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## Review: 'My Son the Waiter, A Jewish Tragedy' at Bucks County Playhouse

by [Neal Newman](#) on March 24, 2017



Nearly everyone in the arts has taken another job such as waiter, receptionist, or office temp just to pay the rent. [Brad Zimmerman](#) has an unfortunately typical problem: He's Jewish and his parents have very special expectations of him. He MUST be a doctor. Or at worst a dentist. Or at VERY worst, a lawyer. But an artist? Never! Or as he quotes the old joke: "A Jewish fetus isn't fully viable till it graduates from medical school."



Brad Zimmerman.

Zimmerman is the author and performer of *My Son the Waiter, A Jewish Tragedy*, or as his mother refers to it, *A Jewish Mother's Tragedy*. He tells his life story. He was a typical kid from New Jersey who excelled in sports. College gave him the theater bug, and after four years as a tremendously successful college actor, he tried New York. Thus began his 29-year career as a waiter.

This “play” is a fascinating combination of stand-up comedy and theater. Brad Zimmerman is obviously a well-trained actor (he played a lawyer on *The Sopranos*), and unlike most comics, he does not hold a mike, which allows him to demonstrate exceptional talent as a physical actor. Every movement is natural, graceful and supportive of the comedy. Most comedians keep their show moving with speedy repartee, but as this is a theater piece, Zimmerman will frequently take his time. His bit explaining “Six lines to give a blind date that you have no interest in” is enacted with serene patience. Hint: one of them is, “On the way to the bathroom I met someone.”

My Son the Waiter is skillfully structured, with the author/performer grabbing the audience's attention by loading his funniest material at the beginning. He describes the various ways waiters avoid making eye contact, or how they can slyly mask their contempt for the profession.

Customer: “Waiter, I'm in a hurry.”

Waiter: “Why don't you just go?”

After his mother details the great monetary success of his high school friends, she tells a friend: “If all goes well, Brad's going to get a bookcase.”

But as the “play” continues the author moves into more hauntingly personal territory when he describes his parents as they age while he continues to inhabit the same New York room for over 30 years. It is touching as he narrates his stumbling into comedy only when he signs up for a class in stand-up. This leads to a greater understanding of what life and success really mean to him. Currently he is, to quote Joan Rivers, “The best comedian in this price range.”

*My Son the Waiter* played Off-Broadway for 15 months and is now on tour. After the run in Bucks County, he moves on to California and Toronto. He will play Penn's Landing this October. Waiters, actors, comedians, parents and children of all ages should catch this unusual, skillfully performed event. Who else but a waiter can anticipate this epitaph: “I'll be right with you.”

Running Time: 90 minutes, without an intermission.



*My Son the Waiter, A Jewish Tragedy* plays through April 9, 2017 at the Bucks County Playhouse – 70 South Main Street, in New Hope, PA. For tickets, call the box office at (215) 862-2121, or purchase them [online](#).