Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Slam Frank, Creation, Shakespeare

David Sheward · Tuesday, October 13th, 2026

Are there certain topics which should be strictly off-limits when it comes to parody and satire? That's the difficult question that the explosive new musical *Slam Frank*, at the Orpheum after an run last season at Asylum NYC, is not afraid to tackle.

This bizarre, uproariously funny and sharp-edged cartoon of a show was inspired by a 2022 Twitter debate which started with the horrifying premise, "Did Anne Frank have white privilege?" The initial comments were widely condemned by Jewish groups. They also served as inspiration for Joel Sinensky (book) and Andrew Fox (music and lyrics) to use the teen Jewish diarist's tragic story of hiding from the Nazis with her family in an Amsterdam attic as a springboard for a merciless attack on a myriad of political stances, both right and left. The authors skewer everything from extreme woke attitudes to unfettered capitalism to a host of musicals such as *Hamilton*, *Rent*, *In the Heights*, and *The Producers*. Sinensky's snarky, smart book and Fox's intricate and hilarious songs hit their targets with stunningly witty accuracy and take us to dangerous comic territory.

No spoilers, but the final 20 minutes are satiric dynamite and will probably be more controversial than any piece of theater in the last 28 years (since Terrence McNally's *Corpus Christi* which imagined a gay Jesus.)



Rocky Paterra, Jaz Zepatas, Olivia Bernábe, Alex Lewis, and Austen Horne in *Slam Frank.*
Photo Credit: Shawn Salley Photography

Sinensky imagines Frank's story as a play-within-a-play presented by a pretentiously progressive theater company, determined to be inclusive even if it doesn't make historical or dramatic sense. In this bizarre, fun-house mirror version, the Frank and Van Daan families become representatives of every minority and political viewpoint. Anne herself (comically daring Olivia Bernabe) is a pansexual Latina hiding her true Hispanic identity in order to sell more copies of her diary. Her mother Edith (hysterically fierce Austen Horne) is a black American woman clad in traditional African garb (Sarah Lockwood designed the humorous costumes.) Horne delivers a riotous rap poem mixing feminist rage with declamations against misogynist playwrights like David Mamet.

Anne's father Otto (delightfully goofy Rocky Paterra) bursts out of the closet as a gay man and tells everyone he is neurodivergent every few minutes. Sister Margo (surprisingly passionate Amelia Louise Barr) remains quiet until those last volcanic scenes. Barr also doubles as Anne's abuela, serving as a ghostly symbol of the family's abandoned Hispanic heritage (the story gets weirder and weirder.)

The Van Daan clan is led by the blustering bullyish father (appropriately despicable John Anker Bow), who dominates his flibbertigibbet of a wife (jazzy Jaz Zepatos) and his son Peter (funny, flighty Alex Lewis). Peter enjoys dancing (much to his dad's displeasure) and comes out as non-binary. The entire cast handles the difficult task of enacting broad caricatures while pursuing truthful objectives. Like the characters in a Christopher Durang play, they are sane to themselves but they are in an insane universe.

In this weird mix, Sinensky and Fox manage to lampoon every political and historical movement and trend of the last 80 years. No cow is sacred. It's blisteringly funny and offers food for thought some might find hard to digest. Director Sam LaFrage and choreographer Esosa Oviasu stage the action with comic invention, aided by Adam Koch's crazy-quilt set and Zack Lobel's frantic video

design. Fox's raucous songs combine hip-hop, rap, salsa, and rock in wicked parodies of Lin-Manuel Miranda.

Many will probably be downright offended by *Slam Frank* for its equal opportunity satiric slash and burn. But it is savagely funny and dangerously thought-provoking. My only caveat is the comedy gets a bit repetitive and the script could use some editing.



Donetta Lavinia Grays, Abigail C. Onwunali, and Savannah Commodore in *creation stories and all the important importants.*
Credit: Valerie Terranova

Mfoniso Udofia's *creation stories and all the important importants* (at Lincoln Center's Claire Tow Theater) could also do with some trimming. This peek inside an African-American playwrighting professor's mind as she struggles through a trying day might work better as a brief sketch. Udofia has written some sharp satire of the constantly on-line generation with her heroine continually issuing commands to Alexa and Siri to play the right music, order her groceries or schedule every spare moment. But the pattern wears thin after half of the running time. The main character, referred to only as "the grown woman" strives to control her hectic life but cannot mask her gnawing insecurities.

Abigail C. Onwunali delivers an admirable, varied marathon performance as "the grown woman" frantically attempting to outrun her inner fears. We see her visit her doctor as she attempts to get pregnant, teach a class, cope with her failing mother, and finally fall apart. She encounters herself as a child (professionally poised Savannah Commodore) and her childhood fantasy of a dream horse (embodied by a vibrant Donnetta Lavinia Grays.) These two imaginary figures aide her in finding her center and the play ends with a too-tidy resolution. Director Tamilla Woodard keeps the action moving on Jason Ardizzone-West's flexible set which transforms into multiple environments with the Adie of Alan C. Edwards' lighting and Katherine Freer's videos.



Jacob Ming-Trent in his autobiographical solo show *How Shakespeare Saved My Life.*
Credit: Hanjie Chow

Jacob Ming-Trent's autobiographical solo show *How Shakespeare Saved My Life* (at the Public in a co-production with Red Bull Theater) is another mostly enjoyable piece which wouldn't be harmed by losing a few segments. But overall, it's tightly directed by Tony Taccone and smartly written and performed by Ming-Trent. He engages the audience, addresses us directly as "Congregation" as he tells his story of falling in love with the works of the Bard while battling an indifferent mother, an absent father, homelessness, violence and drug addiction. The most effective portions deal with his encounters with acting teachers who inform him Shakespeare is for "white actors and white audiences" and he sounds "too black and too fat" and a riotous rap musical number wherein everyone he meets tells him "he should play Othello." Then he gets the audience to repeat that refrain. These hilariously poke fun at stereotypical assumptions about African-American performers and the Bard. There are also pointed comparisons between Shakespeare and rap artists like Tupac Shakur. This memoir is refreshing, fun and moving.

***Slam Frank*: Oct. 4—Nov. 30. Orpheum Theater, 126 Second Ave., NYC. Running time: 110 minutes with no intermission. ticketmaster.com.**

***creation stories and all the important importants*: LCT3 at the Claire Tow Theater, Lincoln Center, 150 W. 65th St., NYC. Running time: 90 minutes with no intermission. lct.org.**

***How Shakespeare Saved My Life*: Sept. 27—Oct. 25. Public Theater and Red Bull Theater at the Public, 425 Lafayette St. Running time: 90 minutes with no intermission. publictheater.org.**

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How Bioactive Copper Complexes Restore Skin Elasticity and Vitality

Our Friends · Monday, October 12th, 2026

The active copper complexes rejuvenate the skin by means of stimulating the cells' remodeling process and enhancing the production of collagen and skin wound healing processes. These molecules do not just moisturize the outer layers but provide the trace minerals right to the fibroblasts, stimulating them to reconstruct the proteins. The usage of such innovative substances as **GHKCU** will make your skin firmer and healthier.

As the old topical approach is only about strengthening the moisture barrier, bioactive copper compounds are more like gene modulators for cells, constantly changing the skin's physiology into a younger one through gene expression.

Copper-Based Bioactive Skin Repair Mechanism

The process of dermal regeneration occurs via fibroblast activation. It also needs the right amount of extracellular work to be kept in check. Bioactive copper complexes are messengers. They join with copper ions and move them to places in the body that are hurt or getting old.

BIOACTIVE COPPER COMPLEX MECHANISM

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Directs Copper to Matrix

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[Fibroblast Activation] [Gene Expression Mod.]

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[Enhanced Collagen & Elastin]

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[Dynamic Tissue Remodeling]

- Fibroblast Activation: Copper molecules help skin cells work better. These make increased

production of types I and III collagen by the cells. These molecules also raise the amount of natural glycosaminoglycans.

- Gene Expression Changes: A study on the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) says copper tripeptide complexes affect over 4,000 human genes. This helps the body's tissues repair themselves and get stronger.
- Tissue Remodeling: The complexes collaborate with the proteins in the body by removing unnecessary proteins and generating new elastin fibers in the skin.

Key Benefits for Dermal Renewal

Bioactive copper molecules give full help to your skin's health. They make the skin feel more firm and stretchy. These **copper molecules also help hair grow** better as they work with many things in the body that keep you healthy.

- Collagen Production Enhancement: Helps your skin become thicker and stronger due to increased collagen production in your body.
- Quick Healing: Helps heal your skin faster to have smooth skin. This is helpful especially in case of exposure to sun or wind or even after a skin treatment.
- Hair Root and Growth Aid: Makes your hair roots larger and allows your hair to remain in the growth phase for a longer period. You get thicker and stronger hair from it.
- Strong Antioxidant Help: Fights away free radicals and keeps stress away from your skin, without making it feel sore or upset.

Comparative Performance Analysis

Bioactive Ingredient	Primary Mechanism	Collagen Impact	Skin Tolerance	Recommended Usage
Copper Tripeptide Complexes	Gene modulation & copper delivery	High (Type I & III)	Excellent / Non-irritating	Daily (Morning or Night)
Topical Retinoids	Rapid cell turnover	High (Type I)	Moderate / Potential peeling	Nightly (Requires buffering)
L-Ascorbic Acid (Vitamin C)	Direct antioxidant protection	Moderate (Cofactor)	Mild to Moderate / Acidic pH	Morning (Under sunscreen)
Hyaluronic Acid	Surface moisture retention	None (Hydration only)	Excellent / Universal	Twice Daily

Optimal Application Timelines

Timeline	Expected Physiological Milestone	Visible Skin Improvement
Weeks 1 – 2	Enhanced cellular hydration & MMP balance	Smoother skin texture and heightened radiance
Weeks 3 – 6	Upregulated fibroblast collagen expression	Noticeable firming and reduction in fine line depth
Weeks 8 – 12+	Deep remolding of the extracellular matrix	Skin elasticity, density, and hair follicles are strengthened

Utilizing quality formulations such as GHKCU allows your skin to make use of these formulations to its fullest potential, providing you with desirable long-lasting effects.

FAQs

When is the influence of the copper complexes on skin elasticity

noticeable?

Generally, the feeling of smooth and soft skin can be experienced within one to two weeks, whereas increased skin firmness and collagen production can take eight to twelve weeks when used regularly.

Can copper complexes be used in combination with other skin care ingredients?

Yes, copper complexes work very well together with hyaluronic acid, niacinamide, and gentle moisturizers. They help with increased hydration and improved skin barrier function.

Is it appropriate to use copper complexes for sensitive skin?

They are safe for skin and non-irritating. It is recommended to use them for reactive skin that can’t tolerate strong acids for exfoliation.

Do bioactive copper molecules have an impact on hair growth?

Yes, according to scientific studies, copper tripeptides stimulate hair growth by increasing the size of hair follicles. In addition, they prolong the growth phase of the hair.

Unlocking Lasting Radiance with Copper Complexes

Bioactive copper complexes are an **important new idea in skincare**. They help improve the look and feel of your skin. These copper compounds work with the skin. They keep the skin supple and elastic. They promote collagen synthesis in the body. Collagen is essential for skin health. Thus, your skin will benefit from these ingredients. If you select the scientifically verified formulas, your skin will remain young and elastic all the time.

Photo: Fernando Serrano via Pexels

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