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SHLEMIEL THE FIRST

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CONCEIVED AND ADAPTED BY ROBERT BRUSTEIN

LYRICS BY ARNOLD WEINSTEIN

COMPOSED, ADAPTED AND ORCHESTRATED BY HANKUS NETSKY

ARRANGEMENTS, ADDITIONAL MUSIC AND MUSIC DIRECTION BY ZALMEN MLOTEK

EDITORIAL SUPERVISION BY DAVID GORDON

Featuring

BOB ADER*, JEFF BROOKS*, MICHAEL IANNUCCI*, JESSE MEANS*, DAVID SKEIST*,
AMY WARREN*, DARRYL WINSLOW*, KRISTINE ZBORNIK*

Band

YAEKO MIRANDA ELMALEH, MICHAEL LARSEN, DANIEL LINDEN, NICK MORRISON,
DMITRI "ZISL" SLEPOVITCH, GRANT SMITH, EZRA WELLER, JIM WHITNEY

Ensemble

STEPHEN CAIN, BRANDON LAVON HIGHTOWER, AMANDA A. LEDERER,
BRANDON MONOKIAN, AARON NETSKY

Scenic Designer
ROBERT ISRAEL

Costume Designer
CATHERINE ZUBER

Lighting Designer
JENNIFER TIPTON

Sound Designer
DAVID MESCHTER

Costume Supervisor
HALEY LIEBERMAN

Casting
CINDI RUSH CASTING & DEBORAH BROWN

Production Stage Manager
ED FITZGERALD*

Production Manager
B.D. WHITE

General Manager
THERESA VON KLUG

Press Representative
THE BRUCE COHEN GROUP, LTD

DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY

DAVID GORDON

THIS PRODUCTION IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF ALICE PLAYTEN.

Shlemiel the First was produced by Peak Performances at Montclair State University in January, 2010 at the Alexander Kasser Theater. Previous productions appeared under the auspices of the American Repertory Theater (1994), The American Music Theater Festival, the American Conservatory Theater and Serious Fun! at Lincoln Center among other prestigious venues.

Leadership support for this production was provided by The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Tryna Ritza (Mrs. Shlemiel) AMY WARREN*
 Shlemiel MICHAEL IANNUCCI*
 Gittel, Sender Shlamazel, Yenta Pesha KRISTINE ZBORNIK*
 Mottel, Moishe Pipik, Chaim Rascal DARRYL WINSLOW*
 Zeinvel Shmeckel, Man in House JESSE MEANS*
 Mendel Shmendrick DAVID SKEIST*
 Dopey Petzel, Zalman Tippish BOB ADER*
 Gronam Ox JEFF BROOKS*

ENSEMBLE

STEPHEN CAIN, BRANDON LAVON HIGHTOWER,
 AMANDA A. LEDERER, BRANDON MONOKIAN, AARON NETSKY

THE SHLEMIEL BAND

Piano/Conductor—ZALMEN MLOTEK

Piano/Conductor (Friday and Saturday matinee performances)—MICHAEL LARSEN;
 Violin—YAEKO MIRANDA ELMALEH; Trombone—DANIEL LINDEN; Banjo/
 Mandolin/Guitar—NICK MORRISON; Clarinet—DMITRI “ZISL” SLEPOVITCH;
 Drums/Percussion—GRANT SMITH; Trumpet—EZRA WELLER; Bass—JIM WHITNEY

Assistant Stage Manager MARCI SKOLNICK*

* Member of Actors' Equity Association,
 the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

MUSICAL NUMBERS

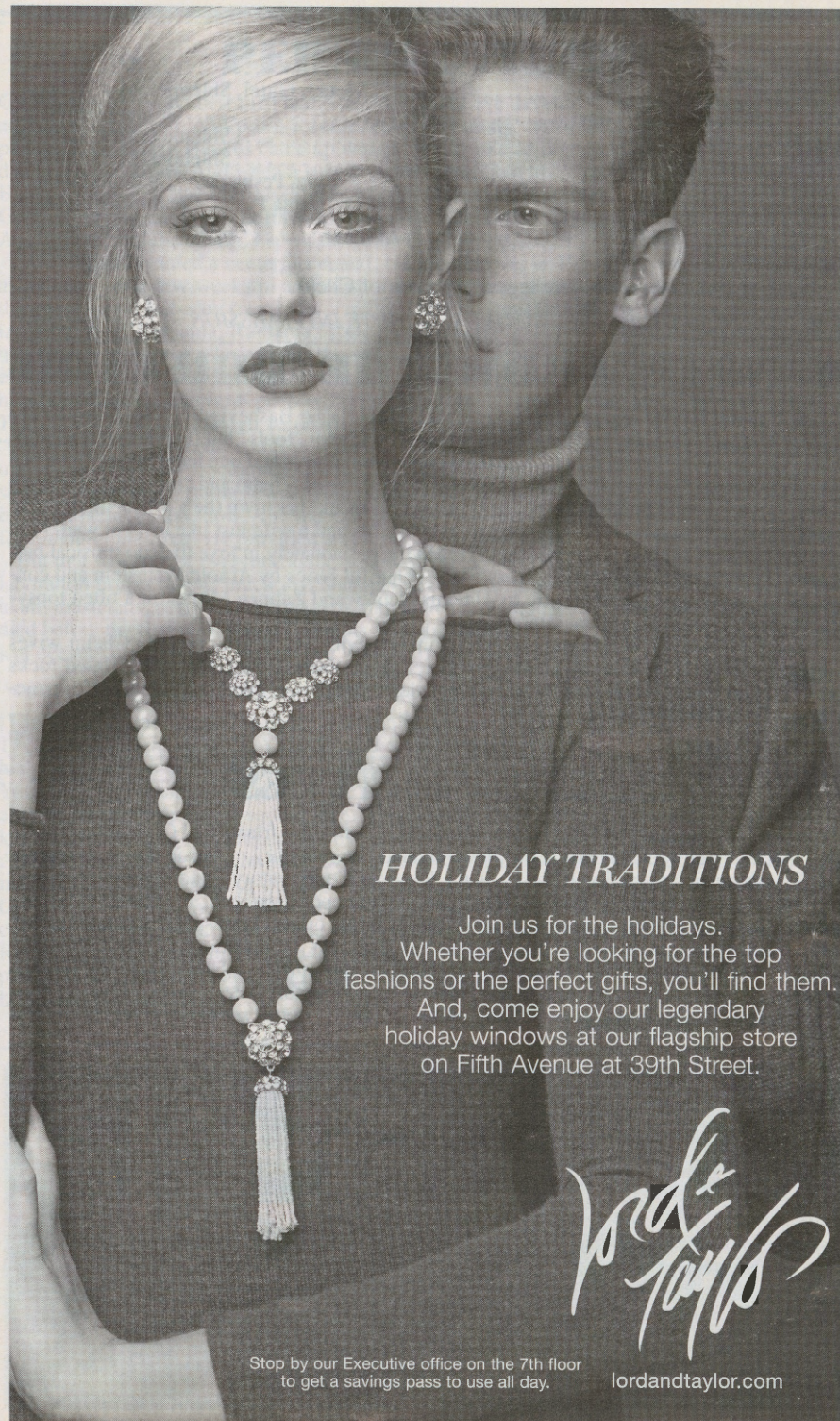
Act I

“Wake-Up Song” Mrs. Shlemiel
 “Shlemiel’s Song” Shlemiel
 “We’re Talking Chelm” Gronam Ox, Yenta Pesha, Sages
 “Yenta’s Blintzes” Yenta Pesha
 “Beadle With a Dreydl” Shlemiel
 “I’m Going to Die” Zalman Tippish
 “Missionary Tour” Mrs. Shlemiel, Yenta Pesha, Women
 “Geography Song” The Company
 “My One and Only Shlemiel” Mrs. Shlemiel, Shlemiel
 “Rascal’s Song” Chaim Rascal

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Act II

Reprise: "My One and Only Shlemiel" Mrs. Shlemiel
"Meshugah" Mottel, Gittel, Shlemiel, Mrs. Shlemiel
"Twos" Gronam Ox, Sages
"The Screen Song" Shlemiel, Mrs. Shlemiel
"Can This Be Hell?" Shlemiel, Mrs. Shlemiel
"Matters of the Heart" Yenta Peshah, Mrs. Shlemiel, Women
"Wisdom" Gronam Ox, Yenta Peshah, Chaim Rascal, Sages
Reprise: "We're Talking Chelm" The Company

PLACE

The legendary town of Chelm.

THERE WILL BE ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I was lucky, 17 years ago, to direct and choreograph Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Shlemiel the First* adapted by Robert Brustein. I was amused by Chelm "fools" but intoxicated with middle-aged married Shlemiel and Tryna Ritza, fallen out of love and into habit in a mismatched alliance, but wait! Shlemiel is sent on a "foolish" journey from Chelm and "foolishly" winds up where he started out. Oh no! Oh yes! He believes he's in another town (he's a "shlemiel"!) like his own and here's a house like his and two kids like his and a wife just like his, but wait!

They can't keep their hands off each other. Madly, passionately in love they do musical battle to get together and stay together with witty, beautiful lyrics by Arnold Weinstein and contagious foot-tapping Klezmer music by Hankus Netsky and Zalmen Mlotek in a tilted topsyturvy landscape by Robert Israel, but wait!

Tryna needs other wives to talk to? Yes! I invent (with Mr. Brustein's OK) Chelm wives (transformed by Cathy Zuber's padded pinafores) in a postmodern farce with painted rocks and trees, musicians pulled on cloths and a wooden chair dance. I dedicate these performances to my friend Alice Playten.

—David Gordon

PERSPECTIVES

Shlemiel originated on a cold autumn day in 1993 when my friend Joel Grey invited me to watch him emcee a benefit at the New England Conservatory of Music. Enter a group of Jewish musicians calling themselves the Klezmer Conservatory Band, led by an intense, scholarly *luftmensch* named Hankus Netsky, who thereupon launched into a set of Yiddish numbers that had me literally dancing in my seat. In a state of near ecstasy, I determined to create a Klezmer musical for the American Repertory Theatre's 1994 season in Cambridge.

There was one terrific possibility for the book of the musical—Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Shlemiel the First*, which he wrote in the '70s for Yale Repertory Theatre when I was in New Haven. Singer had based the play on some of his children's stories set in the mythical town of

PERSPECTIVES

Chelm, about the dumbest men in the world who believe they are the smartest. To me it sounded like Klezmer music in prose form, containing exactly the right brand of goofiness to support such a musical. Hankus came up with a medley of traditional melodies that again had me dancing in the aisles. And when a superb group of collaborators committed to the project, with Hankus providing the music, Zalmen Mlotek additional music and music direction, David Gordon the imaginative stage direction and inspired choreography, Robert Israel the set and the A.R.T. company the acting, I spent the summer adapting Singer's script for the musical stage.

Shlemiel still needed a centerpiece, and, by coincidence, in 1950 I had once been employed as an actor for a few weeks in a Yiddish theatre on Second Avenue where I nightly watched the great Aaron Lebedev (reputedly a major influence on Danny Kaye) perform his mesmerizing number "Rumania, Rumania" ["Geography Song"]. This would be our show-stopper. I had been looking for a lyricist for the show. Arnold Weinstein, composer William Bolcom's chief writer, an old friend and collaborator of mine, was an obvious candidate. But he was a highly cultivated Harvard poet with English-Jewish antecedents, and I wasn't sure his *Yiddishkeit* was ripe enough to distill all the ethnic juices out of the piece. So I gave him "Geography Song" as an audition piece, and he (marrying "Rumania" with a hundred other unexpected rhymes—including "I'll explain ya"), transformed that legendary Yiddish scat song into an unforgettable Jewish-American vaudeville in less than three hours of writing. It became the hit of the show. And the late Arnold Weinstein not only proved the perfect lyricist for *Shlemiel the First*. He provided a great deal of its heart and its soul.

But that was true of everyone associated with the project. It is not often that a theatrical collaboration brings one so much joy. *Shlemiel* gave pleasure to all its associates—cast, creative team, musicians, designers, technicians and audiences—though regrettably not to Singer, who died before the first performance. And its Socratic maxim still seems perfect for our past political decade: namely, that you achieve wisdom only when you know that you're dumb.

—Robert Brustein

[The name of the chieftain] Shelumiel ben Tsurishaddai of the tribe of Shim'on (Numbers 1:6)...seems to underlie the Yiddish term for a chronically hapless loser, "schlemiel." What his parents had in mind we may venture to translate as "God is my well being" or (with New York University scholar Baruch Levine) "El is my ally." But what their son wound up with is a name that no one would saddle a child with today. It is not only speakers of Yiddish who know the term in its mocking, pejorative sense. So do readers of 19th-century German author Adalbert von Chamisso, who gave an unlucky character the name Peter Schlemihls under the influence of the Yiddish, or of ETA Hoffmann, who employed the term in a story used by Offenbach in his opera *The Tales of Hoffmann*. North Americans too know the term and the comic figure it depicts so well that they became the subject of a book by literary historian Ruth Wisse, *The Schlemiel as Modern Hero* (University of Chicago Press, 1971). In contemporary Hebrew, to do something in Shelumielesque fashion means so inept as to be destined hopelessly to fail.

—Rabbi Peretz Rodman, *The Jewish Daily Forward* (2006)



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PERSPECTIVES

Klezmer, short for “klei zemer” (musical instruments), refers to the conglomeration of Greek and Central/Eastern European music played at Jewish celebrations. A pure klezmer band has no vocalist—it just turns up the volume and swings the music faster. Unlike rock, or African-influenced music, klez is made for dancing while holding hands, or dancing with a partner. It doesn’t bounce, it flows. It swings, it cries. Traditionally, there wouldn’t even be a drummer (and, in fact, the difference between a modern “Bar Mitzvah band” and a good band of klezmerim often relies on just that distinction. Bar Mitzvah bands have drummers). Klezmerim create a motion and feel that doesn’t fit easily into 4/4, and certainly aren’t comfortable with “a one and uh two.” It’s no accident that when Jewish musicians abandoned the “old world” music and moved into the American idiom, many of them (most notably Benny Goodman) moved into jazz.

—Ari Davidow, “About the Klezmer Revival” (1986)

In this little town of fools
We don't need to follow rules
Men are smart like mules.
We're talking Chelm.
We're talking Chelm where dumb is smart
Where's stupidity's an art.
The foolishness that we impart
Sends our IQs off the chart.
We put the horse behind the cart.
We never meet until we part.
We're done,
It's time to start.

—Arnold Weinstein, lyrics from *Shlemiel the First*

“My work should be done fast, like Shakespeare—not slow, like Chekhov.”

—Isaac Bashevis Singer, letter to Robert Brustein (1974)

In most Yiddish fiction...the central “character” is the collective destiny of the Jews in *galut* or exile; the central theme, the survival of a nation deprived of nationhood; the central ethic, the humane education of men stripped of worldly power yet sustained by the memory of chosenness and the promise of redemption. In Singer the norm of collective life is still present, but mostly in the background, as a tacit assumption; his major actions break away from the limits of the *shtetl* ethic, what has come to be known as *Yiddishkeit*, and then move either backward to the abandon of false messianism or forward to the doubt of modern sensibility.

—Irving Howe, “I.B. Singer” (1966)

Yes, I [believe in God]. I’m not, however, an observant Jew. I believe in God but not in man insofar as he claims God has revealed himself to him. If a man came to me and tells me he has been to the planet Mars, I would call him a liar, but I would not stop believing in the existence of the planet. I believe that the Higher Powers do not reveal themselves so easily; you have to search for them. Consequently, I have no faith in dogmas of any kind; they are only the work of men.

—Isaac Bashevis Singer (1963)

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

Born in 1904 in a poor, insular Jewish stetl in Poland, Singer went on to enjoy a life of international renown, celebrated for his wildly imaginative, recklessly passionate and subtly modern novels, stories, poems and plays about the Eastern European Jewish experience, Jewish folklore and Jewish American immigrant life. He is the only Yiddish writer to have won international recognition during the post-World War II era—a period when the world’s population of Yiddish-speakers was shrinking dramatically from assimilation and traumatized by the Holocaust.

The author’s father was a Chasidic rabbi, his mother the descendent of rabbis in the opposing rationalist tradition, and he was consequently buffeted from early childhood on by strong

PERSPECTIVES

countercurrents of mysticism and worldliness, religious piety and liberal skepticism, tradition and modernity. His older brother Israel Joshua, whom he revered as a literary model, teacher and guide, introduced him to secular literature at age 10, and soon after Isaac Bashevis began writing poems and stories in Hebrew. He moved to Warsaw in 1921, ostensibly to enter a Rabbinical seminary, but dropped out to pursue a literary life, supporting himself by proof-reading for the Yiddish magazine *Literarishe Bleter*, which published his first stories, and translating fiction by Knut Hamsun, Stefan Zweig, Thomas Mann and others.

The Singer brothers both recognized the Nazis’ intentions regarding the Jews very quickly and emigrated to New York City. Settling in Coney Island in 1935, Isaac Bashevis suffered a seven-year creative dry spell, regaining his voice only gradually in journalism and fiction. His first major novel, *The Family Moskat*, was published serially in the New York Yiddish-language newspaper *Der Forverts*, which became his principal outlet. Of his decision to write in Yiddish in his adopted country, Singer said: “a writer...must feel that he writes for people who know everything he knows—not for the stranger. It’s only when you write for your own people and when you don’t think about anybody else that the other people reading in a foreign language will appreciate your work and like it.” Singer collaborated closely on all the English translations of his books published during his lifetime.

Singer’s literary celebrity dates from 1953 when Saul Bellow’s translation of his story “Gimpel the Fool” appeared in *Partisan Review*. Thereafter esteemed critics such as Irving Howe and Cynthia Ozick wrote penetrating essays about him, glossy magazines such as *Playboy* and *Esquire* clamored for his work, and several of his stories were adapted into popular movies, including *Enemies*, *a Love Story* and *Yentl*. *Shlemiel the First* was first adapted for the stage by the author from one of his children’s stories and directed by Robert Brustein at Yale Repertory Theatre in 1974. The current musical adaptation was first performed at the American Repertory Theatre in 1994. Singer was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1978 and died in Florida in 1991.

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

BOB ADER (*Dopey Petzel/Zalman Tippish*) is happy to be returning to *Shlemiel the First*. Broadway credits include *All the Way Home*. Regional theatre: *The Tin Pan Alley Rag* (Cleveland Play House), *Olympus on My Mind* (FST), *The Nerd* (Phoenix Theatre) and many others. TV: "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," "Unsolved Mysteries," "David Letterman" and "The Onion News Network." Film: *It's Complicated*. Bob did his first professional acting job at the age of six in *The Naked City*. He is also a member of Project Rushmore Theatre Company.

JEFF BROOKS (*Gronam Ox*). Broadway: Mickey in *A History of the American Film*, Phil in *Loose Ends*, the Bellhop in *Lend Me a Tenor* (Outer Critics Circle Award), Pasty in *Gypsy* with Tyne Daly, Spider Malloy in *Nick and Nora*, Nathan Detroit in *Guys and Dolls* and Cogsworth in *Beauty and the Beast*. Off-Broadway: *Sister Mary Ignatius...* and the leading role in *The Actor's Nightmare*, the title role in *The Foreigner* and multiple roles in *Talk Radio*. Feature films include *The Secret of My Success*, *The Lemon Sisters*, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, *IQ* and *Julie and Julia*. Several guest appearances on "Law & Order."

MICHAEL IANNUCCI (*Shlemiel*). NY credits: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Enter Laughing* (York Theatre), *Spellbound* (Fringe Festival), *Wallenberg* (NYMF), *On the Waterfront* (Brave New World Rep), *The Cradle Will Rock* (St. Mark's in the Bowery). National tour: *Annie*, *Fiddler on the Roof*. Regional: *The Most Happy Fella*, *Cats* (TUTS), *Rags*, *Phantom*, *Crazy for You* (Fulton Opera), *Falsettoland* (Caldwell Theatre, Carbonell nomination), *Patience* (Sorg Opera), *Ragtime* (Carnegie PAC), *Steel Pier* (Actors' Playhouse), *Noises Off* (Playhouse on the Green). Stock: *Broadway Bound*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Sleuth*, *The Foreigner*, *Guys and Dolls*, *I Do! I Do!*, *Gypsy*, *Chicago*.

JESSE MEANS (*Zeyvel Shmeckel/Man in House*) began his professional career on Broadway in *Show Boat*. Recent theatre credits include Booker T. Washington in Portland Center Stage's production of *Ragtime*, Enoch Snow in the national tour of *Carousel*, NoMax in *Five Guys Named Moe* and Augustus in the York Theatre production of *A Good Man*. Means has been featured on ABC's "One Life to Live" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live." His film credits include sup-

porting roles in *Argentine in New York* and DreamWorks' *Ghost Town*.

DAVID SKEIST (*Mendel Shmendrick*). Previous collaborations with David Gordon include *Uncivil Wars: Moving w/ Brecht & Eisler and Beginning of the End*. New York: *Los Angeles* (Flea), *Political Subversities* (Joe's Pub), *Havana Journal* (INTAR), *The Misanthrope* (CSC Young Co.), *Kinderspiel* (Stolen Chair). Film and TV: "Law & Order: SVU," "All My Children," *Veronika Decides to Die*, *Memorial Day*. Founding member of CABORCA Theatre. M.F.A., Columbia; B.A. Harvard; graduate of Public Theater Shakespeare Lab.

AMY WARREN (*Tryna Ritza*) made her Broadway debut as Karen Weston in the Pulitzer Prize-winning play *August: Osage County*. She was nominated for Outer Critics Circle, Lucille Lortel and Drama Desk awards for Outstanding Featured Actress in a Musical for her performance as Daisy in *Adding Machine* composed by Joshua Schmidt and directed by David Cromer. She has played leading roles at the Goodman and Steppenwolf theatres in Chicago. Television work includes HBO's "Boardwalk Empire" and "Law & Order."

DARRYL WINSLOW (*Mottel/Moishe Pipik/Chaim Rascal*) returns to Chelm (Peak Performances 2010) after performing as Edna in *Hairspray*, Dave in *The Full Monty* and Louis in *Wild Women of Planet Wongo* (Best Actor Festival Award). He created the role of Jake in the Off-Broadway cult hit *Evil Dead: The Musical*. Favorite New York credits include *Avenue Q* (Broadway), *Bonnie & Clyde: A Folk Tale*, *Unlock'd*, *Brigadoon* and *Camelot*. TV/film: Great Performances' "Sondheim: The Birthday Concert!," "The View," "LATER!"

KRISTINE ZBORNIK (*Gittel/Sender Shlamazel/Yenta Pasha*) has appeared in *A Catered Affair* on Broadway, as Roz in the first national tour of *9 to 5* and as Rosie in *Mamma Mia* in Las Vegas. Off-Broadway and regional credits include *Road Show* (The Public Theater); *Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up Its Act!* (original cast) and *20th Anniversary* (original cast); *Splendor* (Sue Ella Lightfoot, Chelsea Playhouse); *An Evening with Joan Crawford* (Ethel Merman); *Man of La Mancha* (Housekeeper, Goodspeed Opera House); and *Nine* (Paper Mill Playhouse). Cabaret and one-person shows include *Jackie Hoffman* and *Kristine*

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Zbornik (Joe's Pub); *Holiday Hams*, *Blow Up World*, *Ball of Confusion*, *Serving Mankind* and *Zbornik in a Trunk*.

YAEKO MIRANDA ELMALEH (*Violin*) is a graduate of New England Conservatory of Music. A recipient of many awards, she studied under Michele Auclair, Fudeko Takahashi, Ran Blake and Hankus Netsky. As a member of the world-renowned Klezmer Conservatory Band she has performed in such venues as Avery Fisher Hall and the Walt Disney Concert Hall. She is currently an active performer and has just released her first CD of Jewish/Gypsy/Klezmer music.

DANIEL LINDEN (*Trombone*) has worked with Slavic Soul Party, the Klezmer Conservatory Band and Frank London's Klezmer Brass All Stars. He has performed with The New Hampshire Pops, the National Lyric Opera and the Astoria Symphony, and has toured with the *Porgy and Bess* 75th Anniversary US tour. An avid educator, Daniel has taught trombone at Brandeis University and is a member of Epic Brass, which performs educational concerts throughout the Northeast.

NICK MORRISON (*Banjo/Mandolin/Guitar*). Multi-instrumentalist Nick Morrison was born to American parents in Paris, France, where he grew up playing classical piano. He was exposed to jazz and contemporary improvised music while attending the University of Chicago and began studying guitar and upright bass. Since moving to Boston in 2009 he has studied and performed with musicians such as Joe Morris, Cecil McBee, Hankus Netsky, Anthony Coleman and Jerry Leake. He will be moving to Berlin in May.

DMITRI "ZISL" SLEPOVITCH (*Clarinet*) is a clarinetist, pianist, composer, singer, ethnomusicologist; leader of the Litvakus and Minsker Kapelye bands; Yiddish instructor at The New School; music director, composer, musician and actor in shows produced by the Folksbiene, Castillo Theatre, and New Yiddish Rep, as well as the films *Defiance* and *The Burning Land*; teacher of seminars in Jewish studies and Yiddish music worldwide, including BIMA at Brandeis University. dmitrislepovitch.com

GRANT SMITH (*Drums/Percussion*). A member of The Klezmer Conservatory Band, Grant Smith was in the original production of *Shlemiel the First* at American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge. Mr. Smith has toured

globally from Crakow to New Zealand. He has performed with Itzhak Perlman, Don Byron and Jane Wang, among many others. Studies include hand drums with Jamie Haddad, Tabla, Afro-Cuban percussion, frame drums with Glen Velez, drum set with Alan Dawson.

EZRA WELLER (*Trumpet*) is Boston-area trumpet player, composer, improviser and educator. He has premiered works by Anthony Coleman, Matti Kovler and Samuel Harry Chabrow, the latter two as soloist. Recently, his attentions have been focused on composition, and his first large ensemble work was premiered by the Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble in May, 2011.

JIM WHITNEY (*Bass*) has performed with Andy Statman, Bill Frisell, Alicia Svigals, David Grisman and Anthony Braxton. Jim accompanied Meryl Streep, John Goodman, Philip Seymour Hoffman and others in Theater of the New Ear. He appeared with John Lithgow in the Sunny Side Strutters jazz octet. Jim played on the children's television shows "Blue's Clues" and "Word World." He has toured in Europe, Japan, Singapore, Israel, Central America, New Zealand, Canada and the US.

STEPHEN CAIN (*Ensemble*). *Shlemiel the First* marks Stephen's second staged show since graduating from the William Esper Studio in May. Stephen is thankful to be given the opportunity to work and learn from a great group of performers on this piece. Stephen would like to thank his director and fellow cast for being such an inspiration. Stephen also thanks his family and friends for their continued love and support.

BRANDON LAVON HIGHTOWER (*Ensemble*). NYC/Off-Broadway: *Dream Babies* (Niko), *Denial: Time to Face the Musical* (Man #1), *Christmas Rappings* (Narrator), *Chopsticks & Dirty Laundry* (Jericho), *You Are Here* (Jay). Regional: *Dreamgirls* (ReVision Theatre), *Rent* (The Theater Company), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (The Secret Theatre), *New York, New York: 9/11 Benefit Concert* (Palace Theatre). TV: "Celebrity Ghost Stories" (Ahmad Rashad/The Biography Channel), "Boardwalk Empire" (Featured/HBO). Studio/concert: Kenny Rogers (Background Vocals), Chris Wade's "29 Lives" (Soloist).

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

AMANDA A. LEDERER (*Ensemble*). New York: Agnes in *The Divine Sister* (RP at Stageworks/Hudson), Anne in *The Dunes* (Gallery Players). Regional: Leah in *The Trial of FDR* (New Stage Performing Arts), Angel in *Make Sure It's Me* (BTF), Honey in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Abby in *Fiction* (Aglet Theatre), Stella (u/s) in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Sonya in *Uncle Vanya*, Ensemble in *Guys and Dolls* (New Harmony Repertory). Amanda is a member of Project Rushmore Theatre Company. B.A., Theatre Arts, Catawba College.

BRANDON MONOKIAN (*Ensemble*) works as an actor, director and writer. He was last seen on the New York stage in Pearl Damour's *How to Build a Forest*. He can currently be seen in the documentary web series *In Development* which follows the creation of a new theatre piece created in collaboration with Monokian, actress Suzanne Douglas, playwright Regina Taylor and poet Yorri J. Berry. indevelopmentseries.com

AARON NETSKY (*Ensemble*) makes his NYC stage debut in *Shlemiel the First*. He has performed in a variety of musicals in his hometown, Rochester, NY, including *Zorba*, *Peter Pan* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

DAVID GORDON (*Director/Choreographer*) has directed/choreographed for his Pick Up Performance Co(s) since 1971. Commissions include ABT, The Actors Studio, A.C.T., A.R.T., BAM, BBC 4 UK, Danspace, DTW, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Guthrie, The Joyce, Mark Taper Forum, NY Theatre Workshop, PBS/WNET Great Performances, PBS/KTCA Alive TV, Serious Fun! at Lincoln Center, Spoleto USA, Theatre for a New Audience, White Oak Dance Project. Awards include two Obies, three Bessies, two Drama-Logues, two Guggenheims, two Pew Charitable Trust National Residency Grants (Theatre & Dance), three NEA American Masterpieces Grants (Dance & Theatre). Member: The Actors Studio, Center for Creative Research. Founding artist: Grand Union. Judson Church Performances. Mr. Gordon has performed with Yvonne Rainer Co./James Waring Co.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN (*Concept and Adaptation*), 2010 National Medal of Arts recipient, is a playwright, actor, director, critic, scholar and educator. He was the founding director of the Yale Repertory Theatre and the American Repertory Theatre. He is the

author of 16 books on theatre and society and has written 12 adaptations and ten plays, his most recent being his Shakespeare Trilogy — *The English Channel*, *Mortal Terror* and *The Last Will*. Mr. Brustein has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, was recently inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame and is currently Distinguished Scholar in Residence at Suffolk University.

ARNOLD WEINSTEIN (1927–2005) (*Lyrics*) was a playwright, librettist, poet and professor. His plays include *Red Eye of Love* and an adaptation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. With composer William Bolcom he wrote the operas *McTeague*, *A View from the Bridge* and *A Wedding*, and theatre-opera works, among them *Dynamite Tonite!* and *Casino Paradise*. He was Chair of the Yale Drama School playwriting department and taught poetry and dramatic writing at Columbia.

HANKUS NETSKY (*Composer*) is chair of the Contemporary Improvisation Department at the New England Conservatory. Founder and director of the Klezmer Conservatory Band, he is music director for Itzhak Perlman's Klezmer music project, *In the Fiddler's House* and for his new cantorial, klezmer and Yiddish music project, *The Soul of Jewish Music*. He has composed for film, theatre and video and collaborated with Robin Williams, Joel Grey and Theodore Bikel.

ZALMEN MLOTEK (*Musical Arrangements/Additional Music/Music Director/Conductor/Piano*) is an internationally recognized authority on Yiddish folk and theatre music and is a leading figure in the Jewish theatre and concert worlds. He is artistic director of the National Yiddish Theatre-Folksbiene, the longest-operating Yiddish theatre company in America. Mr. Mlotek was co-creator, music director and conductor of *Those Were the Days*, the first bilingual musical honored with a Drama Desk Award and nominated for two Tonys.

MICHAEL LARSEN (*Associate Music Director/Conductor/Piano*). Broadway: *Annie*, *Nine*, *42nd Street*. Off-Broadway: *Perez Hilton Saves the Universe*, *The Golden Land*. Regional: *Stormy Weather* (Pasadena Playhouse), *Breakin' up Is Hard to Do*, *Shlemiel the First* (Geffen/A.C.T.), *...Forum*, *Ruthless!* (Carbonell Award nomination, Best Director), *Only a Kingdom*, countless others. Conductor: Bruce Adler, Theodore Bikel, Judy Kaye, Larry Kert, Elaine Stritch,

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many others. Twenty-four years as Master Teacher/Director at world-renowned Stagedoor Manor. International Director/Music Supervisor of *Menopause the Musical*, including London and Toronto, celebrating six years at the Luxor in Las Vegas.

ROBERT ISRAEL (*Scenic Designer*) has designed sets and/or costumes for numerous opera companies, among them the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, Paris Opera, De Nederlandse Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, New National Theatre of Tokyo, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera and Festival di Due Mondi in Spoleto. He is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and an Obie Award and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

CATHERINE ZUBER (*Costume Designer*) has won Tony Awards for her work on *South Pacific*, *The Coast of Utopia*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Awake and Sing!* and *The Royal Family*. Other Broadway credits include *On a Clear Day...*, *How to Succeed...*, *Women on the Verge...*, *Seascape* (Tony nom.), *Joe Turner...* (Outer Critics Circle nom.), *Oleanna*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *Cry-Baby*, *Doubt*, *Dinner at Eight* (Tony, OCC noms.), *Twelfth Night* (Tony nom.). Other credits include *The Bridge Project* (BAM and Old Vic), *Le Comte Ory*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, the 125th Anniversary Gala, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Doctor Atomic* (Metropolitan Opera), *Romeo and Juliet* (La Scala and Salzberg Festival), *Two Boys* (English National Opera) and the Ring Cycle (San Francisco Opera).

JENNIFER TIPTON (*Lighting Designer*). Recent work in opera includes Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* (La Scala) and *La Clemenza di Tito* (Aix-en-Provence Festival). Recent work in dance includes Alexei Ratmansky's *Romeo and Juliet* (National Ballet of Canada) and Paul Taylor's *Gossamer Gallants*. Recent work in theatre includes *Autumn Sonata* (Yale Repertory Theatre) and the Wooster Group's version of Tennessee Williams' *Vieux Carré*. Ms. Tipton teaches lighting at the Yale School of Drama. Awards include the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize, the Jerome Robbins Prize and the Mayor's Award for Arts and Culture in New York City. She is a United States Artists "Gracie" Fellow and a MacArthur Fellow.

DAVID MESCHTER (*Sound Designer*) has created sound designs for a variety of organizations and artists including John Cage, LaMonte Young, Meredith Monk, Ping Chong, Ridge Theater, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Lincoln Center, Houston Grand Opera, Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York City Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera and The Public Theater, among many others. His work for the Broadway production of *Medea* was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for best sound design of the 2002-03 season. Meschter is the sound supervisor for Lincoln Center Festival.

HALEY LIEBERMAN (*Costume Supervisor*) is a costume designer for stage and film based in Manhattan. Career highlights include *Dido and Aeneas* (Juilliard), *Children* (TACT), the upcoming *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Opera Boston) and assisting Catherine Zuber on *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (The Metropolitan Opera) and *A Lie of the Mind* (The New Group). A winner of the Opera America/Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Showcase award, Haley holds an M.F.A. from Tisch School of the Arts/NYU.

CINDI RUSH CASTING (*Casting*). New York: *ROOMS a rock romance*; *Jacques Brel...*; *Six Dance Lessons...*; *The Thing about Men*; *Showtune*; *I Sing*; *Urinetown*; *Say Goodnight*, *Gracie*. Regional: *Triad Stage*, *Act II Playhouse*, *Arena Stage*, *Goodman*, *Cape Cod Theatre Project*, *Actors Theatre of Louisville Humana Festival*. Film: *Offspring*, *Made for Each Other*, *Home Movie*, *Jack Ketchum's The Girl Next Door*, *Headspace*. Other: *Hats*. Tours: *Curious George*, *Kidz Bop*. Consultant for National Alliance for Musical Theatre (2004-08), Consultant for NYU Graduate Program for Musical Theatre Writing.

DEBORAH BROWN (*Casting*). Deborah Brown has cast for Broadway, Off-Broadway and many of the leading regional theatres in the country. She shared an Emmy for the HBO series "From the Earth to the Moon." Other television includes "The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd" and New York casting on "Band of Brothers." This is her 21st season with Theatre for a New Audience.

ED FITZGERALD (*Production Stage Manager*) has been a professional stage manager for 35 years, working on Broadway (*Da, A Little Family Business*, *The Tap Dance Kid*, *Carrie*, *The Violet Hour*), Off-Broadway (Manhattan Theatre Club; *The Best of*

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Friends; tick, tick...BOOM!), Off-Off Broadway and in major theatres throughout the country and overseas (London, Berlin, Singapore, Seoul, Avignon, Strasbourg). He has been associated with David Gordon, Ain Gordon and Pick Up Performance Co(s) for 21 years.

THE BRUCE COHEN GROUP, Ltd. (*Press Representative*) is celebrating its 36th year of publicizing the good causes that make New York City the capital of the world: the performing and visual arts, community development, historic preservation, business improvement districts, public spaces, tourism and organized labor. Bruce Cohen is a former president of I.A.T.S.E. Local 18032 and a proud honorary member of I.A.T.S.E. Local One. He owes his first job to Merle Debuskey.

DANIEL GWIRTZMAN (*Assistant to the Choreographer*) celebrates 16 years as a New York producer, director, choreographer, teacher and critically acclaimed performer. He directs Daniel Gwartzman Dance Company, a nonprofit performing and teaching organization recognized for its innovative, entertaining, accessible repertory and charismatic dancers. His hit show *Encore*, an official selection of the 2009 New York Musical Theatre Festival, continues to excite audiences and critics: "The dancers can't help but smile" writes *The New Yorker*. GwartzmanDance.org

MARCI SKOLNICK (*Assistant Stage Manager*). Selected theatre: eight years with the National Yiddish Theatre, *Seed* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *The Common Air* (45 Bleecker), *Puppetry of the Penis* (Foster Entertainment), *The Smoking Diary* (Fat Melon), *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding* (Artificial Intelligence), *Sake with the Haiku Geisha* (Gotham Stage), *Angels: The Musical* (NYMF), *Waiting for Godot* (tangent), Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, *Dream Seminar* (CompanionStar). Proud member of AEA, Ms. Skolnick is a graduate of Hofstra University.

THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE (*Producer*) was founded in 1979. Led by Founding Artistic Director Jeffrey Horowitz and Managing Director Dorothy Ryan, its mission is to develop and vitalize the performance and study of Shakespeare and classic drama. The Theatre has produced 28 of the Bard's plays with directors including Sir Peter Hall, Mark Rylance, Bartlett Sher and

Julie Taymor, and a diverse repertory by such authors as Harley Granville Barker, Edward Bond and Adrienne Kennedy. It has played on Broadway and toured nationally and internationally. In 2001, Theatre for a New Audience became the first American theatre invited to bring a production of Shakespeare to the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Stratford-upon-Avon. *Cymbeline* directed by Bartlett Sher premiered at the RSC and in 2007, Theatre for a New Audience was invited to return with *The Merchant of Venice* starring F. Murray Abraham and directed by Darko Tresnjak. In June 2011 Theatre for a New Audience broke ground for its first home, a center for Shakespeare and classic drama in downtown Brooklyn in the BAM Cultural District slated to open in 2013. TFANA.org

THE NATIONAL YIDDISH THEATRE — FOLKSBIENE (*Producer*) is America's preeminent Yiddish theatre. Established in 1915 and led by Zalmen Mlotek, Artistic Director, and Bryna Wasserman, Executive Director, the Folksbiene is committed to promote and develop Yiddish theatre for current and future generations and enhance the understanding of Yiddish culture as a vital component of Jewish life. Now celebrating its 97th consecutive season, the Drama Desk Award-winning Folksbiene presents plays, concerts and literary events in English and Yiddish accompanied by English and Russian supertitles at all performances. Folksbiene programs include award-winning and critically acclaimed Off-Broadway productions; touring productions; a series of free concerts, workshops and readings at City University of New York campuses; and children's programs which portray the history and traditions of an immigrant people in a contemporary venue. Folksbiene productions draw new generations of audiences and artists who are working in Yiddish as they reinforce Jewish identity, renewal and pride within a multicultural world. The company's mission is to celebrate the Jewish experience through the performing arts and to transmit a rich cultural legacy in exciting new ways. nationallyiddishtheatre.org

THE JACK H. SKIRBALL CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS (*Producer*) is the premier venue for the presentation of cultural and performing arts events for New York University and lower Manhattan. Led by Executive Producer Jay

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Master Electrician Stephanie Shechter
Spot Operators Sammy Gordon, Amanda Lemen
Sound Operator Ethan Blade
Deck Crew Megan Caplan

CREDITS

Set, Costumes & Props built at Montclair State University (NJ), Production Manager: J Ryan Graves. Props built by Jeremy Lydic. Costumes built by Erika I. Lilienthal.

Supplemental lighting by PRG Rehearsed at The New 42nd Street Studios. Additional staging provided by Bernhard Link Theatrical. Additional stage drapery provided by JC Hansen.

Special thanks to J. Ryan Graves.



THE ACTORS AND STAGE MANAGERS EMPLOYED IN THIS PRODUCTION ARE MEMBERS OF ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION, THE UNION OF PROFESSIONAL ACTORS AND STAGE MANAGERS IN THE UNITED STATES.

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PEAK PERFORMANCES AT MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY (*Producer*), under the artistic direction of Jedediah Wheeler, has, from its inception in 2005, brought a wide range of internationally acclaimed artists and productions to the Alexander Kasser Theater. With an emphasis on inter-disciplinary work, Peak Performances has presented over 50 world and American premieres by artists such as Bill T. Jones, South African director Robyn Orlin, Susan Marshall, Italian theatre artist Romeo Castellucci, Wayne McGregor, Brazilian choreographer Sonia Destri, Bob McGrath, Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite, Jazz composer Fred Hersch, David Gordon and Belgian artist, writer and director Jan Fabre, among many others. By bringing together artists of uncommon imagination with audiences of adventuresome spirits, Peak Performances fosters a greater understanding and appreciation of creativity. The 2010 Peak Performances production of *Shlemiel the First* was made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts as part of American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius. peakperfs.org

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. actorsequity.org

Information in "Who's Who in the Cast" is provided by the production. Where opinions are expressed, they are those of the players, not necessarily those of PLAYBILL Magazine.

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THE NATIONAL YIDDISH THEATRE — FOLKSBIENE

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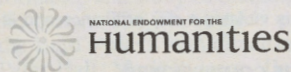
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The National Yiddish Theatre - Folksbiene programs are made possible in part with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, New York State Council on the Arts and New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.

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The National Yiddish Theatre would especially like to thank Ruth and David Levine for their Leadership support.



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Programming is made possible in part by funds from The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, The New England Foundation for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters and through the generosity of donors, foundations and individuals. For more information about how you can support Peak Performances visit www.peakperfs.org and donate today!

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