

KICKED OUT OF DEATH is a two man work – a folie à deux – written, directed and performed by Peter Jacobs and MKS Volcofsky, playing collectively as Père Another.

Inhabitants of a space of aftermath, in a time of aftermath, two men fight impossibility within themselves and each other.

It is possible, having been ‘KICKED OUT’, that they are now trying to get back in, to the particular. “Are you dead?” one asks the other.

A theater event between men having been thrown *into* the world and the fraternity of strangers, the play and its narrative is borne upon their bodies, as their bodies are inseverably welded to the play; inside their play space, a 4x8 ft. sheet of galvanized aluminum acts as a stage within the stage, a shifting esthetic trashground of a few exhausted objects, relics of a life of work and learning and food, the hint of another world beneath their feet. One wants what the other has; the other wants what’s missing. The two are violated by language and use it as bait and weapon and toy; objects are misnamed, and the MEANING of things becomes a postmortal struggle of hilarity and humiliation. Anger, a vile meal, and often their only food. They are haunted by the feminine which here exists only in words or in the disembodied trappings of what is apparently ‘female’.

Tribal affiliations emerge: these two are Jews, of no congregation but each other. Their confined nomadism takes on an historical tinge, contemporary and otherwise. Shoes are extremely important to them. These two men exist step by step. Hyper-specific actions are taken, hyper-specific words are spoken: abuse, love, rage, support, subservience, celebration, robbery and abandonment. In this container of ‘aftermath’ this specificity is elevated to the tension of ritual – with its autonomous brutality of repetition and otherworldly logic –and the meaning of what is happening seems simultaneously apparent and teetering.

The genesis of this collaborative work was in large part Jacobs’ encounter with Volcofsky’s visual art – three charcoal drawings on paper in particular. In them Jacobs saw an isolation, grieving, masculinity, vulnerability, depression, and a relationship to the feminine to which he related strongly – emotional themes and landscapes he had been exploring in his own work. The two decided to collaborate, and the visual art became a map for the work. Through months of improvisation this piece has emerged, with some text written individually.

A common drive the two recognized in each other’s work is the desire to invest catastrophic intellectualism, isolation & self-obsession with (a return to) *intimacy* and *the body*; particularly to explore the emotional male body in relational theatrical space, a feeling male body not made ‘safe’ by either marginalization (grotesquery) or categorical normalization – either homo- or hetero- centric. Something otherwise. Neither melodrama nor sheer display of virtuosic mind-prowess; and not ‘performance art’, which too often is a performer’s therapy at the audience’s expense, too self-referential or -indulgent and often depositing the illness of the performer into the soiled laps of the audience.

And yet we are convinced of the healing aspect of art. **KICKED OUT OF DEATH** is a work that entertains as it guts itself, its text, its own claims, its desire for mastery, laughing all the while, knowing it is doing a maypoleish dance around the panopticon inside.

Peter Jacobs produced and conceived the site specific performance *For A Private House* for the 2005 Movement Research Festival. Since 1997 he has collaborated extensively with choreographer DD Dorvillier, writing plays for dancers: *Die flasche ist ganz leer* (1999), *Wind* (2001), and *Coming Out of the Night With Names* (2004) all choreographed by Dorvillier. He was the dramaturge on Dorvillier's Bessie Award winning *Dressed For Floating* (2002). He was Artistic Co-Director for Chashama Inc. (1995-1997, which he co-founded in 1995) and a founding member of Reza Abdoh's Dar A Luz company. On stage he has performed leading roles in the work of Reza Abdoh, Richard Foreman, The Builders Association, Gale Gates et al, and made his opera debut in 2006 singing the role of Giraffier in *Les Deux Aveugles*, presented at Summerscape at The Fisher Center for the Performing Arts. He's featured in the films *The Blind Owl* directed by Reza Abdoh, and *Philadelphia* directed by Jonathan Demme. A MacDowell Colony Fellow, his work has been supported by The Jerome Foundation, The James E. Robison Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation MAP Fund, and The NEA.

MKS Volcofsky has been writing, directing, designing & performing his original theater work since 1995. Works include his plays *Surrepetition* (New School, 1995), *Sap* (Atrium Theater, NY, 1996), *ALINE*, *BlackBox* (both at Williamsburg Art & Historical Society, 1997), *Holy Wa(ter)* (with Karmenlara Seidman at HERE's T.H.A.W. festival, 2002), *Shivah/Proper* (Williamsburg Art Nexus 2003 & NY International Fringe Festival 2004), and *Stickfigure* (National Museum, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago 2004). His video works *Shivah* & *Snow Vein* were seen in '05, '06 & '07's **Festival Mau** in Lisbon & Faro, Portugal. His first solo performance *Fur Egg* was seen in August '07 as part of the Nomadic New York festival, commissioned for and curated by **Andrè Lepecki**, for the re-opening of the **House of World Cultures, Berlin**. He has twice received **Albee Award Fellowships**, for both playwrighting and prose. His drawing & painting is in private collections and has been seen in shows in the LES, Williamsburg & Tokyo, and will be seen in Berlin in late '08. He is the founder & sole proprietor of **A' Traveling Yeshiva Sideshow**, a roaming silo of original plays, prose, pictures and clothes. www.atravelingyeshivasideshow.com

NOTE FROM MKSV: I work under the nom-de-mort VOLCOFSKY; this would have been my surname had my paternal great-grandfather not been killed in a coal mine explosion in Delaware at the turn of the 20th century. A new immigrant, he'd left his tin-smith artisanship behind in Galicia, became an American laborer, and died, leaving behind his young wife and 2 year old son. They returned to NYC, in poverty. His son, my grandfather, later shed the name. I've unburied it. Fatherlessness, which to me is an essential element of Judaism (along with bearing the rubble of temples/tablets within ourselves, as ourselves), blows through my work like a disaster ash tidalwave through a city street. **KICKED OUT OF DEATH** is rich with it.