. See if you can get into people's studios. See theatre. Do theatre. Do whatever you can in the field to learn if you want this life, because it's crazy but wonderful. •



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

FOR
EDUCATORS

HOW DO ACTORS PLAY A CONFLICT OVER A SPECIFIC OBJECT?

The central conflict of *Bad Jews* involves two cousins who both want an important family heirloom. Use improvisation to explore acting this universal conflict before seeing the play.

Materials: Objects in classroom (ie, book, stapler, pen, food containers) or bring in everyday household objects (ie, mug, vase, photograph); paper and pens or pencils.

- WRITE** Students work in pairs to decide the given circumstances for a scene in which two characters engage in conflict for one object. Decide:
- WHO are these characters and what is their relationship?
 - WHY does each character want this object for her/his self? (To keep the stakes high, each character should have a very strong reason for wanting the object, and there can be no possibility of sharing!)
 - WHERE are they?

ACTIVATE Ask volunteers to improvise a scene with their object. Decide who is playing which character, and give one character the opening line: "That's mine. I need it because..." Possibly stop and make suggestions to keep the scene building. Coach the actors to articulate their motives. You can make a rule that actors cannot touch each other or the object at the same time.

REFLECT For actors: How did your character feel during the scene? What did you say or do to get what you want? Did your character "win" or "lose" the scene?

For audience: What did each character want and why? What did s/he say or do to get it? How could these characters resolve their conflict? How do you see these conflicts happening in your own lives?

HOW DO WE DEFINE OUR IDENTITY THROUGH THE RETELLING OF FAMILY STORIES?

In *Bad Jews*, cousins Daphna and Liam, and Liam's brother Jonah, argue over a necklace that their grandfather, Poppy, carried with him through the Holocaust. The story of the necklace, and Poppy's survival, influences how each character understands their own identity.

Materials: Pens, paper

REFLECT The family story in *Bad Jews* deals with a serious event, but almost every family [or group of friends] has a story that's retold and expresses something about how the family sees itself. Think of a story that's retold by members of your family.

WRITE Write your family story down as if you are telling to a younger family member. Do not write your name on the story.

ACTIVATE Stories are folded and placed in hat or box in the center. Each person draws someone else's story. Take five minutes to read and rehearse telling the story. In a group, share out the story you drew from the hat. Why do you think this story is important to this family? What does this story tell you about how this family sees itself? Repeat through all stories. Give option at the very end for participants to reflect on hearing their story read aloud and what, if anything, resonated from the discussion of family identity.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

FOR
EDUCATORS

HOW DO WE RESPOND TO THE CHARACTERS AND CONFLICTS OF THE PLAY, USING EMPATHY AND/OR ARGUMENT WRITING?

After seeing *Bad Jews*, did you feel more empathy for DAPHNA or LIAM? (Empathy is the capacity to understand and share the feelings of another.) Do you have a strong opinion about who is right? Imagine you are the best friend of either DAPHNA or LIAM, talking to them the next day.

ACTIVATE Phone Call: Students play out an imaginary phone call, in which they speak to either DAPHNA or LIAM the next day, express empathy, and offer an opinion or advice on what this character should do now. (Teacher can also be the voice of DAPHNA and LIAM to prompt student response.) To further challenge students, ask students to express empathy for the character they did NOT agree with.

WRITE Write an argument claiming that either DAPHNA or LIAM has the greatest right to inherit their grandfather's chai. (CCR W1). Support the claim with evidence from the play (what the characters said or did), include a counterclaim and rebuttal, and a conclusion.

REFLECT Who do you feel more empathy towards, and why? As evidence, identify a few things the character said or did that made you take their side.

HOW DOES A PLAYWRIGHT USE A PROVOCATIVE TITLE TO HIGHLIGHT A PLAY'S THEME?

In choosing *Bad Jews* as the title, playwright Joshua Harmon focuses his audience's attention on the question facing his characters: What is our responsibility to our family religion, traditions, and/or culture?

Materials: blank paper, colored markers, tape, any other art supplies desired

REFLECT Consider your family culture, religion, and/or traditions. What is expected of your generation? How might your actions break with, or live up to, those expectations?

WRITE Imagine you have written a play that deals with your generation's responsibility to family tradition. Create a provocative title for your play.

ACTIVATE Design a poster that advertises your play. Include your play's title and either an illustration or a one sentence description of what the play is about. Use color and shape to draw attention to the title.

Display completed posters around the room and have an in-class gallery walk. What grabs your attention about these titles? What do you infer each play is about? Why?

GLOSSARY

ALIYAH	The immigration of Jews to Israel. In Hebrew, “aliyah” means ascent. It is also used to describe the honor of being called to read from the Torah at Sabbath services. <i>In a fit of anger, Liam speaks dismissively about Daphna wanting to “make aliyah and live in Jerusalem” as part of what he sees as her current fanatic devotion to Judaism.</i>
ANTI-SEMITE	Someone who has or shows prejudice toward the Jewish people as a religious, racial, or cultural group. <i>Daphna refers to her cousin Liam as an Anti-Semite.</i>
HAIFA	The largest city in Northwestern Israel. <i>Daphna talks about how she is going to take rabbinical coursework in Haifa.</i>
MALAISE	A feeling of discomfort or uneasiness, of being “out of sorts.” <i>Liam is accusing Daphna and her family of pretending to feel out of place amidst his family’s greater wealth.</i>
ONUS	A burden or responsibility. <i>Daphna says to her cousin Jonah that the “onus” is on them now to carry on Judaism.</i>
PASSOVER	A Jewish festival commemorating the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. <i>Daphna tells a story about Liam’s actions when the family was celebrating Passover.</i>
QUASH	To put an end to, to suppress. <i>Throughout the play, both Daphna and Liam ask Jonah to help them “quash” the discussion about Poppy’s chai.</i>
SLICHA	“Excuse me” or “Sorry” in Hebrew. <i>Daphna says this to excuse herself from conversation to go brush her hair after Liam gives her a hard time.</i>
RABBI	The spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation or synagogue. <i>Daphna speaks about taking coursework in Haifa from a Rabbi.</i>
RABBINICAL	Of or relating to rabbis or to Jewish law or teachings. <i>Daphna talks about how she is going to take rabbinical coursework in Haifa.</i>
SHIVA	A traditional period of mourning in Judaism that lasts one week for the immediate family. <i>Daphna says she thinks Liam will make a mockery of Shiva while they mourn their grandfather’s passing.</i>

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ABOUT ROUNABOUT

ROUNABOUT THEATRE COMPANY

Founded in 1965, Roundabout Theatre Company has grown from a small 150-seat theatre in a converted supermarket basement to become the nation's most influential not-for-profit theatre company, as well as one of New York City's leading cultural institutions. With five stages on and off Broadway, Roundabout now reaches over 700,000 theatergoers, students, educators and artists across the country and around the world every year.

We are committed to producing the highest quality theatre with the finest artists, sharing stories that endure, and providing accessibility to all audiences. A not-for-profit company, Roundabout fulfills its mission each season through the production of classic plays and musicals; development and production of new works by established and emerging writers; educational initiatives that enrich the lives of children and adults; and a subscription model and audience outreach programs that cultivate and engage all audiences.

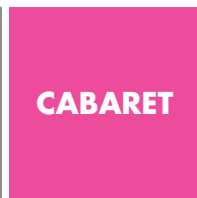
2013-2014 SEASON



By Terence Rattigan
Starring Michael Cumpsty, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Alessandro Nivola, Roger Rees
Directed by Lindsay Posner



By Sophie Treadwell
Starring Rebecca Hall
Directed by Lyndsey Turner



Book by Joe Masteroff
Music by John Kander
Lyrics by Fred Ebb
Starring Alan Cumming and Michelle Williams
Co-directed and choreographed by Rob Marshall
Directed by Sam Mendes



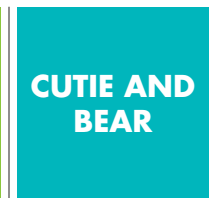
By Tom Stoppard
Directed by Sam Gold



By Joshua Harmon
Directed by Daniel Aukin



By Donald Margulies
Directed by Pam MacKinnon



By Bekah Brunstetter
Directed by Evan Cabnet

Learn more at roundabouttheatre.org

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STAFF SPOTLIGHT: JENNIFER DIBELLA, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Ted Sod: What are the most important aspects of being the Director of Education at Roundabout?

Jennifer DiBella: I think the most important thing is to be an advocate for all of our constituents: audiences, students, teachers, and teaching artists. It's important to think about what's next, to keep abreast of the trends in arts education, and to form strong relationships with other departments in the theatre. It's also important that we provide access to theatre education to people who might not have it. Finally, we need to be leveraging technology, making sure that systems are in place to support our work.

TS: What philosophy do you have about arts organizations like Roundabout going into the public schools? Why is it important for students to see a play like *Bad Jews*?

JD: Over and over again, I see that many students do not have access to quality arts instruction in the schools. I am interested in how theatre can be used to help students look at the world in a different way, build the skills they'll need to be successful in their careers, and not accept things at face value.

Everything that we do in classrooms is tied back to the main stage. We choose which students go to which shows by carefully curating the experience for them. *Bad Jews* is a great family play, and the students who saw the show in the Black Box related to the family dynamics between cousins—how the characters were talking about their parents and their

grandparents. The work that we are doing is really aligned with the state, local, city, and national Common Core standards. We offer students skills needed to analyze text, make informed choices, collaborate, and understand how to interpret the author's purpose. We encourage students to think critically about the information they receive.

TS: How many partner schools do we have and with how many students? How much does it cost a student to come to a play?

JD: We have 12 partner schools in all five boroughs. We reach about 3,000 students a year through this partnership. If you are in one of our partner schools, the ticket is free. When seniors graduate from a partner school, they will have seen at least 7 or 8 shows through Roundabout. If you are a New York City school student who is not in one of our partner schools, you can come for \$20 dollars a ticket.

TS: You were just announced as the new Director of Education. What are your goals?

JD: We want to expand Student Production Workshop, our after-school program, to other venues in the city because we know the model works. We have a 100% graduation rate among participants. I would love to do more distance-learning projects by connecting our students with audiences all over the world. •

WHEN YOU GET TO THE THEATRE

FOR
EDUCATORS

TICKET POLICY

As a student participant in Producing Partners, Page To Stage or Theatre Access, you will receive a discounted ticket to the show from your teacher on the day of the performance. You will notice that the ticket indicates the section, row and number of your assigned seat. When you show your ticket to the usher inside the theatre, he or she will show you where your seat is located. These tickets are not transferable and you must sit in the seat assigned to you.

PROGRAMS

All the theatre patrons are provided with a program that includes information about the people who put the production together. In the "Who's Who" section, for example, you can read about the actors' roles in other plays and films, perhaps some you have already seen.

AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

As you watch the show please remember that the biggest difference between live theatre and a film is that the actors can see you and hear you and your behavior can affect their performance. They appreciate your applause and laughter, but can be easily distracted by people talking or getting up in the middle of the show. So please save your comments or need to use the rest room for intermission. Also, there is no food permitted in the theatre, no picture taking or recording of any kind, and if you have a cell phone, beeper, alarm watch or anything else that might make noise, please turn it off before the show begins.



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