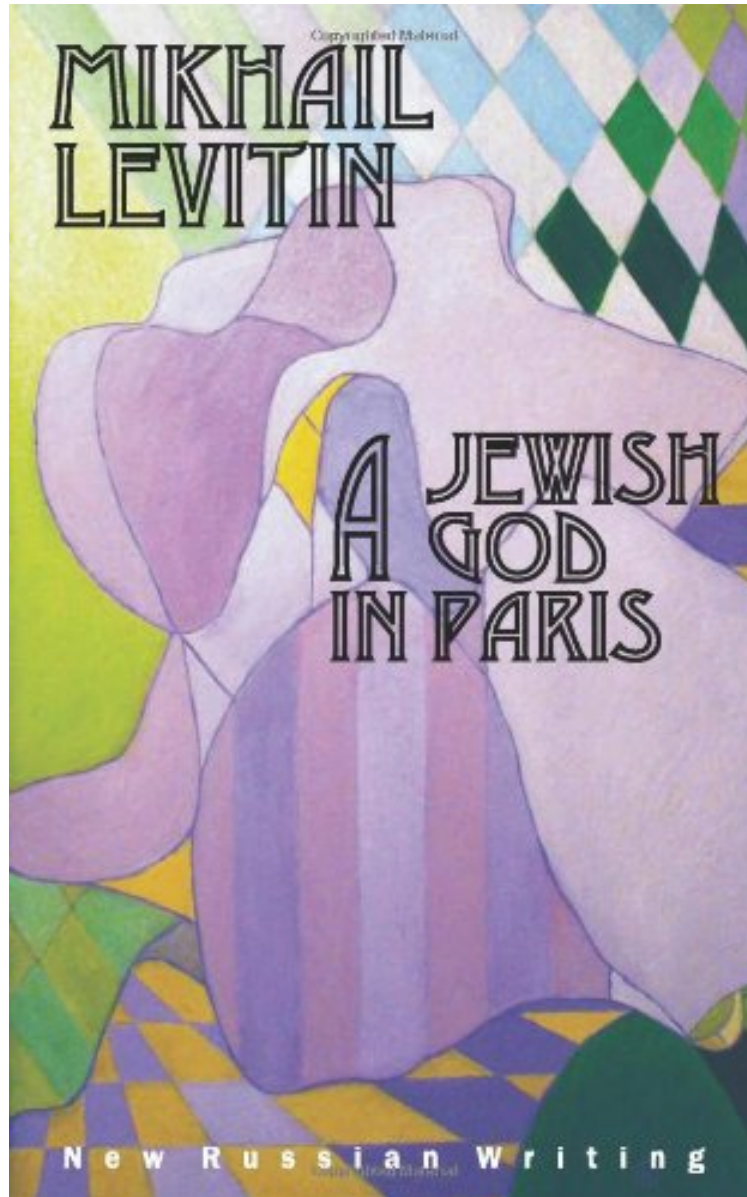


(Mobile pdf) A Jewish God in Paris (New Russian Writing)

A Jewish God in Paris (New Russian Writing)

Mikhail Levitin

DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#6411690 in Books GLAS New Russian Writing 2009-01-09 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x 5.00 x .751, #File Name: 5717200854200 pages | File size: 45.Mb

Mikhail Levitin : A Jewish God in Paris (New Russian Writing) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Jewish God in Paris (New Russian Writing):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Stories about life and theatre By Lost John This volume contains three entirely separate pieces of writing; the title story, A Jewish God in Paris, and two other medium length stories, or novellas. The first tells of the narrator's train journey from Moscow to Paris with his almost estranged wife and two

children, and then of events after their arrival. The narrator is a theatre director and chief among the contacts he makes in Paris are street performers. The second, *With Only Sandals on his Feet*, tells of the discovery by a boy with theatrical aspirations of the one-time existence of a particular Chamber Theatre and something of its, for him, enchanting tradition. The story is set in Soviet times. The third story, *Igor*, is part of a longer work, *Total Indecency*, Levitin's tribute to the real-life 1920's Soviet stage director Igor Terentiev. Levitin has an interesting and unusual writing style. He seems to sketch his stories, creating life-like images of people and places in the reader's mind with just a few deft strokes. His style may be influenced by his background in theatre, where great dramas are convincingly and movingly represented by just a few hundred carefully crafted lines. The characters in the stories in this volume all have strong theatrical links, and there are times when one wonders just how extensive and how deep the autobiographical element is. Certainly there is no doubt that, even though Levitin is well-seasoned as a director (born 1945, graduated from the Russian University of Theatre Arts, Moscow, in 1967), he still regards the theatre as having very substantial magical qualities - even when the theatre is simply the street. And he has a particular enthusiasm for the new, the avant-garde. Clearly, Levitin chose to write about Igor Terentiev because he sees him as a kindred spirit. That is particularly well illustrated when Terentiev was imprisoned in a GULAG work camp. Levitin reports that Terentiev agreed to the camp authorities' demand that he should form and direct a troupe of players, but only on condition that he be allowed to recruit from among the common criminals in the camp, not the officially established thespians. For the most part, the thespians were there as political prisoners. The criminals tormented and stole from the political prisoners - and in later years separate camps were formed for the two categories of prisoner - but Terentiev believed he would get a fresher and more enthusiastic performance from the criminals. They were a great success. The reader is likely to finish the three stories with a re-invigorated interest in theatre and a willingness to look afresh at the less conventional among venues and performers. Curiously, though, none of the stories, taken alone, need be seen as primarily about theatre. Each is also about its own something else; essentially, the mess that people so often make of their own lives. It would be good if the two other parts of *Total Indecency* were also translated into English.

"The picture resembles a Chagall painting. . . . Or perhaps this anti-autobiography is meant to satirize the old Russian question 'Who is to blame?' with the Jewish answer: Me." *The Times Literary Supplement* In the title novella the hero, after a marital infidelity, takes his family to Paris hoping to win his beautiful wife's forgiveness.

About the Author MIKHAIL LEVITIN, a prolific author and stage director whose Hermitage Theater has been a force in Moscow since the Brezhnev era, was born in Odessa in 1945. He mounted his first production (*Mozart and Salieri*) as a maverick seventh grader. Soon after that, he began a correspondence with the Moscow Chamber Theater actress Alisa Koonen, widow of the theaters creator, Alexander Tairov. At the age of 16, he entered the State Institute of Theater Arts in Moscow (GITIS) where he stunned critics and the public alike with his degree production of Peter Weiss *How Mr. Mockinpott Was Cured of His Sufferings*. Later dramatizations by this uncontrollable director including Lewis Carrolls *Through the Looking Glass* and Kurt Vonneguts *Slaughterhouse Five* further established Levitins name but kept the Soviet authorities from giving him his own theater. A three-hour extravaganza based on then-banned works by Daniil Kharms (1982) and a breakthrough staging of an unfinished play by Yuri Olesha (1986) marked the start of his association with the Hermitage where, because of his being a Jew and a non-communist, his position as artistic director would not be made official until perestroika. Throughout his directing life Levitin has written prose, biographical and autobiographical. *Sploshnoye neprilichie* (*Total Indecency*), his tribute to the futurist 1920s stage director Igor Terentiev, was short-listed for the Russian Booker Prize. His biography of Alexander Tairov came out in 2010.