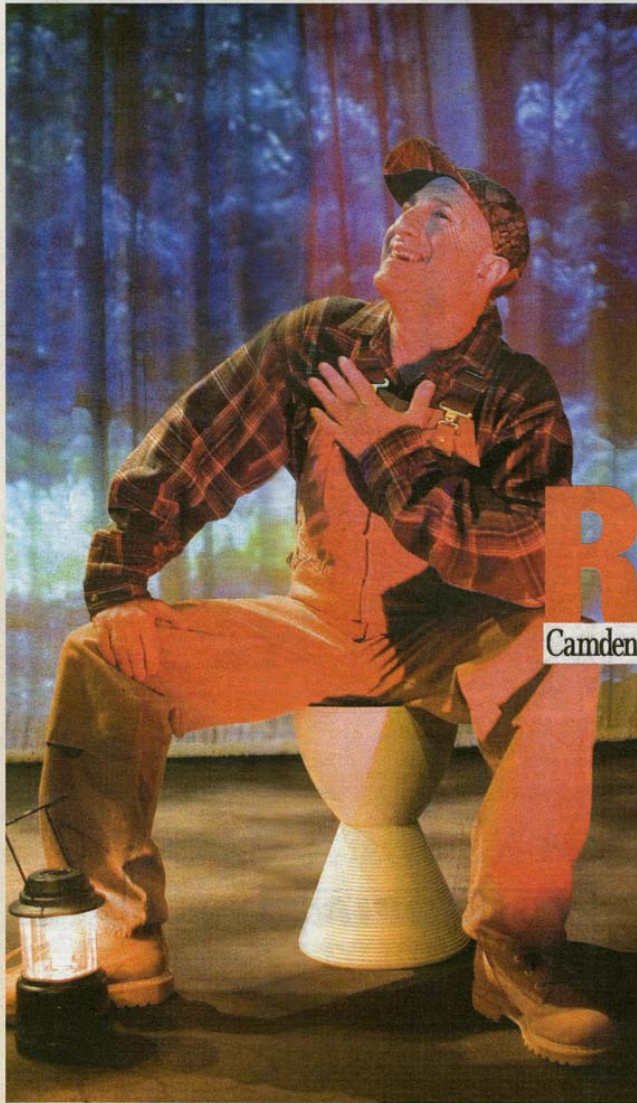


# Camden New Journal

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From **The New Camden Journal**

## **RHODE'S PRIVATE LIVES ARE FIVE FOLD**

RITES OF PRIVACY  
NEW END THEATRE

By EMMA KLEIN

A particularly affecting moment in David Rhodes' compelling one-man show, *Rites of Privacy*, occurs when one of the characters Rhodes impersonates, a rabbi in New York, dances and sings "Hava Naquila", the Israeli folk song, against a backdrop of filmed footage from the Nazi era.

This somewhat incongruous juxtaposition encapsulates the essence of the character, a refugee from Nazi Germany, happy with his own life but secretly haunted.

The rabbi is just one of five characters created by Rhodes (pictured below) who confesses to having loved dressing up as a boy together with a friend, until caught by his parents playing "mermaids" with nothing on but a bra and a scarf to preserve his modesty. It is perhaps not surprising then, that the two women characters, Clarinda, an aging Southern Belle, and Susan, a doctor, are depicted so convincingly.

Rhodes dresses up, makes up and dons a wig while relating episodes from his own life, and, and instant later, is transformed into yet another character with his or her own autonomous existence.

Each of these personages has a secret that impinges greatly on his or her life and it is the audience who hears the confession. In a way, the audience performs the role of psychotherapist for the characters.

Rhodes, the son of two psychoanalysts, tells how he resisted the blandishments of the child psychoanalyst to whom he was sent to relate his own problems, being subsequently deemed "untreatable."

The other two male characters are particularly exotic. Seamus Ben Avram, the son of a New Hampshire carpenter who converted to Judaism, and a gay Belgian immigrant from a Hasidic family of Marrano origin – the clandestine life of the Marranos being perhaps symbolic of the concealment that permeates this play.

Rhodes is a very skilled and versatile actor, with considerable imagination, and together with his director Charles Loffredo, has created an absorbing piece of theatre that will give pleasure to audiences at the New End and wherever he takes it next.