

# TimeOut New York

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## THEATER

### Hoch one up

**Solo stalwart Danny Hoch goes ensemble in Seth Zvi Rosenfeld's new play, *The Flatted Fifth***



**High five:** Danny Hoch is a team player.

It's after midnight on a rainy Saturday, and Danny Hoch has just returned from rehearsals for *The Flatted Fifth*, the new Seth Zvi Rosenfeld play (currently in previews at Intar) in which Hoch plays a young Jewish filmmaker. "Seth brought in 20 new pages today," Hoch says over the phone. And if the actor's gravelly voice makes him sound tired, it's understandable: He isn't sleeping much these days. "I'm gonna be up all night learning these lines," he says. "No one told me it was going to be like this."

Born in Lefrak City, the geographical center of Queens, Hoch, 26, grew up obsessed with illusion. "I used to see magicians and mimes in Washington Square Park, and they intrigued me," he says. "Seeing illusions in the street—where I didn't necessarily expect them—was more exciting to me than theater." Inspired by the park performers, Hoch set

about learning how to create his own illusions. At the age of 12, he began plying his skills at weddings, bar mitzvahs and, of course, in Washington Square Park. But why did he work so young? "Drug money," he says.

Later, Hoch attended the High School of the Performing Arts. After graduation, he spent four years bringing drama to New York adolescents in jails and alternative high schools. And then, in 1993, he had his breakthrough: His Off-Broadway solo show, *Some People*, snagged him raves, an Obie award and a deal for an HBO special that was subsequently nominated for a 1996 Cable Ace Award. A rash of movie and TV offers followed, most of which Hoch nixed—notably one from Quentin Tarantino. "My agents at the time said, 'You turned down Quentin Tarantino?'" he says, mimicking (and mocking) their incredulity. "Yeah, well, the project was *From Dusk Till Dawn*, so turning it down seemed like a wise idea." He laughs. "I read the script."

Although Hoch is clearly picky when it comes to other people's projects (his soul is in his solo shows), he's not above doing film and TV work. In fact, in addition to his work on *The Flatted Fifth*, he's currently filming a movie. When asked about the flick, however, Hoch clams up. "I just can't talk about it," he says. "It gets all political and shit." So is show business worth the slog? "Hopefully, when I'm onstage, I'm achieving the same kind of magic I loved as a kid," he says, then sighs, "or whatever."—James Ireland Baker