

# Westside Notes



*A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step*

## Decoding the Tablecloth: A Must-See Production

Recently, I had the opportunity in New York to see this incredibly powerful play which integrates themes of immigration, abandonment, separation, family and love. Not only was it a beautifully-acted piece, but it portrayed a version of my own family's immigration in the early 1900s. I was deeply moved by Gabriela Kohen's performance and hope you'll join me in June as part of a fundraiser for AGPA and GPALA. Here are more specific details:

Critically acclaimed New York actress, playwright, and drama therapist, Gabriela Kohen, will perform her autobiographical one-woman show *Decoding the Tablecloth* at Congregation Kol Ami at 7.30, Saturday, June 17. She will also perform on Sunday, June 18 in Venice at Beyond Baroque at 3 pm. There will be a wine and cheese reception after each performance.

Advance admission is \$100. Student admission is \$80. Admission is a tax-deductible donation to the *Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health*. Advance payment must be made by contacting the Group Foundation at [http://member.agpa.org/iMIS/agpa/Shared\\_Content/Fundraising/GFEvent.aspx](http://member.agpa.org/iMIS/agpa/Shared_Content/Fundraising/GFEvent.aspx) or 1-877-668-2472.

In English, Yiddish, and Spanish, Ms. Kohen portrays over 20 characters from five generations. Her Jewish/Polish grandmother escapes from the holocaust to Argentina and the family later immigrates to Brooklyn. Intensely moving, and at times humorous, her narrative provides insight into the transmission of trauma, resilience and wisdom from one generation to the next.

*New York Magazine* called *Decoding the Tablecloth* "A loving yet unflinching family portrait...astonishing subtlety of gesture, expression and accent...an extraordinarily efficient and moving hour of entertainment," and *The Washington Post* stated "*Decoding the Tablecloth* is bitter, forgiving, and wise." Directed by Constance Grappo, *Decoding the Tablecloth* won the award for Outstanding Solo Show at the New York International Fringe Festival.

Gabriela Kohen, MFA, received her acting degree from the American Conservatory Theater. She is a drama therapist at Sanctuary for Families and Restore NYC in New York City, a faculty member of the Therapeutic Arts Alliance of Manhattan, and an advanced candidate at the Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies.

Proceeds will go to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health and to the local Group Psychotherapy Association of Los Angeles to fund scholarships and provide group therapy services in emergency situations (floods, earthquakes, terrorism).