

ENTERTAINMENT

THE BEVERLY HILLS COURIER ★★★★★

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Cultural Center. He tells her of their invitation and is dismayed when she tells him they are not in Petach Tikvah but rather in Bet Hatikvah and, to make matters worse, there is no bus until the next day and no hotel for the band to stay overnight.

Thus starts, *The Band's Visit*, which is writer/director Erin Kolirin's first feature.

It is a successful first venture as he bridges two ancient and unfriendly cultures with an amusing screenplay.

The film has caused quite a controversy because there was too much English spoken to be considered for a foreign film Oscar nomination. The powers that be obviously didn't take into account that the Arabs spoke no Hebrew and the Israelis no Arabic.

Out of a need to converse with one another, they speak English... albeit, a broken English, which is also used for comical effect.

That unforgivable oversight notwithstanding, *The Band's Visit* is an extremely pleasurable picture of mutual understanding and co-existence between two Biblical cousins whose future is still in doubt but for the present, there is hope.

3 bagels out of 4

Cutler's Review: Yiddish Theater: A Love Story

By Jerry Cutler

Yiddish Theater: A Love Story doesn't hold out much hope for the future of Yiddish Theater.

The award-winning documentary directed by Dan Katzir and produced by Ravit Markus and Yael Katzir was, for me, a delightful trip down Memory Lane. It tells the story of Zypora Spaisman, a sprightly and charismatic 84-year-old actress and Holocaust survivor, whose fortitude and dedication to the Yiddish art form had kept the Folksbiene Theater alive for many years.

There is great insight into the psyche of the elderly actors who are unwavering in their love for the theatre. The story begins on the now multi-cultural lower East Side of New York, as the show, *Green Fields*, is performed to less than capacity customers.

Undaunted, two elderly producers and the hearty Ms. Spaisman, try to raise enough money to take them from the hard-to-get-to theatre to a Broadway venue and the possibility of more patrons.

You can guess the outcome

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Entertainment News & Notes

Writers Guild to Discuss Terms Of Possible Contract Deal

In a letter sent to its membership on Tuesday, the Writers Guild of America said it was ready to share with its members the details of its continuing discussions with the major Hollywood studios and television networks as a possible precursor to reaching a new contract and ending its four-month-long strike.

The WGA West said it will hold general membership meetings on Saturday at 7 p.m. at the Shrine Auditorium. The WGA East will at 2 p.m. EST Saturday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Manhattan.

"While we have made important progress since the companies re-engaged us in serious talks, negotiations continue," said WGA negotiating committee chair John Bowman. "Regardless of what you hear or read, there are many significant points that have yet to be worked out.

"In order to keep members abreast of the latest developments, informational meetings are being planned by both Guilds for this weekend - details to be announced," he said. "Neither the Negotiating Committee, nor the West Board or the East Council, will take action on the contract until after the membership meetings."

Vanity Fair Drops Oscars Party

Vanity Fair magazine says it is scrapping its traditional Hollywood Oscar party, due to the ongoing Writers Guild of America strike.

Although Academy Awards organizers have promised the prize presentation show will go on despite the strike, many stars have vowed not to cross a WGA picket line -- should there be one -- to get inside the event.

"After much consideration, and in support of the writers and everyone else affected by this strike, we have decided that this is not the appropriate year to hold

NOW ON SALE!
NOW OR NEVER!
Jackie Mason
THE ULTIMATE



GIRL, YOUR HAIR'S ON FIRE, SEASON 2 – Andrea Sabesin's hilarious one-woman show, is at the Acme Comedy Theatre, 135 N. La Brea Ave., for the next five Tuesday nights (Feb. 12, 19, 26, Mar. 4 and 11) and promises to have audiences ablaze with laughter. Not only does this red-head deconstruct her delightfully dysfunctional family, she also skewers a slew of topics from her enduring Donny and Marie fixation, her endless stints as the wedding singer – never the bride, and the fateful Cobb Salad that brought her to Jennifer Aniston's door. She has appeared on TV's *The Gilmore Girls* and *The King Of Queens*, and honed her acting chops at Second City and the Groundlings. Call 323-822-1146 or visit her website at www.andreasabesin.com.

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of the venture, but the anticipation, the never say die attitude and Katzir's photography of the stark winter streets of New York, is a treat.

When I was a young child, I remember my parents taking me to the second Avenue Yiddish Theatre to see a play starring Molly Pican. Her antics, even though I didn't understand the dialogue, stay with me till this day. My father was a Yiddish scholar and had his own program on New York's leading Jewish station, WEVD. He spoke mainly English in the house with my New

York born, mother. Today I can't hold an in depth Yiddish conversation.

I mourn the passing of Yiddish Theater and feel that I, and others like me, are in some way responsible for its demise. I apologize to Ms. Spaisman who I met during the run of a play at the original Folksbiene Theatre in the Jewish Forward building on the lower East Side.

I owe a debt of gratitude to *Yiddish Theater: A Love Story* which transported me back to a less complicated and carefree time of my life. It is currently at Laemmle's Monica. So, go see it already and enjoy.

3 Bagels out of 4