

# Her father's struggle — but her long ride

## Lisa Kron's '2.5 Minute Ride' at Adk. Theatre Fest

By Cathy DeDe  
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"Two-point-five minutes is a long time on a roller coaster. When you think your father is dying next to you, it's a really, really long time." That's the crux of *2.5 Minute Ride*, the brilliant one-woman show by Lisa Kron, on stage at the Adirondack Theatre Festival tonight, Thursday, July 12, through Saturday, July 14. Box office: 798-WOOD.

"Crux," because, what the actress-writer discovered is that, although she meant to tell her father's story — she's really telling her own, of course.

What seemed like an eternity of terror to Ms. Kron on that roller coaster turned out to be a world of fun for her father. Through a certain lens, what she's talking about is how excruciat-



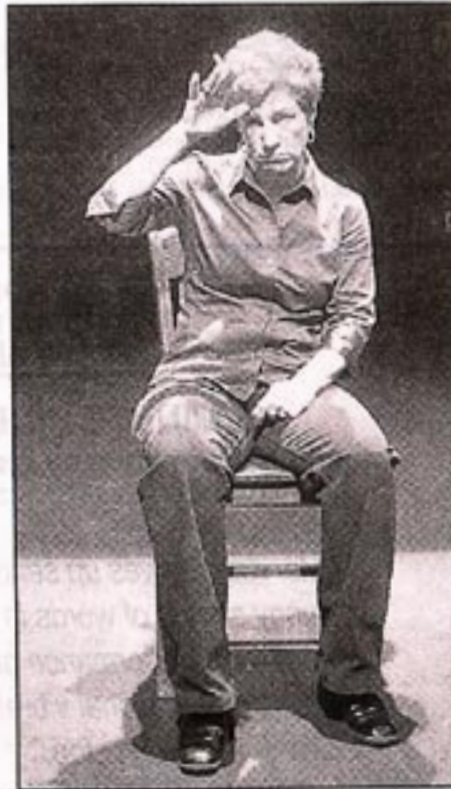
ingly difficult it is to sit next to someone you care about, who you believe to be suffering — even if that journey is their own.

Similarly, Ms. Kron, worried that she might have to "mother" her father when they finally arrive at the concentration camp that is their destination elsewhere in the story, finds that she is the one brought to her knees, wracked with tears, when father and daughter travel together to Auschwitz, the camp where his mother and father died. He survived, sent to American by way of the Kindertrains before his parents were taken away.

She's mystified to learn that he considers himself lucky to have been born a Jew in Germany, rather than to have had to make the moral choice to join or not join the Hitler youth, for example. His is an entirely different ride, you see — he's not having fun, exactly, but he's got a kind of straightforward pluck and humor that she can't quite match.

Your loved one is in what you imagine to be insurmountable pain — and all you can do is stand by in fathomless dread. Maybe, like Ms. Kron's father, that loved one will get off the ride with a euphoric cry: "Want to go again?!" But she still has her pain and worry — that's hers, connected but not at all the same as his experience.

However, *2.5 Minutes* is not all darkness, doom and dread. Ms. Kron is as engaging a storyteller as you could wish for, with a sharp and dry wit, a knack for the telling detail and the long pause, and a great way of switching between segments of a seemingly disparate story to make up a whole that is, to summon the cliché, far greater than its parts. Her stories of relatives who travel countless hours in an annual pilgrimage to an amusement park (mainly for the food), are fabulously funny. Her incredulity at an aunt who can ask for a hamburger at 10 in the morning — hilarious. Somehow it ties together with the story of Ms. Kron's lesbian partner, the friend who's trying to film Ms. Kron's father to save his stories for posterity, the Midwestern brother who's about to marry his Internet bride from Brooklyn. That last is a moment that turns surprisingly poignant for Ms. Kron, as she tells it, particularly as she's gone into the wedding with a huge dose of cynicism — and not even enough here for the couple to buy a new pair of



Lisa Kron in her one-woman show *2.5 minute ride*. Can you tell here that she's channeling her elderly father?

The piece was a huge success when it played in New York, and Ms. Kron has toured it so much, she said in a phone interview last weekend before the opening, that she's nearly out of new places to perform it. This ATF gig, she said, was a welcome opportunity. I'm glad we could afford her the occasion.

## Meanwhile, '365 Days' and 'Tick... Tick' gets started

The short version: Suzan Lori-Parks decided, just after winning the Pulitzer for *Top Dog/Underdog*, to write a play a day for a year. One year later, the very short plays are being performed in week-long blocks at theaters around the country: ATF has "Week 35," July 9 to 16.

Performances continue at approximately 9:30 p.m. nightly, after the Lisa Kron (see left), at the Wood Theater. It's free. Info: 798-WOOD.

The series comes with an added trio of playlets, in which the greatest domestic bliss occurs between strangers on a train. Actor David Girard — a regional star from Hubbard Hall, the NYSTI in Troy and Cap Rep, gives especially nuanced readings in the opening trio.

The July 9 "play du jour" was a silly piece about a president and puppets, which Mr. Girard played all-out, to his credit. Sari Bobbin, too, was fearless in the thankless role of a woman who is either remarkably endearing or disgusting, you be the judge.

Me, I dig this kind of stuff, and I'm intrigued to see what each night's play offers. I imagine it's the accumulation, finally, that imparts a certain kind of meaning to such a project.

ATF opens the Jonathan Larson musical *Tick...Tick...Boom* with a pay-what-you-will preview on Thursday, June 19, at 8 p.m. This one is likely to be a popular favorite, coming from the late, revered composer of *Rent*. — C. DeDe