

137 Cottage Street
New Haven, CT 06511
April 13, 2000

RECEIVED
APR 13 2000

Stuart Matlins
Jewish Lights Publishing
P.O. Box 237
Woodstock, VT 05091

JEWISH
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- 1

Dear Stuart Matlins:

At the urging of Richard Siegel of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, I am sending you the enclosed texts to be considered for publication by Jewish Lights:

1. THE MOMENTS OF THE WANDERING JEW
(as printed in Yale University's Theater Magazine)
2. THE RESPONSES

The enclosed texts are scripts; and, while I know Jewish Lights to be an adventurous house (I especially appreciate your commitment to the work of Arthur Green and Lawrence Kushner), so far as I know your list does not include plays. What, then, led Richard to suppose you might be interested in my work?

Though fairly widely performed and "stage-read" in the New York theatre (the NFJC has sponsored several readings of one of the two enclosed scripts, THE RESPONSES), my plays are not dramatic texts that "happen" to be on Jewish subjects; it would be more accurate to describe them as texts of profound Jewish interest that "happen" to be plays. As well as having a life in the theatre, they would, I believe, delight those with a hunger for innovative Jewish writing--the readers of, say, John Hollander's poems, Cynthia Ozick's novels, and Edmond Jabès's experimental fictions. I should like to reach these readers, and I am looking for a publisher willing to work past the (very real) dilemmas of play publication in order to help me find them.

What I am proposing is a volume made up of four plays of mine (the 2 enclosed and 2 others; for summaries of all 4, see the attached "Synopses"-sheet), to be called something like Four Jewish Plays of Vision, and perhaps containing, as its Preface, my 1989 Tikkun article, "Toward a Jewish Dramatic Theory," based on the NFJC-sponsored lectures I gave at the 92nd Street Y in 1987-88. (A xerox of this article is also enclosed.)

(cont.)

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If you are initially open to the possibility of considering this material for Jewish Lights--great! If you are initially inclined against plays, may I ask you to suspend judgment until you have looked at the enclosed scripts: you will not, I think, find them much like the sorts of works that may have so inclined you.

Please let me know if you would like to see my two other plays, IN THE BLACK AND WHITE OF FIRE and THE RECALL OF RABBI ITHAMAR BEN ZAKHIEL FROM ECSTASY, as well as the full text of THE MOMENTS OF THE WANDERING JEW (of which I include only the excerpt recently published in Yale's Theater Magazine, together with never-before published scripts by Tennessee Williams, Karl Kraus and Heiner Müller).

If you would like to talk, I can always be reached at one of the two phone numbers below.

Meanwhile, thank you for your attention to my work and (speaking for a moment as a Jewish reader) for all that Jewish Lights has made and continues to make available to us.

Cordially,

David Cole

David Cole

PS. It may interest you to know that the enclosed excerpt from my MOMENTS OF THE WANDERING JEW was recently performed on the WBAI radio show, Beyond the Pale, to introduce a special January 2, 2000 program on Jewish views of the Millennium.

David Cole
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phone: in NEW HAVEN 203-624-3982
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(machine on in whichever city I'm in)

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STUART M. MATLINS

April 19 '00

JEWISH LIGHTS PUBLISHING -3

Dear Mr. Cole:

An interesting project,
but too much of a reach
for us at this point.

Thank you for thinking
of us.

Best wishes

Stuart Matlin

Words for the Soul—Made in Vermont

www.jewishlights.com