Company bio

Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver, together with Deb Margolin (veterans of Hot Peaches and Spiderwoman Theater), co-founded Split Britches in 1981 at NYC’s WOW Cafe (an outgrowth of the WOW International Theater Festivals of 1980 and 1981). Peggy Shaw has received Obie Awards for performance in 1987 for "Dress Suits for Hire" and in 1999 for "Menopausal Gentleman."

Shaw and Weaver have become known for "a long line of smart, thrillingly well-executed performance pieces" (Katherine Dieckmann, Village Voice) and "tough intellectual and verbal content (John Hammond, The Native).

They won two more Obies for ensemble acting in "Belle Reprieve" (1991), a collaboration with Bloomis that was a reversed-gender version of "Streetcar Named Desire." They created "Lesbians Who Kill" (1993), a satirical work on violent fantasies, "Lust and Comfort" (1995), a play set in London in the '50s which addressed sterility and complacency in long-term relationships and the urge to reinvent desire, and "Salad of the Bad Cafe" (2000), a collaboration with performance artist Stacy Makishi that was inspired by Carson McCullers' novel "Ballad of the Sad Cafe" and the lives of Tennessee Williams and Yukio Mishima. Shaw and Weaver also create solo, largely autobiographical shows and performance intervention. Shaw's "You're Just Like My Father" (1994) was an autobiographical work on growing up Butch in the 1950s. Weaver's "Faith and Dancing: mapping femininity and other natural disasters" (1997) was a work about growing up a femme dyke in Baptist Virginia. Peggy's recent performances work includes To My Chagrin (2001) a rock and roll tribute to cars and grandmotherhood in collaboration with Vivian Stoll and is currently developing a new performance, Miss America. Lois is currently touring with What Tammy Needs to Know and Diary of a Domestic Terrorist.

Individual bios

Lois Weaver lectures in Contemporary Performance at Queen Mary University of London and is an independent performance artist, director and activist. She was co-founder of Spiderwoman Theatre and the WOW Theatre in New York and Artistic Director of Gay Sweatshop Theatre in London. She has been a performer, director, and writer with the Split Britches Company since 1980. Her interests include live art, solo performance, feminist and lesbian theatre and performance and human rights. She was involved in Staging Human Rights, a People's Palace Project initiative that uses performance practice to explore human rights in women's prisons in Brazil and the UK. She collaborated with Curious on two projects: On The Scent, an
investigation of the relationship between smell and memory and *Lost and Found*, a human portrait of urban regeneration. She was director and dramaturge for Peggy Shaw’s *To My Chagrin* and Holly Hughes’ *Preaching To The Perverted*. Lois was Artistic Director for *Performing Rights*, an international conference and festival on the themes of performance and human rights held in London in 2006 and is Producing Director for *East End Collaborations*, an annual platform for emerging live artists. She is currently principal investigator on *Democratising Technology*, a research project that uses performance techniques to initiate conversations on technology design. Lois tours with the *Library of Performing Rights* and *What Tammy Needs To Know* and is developing a new performance entitled *Diary of a Domestic Terrorist*.

**Peggy Shaw** is an actor, writer and producer. She co-founded The Split Britches Theater Company with Lois Weaver ([www.SplitBritches.com](http://www.SplitBritches.com)) and The WOW Café in New York City. She has received three OBIE Awards for her work with Split Britches - for performances in *Dress Suits To Hire*, *Belle Reprieve* and *Menopausal Gentleman*. She also played Billy Tipton in the American Place production of Carson Kreitzer’s *The Slow Drag*. Peggy is currently touring her new show *To My Chagrin*, which she created through a Rockefeller Map Grant in collaboration with musician and sound designer Vivian Stoll, directed by Lois Weaver; and a revival of *Dress Suits To Hire* (A collaboration with Lois Weaver and Holly Hughes) for Split Britches 25th Anniversary. Split Britches are a part of Staging Human Rights, where they work in prisons in Rio De Janeiro and England. They are associate artists on the Clod Ensembles performing medicine project-creating workshops on gender and difference for medical students and health professionals. As part of this project Peggy is also making a new piece called *Musth* to be performed in lecture and anatomy theaters. Peggy has been a collaborator, writer and performer with Spiderwoman Theater and Hot Peaches Theater. She co-founded the OBIE Award winning WOW Café in 1980. Peggy won the New York Foundation for the Arts Award for Emerging Forms in 1988, 1995 and 1999, and 2005; she also won the 1995 Anderson Foundation Stonewall Award for “excellence in making the world a better place for gays and lesbians ” and a 2003 Otto Rene Castillo Award for Political Theatre. The Foundation for Contemporary Performance recently awarded Peggy with Theatre Performer of the Year 2005. Michigan Press will publish a new book on Peggy, edited by Jill Dolan, that will include the scripts for her three solo shows *You’re Just Like My Father*, *Menopausal Gentleman* and *To My Chagrin*. She has just been awarded a NYSCA Individual Artist Grant for writing her new show *Miss America*. Peggy is a freelance teacher of writing and performance around the world.