

2017 Los Angeles Stage Raw Theatre Award for Solo Performance

Press Kit / Tech Rider

the
DIG 
death, Genesis +
the double helix

written + performed by

Stacie Chaiken

with original music composed + performed by

Yuval Ron

directed by

Pamela Berlin



"moving and deeply satisfying
... a seamless piece of work.

NEAL WEAVER
STAGE RAW



OVATION RECOMMENDED

What luck to have caught this very special
theater artist in her **COURAGEOUS,**
fierce, tender + intelligent
performance of **The DIG**

theDIGplay.com

staciechaiken.com/press

an “unusual and riveting” new play
from a master storyteller

“... an intricate, multi-layered tale that combines archeology,
religion, Israeli-Palestinian politics and personal issues, with
each strand of the narrative reflecting
back on the others.”

With Yuval Ron’s music — the oud and the saz —
we have an independent interactive voice that speaks
directly to the area of the Middle East, where the play
lives, to the land, the danger of the land, the danger of
its history, and — with its deep emotion and
sentimentality — the love of that land.

Two masterful voices in conversation ...

It’s like jazz.



I was completely riveted.

*[This is] an extraordinarily personal, evocative,
and provocative play. Chaiken manages to captivate
in a way that opens us up new angles and takes
deeper dives into really important issues.*

**An American archaeologist is
summoned to a dig in Jaffa.**

**The Israelis have found something.
She’s the only one who can
tell them what it is.**

And her mother just died.

**And there’s a lizard
in her bathtub**



synopsis



Los Angeles-based archaeologist Sally Jenkins is world-renowned for her ground-breaking work in the analysis of ancient DNA. She loves bones, knows everything about bones, knows everything about everything—except how to get along with other people.

Sally's mother dies after a long illness. Moments later, Sally gets a call from Jerusalem—Israeli Antiquities. The Israelis found something buried under a monastery in Jaffa. They have a ticket for her on the next flight out, and they're willing to pay a small fortune to get her there. Sally glibly skips her mom's funeral and flies.

Sally's arrival is cloaked in secrecy. No one, they tell her, must know why you are here. And it's a while before she knows the full story of why she has been summoned.

There's a lizard in the bathtub in her five-star hotel. Gender? Hard to tell. Sally names it "Mo"—for Mom—and goes to work with her Israeli wrangler David (Daveed) and his mysterious Palestinian partner Rashid, in an underground tomb in the ancient city.

They've discovered a stone sarcophagus—unheard of in Israel. Sally, David and Rashid manage to lift the lid, revealing an extraordinarily preserved four thousand year-old burial. The Israelis have reason to believe their find might prove the validity of ancient texts, and challenge already fragile boundaries in this shaking world.

Sally's innovation—real cutting-edge science—is a methodology for cleaning away eons of dust and dirt, and isolating the genetic material necessary for identification of ancient bones. Her analysis of the DNA in the Israeli corpse is suggestive, but inconclusive, and Sally finds herself in a situation where the mess of history—her own history and that of the land where she is working—cannot be so easily cleaned away.

A decision must be made. Sally, David, and Rashid come to an unexpected meeting of minds—and hearts.

"I have never done anything like this," they say, as each of them foregoes their claim to what might have been the most important archaeological find in recorded history.

That's what it costs, the writer suggests, to free us—as individuals and peoples—from the crippling violence of the past.

the team



WRITER/PERFORMER

Stacie Chaiken

Chaiken's play *The Dig, death, Genesis + the double helix* received the 2017 Los Angeles Stage Raw Theatre Award for Solo Performance. Other plays include *What She Left* (World War Two narratives), and *Looking for Louie* (family secrets). Her recent plays, *Saint Vibiana*, *PRAY4US* (2018), and *Don't Flinch* (2019 Son of Semele Solo Creation Festival, May 20-26) are parts of *Porciuncula (Little Portion)*, a large-scale, multi-media, site-specific work-in-progress about the history of one square block in Downtown LA. In 2014, *Since 2014*, she has served as a story consultant for *New Ground: a Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change*, whose work is based on the premise that conflict can become the open door to meeting and conversation.

staciechaiken.com

COMPOSER/PERFORMER

Yuval Ron

Yuval Ron is an internationally renowned and award-winning World Music artist, composer, and record producer. In addition to his leadership of The Yuval Ron Ensemble music and dance group, Ron has created scores for a number of plays, television series and films, including the Oscar-winning short *West Bank Story*. His music is influenced by his continual research into various ethnic musical traditions and spiritual paths. This research has included producing field recordings in the Sinai Desert with the Bedouins, archival preservation recordings of the sacred Yemenite, Moroccan and Andalusian Jewish traditions, and the album of a famed Sufi master musician, Omar Faruk Tekbilek. Ron's musical achievements have been recognized with a variety of awards and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, American Composers Forum, California Council for the Humanities and the Rockefeller Foundation. yuvalronmusic.com



DIRECTOR

Pamela Berlin

New York directing credits include *Steel Magnolias*, which ran for three years off-Broadway, *Endpapers* at the Variety Arts Theatre, *To Gillian on her 37th Birthday (Circle in the Square)*, *The Cemetery Club* (Broadway), *Crossing Delancy* (Jewish Repertory Theatre), *Joined at the Head and Pretty Fire* (Manhattan Theatre Club), *The Family of Mann and The Red Address (Second Stage)*, *Three in the Back, Two in the Head* (MCC), *Black Ink and Elm Circle* (Playwrights Horizons), *Snowing at Delphi and Club Soda* (WPA), *Vita and Virginia* (the Zipper Theatre), *Winners, Close Ties* and numerous one-acts in the Marathons at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, where she is a member. Pamela is also an acclaimed opera director.

pamela.berlin.bio



PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Yael Pardess

Yael's designs have been seen on Broadway, London West End, Mark Taper Forum LA, The Guthrie, American Conservatory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Repertory Theatre, Hartford Stage garnering critical acclaims and awards. She has collaborated with acclaimed directors like Joel Zwick, Oscar Eustis, Robert Egan, Jo Bonney, Brendon Fox, Jessica Kubzanski, Tom Moore, Ron Link, and many more. She currently designs for theme parks and museums worldwide. yaelpardessdesigns.com



The DIG can be presented powerfully in venues ranging from the intimacy of a living room — with just “the woman, the book and the bug” — to full staging with live music, in a designed environment, with mapped projections, and sound score, in theatres holding upwards of four hundred spectators.

Full production:

EQUIPMENT:The full production requires a video projector; a dedicated computer running QLab.

PERSONNEL: Put-in for the full production, with lights, projections and sound, requires a projection or video specialist, sound technician, and a lighting designer. Running crew: three operators, which may or may not include the production stage manager, depending on available personnel and the layout of your facility.

Black-box, with minimal projections and sound score

EQUIPMENT:The full production requires a video projector; a dedicated computer running QLab.

PERSONNEL: Put-in for the black box production, with lights, projections and sound, requires a projection or video specialist, sound technician, and a lighting designer. Running crew: three operators (see above).

Studio production: We provide the woman, the book, and the bug.

FOR DETAILS AND SCHEDULE OF FEES: info@theDIGplay.com

The DIG creator Stacie Chaiken is an acclaimed teacher in the field of performance and story. Formerly on the faculty of the University of Southern California School of Dramatic Art, she is a Fulbright Senior Specialist, and the founder of the Los Angeles-based [What's the Story?](#) workshop, for writers and performers making powerful stuff, based on personal material

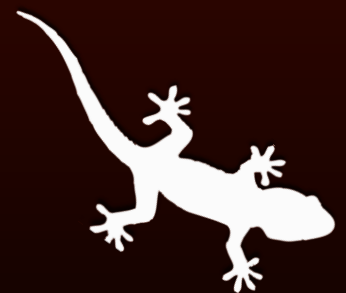
As an adjunct to performances of *The DIG*, Stacie is eager to work with students or artists in your community.

She can facilitate group-process writing workshops for writers who are working in any genre. She can also offer performance workshops and Master Classes for students who are creating — or want to create — solo plays.

Workshops can be customized for writers and performers at any level of training or craft, working in a broad range of genres, from prose memoir, to autobiographical verse, to songwriting and solo performance.

**technical
requirements**

**writing +
performance
workshops/
residencies**



theDIGplay.com



Photos:
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