Leah’s Train Marks Co-production Between 20% Theatre and Sabes JCC

By Sheila Reigan  Tue, Mar 3, 2015 at 9:14 AM
Category: Theater

Starting this weekend, 20% Theatre Company is joining up with Sabes JCC for a production of Leah’s Train, a play by Karen Hartman. The story follows a young woman, Ruth, who must confront her relationship with her mother in the wake of the death of her grandmother.

Claire Avitable, the executive artistic director of 20% and director of performing arts at Sabes JCC, says she was pointed toward the script by a friend of hers as a possibility for 20%’s season. When Avitable discovered the show also had Jewish content, she realized that it was the perfect script to satisfy a longtime goal of hers to facilitate a collaboration between the two organizations.

Avitable believes that collaborations are the wave of the future. “It’s a way not only to combine resources, but to reach a much broader community,” she says. The collaboration includes resource sharing but also requires them to be thoughtful about the audiences from each organization.

“It’s nice to have these audiences overlap and get to know the other organization,” she says.

The story is told through numerous train rides, which often end up being life-changing events. The setting is about a decade or so ago. Ruth, a young doctor living in San Francisco, is dealing with the fact that her grandmother, Jewish matriarch Leah, has just passed away. Due to her imperfect relationship with her mother, Ruth doesn’t go to the funeral. While the script explores the relationships presented in the play, “it’s deeper than that,” Avitable says. “Each character is in search of identity.”

IF YOU GO:
Leah’s Train
March 7 through 22
Sabes JCC
4330 Cedar Lake Rd. S., Minneapolis
There will be a preview performance on Friday, March 6, at 7:30 p.m.