
Notes from the Director

*“Little children as you grow older, then you will understand;
in this alphabet lie tears and weeping, sorrow and woe.”*



S*hoah* is the Hebrew word for the Holocaust—a fitting term for the heinous persecutions that not only fell on the millions of Jewish people in World War II but is also fitting for the suffering of millions in the world today.

Just three weeks ago, our guest speaker Jainyah Corneh, a refugee from both Liberia and Sierra Leone, spoke to the theater company about the *Shoah* she lived through before she was helped by P.A.R.A. (Programs Assisting Refugee Acculturation) when she and her family were brought to the U.S. After hearing her devastating experience, one of the students asked her why she tells her story when it would be easier to let it go and just forget. **“I tell my story because I have to. Because I must. Because I heal a little every time I tell it.”** She went on to explain that telling the story will ultimately bring the power of life out of a story of death.

This was the same experience I perceived when I heard Martin Lowenberg share his story as a survivor of the WWII Holocaust, a story you will have an opportunity to hear directly from him—a story of pain, anguish, and hate. But while sharing his story, I watched those words of sorrow and woe transform to love, healing, and salvation.

In tonight’s performance, you will hear the story of Raja Englanderova, a child survivor of the Holocaust. She will share the story of the more than 150,000 Jews who passed through Theresienstadt (Terezin), a “model ghetto” or concentration camp set up by the Nazis as a propaganda tool for the international community. Raja focuses on the 15,000 children under the age of fifteen in Terezin, though more than 33,000 inhabitants died because of the appalling conditions and another 88,000 were deported to Auschwitz or other extermination camps. A little more than 100 children survived. Raja is one of them.

Hidden poems, paintings, and journals of thousands of children also survived. The healing they experienced through expression during their immense suffering is what makes up the production you will see tonight. Through their tears and stories of sorrow, I hope you too will experience the healing power of love and life that no Holocaust has the power to silence.



Anyone interested in helping the Wyoming Park Theater Company raise money for P.A.R.A. may make donations after the show. One dollar of every ticket has been pledged to help refugees who are experiencing persecutions even today.