

THE 99-SEAT BEAT

Words speak with power

BY DARYL H. MILLER

L.A. author takes eye-opening trip

What: "Walking to Buchenwald" by Open Fist
The essentials: Inspired by a European trip that he took with his aging parents, Los Angeles playwright Tom Jacobson delivers a comic jaunt that takes a worrisome turn when the distracted travelers catch wind of disturbing actions back home in America.

Why this?: "There is very little that is made up" in this play, Jacobson says — a remarkable statement, given his reputation as one of L.A.'s most wildly inventive writers. Think: "Bunbury" or "Ouroboros." The story does have a fanciful twist, however. The characters modeled on the 56-year-old Jacobson and his partner are portrayed at alternating performances by two men or two women, with a couple of heterosexual pairings in the mix. **Bonus:** The news that jolts the travelers so closely parallels recent events that theatergoers are bound to pour out the door in a buzz of conversation.

Open Fist at Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave., L.A. 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays, 7 p.m. Sundays; ends Oct. 21. \$30. (323) 882-6912, www.openfist.org.