

SHALAKHMONES

שלה-מנרת

ותבעי ברעש
השדרביט
דיאמר לה
המנך מה נך
אסתר המלכה
קאמץ שייקט
מועץ ניש קייך שנת-מנות



AN EXPERIMENT IN YIDDISH THEATRE

אַ ייִדיש טעאַטער-עקספּערִמענט

THE CAST

פורים שפילערס

A Cello	Tom Flaherty	.....	אַ טשעלאָ
A Flute	Ellie Rutenberg	.....	אַ פֿלייט
A Man	Abraham Berger	.....	אַ מאַן
A Woman	Bracha Weingrod	.....	אַ פֿרוי
A Girl	Lillian Rabinowitz	.....	אַ מיידל
A Young Man	Joseph Rothenberg	.....	אַ בחור
Late Comers	Sarah Berger Debbie Wolfe	.....	פֿאַרשפּעטיקטע
A Guitar	Marc Hoffman	.....	אַ גיטאַרע
A Dancer	Diane Kravitz	.....	אַ טענצערין
A Vendor	David Roskies	.....	אַ פֿאַרקויפֿער

PRODUCTION STAFF

אויפֿפֿירונג-פּערסאָנאַל

Director	Diane Kravitz	.....	רעזשיסער
Stage Manager	Lester Shulman	.....	סצענע-אַנפֿירער
Music	Tom Flaherty	.....	מוזיק
Set and Lighting Design . .	Lew Morton	.....	סצענע-און ליכטפּלאַן
House Manager	Debbie Wolfe	.....	זאַל-אַנפֿירער
Technician	Bob Cherny	.....	טעכניקער
Artist	Zipora Schreiber	.....	קונסטלערין
Program Design	David Roskies Jim Sleeper	.....	פּראָגראַם
Advisors	Albert Axelrad, Joshua Rothenberg Emanuel Golsmith, Richard Katz, James Klee, Abraham Maslow		בעלי-יועצים

Members of the Workshop: Clayton Austin, Jeremy Brochin, Sarah Berger, Dick Hoffman, Anna Gratun, Sandy Rosen, Beth Levine, Sue Slotnick, Elaine Wolfe

Acknowledgements: Douglas Maddox, Robert Goldman, Ralph Norman, Addie Shumsker

Producers, in cooperation with the Brandeis Theatre Arts Dept:
Jacob Glatstein
Brandeis Hillel Graduate Students
Brandeis Graduate Student Council

Photo and exhibit courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society.

COURSE OF EVENTS

"Di Mezinke Oysgegeb'n" (I've Married Off the Youngest).
A wedding song by Mark Warshavsky (1848-1907).

"Di Yontevdike Teg" (The Festive Days). A poor tailor day-dreams about the approaching holiday. By M. Warshavsky.

"Aleyn" (Alone). By Yankev Glatstein (1896-).

Her father-mother sit on the couch drowsing.
She, the thirteen-year-old, is alone.
Sunset bewitches the window.
She stares out through her large bluewonders.
Her forehead etches hieroglyphics on the pane.
Father-mother snore quietly,
rhymed in sleep like a children's song.
She's alone and who will protect her
when the gentle wild wolf comes in?
The gentle wild wolf is hairy,
his eyes are green flies.
He's such a goodbad wolf
such a warm mysterious wolf.
Father-mother sleep several miles away from her
and she's terribly alone.
Nails scrape at the doorknob.
The door squeaks.
Who will protect her
when the gentle wild wolf comes in?

translation by Ruth Whitman

"Yome, Yome". A Folk song. A mother tries to discover what her daughter yearns for. The answer, predictable of course, is a groom, a khosindl.

"A Dokter" (A Doctor). One-act play by Sholem Aleichem written in 1887. A shadkhn (matchmaker) appears at the home of a nouveau-riche family in Russia. The husband Khayim-Leyb is at first reluctant to read the shadkhn's letter concerning a "rare and marvelous" match. Khayim-Leyb finally relents at the urging of his wife Khane-Leyeh. At the conclusion of the letter an argument ensues over the monetary investment for finding a proper husband. In addition, Khane-Leyeh insists upon a doctor while her husband is equally adamant about finding a merchant (soykher) for their daughter. At this point Vera enters the room, amused at her parent's old-fashioned practices. She, being of the new generation, rejects the whole idea of prearranged marriages. The play concludes farcically with the entrance of the befuddled maid.

חיים-לייב.....יוסף ראָטענבערג
חנה-לאה.....ברכה ווינגראָד
שלום שרכן.....אַבֿרהם בערגער
וויעראַטשקע.....ליבעלע ראָבינאָוויטש
זלאָטע דאָס מיידל.....דבֿורה בערגער

"Margaritkelekh" (Daisies). By Zalman Shneyer (1887-1957).
A love song that is self-explanatory.

"Yiddishkayt" (Jewishness). By Yankev Glatstein.

For those Sabbath lights that flame
in your memory
and have already become deathbed candles set
beside a weeping soul,
do you yearn perhaps, Jewish poet?
Forget it, they are no more,
It's agony to see that Yiddishkayt
has become a cantor's call,
and dried up is the well
of the whole glowing ritual.
Shall Yiddishkayt become
only a folk song,
that catches at the heart
and coats the entrails
with the warm honey of memory?
Better to break up such a celebration.
You, Jewish poet, who have become the bee
and produce the honey margarine
that smears a slice of bread with song--
you are no more than a chorister
who has only enough
for an amen in the chorus of decline.

We relied too much on memory,
until drop by drop
all has been contrived out of us.
Now we are lonely for a tune, a rhyme,
for an escaped flavor.
We all swing around our heads
the sacrificial hen.
But the mumbered prayer's meaning
no longer interests us.
Nostalgia Yiddishkayt is a lullaby for old men
gumming soaked white bread.
Shall we produce the soft crumbs,
the words lifeless and hollow,
we who had dreamed
of a new assembly of Men of the Great Temple?

"Oyfn Veg Shteyt a Boym" (On the Roadside Stands a Tree).
By Itsik Manger (1901-1969). A parable of a little boy named
Itsik who sees the birds abandoning their tree for the
winter months. He decides to take their place. On announcing
his intention to his mother, the good woman is concerned
about her son's health. She urges him to dress in all his
winter clothes. Finally, when Itsik tries to raise his hands
and fly, he finds that the clothes have weighted him down.
His dream is thwarted by his mother's love.

Word Ping-Pong. A not-so-random selection of Yiddish
proverbs and readings from Uriel Weinreich's (1927-1967)
Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary.

"Kum Aher du Filosof" (Come Here You Philosopher) By
Velvl Zbarzher, a folk bard of the Haskalah (Enlightenment)
movement in Eastern Europe. The song pokes fun at the
Hasid's fear of modern science, but its satiric thrust is
modified by the captivating melody.