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# The Epoch Times

Epoch Times International

New England

WWW.THEEPOCHTIMES.COM

ISSUE20060032

'A FRESH LOOK AT OUR CHANGING WORLD'

July 17 - 23, 2006 WEEKLY | FREE

## True Colors: 'The Black Jew Dialogues'

By **MATT ROBINSON**  
*Special to The Epoch Times*

What do you think of Jews?  
What do you know of blacks?  
Are you sure?

In the bold, brave, and at times bawdy two-man show, local improvisational actors and educators Larry



Jay Tish and Ron Jones ply both sets of skills at once as they take a look at their common heritages, common struggles, and the common conversation that must be maintained if either people (or any people) is to survive. In the process, they offer lessons and advice that can help all of us be better, more informed citizens.

But this is not a civics class. It is a play—one that is actually often both provocative and fun, often at the same time.

While hanging out and working it out in a replica of the Chicopee, Massachusetts, hotel room where the play was actually written, Larry and Ron deal with a wide range of issues with the help of costumes (designed by Aleta Pierce Deyo and Sarah Liebmann), puppets (courtesy

of Dave Totty and Bobby Smith) and a larger video screen over the highly convertible bed on which are shown insightful quotes, inciteful questions and surveys, facts and figures, backdrops, and clips of interviews with men and women on the street—people of all shapes, sizes and, most importantly, colors.

Among these often inflammatory issues are abuse, bigotry, cowardice, deceit, envy, food, guilt, humor, ignorance, jealousy, Kunta Kinte, kasha varnishkes (bow tie pasta with cracked wheat), Katrina and the greater part of the rest of the alphabet, as well fear and stereotyping (what the pair term “fear-eotyping”).

Looking at these issues from a variety of angles, Tish and Jones demonstrate that there are in fact

more than one way to look at any of them and that by taking on any of these new perspectives, there is much to be learned and much to be gained.

Though the production is a bit loose (after all, both Tish and Jones are award-winning improvisers), it allows the audiences to fill in the spaces (especially when they are involved in a “Remote Control”-esque game of “Jew/Not Jew”). The play moves along with pathos and humor while never losing sight of its central messages—that we must all laugh while we can but that the laughter should never mask or overwhelm the deeper issues. For if we do not deal with these issues with honesty and a willingness to look deep within, then we will be defined not only by our outsides but by how others perceive them.

“The Black Jew Dialogues” by Larry Jay Tish and Ron Jones, directed by Margaret Ann Brady. The Puppet Showplace Theater, Brookline, through July 22. More details at [www.theblackjewdialogues.com](http://www.theblackjewdialogues.com).

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