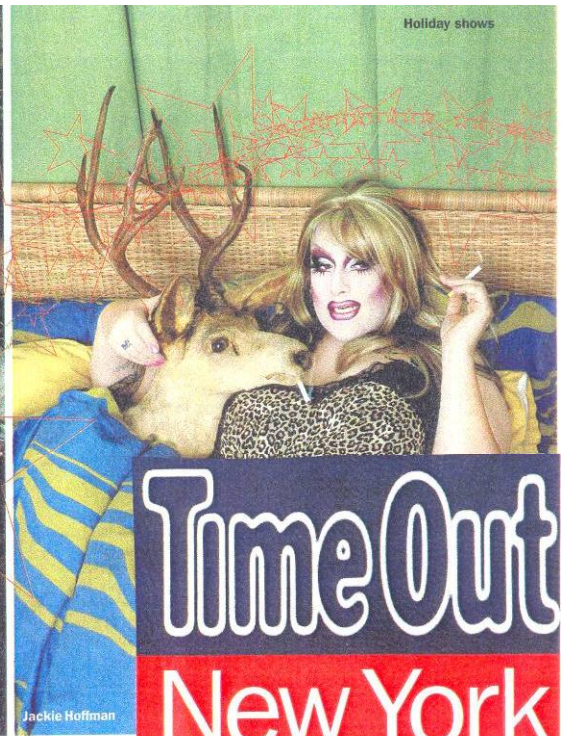


Tommy Femia



The Dysfunctional Theatre Company



Jackie Hoffman

Holiday shows

Time Out

New York

Blue Christmas

'Tis the season for wanking Santas and reindeer sex! These subversives are staging holiday spectaculars with a decidedly perverse twist.

A VERY BETTE CHRISTMAS

Drag artist Tommy Femia has been impersonating Judy Garland since 1991, but this year he decided to do someone a little different: Bette Davis. In *A Very Bette Christmas*, written by author and former Davis neighbor Elizabeth Fuller, Femia portrays the

egotistical screen star as she rehearses her fictional 1962 TV holiday special. She argues with her director, berates an elf with Tourette's syndrome and goes through numerous packs of cigarettes while waiting for the arrival of her special guest star and real-life nemesis, Joan Crawford. "I've never played a bitch

like this," Femia says. "She wasn't big on patience." And while Davis certainly wasn't known for her singing, Femia tackles a number of Christmas songs, all with parody lyrics. Sung to the tune of "Good King Wenceslas": "Old Joan Crawford lived alone in a germ-free penthouse/Wondering when ev'rything

PHOTOGRAPHS: JAMES O'NEILL

suddenly all went south / Everyday's a drunken haze but that's not the queerest / Soon the world will read a book titled *Mommie Dearest*." According to Femia, "It's all the car crashes you would expect from Bette. It's totally over-the-top." —Raven Snook

A Very Bette Christmas is playing through January 8 at Don't Tell Mama (343 W 46th St between Eighth and Ninth Aves, 212-757-0788). Show times vary.

THE BABY JESUS ONE-ACT JUBILEE

Last summer, the folks at the Brick Theater built a special lobby attraction for their Moral Values Festival: a diorama featuring a mechanical waving Santa watching *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* on TV and, well, playing with himself. Not ones to waste a good prop, the Bricksters are back with their wanking Kringle, along with a fully trimmed tree and another freaky fest. The Baby Jesus One-Act Jubilee offers a stocking stuffed with new, holiday-themed work by 12 playwrights. Jeff Lewonczyk, the Jubilee's main curator (and a TONY contributor) defends the festival as more than just a snowball in the face of Father Christmas: "Our title has a snarky overtone, but we have a couple of earnest approaches to

the holidays," he says. "Everybody loves and hates the holidays, so we have a little bit of both. Of course, there's also incest, suicide and heavy sexual content." Lewonczyk sees the festival as essentially no different from cheesy yuletide flicks and TV specials—an attempt to return to a less jaded childhood. "I was raised Catholic and Christmas would be the one time of the year where I'd feel good about being Christian. For a brief moment in time, everybody convinced themselves the world wasn't as crappy as it really was. The Jubilee contains an element of trying to reclaim that Christmas spirit." —David Cote

The Baby Jesus One-Act Jubilee plays Thursday 1–December 17 at the Brick (575 Metropolitan Ave between Lorimer St and Union Ave, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, 718-907-3457). Show times vary.

THE EIGHT: REINDEER MONOLOGUES

None of the shows mounted by the Dysfunctional Theatre Company are warm and toasty. But its outrageous holiday comedy, Jeff Goode's 1994 work *The Eight: Reindeer Monologues*, includes such chilling topics as molestation, bestiality and mental illness.

"There are a lot of Christmas stories where the family is all screwed up but by the end everybody's back together," explains Amy Overman, who portrays Vixen, a reindeer who polarizes the North Pole community by accusing Santa of rape. "This play doesn't tie up everything in a bow." —RS

The Eight: Reindeer Monologues plays Friday 2, Saturday 3, December 9 and 10, and December 16 and 17 at the Red Room (85 E 4th St between Bowery and Second Ave, 212-868-4444) at 10:30pm.

JACKIE HOFFMAN: CHANUKAH AT JOE'S PUB

Jackie Hoffman is cranky again, which is just the way we love her. "My mother said, trying to encapsulate my show, 'You know—you knock people,'" the hilariously unsatisfied actor-comedian says. "Am I still knocking people? Yeah. Same people, different knock." After a smash run at Joe's Pub last year with her solo rant *The Kvetching Continues*, Hoffman returns to the scene of the whine with a brand-new spectacle, *Chanukah at Joe's Pub*, in which she offers new riffs on her usual favorite subjects. "Here we go: I'm Jewish, what a crazy business we're in, my mom sure is