

# THE NEW YORKER

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

## FAVORITE THINGS

by Joan Acocella

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Doug Elkins's "Fräulein Maria," which will be performed this week and next at Joe's Pub, is a parody of, and a love letter to, "The Sound of Music." In "Sixteen Going on Seventeen," the demure Liesl, played by a large man in a pink dress, looks on, fascinated, as another man, Archie Burnett—even larger, and black—rips off his shirt and does a dance combining voguing and whacking (Burnett is a famous club dancer) with a great deal of ordinary lubriciousness, to show her how things are going to be when she's seventeen. But this is not camp, or not of the one-note variety. Each dance is a jewel of choreographic invention and comic subtlety, and, this being a pub, you can have dinner while watching the show. (But don't get a table too close to the stage. Last year, one of the performers, in mid-number, leaned over and sampled a spectator's drink.) Elkins, a star of the nineties dance scene, folded his company in 2004. Right now, "Fräulein Maria" is all you can see of his work. Justly, its greatest number is his solo, in a hoodie, to "Climb Every Mountain." ♦



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