



AUGUST 25 2016

SAVE PRINT

Lipson, Obarzanek channel their dads humorously in *Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre*

Cameron Woodhead

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TWO JEWS WALK INTO A THEATRE ★★★¹/₂
Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek
Arts House, North Melbourne Town Hall
Until August 28

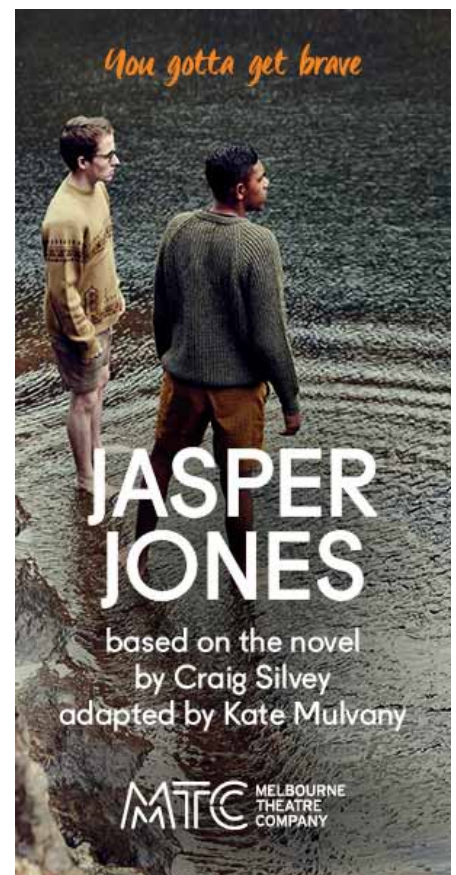
They say every girl turns into her mother: I've watched a number of female friends grow up to find, with a mixture of surprise and chagrin, some truth in that. Boys and their fathers? Not so much.



Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek in *Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre*. Photo: Bryony Jackson

Actor Brian Lipson and dancer/choreographer Gideon Obarzanek certainly seem to have fallen far from the tree, and *Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre* explores what might happen if they turned into their dads.

Structured as a series of improvised conversations between the performers as their own fathers, the piece begins with a meta-



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theatrical reversal. We are to imagine Lipson snr and Obarzanek snr ensconced on chairs in the Arts House foyer, having arrived early for a show in which both of their sons are performing.



The comedy of complaint plays out in improvised conversations. Photo: Bryony Jackson

The chat that follows rambles into a humorous kvetch-a-thon (no one does the comedy of complaint better than the Jews), taking in everything from the size of the foyer to paternal bafflement at their sons' careers in experimental theatre and contemporary dance.

The affectionate embodiment of their fathers leads to a fair amount of sharp, self-deprecating skewering of their own artistic foibles. It also ignites vehement conflict between conservative and liberal ideologies, over Australia's refugee policy and the fraught geopolitics of Israel.



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Illuminating backstory to the Lipson and Obarzanek families emerges: the former assimilated into British life after fleeing murderous Cossacks in a Ukrainian shtetl; the latter escaping annihilation in Poland by moving to Kazakhstan, eventually emigrating to an Israeli kibbutz after the Six Day War.

Memorably black ironies swirl through the family history, like the tale of Obarzanek's paterfamilias – jailed in Poland for being a communist before the war, and jailed for being a capitalist after it.

Pointed questions of Jewish identity mix with more poignant meditations, as they recall their own childhoods, the unbridgeable distance between past and present, and reflect on the changing face of fatherhood over three generations.

If the extemporised format delivers lively comedy and fresh, moving insight, it also secures an unstable performance style, too replete

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with personal intuition ever to collapse into simple impersonation.

It's a bit like theatre as seance, a sense amplified by a final movement into the existential – a brush with impending death, and whatever afterlife there is.

Director Lucy Guerin seizes the moment to end with a brief contemporary dance duet. Obarzanek may have a more natural facility for acting than Lipson for dance, yet this abstract coda, with its patterns of synchronicity, antithesis and mutual engagement, evoking both purgatory and grace, provides a fitting conclusion.

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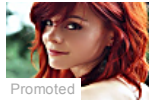
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Two Jews walk into a theatre

AUGUST 25, 2016

[Two Jews walk into a theatre](#). The title of this sublime theatre show was doubly misleading. Firstly, it suggested to me a light hour of comedy. Maybe two Jewish comedians doing a bit of stand-up. That's somewhat my fault. There are many great Jewish comics, but that's not what I came to see this night. Brian is an actor, designer and director who grew up performing experimental theatre in England, before settling in Australia. Gideon has won awards as choreographer of contemporary dance. The kind of dance that might seem robotic and weird. Incomprehensible if not provocative. Well, that's the biased opinions we hear from critics that know the performers better than anyone. Their dads. Which leads to the second misconception – there are four, not two, Jewish men in this play. Brian, Gideon and their two fathers.

This is the setup: the fictitious encounter of two Jewish fathers, sitting in the foyer of the [North Melbourne Town Hall](#). Both here to see their sons on stage. It starts with light witty banter, remarking on how disproportionately small the foyer is for the spacious hall. Funny mainly because that is exactly I had been thinking being crammed standing outside, minutes before, waiting to take my seat. They move easily into anecdotes involving their own parents and their children, whom chose lives as artists which would be impossible if not inconceivable for their parents: migrants and refugees. The humorous reminiscences transition to passionate and heated arguments into what it means to be Jewish, to support Israel. Issues regarding Palestine and immigrants in Australia. They scream and accuse each other. A very long pause where they refuse to speak is followed by a reconciliation. This is followed by a meta reflection on death. Both fathers movingly describe the circumstance of their passing away and their death-bed reconciliations with Brian and Gideon.

The simple premise is powerful. Reassessing their lives by role-playing their fathers is therapeutic, revealing and transcends the limits of the stage. This simple psychodrama experiment left me reeling.

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Melbourne, VIC, Australia



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Thu Sep 01 2016 at 06:30 pm
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At an age, forty, where I am old enough to compare my own life story to that of my father, and having lived through his death too – it forced me to reconsider our own failings in a different and forgiving light. I really believe that this will be one of those exceptionally rare works where I walk away with a different take on my own life.

Two-thirds into the performance, it is finally time for the two older men to leave the foyer and take their seats in the audience. Now Gideon and Brian, the sons, take the stage as the performances. No dialogue. A choreographed abstract dance to arresting minimalist music. It is a startling and brilliant contrast and complement to the mechanics of the opening dialogue. A wondrous coda that is unique, brilliant and unforgettable.

[Two Jews walk into a theatre](#) runs 23-28 August 2016 at the Arts House in North Melbourne. The venue is accessible.

– Christian
Christian G. is an international man of mystery; lover of books, cats and the performing arts; moonlighting as a finance professional by day.

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Two Jews



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by [theplusonesglobal](#) 21 hours ago

Could you think of a better way to spend an afternoon than sipping on Perrier-Jouët and tasting some of the best English treats Melbourne has to offer? Well the Intercontinental Hotel Rialto has just the thing for you. Read our review on: [@interconmel](http://www.theplusones.com/melbourne-TeamTPO) Photo credit: The Bastion Effect




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Two Jews walk into a theatre...

August 23, 2016 - Theatre



Inhabiting our parents idiocentric traits We think we know our parents and we sense their presence inside us. At times we're even shocked to hear their voices come out of our own mouths.

Devised and performed by acclaimed director/performer Brian Lipson and choreographer/director Gideon Obarzanek, *Two Jews walk into a theatre...* sees these artists present themselves as their fathers on stage. It's probably a good thing that Zenek Obarzanek and Laurence Lipson never met in real life, but the fictional meeting of these two irascible old men makes for entertaining and provocative theatre – their disagreements and affinities are intense.

Directed by choreographer Lucy Guerin, *Two Jews walk into a theatre...* is a challenging departure for three of Melbourne's most adventurous and experienced performance makers. Deceptively simple, subtly affecting and packed with surprise, this new work portrays two fathers with all the intimacy, understanding and horror that only a son can supply – it's funny, poignant and alarming.

Brian Lipson is an actor, director, designer, writer and teacher. He has been working in theatre for more than 40 years. Brian grew up in London but has been living in Melbourne for the last eighteen years. He has acted with nearly all the major theatre companies in Australia – from state theatres to the most adventurous independent companies. His work includes: *A Large Attendance in the Antechamber* and *EDMUND. THE BEGINNING*.

Lucy Guerin is an award-winning dancer and choreographer whose work has toured extensively in Europe, Asia and North America as well as to most of Australia's major festivals and venues. She has been commissioned by Chunky Move, Dance Works Rotterdam, Ricochet (UK), Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project (USA), Lyon Opera Ballet (France) among many others. In 2002 she established Lucy Guerin Inc to support the development, creation and touring of new works with a focus on challenging and extending the concepts and practice of contemporary dance.

Gideon Obarzanek is an award-winning director, choreographer and performing arts curator. He is the former Artistic Director of Chunky Move, a company he founded in 1995. His works have been diverse in form and content – stage productions, installations, site-specific works and film – and have been performed in many festivals and theatres around the world in the U.K, Europe, Asia and the Americas. Gideon is currently Artistic Associate with the Melbourne Festival, co-curator for the inaugural Asian Pacific Triennial of Performing Arts and Chair of the Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Two Jews walk into a theatre...

Arts House – North Melbourne Town Hall, 521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne

Season: 24 – 28 August 2016

Information and Bookings: www.artshouse.com.au

Image: Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek feature in *Two Jews walk into a theatre...* – photo by Sarah Walker



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Mikey Cahill, - Livelist Editor, Herald Sun
August 18, 2016 3:51pm

1. CHOPPY WATERS

Would Chopper be rolling or LOLLING in his grave over Heath Franklin's impersonation of him? I'd say laughing, he had real ears for a good joke and imitation is the highest form of flattery. Chopper's Republic of Anzakistan show will see Franklin take over the former countries New Zealand and Australia, throw out the crap bits, and create the world's newest



📷 Two Jews Walk into a Theatre - Brian Lipson, Gideon Obarzanek

7. DEBORAH CONWAY & WILLY ZYGIER CONCERT

It's the 25th anniversary of the String of Pearls album and the tour is coming to cosy environs. I saw Russell Morris there earlier in the year. Conway will preview her Everybody's Begging LP.

13th Beach Golf Course, Barwon Heads. Fri, 6.30pm/8pm. \$45/\$90. Bookings: 0419881268



Two Jews Walk Into a Theatre...



Devised and performed by Brian Lipson & Gideon Obarzanek. Directed & choreographed by Lucy Guerin. Auspicious Arts Projects. Arts House at North Melbourne Town Hall. 22 – 28 August 2016.

So... there are two men sitting in a theatre foyer, waiting for a show. They don't know each other.. but a conversation begins. Because they're two old Jews, the conversation begins with argumentative *kvetching*. Look at this foyer. It's too small. They turn a Town Hall into a theatre – and the theatre is – what? - big enough for maybe four hundred people? Can four hundred people fit in this foyer? No. It's too small...

The two old Jews are played by Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek, seated on the apron of the Arts House proscenium arch theatre, each of them acting (?), impersonating (?), channelling (?) his father. Mr Lipson, a superb actor, creates a real *character* in voice, gesture and body language. Mr Obarzanek, primarily a choreographer, plays it dead straight with a sort of solemn, tight stillness that works perfectly well in this context. Such is the ubiquity of 'Jewish humour' that even the *goyim* recognise the jokes, the rhythms, the fatalistic negativity, the nit-picking and the irresistibility of argument for argument's sake. I suspect than many in the audience recognised their own fathers, possibly with shock and pain – and being Jewish, guilt.

Their 'conversation', under the direction of Lucy Guerin, is essentially an improvisation that has been honed and practiced over years. According to Mr Obarzanek, the show is really about him and Mr Lipson: playing their fathers is a way of getting outside themselves and gaining a new perspective.

So the conversation and the *kvetching* proceed. Each father reveals that he is actually there to see his son in the show – i.e. a show with Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek. One father is trepidatious, the other doesn't really get it, but he's proud. And so they go on, sometimes talking past each other, Obarzanek Senior expounding dogmatically, Lipson Senior checking his watch as if not all that interested.



But as the differences between the two opinionated fathers on stage become sharper, the conversation becomes darker and more and more heated. As elderly Jews, each has a fraught and complex history. Lipson Senior (original name 'Lipshitz') is a London Jew, who served in the British Army; he's a sceptical leftist with an ironic sense of humour. Obarzanek Senior is an Eastern European who fled the Nazis; he's spent time in Israel, he's proud, 'conservative' – and just a little humourless. Their exchanges move into the most contentious subjects: 'discipline', refugees, the Holocaust, Israel... until their conflict becomes shocking (for them and the audience) and locks them into furious silence, a chasm between them.

And then the show takes a sudden and unexpected turn that throws all that's gone before into a whole new light. And then it does it again, switching into a whole new mode, with Bosco Shaw's beautiful lighting design, to express what unites these two old Jews rather than what has divided them. If this show is a character study that makes a statement, the performers give it the weight that makes it both moving and entertaining.

Michael Brindley

Photographer: Bryony Jackson

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Two Jews walk into a theatre by Brian Lipson & Gideon Obarzanek

August 23 @ 7:30 pm - August 28 @ 7:30 pm UTC+10



We think we know our parents. We sense their presence inside us – at times we're even shocked to hear their voices come out of our own mouths. Taking this idea literally, acclaimed director/performer Brian Lipson and choreographer/director Gideon Obarzanek present themselves as their fathers on stage. The result is funny, poignant and alarming.

It's probably a good thing that Zenek Obarzanek and Laurence Lipson never met in real life, but the fictional meeting of these two irascible old men makes for entertaining and provocative theatre. Ranging from the domestic to the global, their disagreements and affinities are intense.

Directed by choreographer Lucy Guerin, 'Two Jews walk into a theatre...' is a challenging departure for three of Melbourne's most adventurous and experienced performance makers. Deceptively simple, subtly affecting and packed with surprise, it portrays two fathers with all the intimacy, understanding and horror that only a son can supply.

Duration: 70 mins

Post-show Q&A: Thu 25 August

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Details

Start:

August 23 @ 7:30 pm

End:

August 28 @ 7:30 pm

Organiser

[Arts House](#)

Venue

[Arts House](#)

521 Queensberry Street
North
Melbourne, VIC3051Australia





(/melbourne/search)

Two Jews Walk into a Theatre

Theatre [Arts House \(/melbourne/theatre/arts-house\)](/melbourne/theatre/arts-house), North Melbourne

Tuesday August 23 2016 - Sunday August 28 2016 ★★★★★ [Add review](#)



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TIME OUT SAYS

Legendary performer Brian Lipson and equally legendary choreographer Gideon Obarzanek collaborate on a deep meditation on fathers and sons, which also promises to be a hilarious and startling look at the things that unite and repel us.

- Close full review

DETAILS

Venue name:

Arts House (<https://www.timeout.com/melbourne/theatre/arts-house>)

Contact:

[VISIT WEBSITE \(HTTP://WWW.ARTSHOUSE.COM.AU\)](http://www.artshouse.com.au)

[CALL VENUE \(TEL:03 9322 3719\)](tel:0393223719)

Address:

North Melbourne Town Hall
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DATES AND TIMES

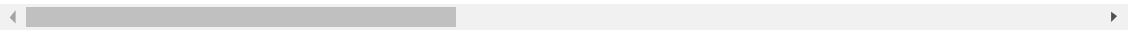
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Two Jews walk into a theatre...

Inhabiting our parents idiocentric traits

We think we know our parents and we sense their presence inside us. At times we're even shocked to hear their voices come out of our own mouths.

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Devised and performed by **Brian Lipson & Gideon Obarzanek**

Directed by **Lucy Guerin**

Produced by **Wendy Lasica**

Tickets Full \$35 / Concession \$30 / Student \$25

Green Tix for Nix Thu 25 August

Bookings artshouse.com.au (<http://artshouse.com.au/>) or (03) 9322 3713

EVENT STARTS

Wednesday 24 August, 2016

EVENT ENDS

Sunday 28 August, 2016

VENUE

North Melbourne Town Hall

VENUE ADDRESS

521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne

LOCATION

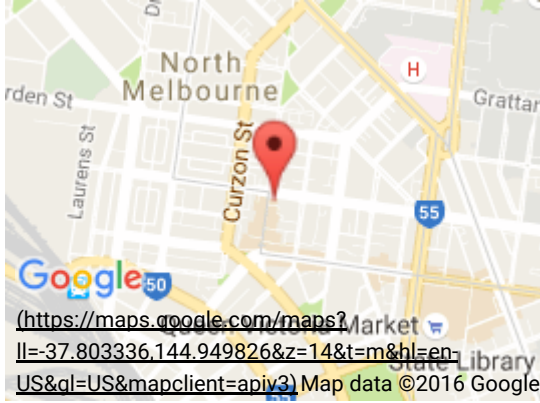
Victoria, Melbourne

WEBSITE

View website [↗ \(http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/arts-house/whats-on-arts-house/Pages/two-jews-walk-into-a-theatre.aspx\)](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/arts-house/whats-on-arts-house/Pages/two-jews-walk-into-a-theatre.aspx)

CATEGORY

Performances & Gigs

LOCATION

Two Jews walk into a theatre...

[Listen now](#) [Download audio](#)

Wednesday 10 August 2016 10:05AM ([view full episode](#))



IMAGE: BRIAN LIPSON AND GIDEON OBARZANEK IN *TWO JEWS WALK INTO A THEATRE...* (PHOTO: SARAH WALKER)

Although it sounds like the beginning of a joke, *Two Jews walk into a theatre...* is actually the title of a new performance work by renowned choreographer Gideon Obazanek and performer Brian Lipson.

Brian and Gideon perform as their fathers, Laurence Lipson and Zenek Obzanek, who discuss everything from what it's like to have an experimental artist for a son and their differing views on the state of Israel.

After leaving Poland for Australia in the late 1950s, Zenek moved with his wife and son Gideon to live on a kibbutz on Israel.

Laurence grew up in Britain, and was a soldier in World War II. Although he wanted to go to university, he studied to become a Chartered Accountant, and hoped his son Brian would achieve everything he hadn't been able to.

While Zenek is a strong Zionist, Laurence tried to hide his Jewish identity.

Brian and Gideon say that making *Two Jews walk into a theatre...* has helped them understand and empathise with their own fathers, which came as a surprise as they thought they knew their fathers so well.

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Guests

Gideon Obarzanek

Former Artistic Director, Chunky Move, now independent choreographer

Brian Lipson

Director and performer

Further Information

Two Jews walk into a theatre...

23 - 28 August 2016

Arts House, Melbourne

Credits

PresenterMichael Cathcart

ProducerGeorgia Moodie

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Two Jews walk into a theatre...

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Saturday 13 August 2016 2:05PM ([view full episode](#))



IMAGE: BRIAN LIPSON AND GIDEON OBARZANEK IN *TWO JEWS WALK INTO A THEATRE...* (PHOTO: SARAH WALKER)

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Former Artistic Director, Chunky Move, now independent choreographer

Brian Lipson

Director and performer

Further Information

Two Jews walk into a theatre...

23 - 28 August 2016

Arts House, Melbourne

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PresenterMichael Cathcart

ProducerGeorgia Moodie

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Two Jews walk into a theatre... | Brian Lipson & Gideon Obarzanek

Written by [Liza Dezfouli](#)

Thursday, 25 August 2016 18:48

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Left – Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek. Photo – Bryony Jackson

Two Jews Walk into a Theatre came about when actor and theatre-maker **Brian Lipson** (via an Australia Council Fellowship) chose to work with 25 different artists on completely open briefs – he and choreographer **Gideon Obarzanek** improvised a conversation as their fathers, *Laurence Lipson* and *Zenek Obarzanek*.

Lucy Guerin directs this evily funny show where two proud yet bemused fathers meet in the foyer of the Arts House and discover that their respective sons are the performers in the show they are each waiting to see. They are polite with each other to begin with, discussing how a town hall can become an arts centre and the failings thereof, then move through a conversation about their

sons' arts practices but eventually find themselves on opposing sides of politics. The dissection of the artistic careers of the sons as seen by their dads is especially delicious. So are their efforts to stay connected even after they find themselves in opposition regarding Australia's immigration policies and the establishment and western support of the State of Israel. Their life experiences have led them to defend certain positions and neither man hesitates to loudly challenge and provoke the other.

Brian Lipson's dad was English, a military man from the midlands whose forebears came to England from the shtetls of Russia. **Obarzanek's** dad, of Polish descent, moved to Israel and served in the Israeli army, arriving there just after the six day war of 1967. **Lipson** points out that if you go back a few generations their families would have been in similar situations in similar environments yet these two men hold wildly antagonistic world views. As always with history, hearing the personal experience brings the past intensely to life and one of the strengths of the show is in how damned fascinating it is to hear their stories and gain an appreciation of their hopes for their families.

The spontaneous quality of the show comes from it not being scripted; rather a long sheet of butchers' paper lies on the floor with prompts to the performers as to what to talk about in what order, and which also acts to remind the audience of the conceit. The last few minutes of the show sees **Lipson** and **Obarzanek** come back to themselves and perform a segment of eloquent and ritualized physical theatre, speaking to a broader experience of masculinity and vulnerability, and to how much their fathers have informed them beyond words and performance.

Two Jews Walk Into a Theatre is so convulsively hilarious that I wanted to slap the knee of the person next to me, pinch their cheeks and roar in their face. However, it's more than that – the show works and appeals on different levels. **Lipson** in one interview referred to the conversations as his father that created *Two Jews* as a form of therapy he recommends highly. Whatever, the outcome is unmissable and unforgettable.

Arts House

Two Jews walk into a theatre...

Devised and performed by **Brian Lipson & Gideon Obarzanek**

Directed by **Lucy Guerin**

Venue: North Melbourne Town Hall | 521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne

Dates: 24 – 28 August 2016

Tickets: \$35 – \$25

Bookings: artshouse.com.au | (03) 9322 3713

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On the Couch with Gideon Obarzanek

August 19, 2016 - On the Couch



Who is Gideon Obarzanek?

A choreographer, occasional theatre director and filmmaker, performing arts curator and an average but extremely enthusiastic surfer.

What would you do differently to what you do now?

Invested in real estate very early and uncouple making shows from income.

Who inspires you and why?

My girlfriend Lucy Guerin. She is so thoughtful and considerate, it's like I'm living with Jesus... But with better dress sense who likes to indulge now and then.

What would you do to make a difference in the world?

More and better quality education for all. The benefits for both individuals and communities cannot be underestimated.

Favourite holiday destination and why?

Maldives on a boat. Surfing remote reefs off uninhabited atolls.

When friends come to town, what attraction would you take them to, and why?

Great Ocean Road because it's the most beautiful place in Victoria and I can sneak in a surf.

What are you currently reading?

Udermajordomo Minor by Patrick deWitt.

What are you currently listening to?

A heap of really great and interesting bands from Asia to consider for a late night venue for the inaugural Asian Pacific Triennial of Performing Arts in Melbourne next year.

Happiness is?

A good night sleep.

What does the future hold for you?

Ultimately death. But hopefully some good meals between now and then.

Gideon has co-devised and will co-perform with Brian Lipson in the world premiere season of *Two Jews walk into a theatre...* at Arts House – North Melbourne Town Hall: 23 – 28 August 2016. For more information, visit: www.artshouse.com.au for details.

Image: Gideon Obarzanek – photo by Bronwyn Kidd



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'Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre' To Make Melbourne World Premiere

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Devised and performed by acclaimed director/performer Brian Lipson and choreographer/director Gideon Obarzanek, *Two Jews Walk into a Theatre* sees these artists present themselves as their fathers on stage.

It's probably a good thing that Zenek Obarzanek and Laurence Lipson never met in real life, but the fictional meeting of these two irascible old men makes for entertaining and provocative theatre – with both their disagreements and affinities being equally intense.



Deceptively simple, subtly affecting and packed with surprise, this new work portrays two fathers with all the intimacy, understanding and horror that only a son can supply – it’s funny, poignant and alarming.

Two Jews Walk into a Theatre will make its world premiere at Arts House Tuesday August 23 - Sunday August 28.

[TWO JEWS WALK INTO A THEATRE](#) | [ARTS HOUSE](#)

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[Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre...](#)

Posted by [Vanessa de Largie](#)

22. Aug, 2016

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As human beings, we believe we *know* our parents and when we grow up, we are often shocked to hear their words and beliefs come out of our own mouths. Acclaimed director/actor Brian Lipson and choreographer/director Gideon Obarzanek bring us *Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre...* at the North Melbourne Town Hall from August 23 – August 28.

Self-devised and performed, this piece of theatre sees these great two artists present themselves as their

fathers on stage. Choreographed by Lucy Guerin, *Two Jews Walk Into a Theatre...* is a challenging departure for this trifecta of performance-makers.

This week *Milk Bar Magazine* sat down with Brian and Gideon to talk about this new work.

How did the idea to co-write this play come to be? And what was your collaborative process?

Gideon: While Brian and I are often involved in many other aspects of show making and presenting, the bulk of our professional experience has been me as a choreographer behind the scenes and Brian as an actor on stage and screen. So here much of our enquiry has been concerned with what can we do together on stage? I can't remember lines and after many years of doing so, Brian hates learning them. In this performance, the content has been agreed but there is no script. Rather, it is a complex game guided by prompts and played to rules.

Brian: This project, like several others, originated from a wonderful Australia Council Fellowship that I received in 2011. During the course of that fellowship I elected to work for a week with 25 artists with a completely open brief. During my week with Gideon, we hit upon the idea of having a conversation as our fathers. We found the experience both liberating and shocking, and that improvisation forms the basis of this show.

Through the creation of this work what have you learnt about your fathers, your Jewish identities and yourselves as artists and men?

Gideon: When we began the objective seemed obvious – play our fathers. I mean, who knows them better than us? And of course we already had a lifetime of experience imitating them in jest, annoyance and sometimes in shocking surprise when with our partners or fathering our own children. But, and beginning with the three words my father begins most his sentences, 'The truth is', I see my parents through a very narrow, often solipsistic lens and this show is in fact about Brian and me. Impersonating our fathers is an attempt to step out of ourselves and make sense of our own memories, perceptions and how we have been individually and intrinsically shaped by our intergenerational social, economic and political history.

Brian: This is the third time we have assayed the exercise: we did a ??? development at Arts House in 20?? and a First Draft development at the Sydney Theatre Company in 20?? (both under the direction of Lucy Guerin). Each iteration has revealed new layers and subtleties to this seemingly simple format, while, at the same time, revealing complex problems of style and presentation. Over the last five years our understanding of the four men involved (or six if we count the grandfathers) has developed in ways that would not have been possible otherwise. It's been hard work, but it's been fun. I would recommend this form of therapy to anyone.

Tickets are selling fast. Don't miss out!

Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre...

Tuesday August 23 – Sunday August 28

Arts House, 521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne

melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/arts-house/whats-on-arts-house/Pages/two-jews-walk-into-a-theatre.aspx

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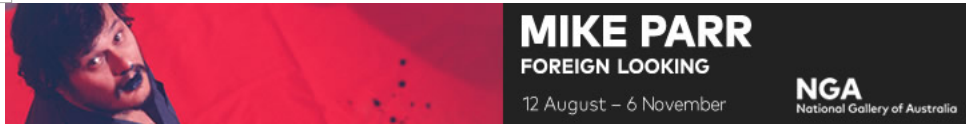
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Arts House Unveils 2016 Second Season Program



Jun 28th 2016 | 6:53pm | Staff Writer

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Arts House has released the dates and program for the second season of 2016, with nine productions in total running from July through to late November.

In July, theatre-goers can see **J R Brennan's** *The Chat*, a darkly comic exploration of the criminal justice system, and **Julie Vulcan's** *RIMA*, a 23-hour-long digital media installation and performance.

August will feature *Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre...*, in which directors **Brian Lipson** and **Gideon Obarzanek** play their own fathers on stage to poignant affect. *Imagined Touch* from the **Jodee Mundy Collaborators** will play in September and in October there will be *Thank You For Coming: Attendance* and *The Secret Noise* from **Faye Driscoll** and **Ensemble Offspring** respectively.

Finally, November will close the year with *Anicca* by **Matthias Schack-Arnott** and **Speak Percussion**, *Tremor* from **Ashley Dyer**, **Chamber Made Opera's** *Permission To Speak*.

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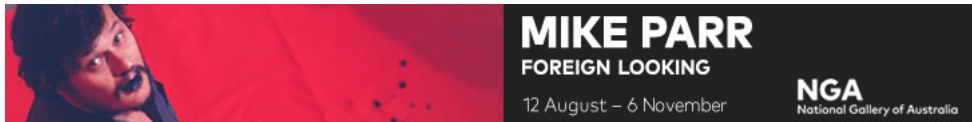
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FEATURES

TWO JEWS WALK INTO A THEATRE...



K.E. WEBER - AUGUST 19, 2016

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Brian Lipson and Gideon Obarzanek are about to embark on a wonderful experiment when *Two Jews Walk Into A Theatre* opens at Arts House later this month.

Both are renowned theatre makers but Obarzanek's usual role is that of choreographer behind the scenes, while Lipson remains a well respected stage and screen actor. This work features Obarzanek on the stage beside Lipson in a project which prodded both men to think about what could be done together on stage.

"I can't remember lines and after many years of doing so, Brian hates learning them," says Obarzanek. "In this performance the content has been agreed but there is no script. Rather, it is a complex game guided by prompts and played to rules."

The work sees both men playing their fathers. The premise here being that we think we know our parents and we sense their presence inside us. At times we're even shocked to hear their voices come out of our own mouths.

"When we began the objective seemed obvious – play our fathers," says Obarzanek. "mean, who knows them better than us? And of course we already had a lifetime of experience imitating them in jest, annoyance and sometimes in shocking surprise when with our partners or fathering our own children. But, and beginning with the three words my father begins most his sentences, 'The truth is', I see my parents through a very narrow, often solipsistic lens and this show is in fact about Brian and me. Personating our fathers is an attempt to step out of ourselves and make sense of our own memories, perceptions and how we have been individually and intrinsically shaped by our intergenerational social, economic and political history."

Father's, Zenek Obarzanek and Laurence Lipson, never met in real life, but the fictional meeting of these two irascible old men makes for entertaining and provocative theatre – their disagreements and affinities are intense.

The work originated from an Australia Council Fellowship that Lipson received in 2011 and this marks the third time the men have travelled through the exercise – all under the direction of choreographer Lucy Guerin.

"Each iteration has revealed new layers and subtleties to this seemingly simple format, while, at the same time, revealing complex problems of style and presentation," says Lipson. "Over the last five years our understanding of the four men involved (or six if we count the grandfathers) has developed in ways that would not have been possible otherwise. It's been hard work but it's been fun. I would recommend this form of therapy to anyone."

August 23 – 28

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Two Jews Walk into a Theatre

 Critics' choice

Legendary performer Brian Lipson and equally legendary choreographer Gideon Obarzanek collaborate on a deep meditation on fathers and sons, which also promises to be a hilarious and startling look at the things that unite and repel us.

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 Arts House, North Melbourne  Tuesday August 23 2016 - Sunday August 28 2016



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521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne (http://maps.google.com/maps?q= 521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne)

Tuesday 23 August 2016, 19:30 till Sunday 28 August 2016, 19:30

Organized by : Arts House (http://www.facebook.com/332546913442566)

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We think we know our parents. We sense their presence inside us – at times we're even shocked to hear their voices come out of our own mouths. Taking this idea literally, acclaimed director/performer Brian Lipson and choreographer/director Gideon Obarzanek present themselves as their fathers on stage. The result is funny, poignant and alarming.

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