

# MICHAEL TAKIFF

## Actor/Writer

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### **AUTHOR AND PERFORMER OF TWO WORKS OF SOLO THEATER (video trailers at website)**

#### ***Jews, God, and History (Not Necessarily in That Order)***

Produced May-June 2022, The Sigg Theater at The Flea, New York City

In two acts of comedy and drama, *Jews, God, and History* looks at how modern humans live with ancient traditions. This show explores the big questions asked by people of all origins and beliefs: about God, faith, reason, heritage, tribe, morality.

#### REVIEWS:

##### Theater Scene

One punch to the gut after another.... Takiff is a skilled performer who never loses the audience no matter how angry or sardonic he gets.

##### Director Talk

Writer and performer Michael Takiff melds his prodigious intelligence and expert showmanship to illuminate the darkest (and most tender) moments in the life and mind of the modern American Jew.... Takiff's brilliant one-man show answers the question What is a Jew? in an entirely new, but deeply ancient, way.

##### Off Off Online

Can an atheist serve as a guide to the history, customs, and longevity of the Jewish religion and its adherents? Moreover, how can an atheist recognize that a man who has just died is with God? ... *Jews, God, and History (Not Necessarily in That Order)* is a roller-coaster ride through Jewish belief, identity, and practice.

##### Hi! Drama

Highly amusing and gets deadly serious in the second act when he talks about the Holocaust and his father's death.... It ends with the circumstances surrounding the death of his father which was so touching it had me weeping. This show has the whole megillah: Laughter and tears.

#### ***Black Tie: A Son's Journey through the Death and Life of His Father***

In this two-act family memoir, I investigate the life of my father, an ordinary man, and uncover a hero—for his diligence in serving his family day in and day out, for his courage in serving his country during World War II. After seeing *Black Tie*, people start talking and thinking about their own fathers; many leave the show in tears.

#### REVIEWS:

##### Director Talk

A rare mix of sharp intelligence and deep feeling, Filled with vital insights into a man's unending love for a difficult dad.

##### Jimmy Roberts, Composer of Off Broadway's long-running I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

Michael Takiff has a story to tell: a father, a son, a family; a country in depression, war, and peace. It's his story, yet it's everyone's story—coming to terms with loss as we find our way forward in life. He imbues small moments with humor and significance, and all we can do is watch, riveted in our seats.

##### J.B.

Full of wonderful energy, intelligence, irony, and feeling. *Black Tie* made me think and remember.

##### F.B.

Deep and funny and performed with authenticity—it's not just that Michael Takiff is a pro—he's an artist.

**FILM/VIDEO****Features:**

<i>Beach Town Maidens</i>	William	Dmitriy Rozin, dir.
<i>Gone Without a Past</i>	Saul	Julia Gorden, dir.
<i>The Rabbit Hole</i> (upcoming)	Horus	Sam Jonas, dir.

**Shorts:**

<i>Unwanted Houseguest</i>	Conductor	Ben Huff, dir.
<i>Bygone Spring</i>	Mike	Soo Oh Bang, dir.
<i>Dandelion</i>	Alejandro	Francis Kong, dir.
<i>The Mule</i>	Mr. X	Hideyasu Tanizaki, dir.
<i>Lanternfly</i>	News Anchor	Deven Nicotero, dir.
<i>Sidebar</i>	Guapo	Ivo Duwin, dir.
<i>The Poet</i>	Poet	Katherine Baxter, dir.
<i>The Right Man</i>	Prison Warden	Sam Ellis, dir.

**THEATER**

<i>The Trial of Adolf Eichmann</i> (upcoming)	Eichmann	David Serero, Prod./Dir.
<i>Impressions of the Alhambra</i> (upcoming)	Washington Irving	Mosaic Dance Theater Company
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Caesar	Shakespeare Workshoppe
<i>Goldberg's Kaddish</i>	Papa	NY Theater Festival
<i>Coriolanus</i>	Junius Brutus	Worlds Elsewhere Theater Company
<i>The 252<sup>1st</sup> Man</i>	2455 <sup>th</sup> Man	Independent Workshop Production
<i>Larry's Late Show</i>	Senator	Lionheart Productions
<i>The Box Office</i>	Person 2 (multiple roles)	The Tank
<i>Finding Silence</i>	Gabriel	Chain Theater

**STAND-UP COMEDY**

Ten years professional experience. Based at The Comic Strip, NYC; toured throughout the US.

**EDUCATION**

Yale University, B.A., *cum laude* with distinction in History.

**OTHER TRAINING AND SKILLS**

Singing voice: Baritone, specializing in classical art songs and dramatic pop/show tunes. Dance: Jazz and ballroom. Voiceovers. Accents (Russian, French, German, British, Yiddish). Jewish prayers. Love dogs.

Book Author – See Next Page

## **OTHER WRITING CREDITS**

### **PUBLISHED BOOK AUTHOR**

***A Complicated Man: The Life of Bill Clinton as Told by Those Who Know Him***  
(Yale University Press).

The Bill Clinton story, told in oral-history format, by 169 people who grew up with, worked with, worked against, prosecuted, defended, reported on America's forty-second president.

- \* "An outstanding accomplishment . . . . A historic contribution to the biographical record which will stand for generations."
  - Rick Perlstein, author of *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of a Nation*
- \* "The best oral history book ever written about a President of the United States"
  - *And Magazine*
- \* First Prize, Biography and Autobiography, Los Angeles Book Festival

***Brave Men, Gentle Heroes: American Fathers and Sons in World War II and Vietnam***  
(HarperCollins/William Morrow).

The first book to offer side-by-side, in-depth comparison of World War II and Vietnam, each the defining experience of a generation.

- \* A "Critic's Pick."
  - *Washington Post*
- \* "Oral history at its best, with an edge and a hook."
  - Joe Galloway, co-author of *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*
- \* "A superb oral history [that] would do Studs Terkel proud."
  - *Kirkus* (starred review)
- \* "A major contribution to the history of these two distinct and influential wars."
  - *Library Journal*

***The Vietnam War*** (The History Channel, 2012).

A survey history sold as a companion piece with History Channel videos.

### **OP-ED WRITER**

Published pieces on politics and baseball in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Post*, *Washington Post*, *Salon*, *The Nation*, *CNN.com*, and *Huffington Post*.

### **TELEVISION**

- \* MSNBC: "Hardball with Chris Matthews" and "Daily Rundown."
- \* Fox News Channel: "Fox & Friends."
- \* C-SPAN: "Book TV" for both *Brave Men* and *A Complicated Man*.
- \* Local TV in multiple US markets.

### **OTHER WRITING EXPERIENCE**

- \* Extensive work as ghostwriter/collaborator/editor.
- \* Editorial consultant to NBC Publishing on a series of political e-books.
- \* Author of chapters in high school history textbooks.
- \* Teacher of memoir writing.