

Writing & Producing Your Own Plays

Joe Beck

Thanks for having me Carolyn and
Jodi!

Writing a Play

Write the Play You Want to See

- Attend plays
- Read plays
- Talk about plays with other playwrights (network)
- Listen to people (you'll hear and remember everything you need to know to write great dialogue)
- Write the first draft on cocktail napkins and scraps of paper if you have to. Collect great lines and phrases.
- Listen for euphemisms, vernacular, idioms that don't match stereotypes.

Your Voice Counts

Write a play that is personally meaningful to you. It helps if it's something you must say and can say in no other way as effectively.

Listen and Feel Openly

The first time your play is read out loud you'll hear where changes need to be made. Your characters will teach you things you didn't know you need to learn. And by god, don't worry about perfection. No theater going audience is thinking about spelling errors or grammar when they cry or laugh for a character they fall in love with.

Character Destiny

Character Destiny is plot summary.

Write Honestly

It takes courage, but write your plays as honestly as you can, according to your truth. Have affection for your characters, even the scoundrels; we're all damaged.

Be There In The Dark

Be with your audience. Treat your play as a living , breathing, precious child. Get it up and walking as soon as possible. Like a teenager, let it talk back to you.

PROGRAMS FOR PLAYWRIGHTS

Laptop

- Microsoft Word – most options, biggest compatibility, still king
- Scrivener (\$40) – the bomb
- Ulysses III (\$45) for Mac only, simpler than Scrivener, between a minimalist writing tool and Scrivener
- Fade In (\$50), cross-platform (Windows, Mac, and Linux) with features that rival Final Draft at a lower cost
- Final Draft (\$250), “#1-selling screenwriting program in the world!,” heard they stopped making changes years ago, overpriced
- Masterwriter (\$200), biggest collection of writing tools ever assembled in one program
- Movie Magic Screenwriter (\$200), Dramatica Story Expert (\$190), dramaticaPRO (\$136), “analyze an existing story”, “finds the problems in your story” (really?)
- WriteWay Pro (\$35)
- Voice-Recognition software – not useful

Getting the Word Out

- REPUTABLE CASTING WEBSITES

- Backstage
- Actors Access
- Playbill
- Now Casting
- Casting Network
- NY Castings.com
- Casting Frontier

Use Protection-Register Your Script

<https://www.copyright.gov/registration/>

<https://www.dramatistsguild.com/>

https://www.wgaeast.org/script_registration/?&cookie_check=1

Join the Dramatists Guild

Publicist

Media Coverage

Interviews

Apply to Festivals

Publicist

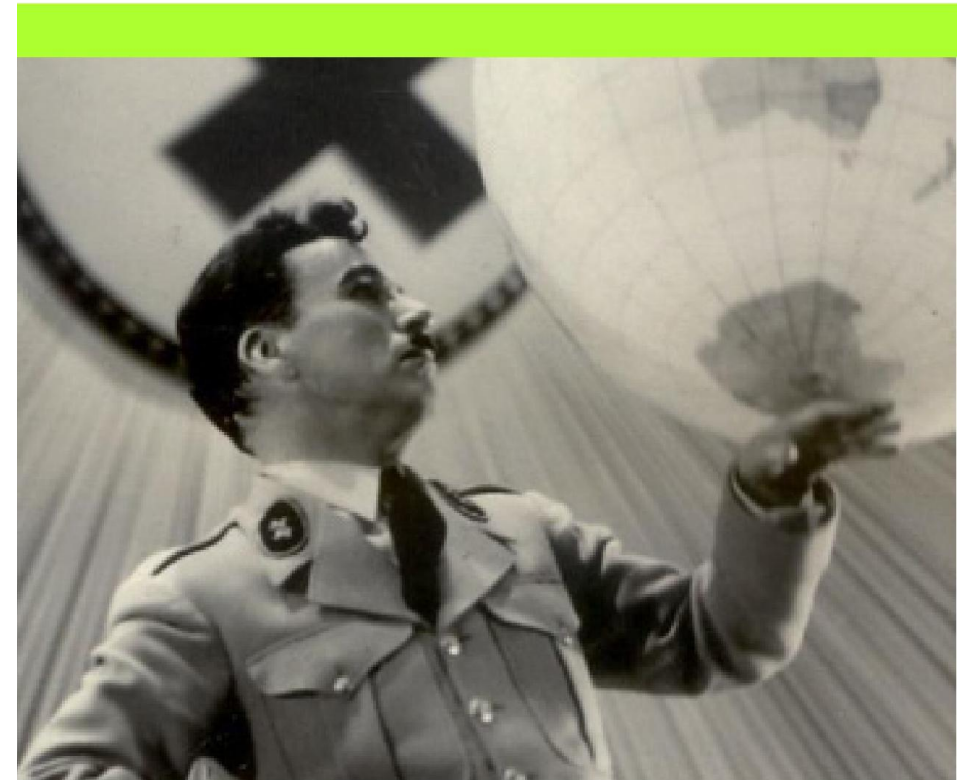
- <http://theater.nytimes.com/show/139411/FringeNYC-A-Homecoming/overview>
- <http://planetconnections.org/staff/bunch-of-people-press-publicity/>
- <http://offbroadwayalliance.com/off-broadway-producers-resource-directory/press-agents/>
- Festivals and theaters often have their own press and publicity machines at work.
- www.art-newyork.org/assets/member-documents/2011-2012-theatre-publicity-handbook.pdf

Casting and Rehearsals

- <https://www.backstage.com/>
- Seeking talent?
- Casting that special project?
- List it there.
- <https://ripleygrier.com/>
- <http://simplestudiosnyc.com/>
- https://www.244rehearsalstudiosny.com/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI_su3oYT-4QIVDksNCh0UcAqUEAAYASAAEgIGwPD_BwE
- http://3929studios.com/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIzNv9vIT-4QIVm4qzCh0WkwNSEAAYAIAAEgLAHvD_BwE

Dictators for Hire

- Make art out of the Arab Spring
- Fallen dictators around the world are looking for work. Why not in New York City boardrooms?



*Manhattan Repertory Theatre
Presents*

Dictators for Hire

by Joe Beck.

Directed by Philip Waller.

The Great Dictator, Charlie Chaplin,
United Artists, 1940

<https://newplayexchange.org/plays/290685/dictators-hire>

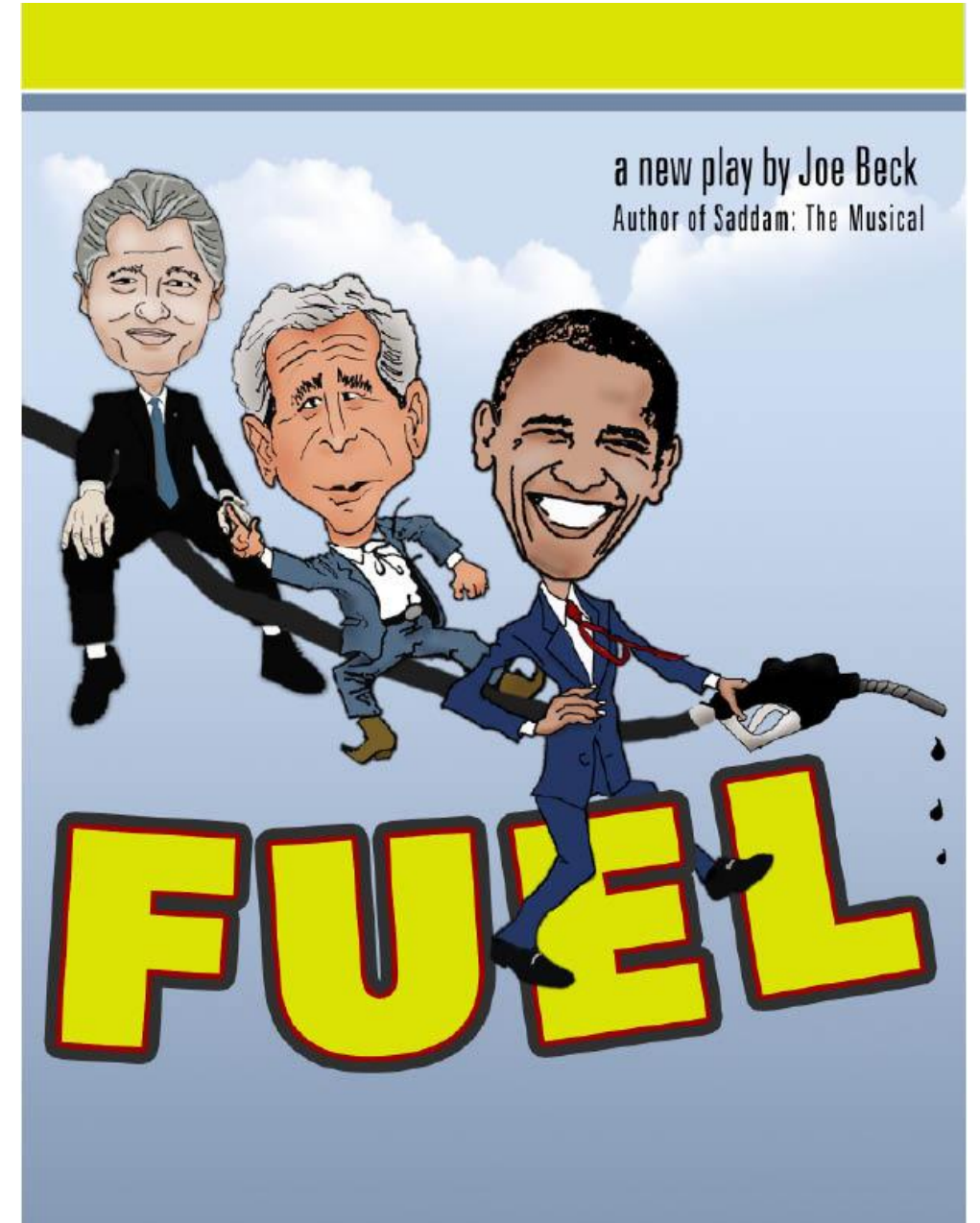
<https://newplayexchange.org/users/21532/joe-beck>

Build A Website and Brand

- www.joebeckwrites.com

Fuel

- This is my only defense against rising fuel prices.
- Write a silly play that mocks America's dependence on foreign oil
- www.joebeckwrites.com/fuel



A Homecoming

- a shattered Irish family's final goodbye to the matriarch.
- Their grown children come back home for a final goodbye for mom.

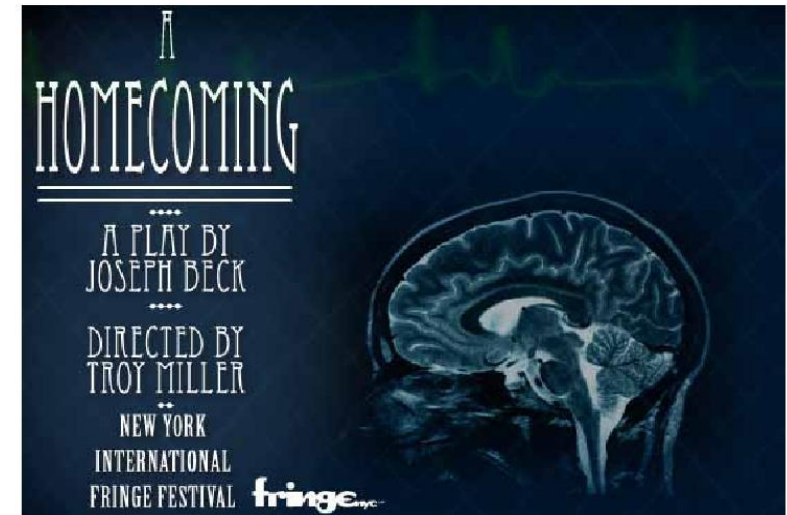
<https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/Joseph-Becks-A-HOMECOMING-to-Premiere-at-FringeNYC-810-23-20130807>

http://www.zimbio.com/photos/Joe+Beck/A+Homecoming+Read+Through/s7H0pr_4zJS

http://www.troymiller.org/News/Entries/2013/8/10_A_Homecoming_opens_in_the_NY_Fringe_Festival.html

http://www.troymiller.org/News/Entries/2013/5/23_A_Homecoming.html

http://www.troymiller.org/Photos/Pages/A_Homecoming.html



Saddam: The Musical

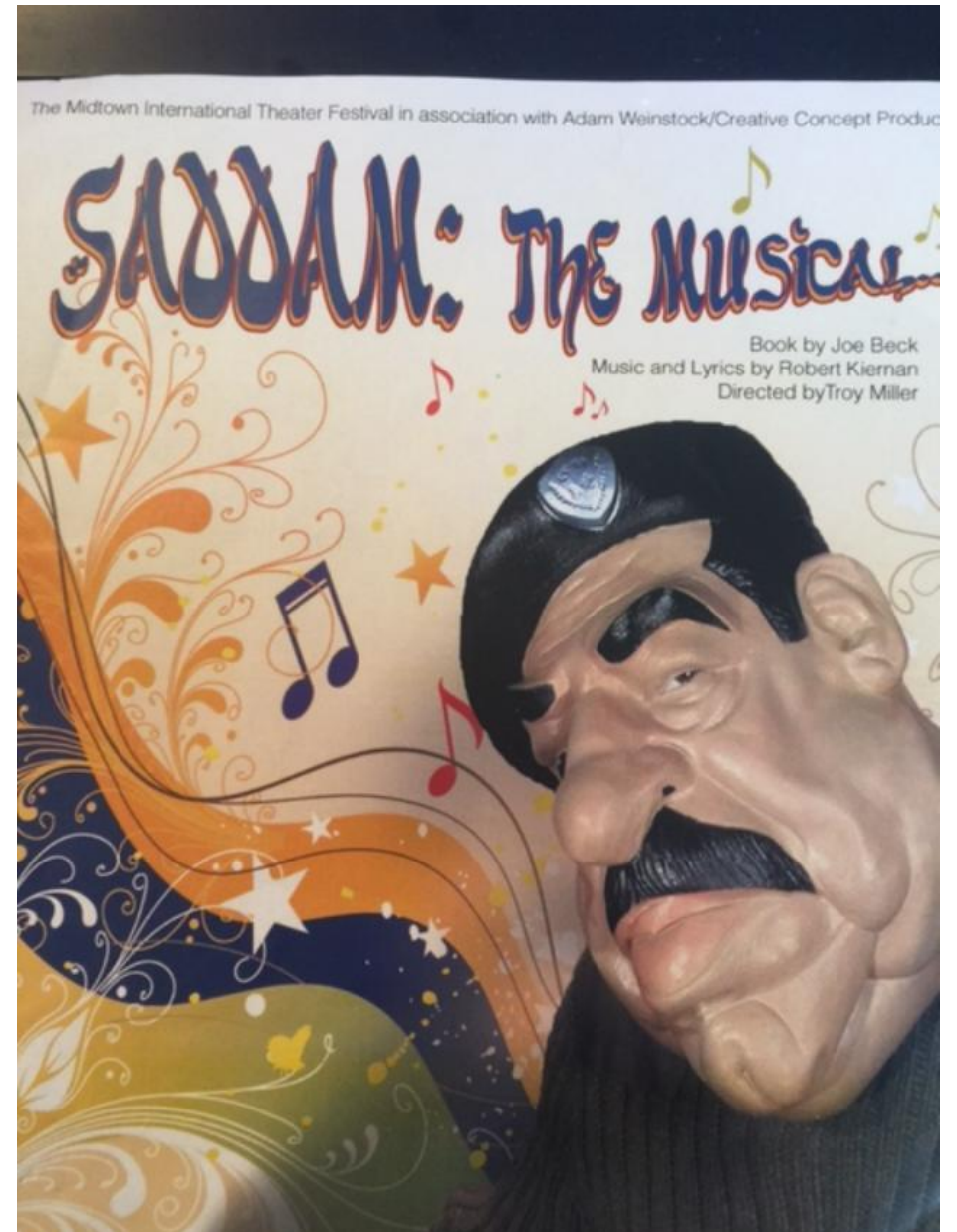
- Saddam can rule the whole world but his five-foot-tall wife kicks his butt in the palace where she's in charge

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-oct-16-ca-artsnotes16.3-story.html>

<https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/Saddam-The-Musical-Runs-at-Drama-Book-Shop-Oct-2130-20051013>

https://www.theatermania.com/shows/new-york-city-theater/off-off-broadway/saddam-the-musical-or-a-funny-thing-happened-on-the-way-to-baghdad_107603

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20051013005748/en/SADDAM-MUSICAL-Debut-Coincides-Trial>



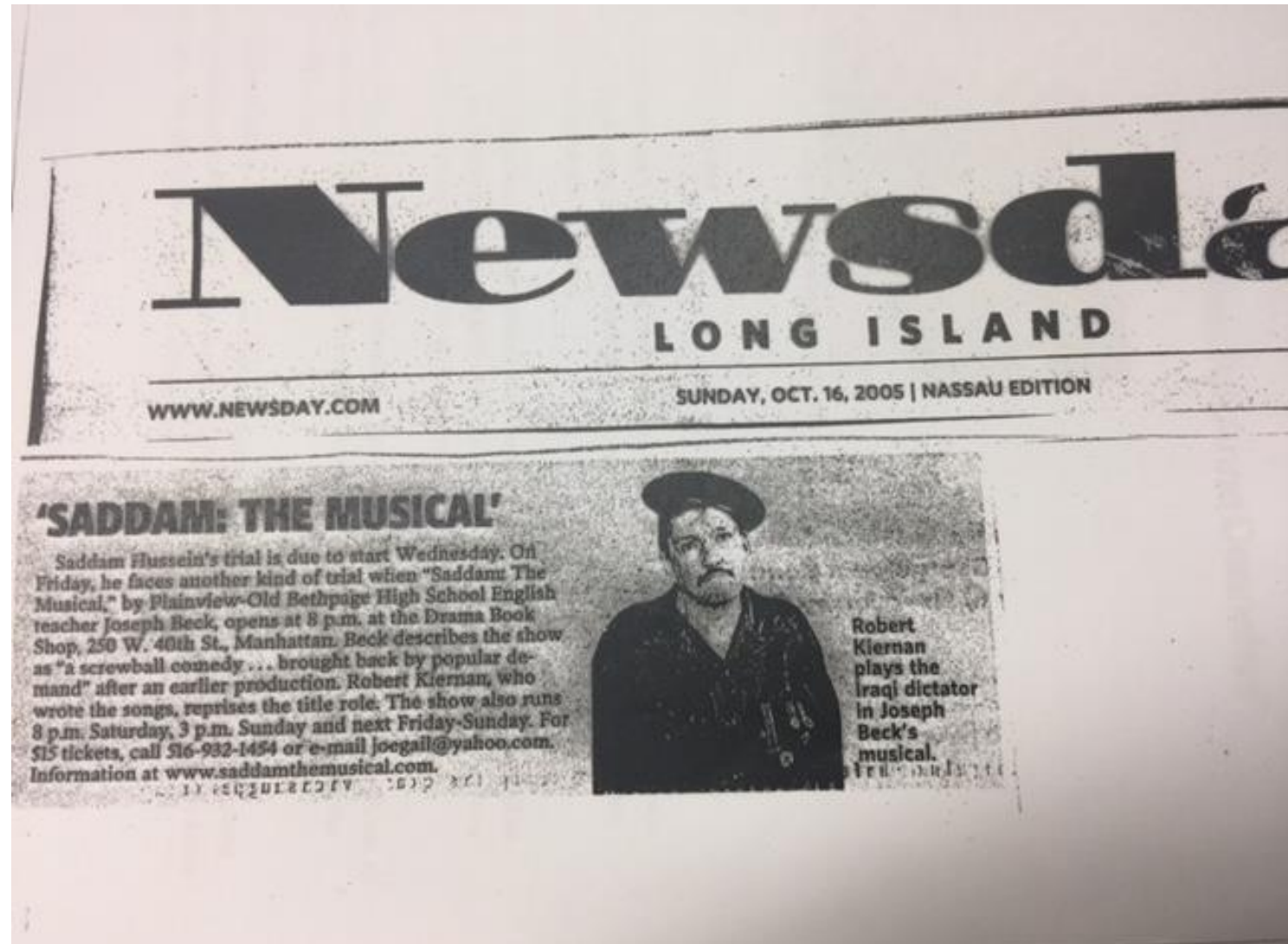
Valuable Links

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- https://www.theatermania.com/shows/new-york-city-theater/off-off-broadway/saddam-the-musical-or-a-funny-thing-happened-on-the-way-to-baghdad_107603
- <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20051013005748/en/SADDAM-MUSICAL-Debut-Coincides-Trial>
- <https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/Joseph-Becks-A-HOMECOMING-to-Premiere-at-FringeNYC-810-23-20130807>
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More Valuable Links

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- https://www.theatermania.com/shows/new-york-city-theater/off-off-broadway/saddam-the-musical-or-a-funny-thing-happened-on-the-way-to-baghdad_107603
- <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20051013005748/en/SADDAM-MUSICAL-Debut-Coincides-Trial>
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- http://www.troymiller.org/News/Entries/2013/5/23_A_Homecoming.html

Saddam makes Newsday



Still More Links

- <https://www.newsday.com/long-island/obituaries/ed-and-sue-anne-dennehy-acting-couple-dead-1.11542151>
- <https://www.newsday.com/entertainment/theater/acts-of-love-recalls-ed-and-sue-anne-dennehys-romantic-tragedy-1.13782847>
- <https://www.newsday.com/opinion/letters/letter-ed-dennehy-was-theater-royalty-1.11563389>
- <https://events.longisland.com/jdtlab-staged-reading-of-james-joyce-a-short-nights-odyssey-from-no-to-yes-by-joe-beck-directed-by-elizabeth-falk.html>
- <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/850607>
- <http://www.midtownfestival.org/Archives/playsbody2011.htm>
-
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James Joyce...Waits

James Joyce waits for the censorship board to decide the fate of his best work.

<https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/Joseph-Becks-A-HOMECOMING-to-Premiere-at-FringeNYC-810-23-20130807>

http://www.zimbio.com/photos/Joe+Beck/A+Homecoming+Read+Through/s7H0pr_4zJS


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http://www.troymiller.org/Photos/Pages/A_Homecoming.html

<https://patch.com/new-york/easthampton/jdtlab-staged-reading-james-joyce-short-nights-odyssey-no-yes-joe-beck>

https://www.har.com/jdtlab-staged-reading-james-joyce-a-short-nights-odyssey-from-no-to-yes-by-joe-beck-directed-by-elizabeth-falk/event_E0-001-090169923-8




James Joyce ... Waits

Spend some time with the author of Ulysses, considered the preeminent work of fiction in the history of Western literature at Meehan's of Huntington

with Drew Keil
written by Joe Beck

371 New York Avenue
Huntington, NY 11743
Sunday, August 5th
7:00 PM



Acts of Love

- A Newsday announcement. Ed Dennehy dressed as James Joyce for his final role.

arts

NOW ONLINE: Review of 'Death of a Salesman' at Studio

trick-or-treat antidotes Hallow weaning

BY STEVE PARKS
steve.parks@newsday.com

It's not Halloween humbug to be relieved when the trick-or-treat invasion subsides enough for you to extinguish the jack-o'-lantern. Nor is it humbug to regret accepting a weekend party invitation to come tricked out as the "Gene Girl" spouses from hell. Not even TV offers refuge. How many "Rocky Horrors" or Charlie Brown pumpkins can a grown-up endure? So here's our treat: five arty antidotes to All Hallows' overload.

"James Joyce: For All Those Who Hide Away ... A Short Night's Odyssey from 'No to Yes'"
Joe Peck, author of this long-winded title of a play, also wrote "Saddam the Musical, a Homocenting," which premiered at last summer's New York International Fringe Festival. The Joyce project came about when the Bethpage resident was "shooting the breeze" with his friend Ed Dennehy on the actor's porch in Huntington. "We were talking about one-man shows about writers," Dennehy recalls. "Truman Capote, Mark Twain. But no one has done James Joyce."

The title comes from Molly Bloom's last line in "Ulysses." "Yes" is her final word. And "no" is the first line of the script as Joyce tells his father know he's not coming home for his mother's funeral.

Dennehy says, "Joyce hated Dublin — he was an expatriate for years — though he spent a lifetime writing about Dubliners."

Dennehy, brother of fellow actor Brian, says that besides the eyepatch — Joyce was virtually blind in his left eye — he's most self-conscious about getting the Irish brogue right. "My father would turn over in his grave if I got the accent wrong."

Enough, Ed. We said this



Ed Dennehy stars as "Ulysses" author James Joyce in a one-man show at Conklin Barn in Huntington.

isn't about Halloween. Tonight and tomorrow night at 7, Sunday at 3 p.m. through Nov. 16, Conklin Barn, 2 High St., Huntington, \$18, 800-838-9004, brownpapertickets.com

"Harvey"
An imaginary friend is not a ghost. OK? And besides, Elwood's "friend" is a 6-foot-4½-inch rabbit. So "Harvey," the 1944 Pulitzer-

winning play that opens the Hampton Theatre Company's 50th anniversary season, brings to mind Gaster more than Halloween. Matthew Coston plays Elwood, the role Jimmy Stewart immortalized on Broadway and on film.

Tonight at 7, tomorrow night at 8, Sunday at 2:30 p.m. through Nov. 9, Quaque Community Hall, 125 Jessup Ave., 631-633-4955, ovationtix.com

Django Festival Allstars
Led by Django Reinhardt, the legendary musician who brought swing and Gypsy-style jazz to postwar Paris, the Allstars celebrate their 10th anniversary accompanied by Janis Siegel of Manhattan Transfer and harpist Edmar Castaneda. We doubt "Monster Mask" is on the playlist.

Tonight at 7:30 and 9:30, Titles Center's Hillwood Recital Hall, LLU Post, Brookville 54-4551, 516-299-3100, titlescenter.org

Momix — "Alchemia"
Although Moses Pendleton's acrobatic dance troupe works its magic in the latest Momix show, "Alchemia" — signifying earth, air, fire and water — there's nothing black magic about it. Just a spectacle of originality, beauty, sensuality and wit. A treat without sugar.

Tomorrow night at 8, Staller Center, Stony Brook University, 642, 631-632-2787, stallercenter.com

"Still Life: 1970s Photorealism"
Few of us use cameras today that aren't inside a cellphone. Forget film. But back in the '70s, photographers combined timely exposure with darkroom alchemy to make art of what was dismissed as a hobby. This weekend's your last chance to see images by such ground-breakers as Chuck Close, Audrey Flack, Malcolm Morley and Ralph Goings, who stretched "Still Life" Art into the gristlier realm of "Tiffany's Omen," paintings by Louis Comfort Tiffany from a part of the world where Halloween is not on the calendar.

Today through Sunday, 11 a.m.-6:45 p.m., Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn Harbor, 110, seniors \$8, students and children ages 4-12 \$4, 516-484-9307, nassauxmuseum.org

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Momix works its dance and acrobatic magic in "Alchemia" at Staller Center at Stony Brook University.

Acts of Love

Acts of love. The
modern Romeo and
Juliet story of actors
Ed and Suanne
Dennehy

<https://www.newsday.com/entertainment/theater/acts-of-love-recalls-ed-and-sue-anne-dennehys-romantic-tragedy-1.13782847>

<https://www.studiotheatreli.com/current-season/acts-of-love/>

<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/obituaries/ed-and-sue-anne-dennehy-acting-couple-dead-1.11542151>

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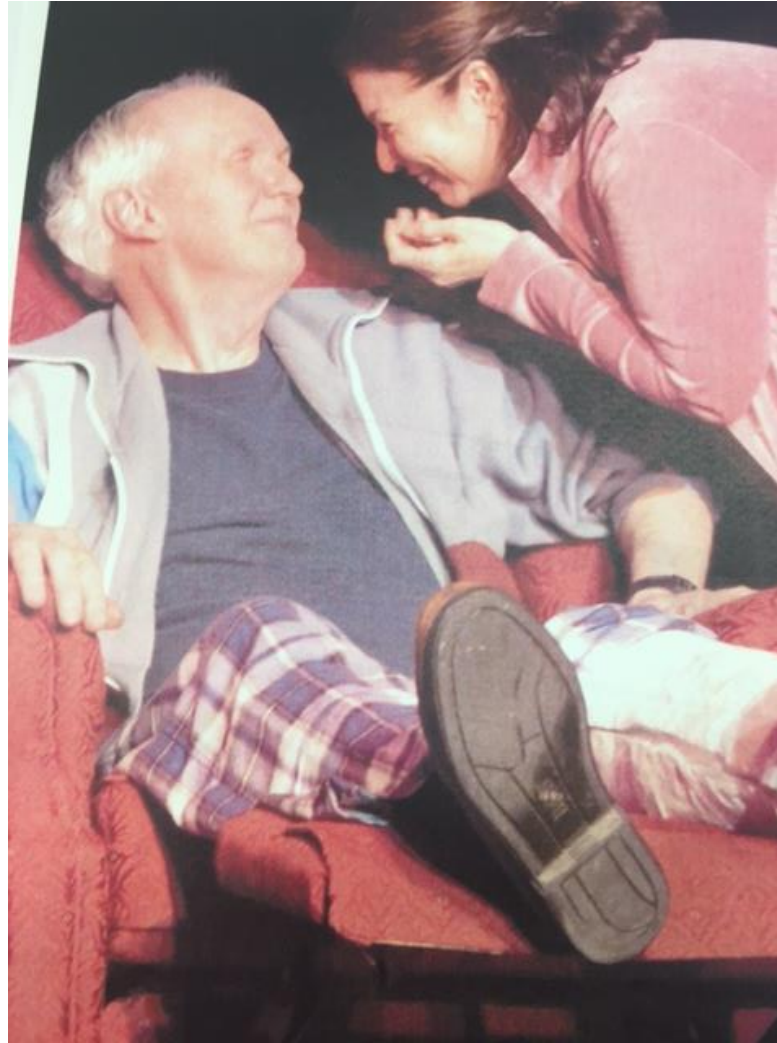
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A Homecoming

http://www.zimbio.com/pictures/R8ll4F1uxfg/A+Homecoming+Read+Through/s7H0pr_4zJS/Joe+Bek



Wrap Up

- <https://www.backstage.com/>
- Seeking talent?
- Casting that special project?
- THERE ARE HANDOUTS ON THE TABLE IN FRONT
- <https://ripleygrier.com/>
- <http://simplestudiosnyc.com/>
- https://www.244rehearsalstudiosny.com/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI_su3oYT-4QIVDksNCh0UcAqUEAAYASAAEgIGwPD_BwE
- http://3929studios.com/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIzNv9vIT-4QIVm4qzCh0WkwNSEAAYAIAAEgLAHvD_BwE