I hated it and never wore it.

DR. MICHAEL ZINNER, former surgery chief at Brigham and Women’s, on the shower-cap like bouffant

An argument of the head — and heart — roils OR

By Liz Kowalczyk
GLOBE STAFF

Surgeons for years have stepped into operating rooms wearing their surgical cap — a snug covering that ties in back and comes in standard-issue blue or hundreds of personalized designs.

But a crackdown appears to be underway on that almost sacred piece of headgear.

Inspectors in January reprimanded operating room staff at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston for having the hair around their ears uncovered during surgery — and for sporting visible facial hair. And a New York surgeon was written up for showing 3 inches of hair at the nape of his neck.

For sure, other operating room staff wear surgical caps, but they have long been the hat of choice for many surgeons. The problem is the hats usually leave small amounts of hair and the ears exposed — a situation that an influential nursing group says could promote infection.

Regulators have taken the nurses’ATTIRE, Page C6

A nurses’ association says the bouffant (left) can prevent surgical infections. Nonsense, says a surgeons’ group, which backs the traditional cap.
musical about life at crossroads

each other so well they have a shared language as they approach the roles. “We are trying to play to a reality but then add this crazy, absurdist layer on top,” she says. “When you are taking risks and pushing a scene to its extreme, it helps to be in a safe environment with someone you trust.”

That helps, Wheeler says, as the two transform from mild-mannered Midwesterners to political revolutionaries.


‘Eight by Tenn’ at Zeitgeist

Zeitgeist Stage opens its 16th season this weekend with ‘Eight by Tenn,’ a collection of eight short plays by Tennessee Williams. Williams, who considered his short plays to be among his best work, often captures a crushing emotional moment in just a single scene. The plays in Zeitgeist’s collection include “The Lady of Larkspur Lotion,” “Portrait of a Madonna,” “Auto Da Fe,” “This Property Is Condemned,” “Something Unspoken,” “A Perfect Analysis Givin by a Parrot,” “The Unsatisfactory Supper,” and “The One Exception.” The production runs Sept. 2-Oct. 8. Tickets: $30, 617-933-8600, www.zeitgeiststage.com.

Israeli Stage launches its season

In its seventh season, Israeli Stage once again gathers some of the area’s top actors for a series of staged readings of Israeli plays and one full production next spring. The readings include “Fertile” by Yakir Eliahu Vaknin (Sept. 18, 170 Beacon St., Boston); “Happy Ending” by Anat Gov (Nov. 13, 170 Beacon St., Boston); a residency in spring for playwright Joshua Sobol, who will develop a new play called “David, King”; and a full production of “Days of Atonement,” by Hanna Azoulay Hasfari (June 1-25, 2017, Boston Center for the Arts). For tickets and more information, go to www.israeilstage.com.

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Director Spiro Veloudos (left) and actor John Ambrosino.

COMPANY
Presented by Lyric Stage Company,
140 Clarendon St., Sept. 2-Oct. 9.
Tickets: Starting at $25,
617-585-5678,
www.lyricstage.com

Stage Company Sept. 1-24, Collins and Wheeler play a married couple for whom gender stereotypes have been reversed. Wheeler is a family doctor who is eager to start a family, while his wife is an ambitious political operative who has a chance to manage the campaign of a woman running for lieutenant governor of Nebraska.

Peter Sinn Nachtrieb’s absurdist comedy takes things to extremes, with both characters getting caught up in the chaos of a candidate Wheeler describes as having “the DNA of Donald Trump and Sarah Palin: Someone who has no filter and gets all the attention because he is so unpredictable.”

Collins says the world of “The Totalitarians” is far from the couple she and Wheeler are, but because they know

Ticket To The Arts
Sondheim musical about life at crossroads

"COMPANY"
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The musical takes place on Robert's 55th birthday, and in a series of vignettes that follow, you meet the five couples and three friends that make up his social circle. When you direct this play, you can't help but think about whether or not you have a little bit of Robert in you, says Veloudos. "It's a moment when you stop, look around at where you are and think about what's important to you. It doesn't matter whether you're Veloudos or a Greek actor or a Greek . . ."

Veloudos's production of "Company" as he celebrates his 20th anniversary at the Stage Company, is a story of the lives of five couples, and the men and women behind the scenes. "I'm very proud of the work we've created here," Veloudos says.

John Ambrose, who plays Robert, was a standout in the Stage's production of "Into the Woods," "Avenue Q" and "On the Town," for which he also appeared at New Repertory Theatre, Stoneham Theatre, Off-Broadway, in national tours, and in Las Vegas ("Jersey Boys").

When I was casting Robert," says Veloudos, "I needed someone who has both charisma and a quality of introspection. While there is no traditional plot structure, I wanted to see the journey Robert takes.

While much has been made of Rob's age, he is not old, and Fukuhara rewriting some lyrics and dialogs, whether he is 35, 45, or 65, "He's scared of opening up to someone," says Fukuhara. "He's surrounded by friends who are affectionate, but he doesn't have love, and he's sure if he is a person of enough strength to have a conversation with someone." Role reversals for acting couples Throughout their nine years as a couple, Amanda Collins and Lewis D. Wheeler have appeared together on stage in 10 different plays.

Although the show's vignettes don't offer a traditional story arc, Ambrose says Robert is a person who just needs someone to talk to on a deeper emotional level.

"He's scared of opening up to someone," says Fukuhara. "He's surrounded by friends who are affectionate, but he doesn't have love, and he's sure if he is a person of enough strength to share himself with someone."
From left: Patrick Murphy of Somerville, Alex Klein of Somerville, Louise Fonteyne of Brookline, Alper Cesmecabi of Allston, and Tyler Kreider of Boston.

Victory Programs' Mac Davino and Shauna Helton, both of Boston.

Rachel Teixeira (left) of Boston, Kleber Deassis of Boston, and Kim Apple of Quincy.