

המפה

HaMapah / THE MAP

**"I AM THE SUM TOTAL
OF ALL MY ANCESTORS."**

I AM THE MAP, THE QUILT, AND THE TABLECLOTH
OF THOSE WHO HAVE COME BEFORE ME"



DNAWORKS
Dialogue and Healing through the Arts

A MULTIMEDIA DANCE
JOURNEY TRACING THE
INTERSECTIONS OF
AFRICAN, JEWISH, and
NATIVE AMERICAN
HERITAGES

המפה *HaMapah*

Conceived and
Performed by
ADAM MCKINNEY
Directed by
DANIEL BANKS



PHOTO: ANDREW ECCLES

**I AM THE SUM TOTAL
OF ALL MY ANCESTORS.**

I AM THE MAP, THE QUILT, AND THE TABLECLOTH

OF THOSE WHO HAVE COME BEFORE ME .

-ADAM MCKINNEY

In Hebrew, HaMapah / המפה means "the tablecloth" or "the map." HaMapah / המפה weaves contemporary dance with archival material, personal interviews, Yiddish and American songs, and video set to traditional, contemporary, and classical music. In HaMapah / המפה, Adam McKinney explores issues of identity, culture, self-hood, and community.

As part of the program, immediately following the performance, DNAWORKS Co-Directors Adam McKinney and Daniel Banks lead a community dialogue about the audience's relationship to the core ideas of the piece – heritage, ancestry, and identity.

Praise for *HaMapah/The Map*:

“HaMapah took my breath away. I could not speak right after the performance. I wanted to sit in silence with my thoughts and feelings.”

**– Audience Member
Memphis Tennessee**

“I speak non-stop about *HaMapah*. I feel totally elevated because of the experience. I could not fall asleep last night, I was so positively excited...The genius of this experience for me was the reference to the past to create the future. Through our ancestors, in this case Adam’s, all our ancestors were mobilized and the surge of personal emotions touched upon our current multiplicity of identities that reside in all of us and make us so human, similar and distinct at the same time.”

**– Shula Bahat, C.E.O.
Beit Hatfutsot of America**

“I was so moved by the performance and the follow up last night...this was so amazingly beautiful, creative, executed and magnificent that I am lost for words.”

–*Hamapah/The Map* Audience Member

“I have never seen anything like it before. It is a new way to tell a story... for me to hear and see a story!”

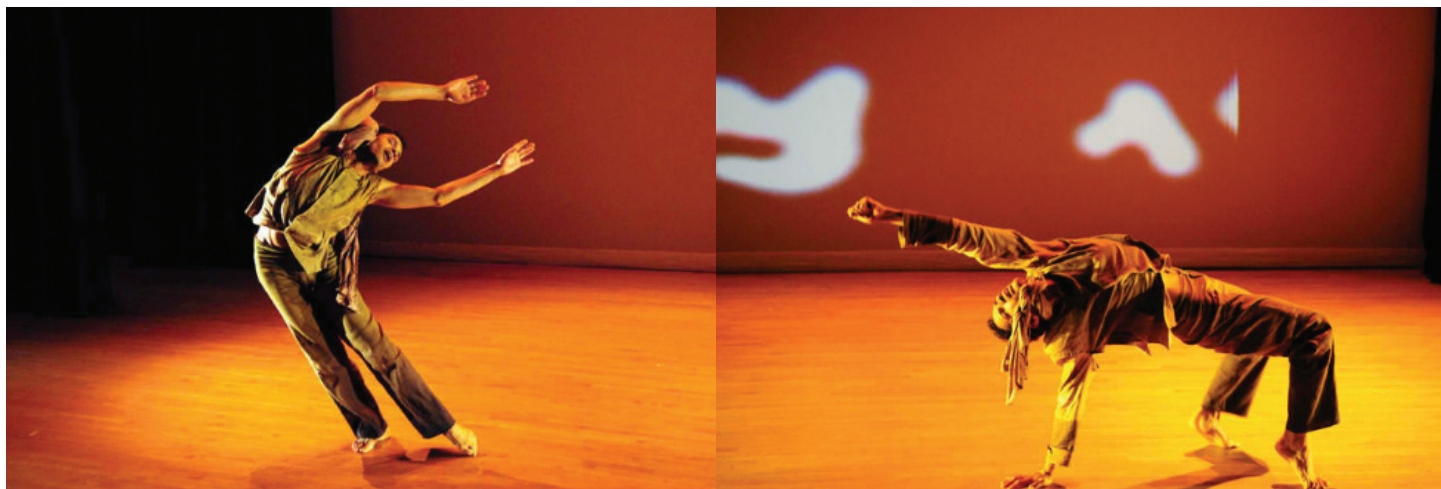
– Student at Rhodes College

“On October 9, 2011, McCoy Theatre had the honor of hosting *HaMapah*. The incredible performance took us on a journey that was not only moving and powerful, but gave us all a sense of hope. The discussion and workshops that followed opened doors for individuals who believed they had no voice, connected individuals who believed they were different and separate from others, and for a brief moment united all present in the awareness of what we could be, what we could do. This team is so important right now! Uniting our histories, our stories, our humanity; allowing us the ability to actually connect and discover how to truly give and take. These two artists give me hope!”

**– Julia Ewing, Artistic Director,
McCoy Theatre, Rhodes College
Memphis Tennessee**

“HaMapah/The Map is, conceptually, one of the most critical performances/productions I have had the opportunity to participate in and witness. The exquisite 30-minute choreographed solo tells a riveting life story/family history. However, it is also the engagement of the audience after the performance that truly makes this event a unique experience. The audience not only responded to the work on stage, but they also revealed their own life stories in relationship to the work. It is rare to see “audience participation” taken to this level. The entire evening was both cathartic and inspiring and probably could have continued long into the night”

**– Baraka Sele
Independent Producer and Consultant**



המפה

HaMapah/The Map



HaMapah/The Map Liner Notes

Adam McKinney (Creator, Performer):

I have envisioned *HaMapah/The Map* since I began actively tracing my family's genealogy at the age of ten.

I remember wanting to know who each of my relatives was and how s/he was related. I rummaged through my parents' old boxes, searching for some semblance of me before me and of them before them. I became enthralled with recent and antique family stories and photos. I imported myself and envisioned myself (re)living that moment – How did we come to be? Where were we? How did we get there?

At age three, I gave my grandmother what was, in my mind, the most precious gift – a small blue mirror that I had taken from my sister's dollhouse. I wanted my grandmother to see herself in me – for us to reflect each other and to remember our infinite connectedness. I knew then that, on a visceral level, I was responsible for holding close my family, our lore, pictures, 8-mm reels, videotapes, videocassettes, and most of all, memories.

HaMapah/The Map is a non-linear, multi-media weaving of image, song, story and dance. In creating the piece, I chose lullabies that my mother sang to me, a song that my grandfather sang to my mother, and a poem written by my grandmother. I use videos from 8-mm family reels and from a recording taken at Elmina Castle on the west coast of Ghana. Photographs come from family archives and I interviewed family members for voiceover and live spoken text to share intimate family histories.

In performing this work around the world, I am continually reminded of our interconnectedness as human beings and that, in fact, we really are all related. Why else would my

grandmother have kept that small blue mirror in her jewelry box for 30 years?

I am often asked, "How are you Jewish?" From my experience, this question embodies certain assumptions and one in particular – that a Jew can't look like me. I respond playfully, "I'm fine, Jewish. How are you, Jewish?"

This interchange has truly inspired my work. Instead of becoming defensive, I make art.

Daniel Banks (Director)

HaMapah/The Map is our second collaboration, the first being the filmed oral history, *We Are All One: The Jews of Sefwi Wiawso* that we use in the art and dialogue program "Belonging Everywhere." Our mission is to use the arts to stimulate dialogue because we know that the arts can touch people on a soul and spirit level, and that this is the place from which lasting change can grow. If we, as human beings, can still the media chatter, the cultural noise, the misnomers and separatist thinking that we have all been taught about other human beings, we may actually have the chance to look into someone's eyes and recognize that person as a relation – as a member of the same "race," the human race.

Adam and I began working on *HaMapah/The Map* to offer an audience this process of recognition and reconciliation. As with "Belonging Everywhere," the performance is followed by a community dialogue during which we invite audience members to share their own family stories and struggles with identity and self-identification. We see the dance and dialogue as one event, one performance – a call and response, Adam's story, then the community's collective story. We have heard amazing accounts from audience members – not only during, but after attending *HaMapah/The Map*. In Spain, one

woman in her mid-20s – whose mother had consistently refused to tell her the name of her birth father – called her mother from the theatre during the dialogue and insisted on knowing where she came from. Her mother, hearing her passion and conviction, gave her the name she demanded. The woman waited an hour, outside the theatre at midnight, to tell us her story.

Another audience member, who was at the premiere in New York City, reconnected with a 90 year-old aunt in California – whom she had not seen in over 30 years – to begin to document her family history. The next year, she decided at the last minute not to attend a conference for which she was already registered and go instead to a family reunion in Ohio of a branch of the family she did not know. If she had gone to Japan, she would have been there during the earthquake and tsunami of 2011. She called Adam and me to her office to let us know that, not only had *HaMapah/The Map* changed her life, it may very well have saved it.

We created *HaMapah/The Map* by assembling fragments – of memories, of archival photos and videos, of songs and stories. We weave them together to demonstrate that, as humans, we are one being, as Adam writes, "the sum total" of our ancestors. The current language of being "half-something and half-something else" is a form of violence to our bodies and our psyches. As in all elements of life, we believe that it is crucial to strive for integration and that integration is, in fact, healing for the individual and society. We hope we are doing our part to create a space for healing and connection by showing Adam's own process of affirming the possibility of his multiple selves co-existing peacefully, creatively, and lovingly.



DNAWORKS

Dialogue and Healing through the Arts

P: 1.212.765.4914
F: 1.866.394.6033
info@DNAWORKS.org
www.DNAWORKS.org

Founded in 2006 by Adam McKinney, M.A. and Daniel Banks, Ph.D., **DNAWORKS** is an arts and service organization dedicated to furthering artistic expression and dialogue, focusing on issues of identity, culture, class and heritage.



We **catalyze** performance and action through the arts in the intersecting **communities** in which we live. In our work, **art=ritual=healing=community**. We believe that this **philosophy** and **practice** lead to a more **peaceful** world.



DNAWORKS has led programming and workshops at such notable institutions as Wellesley College, California Institute of the Arts, Babson College, Bryn Mawr College, New York University, Skidmore College, University of California Berkeley, DePaul University, University of Ghana Legon, and the Black Theatre Network, among others, and has worked with community organizations and congregations in Salt Lake City, Atlanta, Toronto, Tacoma, Los Angeles, New York City, Budapest, Szarvas and Balatonlelle, Hungary, and Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa. In addition, they have led trainings for such organizations as the Museum at Eldridge Street and the Academy for Jewish Religion.

One of DNAWORKS' programs, DNAWORKSHOP, was a monthly multi-generational meeting in NYC for artist-activists designed to nurture exchange, communication, and the sharing of creative ideas and practices.

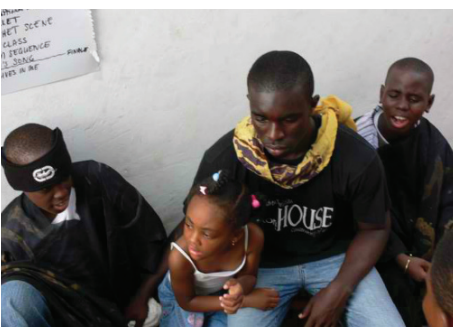
At the end of 2009, DNAWORKS spent nine weeks in the Middle East working in Israel and Palestine. They created a new dance work with Beta Dance Troupe, an Ethiopian Dance Company in Haifa, and led workshops with Israeli Arab and Jewish youth, as well as with Israelis and Palestinians. For three consecutive summers, beginning in 2009, they worked in Hungary under the auspices of the U.S. Embassy in Budapest to lead drama workshops and teacher trainings at the Roma and Friends Tolerance Camp.

THE HIP HOP THEATRE INITIATIVE, a program of DNAWORKS, was designed to integrate the rigors of theatre making with the performance elements and politics of the global, youth-driven, activist culture. HHTI trains practitioners in critical thinking, leading arts workshops in communities, and facilitating dialogue about the social issues pertaining to Hip Hop. This work

has been invited to college campuses and community groups across the U.S., as well as in the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana, townships in South Africa, the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, neglected neighborhoods and towns in Mexico, and the La MaMa International Symposium for Directors in Spoleto, Italy.

THE BORDERS PROJECT is another community-based DNAWORKS initiative that confronts border and immigration issues, policies, and laws while providing communities access to accurate information about the histories and effects of borders, how they are constructed, who profits, who suffers, and why. The first two installations of THE BORDERS PROJECT include a summer residency at Centrum Center for the Arts (Port Townsend, WA) and a site-specific dance on the border wall in Bethlehem that separates Palestine and Israel.

DNAWORKS has received grants from the U.S. Embassies in Budapest, Tel Aviv, Accra, and Johannesburg, and the Trust for Mutual Understanding. In 2010, DNAWORKS received the Presidential Pathfinder Award from the Black Theatre Network.





Adam McKinney, M.A., is a classically trained dancer and former member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Béjart Ballet Lausanne, and Alonzo King's LINES Ballet. Adam has taught master dance classes in the U.S., Hungary, Indonesia, England, Ghana, South Africa, and Israel, and has organized programs on social justice and the Arts with a long list of organizational partners, including Ghana's National School for the Deaf, Ghana State Mental Hospital, and City Ballet Theater, Milwaukee, WI.

In 2006, Adam served as a US Embassy Culture Connect Envoy in South Africa and co-choreographed *Pretending to be Something, Now Coming from Nothing* with Agulhas Theatre Works, a mixed abilities contemporary dance company in South Africa.

Adam's awards include Career Transition for Dancers grants, the NYU President's Service Award for his work with the Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center (NYC), a Jerome Foundation Travel and Study Grant and Gallatin (NYU) Jewish Arts grants for work with Ethiopian communities in Israel, and the Bronfman Jewish Artist Fellowship for his genealogical dance work *HaMapah/The Map*.

His choreographed works have been performed in Indonesia, Italy, Serbia, Hungary, South Africa, Israel, and Spain. Named one of the most influential African-Americans in Milwaukee by St. Vincent DePaul in 2000, Adam holds an M.A. in Dance Studies with concentrations in Race and Trauma theories. He worked as Assistant Choreographer at Santa Fe Opera and is currently Chair of the Dance Department at the New Mexico School for the Arts, Santa Fe.



Daniel Banks, Ph.D., is a theatre director, choreographer, educator, and dialogue facilitator. He has worked extensively in the U.S. and abroad, having directed at such notable venues as the National Theatre of Uganda (Kampala), the Belarussian National Drama Theatre (Minsk), The Market Theatre (Johannesburg, South Africa), the Hip Hop Theatre Festival (New York and Washington, D.C.), the Oval House (London), Playhouse Square (Cleveland), Skirball Center for the Performing Arts (NYC), and served as choreographer/movement director for productions at New York Shakespeare Festival/Shakespeare in the Park, Singapore Repertory Theatre, La Monnaie/De Munt (Brussels), Landestheater (Salzburg), Aaron Davis Hall (Harlem), and for Maurice Sendak/The Night Kitchen. Daniel has served on the faculties of the Department of Undergraduate Drama, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University and the MFA in Contemporary Performance at Naropa University, and is the founder and director of the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative (a project of DNAWORKS) that uses Hip Hop Theatre as a vehicle for youth empowerment and leadership training. HHTI has worked on campuses and in communities across the U.S. and in Ghana, South Africa, Hungary, Israel, and Mexico. He currently teaches in the M.A. in Applied Theatre at City University of New York and is a long-time advisor in the Gallatin School for Individualized Studies.

Daniel is an Ariane de Rothschild Fellow and a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group Career Development Program for Directors. He is Co-Director of Theatre Without Borders, on the Editorial Board of No Passport Press, and on the Advisory Boards of the Hip Hop Education Center, NYU, and the Downtown Urban Arts Festival. He has guest lectured extensively across the country and has been a Guest Artist at Williams College, City College of New York, Marymount Manhattan College, and the National Theatre Conservatory, Denver. He holds a Ph.D. in Performance Studies from NYU. Publications include "Unperforming 'Race': Strategies for Re-imagining Identity" in *A Boal Companion: Dialogues on Theatre and Cultural Politics* (Routledge, 2006), "Youth Leading Youth: Hip Hop and Hiplife Theatre in Ghana and South Africa" in *Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict*, a project of Brandeis University and Theatre Without Borders (New Village Press), and "The Question of Cultural Diplomacy: Acting Ethically" in *Theatre Topics* (Fall 2011). He is editor of the critical anthology *Say Word! Voices from Hip Hop Theater* (University of Michigan Press).

CO-DIRECTORS



WORKSHOPS

We the Griot

What if we still lived in a society where artists, at large, were seen and valued as conduits for belonging and community health? Participants are taken through the progression DNAWORKS uses to create performance work that examines the role and function of the artist as community builder and catalyst for dialogue.

Move2Heal

Adam McKinney leads participants in community building exercises and healing movements and dances, focusing on systems of oppression and their effects on the body. Participants will experience a renewed sense of connection to their bodies and personal histories and feeling of interconnection with others.

Sipurainu - Our Stories

A genealogy project in which participants explore familial histories and the diversity of Jewish voices in North America. Out of this group process, we work towards creating welcoming Jewish spaces and programming in our own communities.

Hip Hop Theatre: Theatre of Now

In this interactive lecture-demo, Daniel

Banks discusses the origins, politics, and aesthetics of the recent wave of Hip Hop Theatre in the U.S. and globally. He addresses the questions: Where did this form come from? What is its connection to other Afro-centric modes of cultural production? And where is it going with its current swell of popularity?

Storytelling and Performance in the Age of Hip Hop

Daniel Banks will take participants through the progression used in the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative to create devised Hip Hop Theatre performance. This workshop integrates the elements of Hip Hop performance with participants' own personal material and explores how to stage their communities' voices. (May be combined with Theatre of Now lecture-demo.)

PRODUCTIONS

HaMapah - The Map

HaMapah/The Map is a multimedia, genealogical dance journey that traces the intersections of Adam McKinney's African American, Native American, and Jewish heritages. In the piece, directed by Daniel Banks, McKinney explores issues of identity, ancestry, and family. As part

of the program, DNAWORKS Co-Directors McKinney and Banks lead a community dialogue with the audience about the core ideas of the piece.

FILMS

Belonging Everywhere

Adam McKinney and Daniel Banks screen the filmed oral history they led with members of the Jewish community in Sefwi Wiawso, Western Region, Ghana. Through discussion and dialogue, the program highlights the ethnic and cultural diversity of K'lal Yisrael (the community of Israel) and reconnects the fragmented histories of the Jewish Diaspora. (30 min)

Pretending to be Something, Now Coming from Nothing

While in South Africa, Adam McKinney was struck by the presence of a derelict building in Kliptown township. What ensued was an impromptu, community-wide dance on this structure that was a site for the signing of the Freedom Charter in 1955. This event is intercut with the piece McKinney choreographed for Agulhas Theatre Works, a mixed-ability dance company, at the Museum Afrika in Johannesburg. (10 min)



We Will Not Stop Dancing A Choreography of Healing in Israel

By Micah Kelber March 12, 2010 *The Jewish Daily Forward*

Dance Is a Journey: In this case, DNAWORKS went on a journey from America to Israel and from paralysis to dance.

Last August a gunman entered the Aguda building in Tel Aviv and opened fire on the crowd at Bar Noar, a safe space for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth. He killed two and wounded a number of others before escaping without trace or identification.

Two of the wounded, 15-year-old "Alef" and 19-year-old "Yud" (names changed for privacy reasons) had studied dance, concentrating on ballroom and hip-hop, but their gunshot injuries left them without sensation or mobility below their ribs. Confined to wheelchairs, they believed their dancing days were over.

Enter Daniel Banks and Adam McKinney of New York-based DNAWORKS. Banks, originally from Brookline, Mass., and McKinney, a former Alvin Ailey dancer who grew up in Milwaukee, heard about the attack at Bar Noar, and through their friend Avi Blecherman — a social worker with the International Gay Youth Organization in Tel Aviv — they heard about the tragic injuries to the dancers.

DNAWORKS, the organization they founded, creates original dance and theater (plays, multimedia, etc.) with groups around the world, using an innovative organic process designed to draw out creativity and self-expression. A grant from the Jerome Foundation had enabled them to work in Israel with an Ethiopian dance company, Beta Dance Troupe. While working with the troupe, they connected with many different theater and dance groups, Arab and Israeli alike, specifically those that use performance as a way into identity exploration.

The apparent hopelessness of the situation flew in the face of their belief that anyone can

dance and in dance's transformative power. So McKinney and Banks decided to get involved.

They traveled from Haifa to meet with the young men at Sheba Rehabilitation Hospital, where they were being treated. At first, Yud was not really sure how he was going to dance. But after 45 minutes of contact improvisation and creating choreography during their first interaction, he enthusiastically invited his friend, Alef, to join in future sessions, and a new dance experience opened up.

"The way that we were dancing had nothing to do with the attack," McKinney said. "In fact, initially Alef only wanted to do MTV video dancing, to Britney Spears and Madonna. But after a while, we were able to move beyond it," and they were able to do more personal and creative expression.

Not wanting the young men to believe they got involved with them for publicity purposes, Banks and McKinney were extremely reluctant to speak of their involvement. Nor did they get involved with them in order to play hero. DNAWORKS is not a therapeutic dance organization and does not go into communities to heal pain. Still, McKinney and Banks cannot deny that their interactions have a nurturing effect. During one of their sessions, they assisted one of the young men in standing up for the first time since the attack. "We are artists. We feel that the power of art is healing. We didn't go in thinking about how this would help their rehabilitations from a medical perspective — we know that creativity can help in the healing process," McKinney said.

In this case, they started by simply trying to be "four people experiencing joy and sharing in the creativity that each person brings

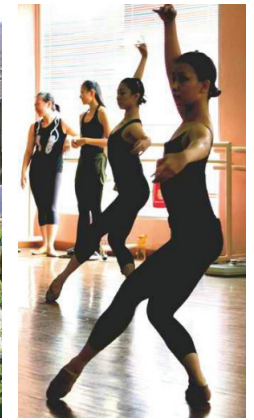
to the room," Banks said. Their lives in the hospital were challenging, with intense, daily rehabilitation, tests and physical therapy. McKinney and Banks tried to give to them a couple of hours a week where they could go back to something that they loved. And although Alef and Yud's bodies have changed, McKinney explained, they did not work from a perspective of the bodies being "incomplete."

"They are still connected to their bodies," McKinney said. "We all have what could be called 'disabilities' of our own. I have had physical injuries, and sometimes that affects the way that a dance is made. Every once in a while there would be a little 'oops' because we didn't realize that they couldn't use their abdominal muscles, but we would then make an adjustment and find an even more creative solution."

The DNAWORKS process, whether used for performances or in workshops, starts through discussion and dialogue among participants. McKinney and Banks do not necessarily come in with set choreography, casting or even music in mind.

"We use personal stories and improvisation to create a gestural vocabulary of movement. We use imagery and body exploration as an impetus, asking questions like, 'Tell me your first memory of playing,'" Banks explained. The gestural vocabulary that was stitched together to make the choreography emerged from what the young men could and wanted to do.

This was similar to the process they had been using with Beta Dance Troupe. To generate ideas for the troupe, they asked the dancers to use their bodies as calligraphy pens and to dance the letters of their names — in Amharic and Hebrew. They asked those who had both Amharic and Hebrew names to "dance the



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- Adam McKinney

space in between” the two names.

While the encounter with the young men at Sheba Rehabilitation Hospital did not generate a final choreographed performance, judging from the video of their rehearsals, their time together was extraordinarily well spent. Even the beginning movements that they had started to piece together into a dance look beautiful and playful. McKinney is a magnetic and elegant dancer, and his physical charisma spills over to both young men. Sitting between them, he provides a model of composure to imitate, inspiring them to extend their movements. At the same time, he looks on encouragingly, and then physically riffs off their ideas. The dance and the interaction look restorative and graceful.

Since 2006, Banks and McKinney have been to Ghana, South Africa, Israel and Hungary, working with communities in each locale

to create original compositions. Seeking out places that might be underserved or under-voiced, they believe that their practice — both in dance and in theater — is a form of tikkun olam, repairing the world. Their conviction is that art can help express ideas that have been ignored and blocked, especially in marginalized communities. Furthermore, they believe that their work ultimately connects communities to each other by drawing out the common struggles and values. In this way, Banks and McKinney hope to cultivate a “Global Judaism” — a term they have been using since 2006, which emphasizes the unity of the people worldwide and expands the possibilities of Jewish thought, ritual and experience.

While they insist they will continue to travel, they are also working to find a home to which they can invite guest artists. Among his many goals, Banks said that he hoped one day to

connect performers from all different parts of the Jewish Diaspora — to put people together onstage to tell their common story of exile.

The process of doing all this, Banks said, reminds him of something he once saw at a science fair when he was young. The goal of the experiment was to pass a coil of tinfoil along a rod that would light up when the coil touched the rod and completed the circuit. “There are a lot of holes in the world’s circuitry, and our work is to connect the circuitry,” he said. “We do that by inviting people to share what is unique about them, and that helps people understand each other and love each other in different ways.”

Micah Kelber is a writer and freelance rabbi in Brooklyn. He is currently writing a screenplay about divorce in New York in the 1940s.



community

WE THE
GRIOT



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DNAWORKS

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301 Otero Street, Unit #4
Santa Fe, New Mexico
USA 87501

P: 1.212.765.4914
F: 1.866.394.6033
info@DNAWORKS.org
www.DNAWORKS.org