



# Nine Contemporary Jewish Plays

*Ellen Schiff, Michael Posnick*

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Jewish theatre—plays about and usually by Jews—enters the twenty-first century with a long and distinguished history. To keep this vibrant tradition alive, the National Foundation for Jewish Culture established the New Play Commissions in Jewish Theatre in 1994. The commissions are awarded in an annual competition. Their goal is to help emerging and established dramatists develop new works in collaboration with a wide variety of theatres. Since its inception, the New Play Commissions has contributed support to more than seventy-five professional productions, staged readings, and workshops.

This anthology brings together nine commissioned plays that have gone on to full production. Ellen Schiff and Michael Posnick have selected works that reflect many of the historical and social forces that have shaped contemporary Jewish experience and defined Jewish identity—among them, surviving the Holocaust, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the lives of newcomers in America, Israel, and Argentina. Following a foreword by Theodore Bikel, the editors provide introductory explanations of the New Play Commissions and an overview of Jewish theatre. The playwrights comment on the genesis of their work and its production history.

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