

# A Missing Man, An Enduring Message

Creative Writing and Visual Arts inspired by Raoul Wallenberg's Legacy.

## RAOUL WALLENBERG



August August  
**1912 - 2012**

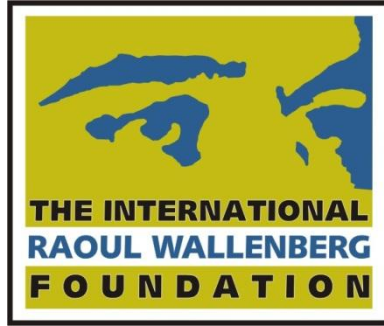
**Centenary of his Birth**



THE INTERNATIONAL RAOUL WALLENBERG FOUNDATION

[www.raoulwallenberg.net](http://www.raoulwallenberg.net)

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# **A Missing Man, An Enduring Message**

**Creative Writing and Visual Arts Inspired by  
Raoul Wallenberg's Legacy**

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## Introduction

“I would not be here if not for Raoul Wallenberg. He rescued my parents and father’s parents from deportation in 1944 and installed them in a Budapest building, which the Swedish diplomat had annexed for the newly minted Swedes.” Joseph Kertes, writer.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who rescued scores of victims from Nazi persecution and the massacre machine in Budapest during WWII. Ironically, this great hero was abducted by the Soviets in 1945, and even now his fate and whereabouts are shrouded in mystery.

Throughout the years, we have come across many artists who have been inspired by Raoul Wallenberg’s legacy, and we have wanted to compile their work for a long time. What better opportunity than the centenary of Raoul Wallenberg’s birthday.

This e-book is a compilation of some of the many creative writing and visual arts submitted by both professional and amateur artists. It is a tribute to the Hero without a Grave, as well as recognition of all those writers and artists who have honored his memory.

The works in this e-book were collected in two different ways: Many artists and writers were invited to participate in the project, given that we were aware of the work that they had produced honoring Raoul Wallenberg. At the same time, we created an open call for visual arts and creative writing and posted this call on several listings and in the media. We were eager to encourage people to learn more about Raoul Wallenberg, his deeds, and his legacy, and for them to produce new works inspired by him.

# Visual Arts

## Barbara Bell

### Drawings

#### Statement:

"Do not go gently..." is a quote from a Dylan Thomas poem, in which the subject encourages his father to fight death, to stay alive. The image shown below, entitled *Do not Go Gently*, is drawn in charcoal on paper. Although the group of men, drawn from a photo from the Holocaust, is desperate, the men themselves emit light; they are of tremendous value. They are not forgotten. There is a strong contrast between dark and light. Light breaks into the darkness as a symbol of hope and life. The men are enveloped in texture, which in spite of its lack of color creates a womb-like affect. Images of family with descendants aggressively crossed out make the point that there are many people left unborn, many unwritten centerpieces, because of the Holocaust. These images also emphasize the pain of the survivors. In some ways, the picture speaks for itself, allowing the viewer to make his or her own interpretation. Raoul Wallenberg did much to redress this terrible tragedy. Men like Wallenberg were among the few that reached into the darkness of the Holocaust because of their passion for human life.



*Do Not Go Gently* 16.5"x 23.6", charcoal on paper

**Barbara Bell's Biography:**

Barbara Bell was trained as a Fine Artist and has taught art and headed art departments during her professional life. Currently, Barbara works as an artist. She has exhibited her work in Scandinavia and the U.K., and her works are part of private collections in the U.S.A., New Zealand, Scandinavia and the U.K. Her work either celebrates what is beautiful and simple, or develops themes that reflect upon the nature of faith. She is particularly interested in exploring the interface between faith in God and suffering. More on Barbara can be found at her website at [www.barbara-bell.co.uk](http://www.barbara-bell.co.uk)



# Gabriella Boros

## Illustration

### Statement:

*The Roots Series* began with the experience of my parents during the Holocaust, a story that during my childhood was alluded to in fable-like terms. *The Roots Series* was my filtration of their experiences while simultaneously coming to terms with my own high school story. By juxtaposing the nightmarish harshness of a child's experience during the Holocaust (my mother and father), with the castles that loomed over their cities, with the seemingly silly struggle of fitting in socially in American schools, I try to repair the pain in these histories.

Raoul Wallenberg plays an active role in my father's story. During the last frigid days of World War II, my grandmother desperately searched for refuge upon their return to Budapest. She begged entry at one of Wallenberg's protected houses and the protection they found there saved their lives. Later, they were rounded up and almost shot to death by German Commandos, (as depicted in the illustration below). Miracles led to miracles in these stories.

In the illustrations below, my mother is shown in hiding under the dirt floor of a farm building. Her miracles also grow one from another, and although not directly saved by Wallenberg, her life depended on other righteous gentiles who kept her alive.

The castles offered nothing to the Jews fearing for their lives; instead they became a mockery of the symbol for refuge. And yet, as we travel to these countries today it is the castles that we flock to, as their picturesque esthetic draws us to them. There are no such esthetic plaques dedicated to the Jews murdered in the name of Aryan primacy.

By drawing the horrifying experiences of my parents in pen, I try to heighten the viewer's experience of fear. I purposely paint the castles as gloriously as possible, and the high school stories are painted in cloying colors. The techniques reflect the experience.

My father maintains that Wallenberg also interfered another time to save his life. A roundup of the Budapest Ghetto eventually culminated in a grouping of the Jews at the Tattersall horse track where they were going to shoot them all. After a night on the grounds they were all released due to Wallenberg's intervention. These somewhat more personal interactions with the great man inspire me to keep his story alive.



*Roots 1*  
33" x 22.5", Acrylic on Paper



*Roots 2*  
33" x 22.5", Acrylic on Paper

## **Gabriella Boros' Biography:**

Born in Israel to Holocaust survivors, Gabriella Boros immigrated to the United States as a young child. She graduated from the University of Michigan School of Art with a BFA in 1984, where she studied intaglio, oil painting, and graphic design.

Gabriella ran a marketing firm until 2001, and at that point she devoted herself to painting fulltime. In addition to painting, Gabriella continues drawing in pen and ink, completing numerous finished sketches as preparation for her paintings, as well as creating "Cheese Box Frames."

Gabriella has been included in numerous solo and group shows since 1988. In 2012, she will show her Scroll Project at the South Shore Arts Center in Munster, Indiana. In 2011 she showed at the Quad City Arts Center, the Harold Washington Library, and her international Stone Project at Substation 9. In 2010 she had a solo show at Anshe Emet Synagogue of her pieces on wood panel, and she was included in many group shows. In 2009, she showed her work in a two-person show at the College of Lake County. Her international on-line [www.astorytosee.com](http://www.astorytosee.com) curation and project was also completed that year. A solo show at the University of Illinois in 2007 showed her works on paper. Her solo show in 2006 at Schopf Gallery in Chicago displayed works in oil completed in 1990-96.

Gabriella's work has been in numerous juried and group exhibits, both national and international. She has shown in commercial galleries as well as museums and art centers. She continues to exhibit around the Chicagoland area and maintains a studio in her house in Skokie, IL.

# Peter Bulow

## Sculpture

### Statement:

*Blessings May Break from Stone* is a collection of sculptures that are about the impact that my mother and father's past has had on my life. My mother, who is Jewish, went into hiding in Budapest during World War II. My father grew up in the ruins of Berlin and was from a non-Jewish family. My parents met in Israel. My mother was a nightclub singer in the Café Roma in Tel Aviv, and my father was a steamfitter in Israel, working for a German company. They married in Berlin and spent three years in India, where I was born. Then they moved back to Berlin, where I spent my childhood.

Growing up in Berlin, I heard stories about the war from my great uncle Oscar. He mixed his tales with German myths, fairy tales, and stories about the Kaiser. I was very close to my German relatives, and German was my first language.

I did not know that I was Jewish – or know about my mother's past – until I came to America in 1968 and met my mother's side of the family.

The Nazis killed my mother's father, and my mother's mother was nearly deported. One day, the police asked my grandmother to come with them to a train station, where hundreds of Jews were waiting to be deported; however, a limousine pulled up, and a man got out and said in Hungarian, "All those with Protection Passes, come here." My grandparents had obtained a Swedish Protection Pass a few months earlier. My grandmother got into the limousine, which dropped her off at her house. Raoul Wallenberg was in the back seat.

Ultimately, my mother and her family hid for 12 months in a cellar in the Budapest ghetto. To help keep those around her alive, my mother, a child of 12 years, would leave the ghetto and pose as a gentile in order to trade linen, saved from the family business, for food.

I first heard my mother's stories during family dinners in New York. She would talk about the hunger she experienced during the war; my father had similar stories from his childhood in Berlin. These stories, or the reality that they were based upon, became a touchstone for me as I grew up in The United States of America, a very different setting than their European homeland. In some ways I experienced my own life as fake, a plastic copy of my parents' lives, which seemed more real. I came to see their past as an absolute reality that my own life could never approach.

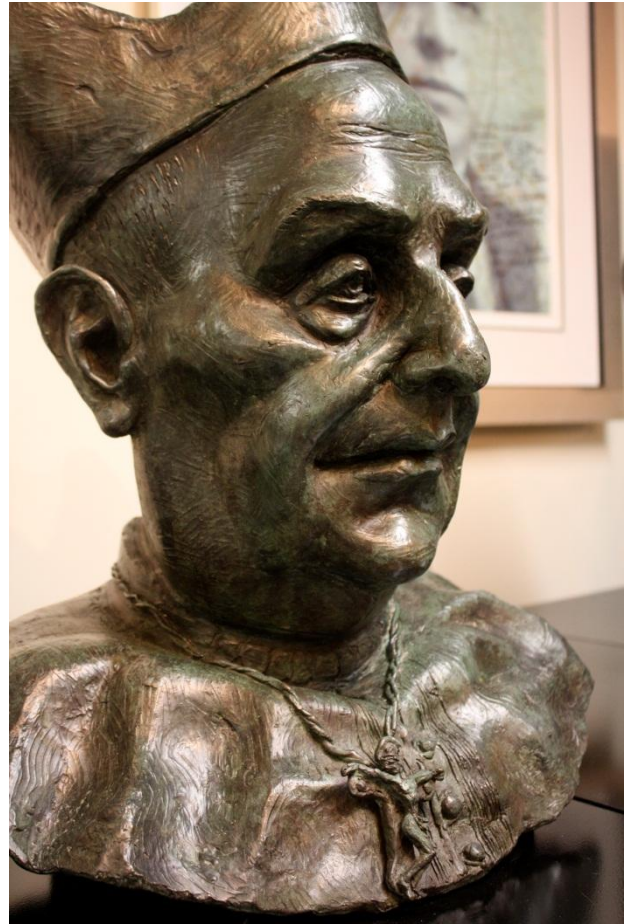
As I learned about my mother's past, I began to read books on World War II, and I started sculpting the heads of starved prisoners and soldiers. When I was 14, I used the sand at New York's Jones Beach to create a life-sized relief sculpture of a starving man. Since then, the image of the starved or near-dead man or woman has recurred in my art.

In 1994, while I was a medical student in Illinois, I wrote *Stories from My Mother*, a play based on the war stories told by my family. In order to write the play, I asked my mother many questions about her childhood. Our conversations helped me begin to picture the place where she had hid, and I envisioned it as a stone box with a red door. I carved a four-foot-long stone box for the play. On each side of the box, I

carved scenes in relief from my mother's life. I added a stone doll of my mother as a child, wearing an armband carved with a Jewish star. I later realized that this was an error, as my mother had told me that she had to wear the Jewish star not on her arm, but on her chest.



Raoul Wallenberg Bronze Head  
Bronze



Roncalli Bronze Head  
Bronze

Commissioned by the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, these sculptures pay homage to two Saviors of the Holocaust, Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat, and Angelo Roncalli, the Apostolic Nuncio in Turkey and Greece during the War and who later became "the good Pope" John XXIII in 1958. Both of these heroes issued transit visas to assist many Jews to escape Nazi persecution.



*Oma Clara*  
Mixed Media



*Oma Clara (detail)*  
Mixed Media



*Mamawall*  
Mixed Media



**Peter Bulow's Biography:**

Peter Bulow was born in India and moved to New York as a child. He began sculpting animals in the Berlin Zoo in Germany when he was 5, and he majored in art in college in NY, eventually receiving an MFA in sculpture in 1997.

He has participated in several group art shows and was featured in a solo exhibition at the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation in 2010. He has received several grants, including one from the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance to sculpt portraits of Holocaust Survivors living in Washington Heights. Bulow was commissioned by the Wallenberg Foundation to sculpt five bronze portraits, including one of Raul Wallenberg. One of his portraits of Raul Wallenberg adorns the facade of the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation. More of Peter Bulow's artwork can be seen on his website: [www.peterbulow.com](http://www.peterbulow.com)

## Norma D'Ippolito

### Sculpture

#### Statement:

My sculpture entitled *Homenaje a Raoul Wallenberg* (*Homage to Raoul Wallenberg*) appears in the picture below. The two pillars in this sculpture allude to the strength and persistence of Judaism throughout the centuries. The elements at the top between the two pillars symbolize the special passports used by Wallenberg to save many people during World War II.



*Homenaje a Raoul Wallenberg* (*Homage to Raoul Wallenberg*)

13"x 3.1"x 7.5"

Bronze and Mixed Media

#### Norma D'Ippolito's Biography:

Norma D'Ippolito was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She graduated from the National School of Fine Arts Prilidiano Pueyrredón in the disciplines of Sculpture and Printmaking. She later attended the Graduate School of Fine Arts Ernesto de la Cárcova, specializing in Sculpture. She also studied in Paris, where she received the Diplôme de Hautes Etudes Françaises. Since 1980, D'Ippolito has won over twenty awards, was selected to the main art salons in Argentina, and participated in several juried shows worldwide. She lives and works in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



**Ann Froman**

## **Sculpture**

### **Statement:**

This bronze sculpture shows the people who survived the holocaust, coming to the United States of America for safety, freedom of religion and protection. The man whose outstretched hands help the people to safety represents Raoul Wallenberg. He was the hero, a Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Jews. The man holding the flag represents Simon Wiesenthal, the famous Nazi hunter. And the boys on either side -- one with a gun for protection, the other reading the Bible --represent religious freedom to all people.



*Survival*

Bronze Sculpture

In the Collection of Brooklyn College New York State University, & Time Warner's gift to Harvard University



*Survival* (detail)



*Survival* (2 details)

## **Ann Froman's Biography:**

Internationally recognized for her work in bronze and acrylic, she has bridged the gap between museum masterpieces and timeless works of art for the home. Froman's incredible career spans over 42 years. From her time as an award winning fashion designer to her rise in the art world, where she has earned the reputation as one of our greatest living sculptors. Her work is powerful, engaging, innovative and inspirational – a reflection of the artist.

A native New Yorker, Froman's studies took her from the Fashion Institute of Technology, NYC, to the National Academy School of Fine Art, NYC, and on to the Palace of Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts in France, where she became a protégé of Le Corbusier and studied Painting with Henri Goetz.

Froman's timeless sculpture, *Survival*, pays tribute to Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish hero who saved 100,000 Jews and Christians during the Holocaust. This powerful piece was purchased by Time Warner, Inc. for Radcliffe College in Cambridge, MA; it is also prominently displayed on the campuses of Brooklyn College and Harvard University.

The recipient of many awards for contributions to modern sculpture, Ms. Froman's works can be found in the permanent collections of: Brooklyn College, NY; Harvard University, Boston, MA; Metropolitan Museum, NY; Springfield Museum of Fine Arts, MA; Butler American Institute of Art, Youngstown, OH; Temple Emanuel, NYC; St. Raphael's Church, Livingston, NJ; The Jewish Museum of Greater Phoenix, AZ; New York Hospital of Special Surgery, NYC; Florida Holocaust Museum, St Petersburg FL; Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY, and among many private, national and international collections

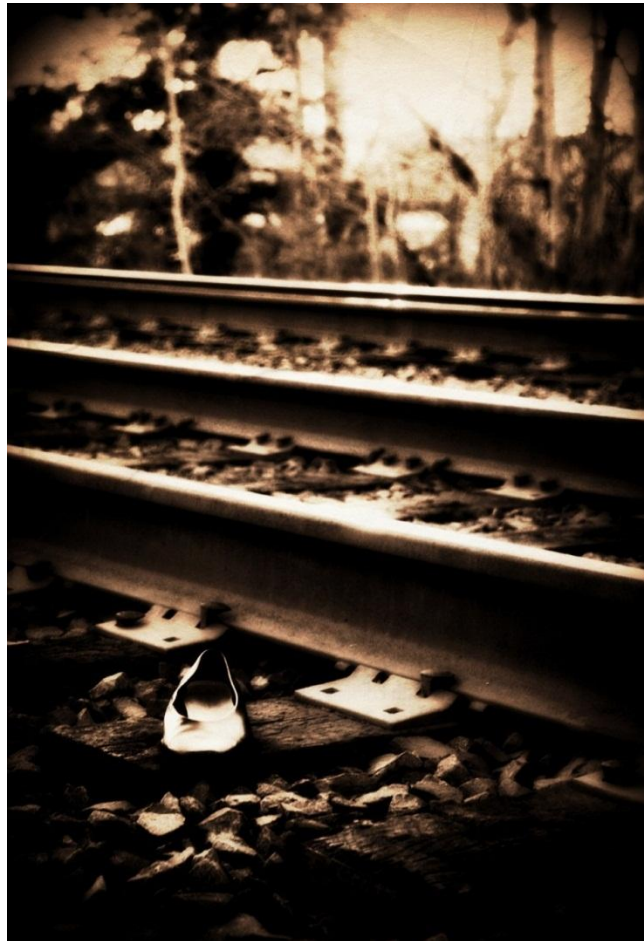


## Kaileigh Hyman

### Photography

#### Statement:

The piece *Walking a Mile in Their Shoes* was based on Raoul Wallenberg's efforts to save Jews during the Holocaust. What I was really intending in this piece was to represent a scene that could have occurred due to the efforts of Wallenberg. This work tells a story of a young Jewish woman on a train, perhaps to Auschwitz, who one way or another, escapes or is saved by the help of someone such as Wallenberg. As she escapes to safety however, she loses her shoe, leaving a footprint of all the agony and suffering she has gone through, even as the footprint leads the way to hope. I tried to make this piece darker to represent all the pain from the Holocaust while brightening the shoe with a nearly angelic glow to illuminate the hope that it represents.



*Walking a Mile In Their Shoes*  
Digital Photograph

**Kaileigh Hyman's Biography:**

Kaileigh Hyman is a Jewish student at a very small Catholic high school. A senior, Hyman hopes to pursue her dual passions of photography and graphic design. Her ultimate aspiration is to own her own studio. In August of 2012 she will attend Chester College of New England, a small liberal arts school near Manchester.

## Batya F. Kuncman

### Mixed Media

#### Statement:

The long shadow of the Holocaust hovers over my family experience and, as a result, my work expresses a process that both helps me gain a deep insight into the frailties inherent in being part of the human race and to adjust to an assortment of so-called identities that brand me; it has helped me realize how one's personal identity is really a fusion that reflects others' perceptions and that mostly disregards the values that are truly important. Raoul Wallenberg represents the spirit I would consider to be the highest level of humanity; his courage which called one's greatest convictions and faith into action is a beacon of hope and light in a dark world.

Each of my recent works is an elaborate imagined studio space featuring an installation of images as an investigation into corruption/beauty, destruction/renewal, and utopia/dystopia. I try to imagine a connecting spirituality that might explain what is happening and what would happen if our reality were suddenly to reveal this component.



Angel of Mercy

20"x 13" mixed media, archival pigment ink on paper

**Batya Kuncman's Biography:**

Batya is a multidisciplinary Israeli artist born to a Holocaust surviving family based in New York City. Her work has been internationally exhibited in galleries and museums that include the Museum of Modern Art of Taluca, Mexico and the Haun Tie Art Museum in Beijing, China. Recently, her paintings from the series "Landscapes for Humanity" were on solo exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art. Her work has appeared in a variety of publications, including Forbes, MIT Technology Review, Wired, Studio Visit Spring-Summer 2012 and the international luxury annual magazine VIEWS 2012. An upcoming exhibit of her work will be on view in August 2012 at the Martine Chaisson Gallery in New Orleans.



## Susy Navon

### Paintings

#### Statement:

Some years ago a friend of mine, Daniel Vernik, was the president of the Holocaust Museum of Argentina.

He wanted to make a show of Holocaust paintings at a Temple in Miami. He asked me if I would cooperate and I agreed to do so. Along with two other Argentine artists, we prepared a wonderful setting at the venue and I began painting. My fine art is usually 2 or 3 dimensional, using collage techniques. This was my first time painting Jewish themes and I was surprised at what emerged after reading a Holocaust book.



*Wallenberg and Others Saving the Jews* 36"x 24", Mixed Media on Canvas

#### Susy Navon's Biography:

Susy Navon is an artist as well as a computer art designer. She recently painted a series on the Holocaust, and two of her works focused on the saviors of the Jews during the war. Navon was born in Argentina and immigrated to the United States in 2001 on an art visa, and she is now a proud citizen of the U.S. Her father was born in Turkey and immigrated to Argentina at the age of thirty. Her mother was also an immigrant, as she was born in Aleppo, Syria. Navon is married with four children, two living in the United States and two in Argentina.

# Marisa Scheinfeld

## Photography

### Statement:

The following images are part of an ongoing series on Holocaust survivors. While each distinct story of survival is both incredible and unimaginable, the persons in this series pass on a collective narrative, which remains as a testimony to the chaos and devastation experienced by millions during the Second World War.

I began the project as an attempt to address the gripping and powerful effect the subject of the Holocaust has continually had on me. Aware from an early age about the scope of the Holocaust, I found myself seeking out as much information as I could find on the subject- particularly in the form of photographs. Each time I read about or saw an image, I felt further and indelibly engrossed and bewildered. At present, these feelings still remain.

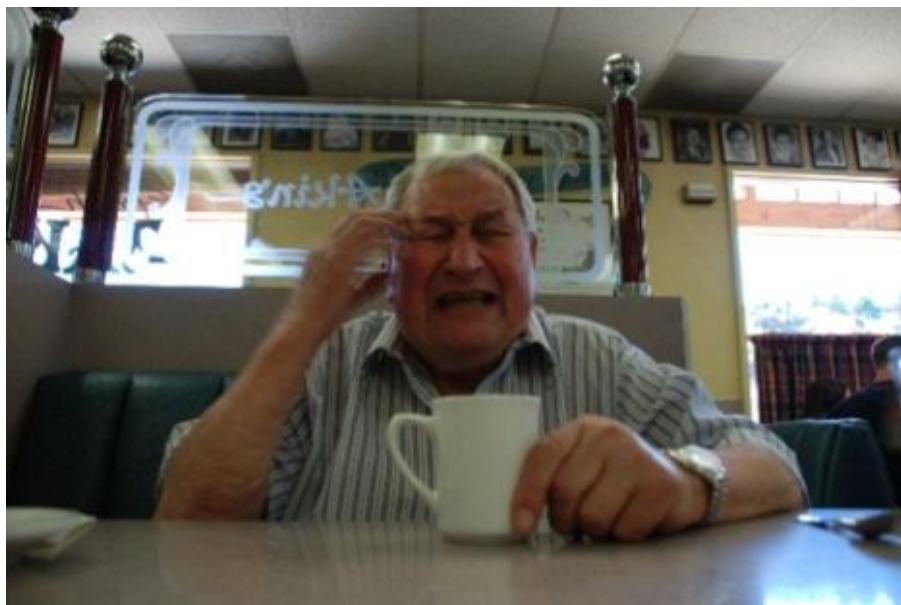
In my pursuit of tracking down survivors I have been both haunted and moved. Using the camera and making portraits, most often in their homes, I sought to encapsulate a sense of time and the inclusive emotions of it - an awareness that resides in the past yet subsists in the present. For virtually all Holocaust survivors early development was infiltrated with prejudice, war and genocidal barbarism. Now in the later stages of life, their stories of survival are buried deep in their eyes and ears, in their memories and hearts.

While this series does not attempt to cover even a fraction of those who survived, it exists as a form of remembrance for all who have been persecuted. Additionally, it is my hope that the photographs will generate consciousness and confirm the capabilities of hatred and the severity of war - going on right now. May the events illustrated in this book never be forgotten.

The entire series, entitled, *Ben, His Tattoo and Other Stories*, is a self-published book; a photographic series juxtaposed with text dictated by each survivor upon their interview. The book was accepted into the collection of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. In addition to the book, a 3 and a half minute video was produced with still photographs and the voices of the survivors speaking.



Morris Rubenstein, San Diego, California,  
8 x 10, Digital Photograph



Lou Dunst, San Diego, California,  
8 x 10, Digital Photograph



Sally Dragon, Rancho Bernardo, California,  
8 x 10, Digital Photograph



Ben Midler, San Diego, California,  
8 x 10, Digital Photograph



Sari Zhad, San Diego, California,  
8 x 10, Digital Photograph



Sol Schwartz, Swan Lake, New York,  
8 x 10, Digital Photograph



## **Marisa Scheinfeld's Biography:**

Marisa Scheinfeld was born in Brooklyn, NY in 1980 and raised in the Catskills. She took her first black and white photography class at age 15 and hasn't put the camera down since. In 2002, she graduated from The State University of New York at Albany, where she studied under photographer Phyllis Galembo and photographer Abby Robinson from The Pratt Institute and The School of Visual Arts. From 2002 - 2003 she was an intern in the Community Programs Department at The International Center of Photography. In 2003 Marisa moved out west and worked in the Education Department of the Museum of Photographic Arts (MoPA) in San Diego, CA for four years; primarily teaching the museum's various photography outreach programs but in her time there "wore many hats." In 2009, she was accepted into the graduate program at The School of Art, Art History and Design at San Diego State University and over the course of her studies she worked with Arthur Ollman, photographer and previous director of MoPA, sculptor Richard Keely, painter and photographer David Hewitt, photographer Kim Stringfellow and Dr. Carol McCusker, an independent curator of photography. Her photographic projects and books are in the collections of The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, CA, The La Jolla Athenaeum in La Jolla, CA and in the Edmund and Nancy K. Dubois Library at the Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego, CA. Scheinfeld received her M.F.A. in the Spring of 2011 and shortly after relocated back New York. She is currently living in the Lower East Side. More of Marisa's work can be viewed on her website at [www.marisascheinfeld.com](http://www.marisascheinfeld.com)

## Kate Walsh

### Sculpture

#### Statement:

The crimes committed against humans during the Holocaust are unimaginable, devastating. Personally, I am humbled and encouraged by stories of survival, of heroes, and even of forgiveness after such devastating events. The heart of people who risked so much for good continues to motivate me. This piece is meant to portray the rebirth that happens after a horrific event such as the Holocaust. It is made of old wood with chipped paint, wires and nails. But in the center, each slightly different from one another, new life emerges. The piece is covered with an encaustic texture because I believe that although life grows anew, we are not meant to be untouched by what happened in the past.



*Grandfather Clock* 5"x 1", Mixed Media

**Kate Walsh's Biography:**

Kate Walsh has studied in the United States and around the world, from China to South America. Wherever she is she desires to immerse herself in the language, culture and history of that place. She says that this perspective allows her to have a greater sense of the connectivity of humanity; our struggles, battles, and our victories. Currently, she has pieces on exhibit in Chicago, IL; Minneapolis, MN; and at the Multi-Cultural Center in Budapest, Hungary. She says that participating in this exhibition in Hungary is an honor, as she makes a concerted effort to try to live life with a global mentality.

# **Creative Writing**



## Panos D. Bardis

### Poetry

#### Statement:

Robert Karp began speaking with Dr. Panos D. Bardis in the 1980s about Raoul Wallenberg and his sacrifices to save Hungarian Jews from being sent to death camps by the Nazis during World War II. Their discussions evolved into his composition of *Ode to Raoul Wallenberg* and its publication in 1989 in various journals, including the International Journal on World Peace (January-March 1989, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 93-97). Subsequently, Robert Karp arranged to have it beautifully set to music by David Jex of the University of Toledo Music Department for soprano, cello, and piano. It was performed on campus on December 11, 1994 in connection with the Northwest Ohio Raoul Wallenberg Committee, headed by Mr. Karp, which awards scholarships to students for altruism in the spirit of Wallenberg (Statement provided by Mrs. Donna Bardis, wife of Dr. Bardis).

#### Ode To Raoul Wallenberg\*

By Panos D. Bardis

The University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio 43606, USA

*"Thus the Lord saved Israel that day  
out of the hand of the Egyptians;  
and Israel saw the Egyptians dead  
upon the sea shore."*

Exodus 14:30

*"He who wins the prize of valor and distinguishes  
himself shall first be crowned."*

Plato, *Republic*, 468b

Torch of Freedom! Brightly burning  
Over field and fjeld and fjord;  
Over frozen rills and rivers,  
Roaring torrents, singing streams;  
Over summits rising proudly;  
Over woods of birch and beech,  
Brightly blazing Star of Freedom,  
Death and prison never slay  
Noble Heroes!

*Chorus*

Noble Heroes, unforgotten.  
Misbegotten  
Fiends, forgotten.  
Never trapped in Charon's sieve,  
Men of valor always live.

\* \* \*

Dazzling Danube, gently flowing,  
Hugging Buda, kissing Pest;  
Rolling hills adorned with flowers;  
Castle Hill and Margit Isle;  
Magic city, fabled city;  
Gypsy rhapsodies and chants  
Tell of Final—grim—Solution,  
Ghastly horrors, and nightmares.  
Isaac's melancholy children,  
Terah's seed, in their new Ur,  
Flee to Shechem, fly to Bethel,  
Seeking solace, love, and peace.  
But the Arrow Cross of demons—  
Serpent fastened to their arms—  
Writhes and squirms and coils with fury,  
Hissing madly, spreading death!  
Ah, the deadly, frightful marches—  
Frozen phantoms, fading shades!  
Ah, the ghostly, spectral figures  
In the silent Synagogues!

*Chorus*

Bodies frozen,  
Yahweh's Chosen  
March in night.

Darkly winging,  
Death is singing,  
Spreading fright.

But a dazzling Northern Light,  
Mocking madmen's monstrous might,

Brightly shines  
Over shrines,  
Giving signs

Of relief and liberation.  
Jubilation! Jubilation!  
Like two spirits, here and there,  
Yahweh's Angel, bright and fair,  
Brings new life, new dreams, new hope,  
Breaking hangmen's writhing rope.  
Gladness! Rapture! Jubilation!  
Kindness is mankind's salvation.  
But the demon Eichmann, howling,  
Like a wounded creature growling,  
Like the Lord of Evil, Seth,  
Seeks the faithful servant's death.  
Ah, what madness, what false might!  
Are bright orbs obscured by night?  
Does a dragon's fearful flight  
Bring a noble knight's twilight?

\* \* \*

Cannon, horrid conflagration.  
Bursting bombs—a flaming hell.  
Thunder-hammer, sharpest sickle,  
Freedom symbols, signs of life.  
Buda smiling, Pest rejoicing,  
Jacob's children greet the dawn.  
But the ageless, rolling river,  
Wise with eons' sights and sounds,  
Sees a hammer crushing children,  
Sees a sickle bringing death!

*Ancient Danube!*

River-god, forever singing  
Dirges, ballads, barcaroles,  
Rhapsodies, triumphal anthems,  
Sweetest lieder, lullabies,  
You foresaw the coming tempest,  
And the Northern Orb's eclipse.

*Chorus*

Dark and ominous eclipse,  
Horsemen and Apocalypse,  
Lost and haunted ancient ships.  
But such darkness lasts awhile,  
Then the sun returns to smile.

\* \* \*

Now the Danube greets the Volga,

Sending messages and hymns.  
And the hymns, in the Lubianka—  
Darkest ghetto, blackest cage—  
Greet a gaunt and sleepless Hero,  
Greet a silent, somber shade.

*Chorus*

Master Builder, son of mortals,  
You have soared through Heaven's portals,  
There to shine among immortals.  
When the Fates were sternly scowling  
And the hounds of hell were howling,  
Gulag's ghouls—  
Frenzied fools—  
Come to take your precious life.  
But can life succumb to strife?  
When the mountain shakes and quakes  
And the burning lava bakes  
Ground and flowers,  
Death is regnant. But new bloom  
Soon will rise from Earth's dark womb.  
Silver showers  
Then will bring new joy, new life,  
And an end to storm and strife.

\* \* \*

Master Builder, son of mortals,  
You have joined the Great Immortals

## Notes

*Apocalypse (Revelation)*: Greek for Unveiling or Uncovering. The last book in the New Testament, The Revelation of Saint John the Divine. The Four Horsemen and their horses (white, red, black, and pale) symbolize War, Famine, Disease, and Death (Revelation 6:1-8; see, also, Vicente Blasco Ibanez, 1867-1928, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, 1916).

*Arrow Cross*: Hungarian Nazis.

*Bethe*: "The House of God." A town in Palestine where Abraham encamped about 2000 B.C. (Genesis 12).

*Buda*: Part of Budapest, on the western bank of the Danube.

*Castle Hill*: A romantic district of Buda with charming narrow lanes and one-story buildings.

*Charon*: The ferryman who conveyed the dead to Hades over the river Styx. Greek mythology.

*Fjeld*: A high, barren plateau. Danish.

*Gulag*: Soviet penal system consisting of a network of labor camps.

*Lubianka*: Prison in Moscow.

*Margit Isle*: Beautiful Island between Buda and Pest. Romantic and popular. Named after Saint Margaret, daughter of King Bela, who lived in a convent (13<sup>th</sup> century).

*Pest*: Part of Budapest, on the eastern bank of the Danube.

*Seth*: Egyptian god, lord of the powers of evil.

*Shechem*: Town near Mount Gerizim, where Abraham camped (Genesis 12).

*Terah*: Father of Abram (Abraham), about 2000 B.C. (Genesis 11:24-32).

*Ur*: Mesopotamian city, where Abraham was born, about 2000 B.C. (Genesis 11).

(\* Reprinted from *Indian Writer* and other journals.)

*International Journal on World Peace*, January-March 1989, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 93-97

## Panos D. Bardis' Biography:

Dr. Panos Demetrios Bardis was born in a small, poor mountainous village in Greece in 1924. He learned 8 languages, mostly on his own, from ancient Greek to English. He suffered through World War II and the Greek Civil War that erupted in its wake. During the Civil War, Panos was invited by both extremes, Leftist Communists and Rightist Fascists, to write poems and plays for them. He refused both extremes, as he wanted to be a centrist. That encouraged both sides to accuse him of being a supporter of the other. For example, after he won a scholarship to study in America, the Fascists imprisoned him as a Communist on an island and the Communists imprisoned him as a Fascist in a cave on the island.

He eventually escaped and came to America where he received degrees from Bethany College (WV), Notre Dame, and Purdue. Dr. Bardis came to the University of Toledo in 1959 as a professor of Sociology. In 1974 he was awarded the Outstanding Teacher Award, and in 1989 he was named Professor Emeritus.

Over his lifelong academic career, he became a member of over 50 literary and professional organizations, was listed in over 50 Who's Who volumes, spoke at over 100 professional conferences all around the world, composed songs for the mandolin, and developed 25 questionnaires to measure attitudes.

Always a poet and scholar, Dr. Bardis published 26 books and hundreds of poems, articles, and book reviews. He served on 40 editorial boards of literary and professional organizations. Of these, he spent the most time as Editor of: *Social Science*, 1959-1982, *International Social Science Review*, 1982-1993, and *International Journal on World Peace*, 1983-1993.

Above all else, Panos always prized family (wife Donna and two sons Byron and Jason), teaching, and writing. He passed away in 1996 after a lifetime as a staunch defender of democracy against extremism.

# David Ben Reuven

## Lyrics

### Statement:

I have been involved in activity for Raoul Wallenberg since the early 1980s when I headed a committee called the "Jerusalem Committee for Raoul Wallenberg," which organized demonstrations in Jerusalem and appeals to the Soviets calling for his release. It was around this time that I wrote my first two songs inspired by this activity: *Wallenberg* and *There is a Man*. I performed these two songs in public on numerous occasions, particularly during events organized by the Jerusalem Working Group, headed by Larry Pfeffer, to commemorate the Jewish and non-Jewish rescuers of the Holocaust. Later I composed the song *Raoul We Thank You* to express our deep thanks to him on behalf of the many thousands he saved. I also wrote a song called *Louise and Marie* in tribute to the outstanding efforts of his step-brother, Guy von Dardel, and his nieces, Louise and Marie von Dardel, to perpetuate his memory and achievements. As a publisher I also worked on projects dedicated to Wallenberg. In the late 1980s I published Yefim Moshinsky's memoir about Raoul called *Raoul Wallenberg is Alive*. Finally, I also issued a statement based on my interview with an elderly Russian immigrant who affirmed that in 1970 he had been in a bed next to Raoul in a prison infirmary and had held conversations with him. Raoul Wallenberg is a very important part of my being and a major inspiration for my creativity.

### Raoul We Thank You

By David Ben Reuven

Raoul we thank you  
We never shall forget  
How you came to help us  
In our distress,  
Like an angel of rescue  
Like a shining star  
May the Lord protect you  
Wherever you are.

We were so helpless  
Knowing not what to do  
But unhesitatingly  
You ran to save us Jews

Raoul we love you  
Though you're far away  
Raoul we want you  
Back with us one day

Raoul we bless you  
For the thousands you saved  
With your steadfast courage  
And the example you gave.

We shall always remember you  
We shall never forget  
Your name will live on with us  
Forever in your debt.  
Lost in the Gulag  
Disappeared without trace  
But here in our hearts  
You have pride of place.

## **The Rescuers**

By David Ben Reuven

Rabbi Michael Ber Weissmandl and Gizi Fleischmann in Bratislava; George Mantello and Recha Sternbuch in Switzerland; Raoul Wallenberg, Per Anger, Giorgio "Jorge" Perlasca, Carl Lutz, Monsignor Angello Rotta in Budapest; Josef and Rivka Bau in Plashow; Chiune Sugihara in Lithuania; Hillel Kook (alias Peter Bergson) in New York; Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld and Nicholas Winton in Britain;

The list is small  
Their task is great  
To rescue Jews  
From their tragic fate  
In the darkness of the night  
They shine their light  
The courageous few  
With a sacred task  
To save the Jew.  
Boldly they step into the darkness  
They do not hesitate  
They will not, they cannot  
Leave the Jews to their dismal fate  
The Rescuers....

Let their names be inscribed forever  
In the Golden Book of Life  
Tell it to our children  
For generations yet to come

How they saved tens of thousands of our  
people  
From the Nazi Gehinnom.  
So tell the world their story  
Their heroic feats make known  
Not for fame or glory,  
With them we were not alone

SPOKEN:  
All over Europe  
When all hope of deliverance had gone  
Lights suddenly went on.  
In Slovakia, in Budapest  
In the East and the West  
The rescuers rose up  
The doomed Jews to wrest  
From the Nazi beast,  
Of humankind they were the best...  
The Rescuers...

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## **David Ben Reuven's Biography:**

London-born David Ben Reuven came on Aliya in 1966 soon after graduating from Cambridge University with a degree in Modern Languages. He settled in Jerusalem and pioneered a system of simplified English, French and Arabic newspapers for use in the Israeli school system. Over the years, he developed into a prolific singer-songwriter, performing in one-man musical shows about Jerusalem, Theodore Herzl, Zionism, and the heroes of the Bible.

For many years he has been writing and performing songs about Raoul Wallenberg and other rescuers of the Holocaust as a member of the Jerusalem Working Group for Commemorating the Major Jewish and non-Jewish Rescuers of the Holocaust. His unique songs have been widely acclaimed and are also available on CD.

# Dorsey Fiske

## Playwriting

### Statement:

My reasons for writing *That Little Candle*: The Second World War and our combat against the evils of the Nazi regime is one of the defining events in the history of the United States and the world. There has not been, before or since, a war between nations with an enemy that it was so necessary for good men to fight.

When I learned about Raoul Wallenberg and what he had done for the Jews of Budapest, he seemed to me the embodiment of the best that is in mankind. Who could resist his courage, his daring, his gallantry, his gaiety in the face of pure evil? And his fate has been the cruelest imaginable; I can only hope that he died young, for to be imprisoned in the Kafkaesque system of the Soviet Union with no escape is horrible. Nearly seventy years after his arrest and disappearance we still do not know what happened to him; it is shameful that his own country, Sweden, made so little effort to find him when he could have been rescued – a valuable life wasted and discarded by those who should have saved him.

The situations and characters I chose to portray in my play are those that best show his humanity, his ingenuity, his nobility, and his heroism. I contrast these qualities with the monstrous evil and seeming inevitability of the Nazi machine. Wallenberg is the triumph of the human spirit – a beacon for us all.

### Excerpt from the play *That Little Candle*.

#### ACT 3, SCENE 3

*The Budapest Railway Station Waiting Room, That Same Night*

*It is early morning, and still dark outside. It is the same set as that in Act 2, Scene 8, but the scene is very different. At the rear of the stage the great doors leading to the train platforms are closed, but there is a small entrance which is open. Clanging noises, the sound of boxcar doors being thrown open, issue from the platform area, and two German soldiers near the door are busy checking off lists. Two Arrow Cross guards hurry through the door with piles of metal buckets as the sound of heavy motor vehicles is heard in the distance. A Captain and a Lieutenant stand at the front of the stage.*

**Captain** *(To the guards with the buckets.)* Get going, you! Macht schnell! The trucks will be here any time now; I hear them coming. We want to be ready to load as soon as they show up. Obersturmbannführer Eichmann told me he expects this lot to be shipped off well before dawn. *(He grumbles to the Lieutenant standing beside him.)* Eichmann's innards must run by clockwork. I bet he shits cogwheels. Get so much as

two seconds behind schedule and he behaves as if the Führer was shoving a bayonet up his arse. *(To the men, shouting.)* Hey, you pile of turds! Get a move on! *(The Arrow Cross guards exit to the platforms.)*

*The sound of trucks comes closer, then grinds to a halt. A moment later several pathetic figures straggle into the waiting room through the entrance of the railway station at stage right, prodded along by another Arrow Cross guard. There are two women, an old man, and a small child. They are all in ragged nightclothes; one with a coat over her nightgown, one in a shabby dressing-gown, one with a piece of a blanket wrapped around her. The young woman with the child is barefoot. They all look dazed, and the child is weeping.*

**Captain** Don't bring them in here, you piece of dreck! The back entrance. *(The guard starts to lead them out.)* All right, get along there, all of you. Make it snappy. *(To Lieutenant.)* Go check over the boxcars before they're packed in. Make sure the loads aren't light. I don't trust those Hungarians to do anything right. At least eighty to a car, remember, more if you can pull it off, and only one pail in each for sanitary use. We're short of buckets. This sodding war! We're always short of something.

**Lieutenant** How much water is to be furnished per boxcar?

**Captain** Water? What do you think we're running, the Paris Ritz? You can forget about water. I told you, we're short of buckets. Besides, it would just make them piss more. As soon as you've made the check, start loading. You'd better get some of our boys to do the counting. Those Hunky yobbos are o.k. for heavy work, but they're short on brain-power.

*The Lieutenant salutes smartly and starts to move off. Another Arrow Cross guard begins to lead in several more pathetic prisoners in bedraggled nightclothes -- a middle-aged woman, an old woman, and a young girl.*

**Captain** *(Angry.)* Haven't you swine been told to take them in the back way?

**Guard** *(Looks confused.)* No German. Nich sprech Deutsch.

**Captain** *(Disgusted.)* Gott im Himmel! All right, all right! That way! Take them that way. *(He points at the door to the platforms at the rear of the stage.)*

*Suddenly Raoul and Vilmos appear in the entrance of the railway station. Raoul is dressed in the uniform of a Nazi SS major. Vilmos, in a soft felt hat and trenchcoat, carries a bulging briefcase. As they arrive, the two guards who had carried in the buckets come back through the door to the platforms and, unnoticed, slouch over to a bench and sit down. As the scene progresses, one pulls out a deck of cards and they begin to play a hand.*

**Raoul** *(Gives the Nazi salute and says in an authoritative voice.)* Who is in charge here?

**Captain** *(Stands at attention and returns the salute.)* I am, Herr Major.

**Raoul** *(Looks haughtily around him.)* I am Major Hoechst. Aide to Obersturmbannführer Eichmann.

I have come to check on your progress. Are you on schedule?



**Captain** (*Eagerly.*) Right on target, Herr Major. As you know, Obersturmbannführer Eichmann has ordered that this conscription of Jews be loaded into the boxcars so the train will be ready to leave for Berlin by 0500 hours at the latest. The loading has begun, and as it is now (*he glances down at his wristwatch*) 0434 hours, the operation should be completed on schedule.

**Raoul** (*Looks with distaste at Vilmos.*) The Obersturmbannführer has commanded me to conduct this man here and to facilitate his business. He is an undersecretary of the Swedish Legation in Budapest. He claims that among the occupants of the houses emptied to fill the train there were a number of Swedish citizens.

**Captain** Swedish citizens? No, no, I assure you. They are all good Hungarian Jews. We have made sure of that. And Obersturmbannführer Eichmann personally gave me the order to deport them to Germany. Look at them. (*He gestures at the prisoners, who are being led out the door at the back.*) Do they look like Swedes? Just a lot of trash, ready to be cleared up and got out of the way. I doubt half of them will make it in shape to work in the munitions factories, but they're disposable, after all. There are plenty more where they came from.

**Raoul** (*Confidentially.*) But we all know what sloppy work the Arrow Cross turns in, don't we? A zealous bunch, but not too bright. (*The Captain nods in agreement.*) I suppose they got somewhat over-eager on this assignment. Obersturmbannführer Eichmann made a point of telling me that he is very pleased with your work. He said that you are among the most efficient and capable officers of his command. (*The Captain looks gratified by this information.*) He doesn't blame you for this slipup. It's entirely the fault of the Arrow Cross and of the Jews concerned, who ought to have notified you at once of their standing. For that, if for nothing else, they deserve to be shipped off to the munitions factories. They should be honored to be chosen to work for our Führer's glorious victory. Unfortunately, however, there is the question of the Swedish Legation. Obersturmbannführer Eichmann wishes to assure the Swedish government of our coöperation concerning their interests; in that way we are assured of their coöperation with us. So. (*He gestures toward Vilmos.*) This man is a member of their Legation and has brought the requisite papers for those Jews who are citizens of Sweden, Jews with families who are influential in that country.

**Captain** (*Looks hard at Vilmos.*) Say, he's not Wallenberg, is he? That Swede Obersturmbannführer Eichmann issued an order a couple of weeks ago to kill on sight?

**Raoul** Wallenberg? No. He says his name is Larsen. But in any case it couldn't be Wallenberg. I know Wallenberg. I wouldn't forget Wallenberg's pretty face, I can tell you. He got in my way once and he'd better not try it again. Once was one time too many, so far as I'm concerned. (*He snaps his fingers.*) Herr Larsen!

**Vilmos** Yes, Major?

**Raoul** The papers. (*Impatiently.*) Please! You are holding up the Captain's operation. It is of the highest importance that he keep on schedule. (*To the Captain.*) We don't want to keep Obersturmbannführer Eichmann waiting, do we? It would not be a good idea.

**Captain** (*In fervent agreement.*) Not a good idea at all. Once Eichmann says do it, it's done.

**Raoul** (*Conspiratorially.*) Or else. Ja?

**Captain** (*Delighted to have found a fellow-spirit in this somewhat intimidating Major.*) Or else! How right you are, Herr Major. He does not consider the difficulties there may be in implementing his orders.

**Raoul** Eichmann is a hard taskmaster. He cracks the whip over us all. But with good reason, of course. He gets results.

**Captain** (*Abashed.*) Of course, Herr Major.

**Raoul** (*To Vilmos.*) So, Herr Larsen. If you want those Swedish citizens of yours, you will please to present the papers at once.

*Vilmos opens his briefcase and takes out sheaves of documents, which he shows to Raoul.*

**Raoul** (*Takes several from Vilmos and glances carelessly at them.*) All in order. Yes. That will do. (*He shows one very briefly to the Captain and then hands it back to Vilmos.*) Be quick about it. The Captain has no time to lose. (*He takes out a cigarette case. To the Captain.*) Cigarette? My own blend. I have them sent from Abdullah, in Paris. (*Flattered, the Captain takes one. Raoul lights it for him, then lights one for himself.*) Perhaps you know it, a little tobacconist on the Quai Voltaire.

**Captain** Thank you, Herr Major. No, I regret I have not that pleasure.

*Raoul has been keeping an eye on Vilmos, who has walked over to the platform door at rear and is arguing with the soldiers stationed there.*

**Raoul** (*With a gesture towards them.*) Perhaps you will instruct your men to facilitate Larsen's work. Otherwise the train may not be able to depart on schedule, in which case Obersturmbannführer Eichmann will be exceedingly displeased with us both.

**Captain** (*Visibly discomposd by this prospect.*) Yes, yes. Of course. (*He puts out his*

*cigarette on the heel of his boot and strides toward the two soldiers.*) You there! Let that man conduct his search. Orders of Obersturmbannführer Eichmann.

*Instantly the soldiers stand at attention, giving the Nazi salute. Vilmos exits through the door to the platforms and the Captain goes back to Raoul, who courteously offers him another cigarette.*

**Captain** Many thanks, Herr Major. A superb blend. When I am in Paris, I shall be sure to look up Abdullah's.

*As he smokes it, he cannot resist nervously consulting his wristwatch. A moment later Vilmos returns and walks over to Raoul and the Captain.*

**Vilmos** Major, the boxcars are so filled with people that I am unable to perform my duty.

**Raoul** (*Wearily to the Captain.*) Damn and blast the Swedish government. I'm afraid I shall have to assist Herr Larsen in his errand, if we are to entertain a hope of keeping this operation on schedule. If I were you, Captain, I should order my men to stop loading at once. It will be more efficient to sort out the sheep

from the goats before they are crammed into the boxcars. Once loaded, they will only have to be brought out onto the platforms again, a great waste of time. And we both know, don't we, what Obersturmbannführer Eichmann thinks about wasting time?

**Captain** *(Flustered.)* Yawohl, Herr Major. *(Shouts to the soldiers at the door.)* You men there! See that they stop loading at once. Halt!

*Raoul strides forward to join Vilmos, taking a handful of Shutz-Passes from him with an air of ill-suppressed impatience.*

**Raoul** *(To Vilmos.)* Hurry up. Let's go. You won't have much time. The Captain has his schedule to fulfill.

*They exit through the door to the platforms.*

**Captain** *(Agitated.)* This is terrible! We can't miss the deadline. I must see to it. *(To the soldiers at the door.)* Come with me, you two.

*They also exit through the door to the platforms. Left to themselves, the two Arrow Cross Guards light cigarettes and continue their game of cards.*

**First guard** Fucking Swedes. What do they mean, wasting our time? We just got that load of shit here, and the fucking Swedes come grab them.

**Second guard** What the hell do you care? It's no skin off our noses, is it?

**First guard** They're Jews, aren't they? Stinking kikes. I want them to get what's coming to them, that's all.

**Second guard** Germany, Sweden, who gives a shit? One way or another, they'll be out of our hair.

*Vilmos enters, a line of women and children with passes clutched in their hands strung out behind him. Raoul follows. He sees Hanna in the line.*

**Raoul** Are you Hanna Stern? *(She nods.)* I am so sorry about the older lady who was with you. I had to tell her that there are not enough passes for everyone, and that we must save the young ones, so there will continue to be Jews in the world. *(He touches her shoulder and approaches Vilmos.)*

**Vilmos** I've run out of passes.

**Raoul** So have I. I'm afraid these are all we will be able to save. It's time to get them out of here.

*The Captain bustles back into the waiting-room.*

**Captain** *(Anxiously, to Raoul.)* We may start to load now, Herr Major? It grows late.

**Raoul** Yes. We have finished our errand. Many thanks, Herr Kapitan. I shall not forget to inform Obersturmbannführer Eichmann of your coöperation.

**Captain** (*Calls back, as he goes back toward the door to the platforms.*) Thank you, Herr Major, thank you.

*As Raoul and Vilmos lead the line of women and children out of the waiting room, the **Curtain** falls.*

### **Dorsey Fiske's Biography:**

Born in Hawaii of an Army family, as a child Dorsey lived all over the United States and in Germany. After graduating from Harvard, she worked as a researcher in Manhattan, and then moved to Middleburg, Virginia, where she catalogued rare books and prints for a private collection and rode horses. Later she attended Cambridge University as a research student, and upon her return to the U.S. she worked with rare books. Currently, Dorsey lives in New Castle, Delaware, a small eighteenth-century river-town halfway between New York and Washington, D.C., where she writes novels -- detective and otherwise -- and plays.

**Laurence Holzman, Felicia Needleman,  
and Benjamin Rosenbluth**

**Musical Theater**

**Statement:**

Several years ago, I was teaching a sixth grade Hebrew school class. The subject was the Holocaust, and the text we were using was a book for young adults with many photographs from the period. In the chapter on rescuers, there were two paragraphs about Righteous Gentiles. The first paragraph began with the following words:

“In 1944, Raoul Wallenberg left the safety of Sweden and went into Nazi-occupied Budapest. In six months, he saved over 100,000 lives—more than were rescued by any other individual, organization or government during the entire war.”

Then it went onto talk about how Anne Frank and her family were hidden by Christians in an Amsterdam attic. I was surprised. I had gone through years of a Jewish day school education, had been through both college and graduate school, and considered myself a well-educated person. And yet, I had never even heard of Raoul Wallenberg. If that short blurb was true, how could this be so?

I went to the library and took out a book on Wallenberg, and I was amazed by what I read. I immediately called my longtime writing partner, Felicia Needleman, and discovered that she, too, had no idea who Raoul Wallenberg was. We immersed ourselves in whatever materials we could find about this amazing man, and we soon came to the conclusion that his inexplicably little-known story had all the makings of a compelling dramatic musical. We approached the gifted composer, Benjamin Rosenbluth, who eagerly joined the project.

It has been both a privilege and an honor to bring the incredible heroism and humanity of Raoul Wallenberg to life through words and music. Our journey has taken us from staged readings to the world premiere regional production, and we have met a wide array of amazing individuals along the way, ranging from people who were saved by Wallenberg to diplomats, politicians, authors, businessman, and religious leaders, not to mention the many talented performers, musicians and designers we have worked with, all of whom have now been deeply touched by Wallenberg.

It is our hope to bring our musical to Broadway and beyond so that audiences everywhere can know of Raoul Wallenberg and the hope and life that he brought to one of the darkest periods in history. Perhaps the show's finale, *A Million Tomorrows*, that is excerpted below best expresses Wallenberg's everlasting legacy.

## A Million Tomorrows

From the original musical drama, *Wallenberg*  
Lyrics by Laurence Holzman & Felicia Needleman  
Music by Benjamin Rosenbluth

There's a mother in Detroit with tears in her eyes  
'cause her daughter took her first steps today.  
In London, there's a boy whose bar mitzvah's next month,  
And his grandfather's teaching him to pray.  
There's a hush among the guests in a synagogue in Rome  
'cause the wedding music just began.  
There are people all around who are thriving now—  
because of one man.  
One man.

A million tomorrows, that's what he gave us  
A million more futures that wouldn't have been.  
Bright, sunny mornings and glittering twilights—  
a million more chances for life to begin.

There's a little boy who lived in a safe house who's now  
Doing stem cell research at Penn.  
There's the daughter of a woman whom he pulled from a train  
helping stroke victims learn to walk again.  
The son of a woman he hid in a church  
is teaching orphans in Afghanistan.  
There's a grandma in Berlin who goes around to schools  
and tells of one man.  
One man.

A million tomorrows, that's what he gave us  
a million more futures that wouldn't have been.  
Bright, sunny mornings and glittering twilights—  
a million more chances for life to begin.

A million tomorrows, that's what he gave us—  
autumns of orange and summers of green,  
infinite Tuesdays and countless Decembers—  
treasures of time we would never have seen.

It's wondrous to know that one ordinary person  
can change the world's entire destiny.  
Thanks to one man there will be...



## Laurence Holzman and Felicia Needleman's Biographies:

Laurence Holzman and Felicia Needleman (book & lyrics) are the winners of the prestigious Leban Award for Most Promising Musical Theatre Librettists (2006). They have been collaborating on the book and lyrics of musicals for many years, after first meeting in modern drama class at Columbia College. Their musical drama, *Wallenberg*, premiered at White Plains Performing Arts Center in the fall of 2010. Prior to that, staged readings of the show had been presented in the "first-draft readings" series at Symphony Space in Manhattan and in The New York Musical Theatre Festival.

Their original holiday musical hit, *That Time of the Year* (with music by seven different composers), premiered off-broadway at The York Theatre Company in 2006, and is now being licensed by Theatrical Rights Worldwide. The original cast recording of that show was released on JAY Records. In addition, songs from *That Time of the Year* have been recorded on the albums, Carols for a Cure volumes 5 and 6; Susan Egan: Winter Tracks; The North Coast Men's Chorus: Sugar Plum Fairies; and the Philadelphia Boys Choir & Chorale: Celebrate the Sounds of the Season. The song "Little Colored Lights" was performed by Broadway star Kelli O'hara on the CBS-TV special, "Holiday in Bryant Park."

Laurence and Felicia's original musical comedy, *The Jerusalem Syndrome* (with music by Kyle Rosen), was produced in the fall of 2008 as part of the New York Musical Theatre Festival's Next Link project, where it won the Theatre for the American Musical Prize for Most Promising Book Musical. Their musical, *Suddenly Hope*, (with music by Morris Bernstein & Kyle Rosen), had its world premiere at the Stamford Center for the Arts in 2000, with subsequent productions at the Garfield Theatre in La Jolla, CA and the Denver Civic Theatre. Their first show, based on the 1942 film *I Married a Witch*, was presented in the ASCAP Musical Theatre Workshop, and its lyrics earned them ASCAP's Sammy Cahn award for Outstanding Lyricists. Laurence and Felicia's children's musical, *We All Are America* (with music by George Swietlicki), premiered in the spring of 2012. They are currently working on two original musicals: *Winchester House*, about the heiress to the Winchester rifle fortune, and *One Night*, a chamber musical about two married couples. Laurence and Felicia's children's song, "Everyone Can La-La-La-La-La" (with music by David Grover) has been performed in concerts across the U.S., and was recorded by David Grover & the Big Bear band on their album, Listen to the Music Band. *Suddenly a Song*, a collection of their cabaret material, was performed at The Duplex in Manhattan.

Laurence and Felicia are alumni of the BMI-Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop and members of ASCAP and the Dramatists Guild. As a principal of Bard Theatricals, Laurence was also one of the producers of *Looped*, the Broadway comedy starring Valerie Harper, and Kander & Ebb's final Broadway musical, *The Scottsboro Boys*. In addition to his work in theatre, Laurence is the co-author (with Marc Goldsmith) of the original screenplays *Fella* and *The Queen is in the Parlour*, and the author/illustrator of *My Zoo*, a rhyming picture book for children. He is also a graduate of Columbia Law School and the Commercial Theatre Institute. Felicia toured with *42nd Street* as a member of Actor's Equity, and was a featured performer with the A & G Dance Company. For several years, she was on the faculty of Broadway Dance Center, where she taught tap.



## **Benjamin Rosenbluth's Biography:**

Benjamin Rosenbluth (music) had his passion for musical theatre ignited when, at the age of 10, he had the opportunity to appear onstage alongside Marvin Hamlisch. He has since studied music composition with Charles Wuorinen at Rutgers and with Milton Babbitt at Juilliard, where he earned a masters in music. He also studied jazz piano with Kenny Baron while at Rutgers, and composed for the stage under the tutelage of John Corigliano while at Juilliard. In addition to the score for Wallenberg, Benjamin composed songs and incidental music for the Juilliard production of *As You Like It* (directed by John Rando) and the Juilliard Alumni production of *Herculina* (directed by Christopher Durang). His ballet, *Six*, was performed as part of the "composers and choreographers" series at Lincoln Center. He is an alumnus of the BMI-Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop. Past musical theatre works include the original musical drama, *Masada*, (Oscar E. Moore and Michael Amen, book and lyrics) at the York Theatre, and *The Necklace* (Sandra Ben-Dor, book and lyrics) at the West Bank Cafe Theatre. His work with Laurence Holzman and Felicia Needleman has been featured in the New Voices concerts at Symphony Space (performed by Rebecca Luker & Judy Blazer).

Mr. Rosenbluth also earned an MD at Harvard Medical School and did postgraduate training in radiation oncology at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He is currently a practicing radiation oncologist at Holy Name Hospital in Teaneck, NJ.

# Joseph Kertes

## Fiction

### Statement:

I would not be here if not for Raoul Wallenberg. He rescued my parents and father's parents from deportation in 1944 and installed them in a Budapest building, which the Swedish diplomat had annexed for the newly minted Swedes.

The story on which I based my novel *Gratitude* and that is excerpted here has haunted me my whole life. The events occurred before my time, but I have tried to create a novel around all the stories I had heard, tried to turn these real people into characters and give them lives. What the story says to me—and what I hope sets it apart from others on the subject—is that all of us—victims, perpetrators, Christians, Jews, saints and criminals alike—are capable of making mistakes with tragic consequences.

### Excerpt From *Gratitude*: A novel by Joseph Kertes

*Budapest, October 9, 1944*

Paul was wondering aloud how long the Swede planned to continue his campaign. "I'm not alone," Raoul said. "There are others: Carl Lutz, the Swiss Vice-Consul here, Per Anger, Angelo Rotta, the priest, Giorgio Perlasca, the businessman."

Paul held up his hand. "Very few. You could probably name them all in a minute."

Wallenberg took a sip of his espresso and frowned. The coffee was bitter. "How about you?" he said.

"I'm fighting for my own people. Because of the circumstance."

"Would you have come to my country to do what Carl Lutz and I are doing?"

Paul thought about it for too long. Wallenberg reached to pat Paul's hand. "Possibly you would," the Swede said.

What the two men no longer needed to discuss was the aim of the operation, merely the operation itself. It was to be once again as audacious as it was simple. Raoul Wallenberg and his half-dozen lieutenants would ferret out as many Jews as they could and issue them Swedish passports. Since Eichmann had begun his operation, finding Jews was easy. Many were wearing a cloth star of David. They could be found clustered in newly created ghettos, or in long line-ups being loaded on trains for export to concentration camps.

Wallenberg sometimes wondered aloud what would happen if the Jews simply hadn't worn their stars? What confusion! The news had filtered through to Hungary the previous year, 1943, that when

Danish Jews were asked to wear the star, most other Danes did so, too. In the midst of the chaos, in a clandestine operation, Danes organized flotillas to transport their Jews to safety in Sweden.

Paul Beck never wore the star, not even in the beginning. He might as well have been asked to put on rabbit ears. Nor did Zoltan Mak, the photographer, wear it. He followed around Raoul Wallenberg and Paul on their expeditions. What Zoli always did wear was an ingenious cape like Paul's, but this one was given to him by Wallenberg. Zoli could not have taken photographs otherwise. The cape cinched together at his chest with a sturdy leather lace. Zoltan could rest the chin of his lens directly on the lace itself. Sometimes he snapped photos from a stone's throw of the S.S. or the dreaded *Nyilas*, just before they happened to notice him. When they did, Zoli had a nifty way of yanking on the camera strap inside, thereby shifting the Hasselblad to the back.

On this day, as Zoli was getting his gear arranged and his cape on, Rozsi simply watched him. They'd had a rare night together, away from the others. He'd moved her cot and his to the basement.

She followed him to the front door of the converted Dutch insurance company building. She didn't want her relatives to hear. He said, "I'll see you."

She took his hand. She was wearing the ring he'd given her. She put her arms around him, around his ridiculous cape. "I'll wait up for you," she said, and he kissed her.

Today's destination for Wallenberg and Paul was the Jozsefvaros train station at one end of Ulloi Street itself. Zoli, too, had planned to meet up with Wallenberg's group, but this day he was determined to photograph the herding itself. Half way up Ulloi Street, he hovered across the way from the Jews and their captors, acting disinterested, acting like a businessman on the way to work.

Some four or five hundred Jews had been rounded up on this fall day and, other than the shuffling of feet, the street was painfully silent, the march remarkably orderly. Except for a look of anxious apprehension on some of the faces, one might have thought the throng was off to the fair, complete with a military escort.

Zoltan realized, just as he managed a quick photo, that he was the only bystander, the solitary onlooker. When someone fell out of a tree and broke a leg, or was hauled out of the sea drowned or from under the wheels of a bus broken and bleeding, a hungry crowd always gathered to feast on the spectacle. This time the reverse was true. He stood alone to watch as hundreds marched.

But only for a moment. One of the German *Einsatzkommandos* turned to look at Zoli, as did some of the Jews nearest the officer. Zoli was glaringly out of place: a Jew with Swedish papers and a camera behind a conspicuous cape, standing, gawking across the street at a line-up of Jews heading for deportation. The officer still watched him. Zoli felt sheets of sweat flowing down his back. The only way to become invisible was to fall into line. Zoli hesitantly crossed the street merely, as if curious to see what was going on. He wanted to be brushed aside, told to go about his business.

And then into the quiet of this quaint upper middle-class street with its elegant stone townhouses and apartments, their façades proudly recalling their allegiance to the Austro-Hungarian empire, the grey stone double-headed eagles fierce and at the ready—into this setting was dropped the sound of soothing music. The notes fell from a window above the heads of the marchers.

Why did the officer at the front stop the line? Why was the scene so preposterous, this lovely *Adagio* drizzling down on the walkers on their autumn march? Was there a place for music aboard a sinking ship—a place for the little orchestra that played on the deck of the Titanic as the ship slanted into the sea? Was there a place for an orchestra to play Mozart a hundred paces from the crematoria—or here, two hundred steps from the Jozsefvaros train station—all geared up now to take passengers out of the country of their birth to the country of their—*what?*

It seemed incongruous to the throng below, to Zoli who fell in behind an elderly gentleman wearing a handsome, grey, herringbone suit, strange even to the German officers who halted the line.

The music was as sweet as pastry but touching, the essence of sadness.

The officer who'd spotted Zoli across the street asked, in German, "Who is the composer of this music?"

The gentleman in the herringbone suit standing directly in front of Zoltan said, "It's Dvorak. Antonin Dvorak."

The officer's gaze fell on Zoli's eyes and detected something there. "We'll see," the officer said.

He separated the line with his rifle and strode up to the door below the musical window. He pulled open the door easily and stepped in. The heads craned from the bright street to look in to the shadows of the dark room. Those nearest could see an elegant, red, plush, Queen Anne chair and a baby grand piano. All they could hear now was the music, not another sound. Lovely music. As suited to the street as if it had been written in the very room it emanated from.

A shot rang out, killing the record. Then the throng heard one syllable—"De"—Hungarian for "But"—before another shot stopped the sentence.

A moment later, the German officer rejoined the line where he'd left it and said to the gentleman in the herringbone suit, "What is your name?" The officer was reloading his rifle.

"I'm Laszlo Zene."

"Mr. Zene, the composer of the piece we were just listening to was not Antonin Dvorak. It was Gustav Mahler. The *Adagietto* of his fifth symphony."

Laszlo Zene nodded his head and shrugged his shoulders.

"Gustav Mahler is forbidden," the officer said. "*Verbotten.*"

He set the warm muzzle of his rifle up against Laszlo Zene's chin and fired a third time, sending up a fountain of brain, blood and bone to rain down on Zene's neighbours in line. No one dared make a sound.

The gentleman fell back against Zoli, the back of his collar snagging against the lace holding together Zoli's cape. The lace snapped. As Zoli set the man down on the sidewalk, his cape pooled around him at his feet, and his camera dangled free at the back.

The officer at the front ordered the line to advance. As it began, the one who'd shot Zene waited, his back to Zoli. Frantically, Zoli pulled the dead man's jacket straight off his back over the wet stem of his head, struggling to free a lifeless arm. The officer was poised to turn toward Zoli. He was half-turned, watching the advancing line of Jews, each one pausing in horror as he or she glanced down at Zoli. A young girl, who came face-to-face with Zoli who was still down on his haunches, misunderstood what she saw, glared at Zoli and slapped him, then moved on. The officer turned for a moment forward again though he still held his position.

In a flash, the dead man's jacket was on Zoli's back, an arm in one sleeve, another tunneling through the other, a camera buried in a heap of cape on the sidewalk. Beside the arrangement lay the gentleman in a stained but elegant shirt, his arms spread out to embrace the cool sun.

Would the officer look at Zoli as he marched by with the throng? Did he have the composure to single out another Jew for execution, or had his point been made, the example set? Step, step, forward, step, onward, unnoticed, from instantaneous death on the sidewalk to possible death in a train yard, or probable death down the line in the Polish countryside where a tidy camp had been erected to receive visitors. Zoli's Swedish papers were buttoned into the inner pocket of the cape. They were gone with the camera.

Glaciers of sweat and blood oozed down Zoltan's back beneath a warm, grey jacket customarily worn for afternoon teas and Sunday walks. Proudly, shamefully, sewn to the good jacket's chest pocket was a yellow, six-pointed star with the German word "*Jude*" marked across it.

A few steps more and the Jews, together with their captors, arrived at Jozsefvaros station where they were greeted by their own *Nyilas*, the Arrow Cross.

Zoli was forgotten now as he was hustled along toward a particular boxcar, usually employed for hauling bricks, along with about 50 others. And then out of the hubbub, before anyone could make another move, Zoli heard a whistle blow through the confusion, and he gazed at the now familiar face of Raoul Wallenberg, and behind him, carrying a folding table, was none other than Paul Beck. The duo waded right into the middle of the crowd, Paul unfolded the table and chair, and Wallenberg took a seat. The noise persisted for another minute until another whistle blew. It was Paul, now on top of a train car, pointing to the Swedish diplomat. The crowd quieted down.

Wallenberg unclasped his briefcase and declared, "You have a number of Swedish nationals here, and I'd like them released to my care immediately."

"Like hell!" one of the *Nyilas* men shouted and, using his rifle, he bashed out a path toward the outrageous table. Switching to German, he said, "These are not Swedes! They're not even Hungarians. They're Jews! Get them on these trains."

The German commander stood between the Hungarian and Wallenberg. "We do not deport Swedish nationals," the German said.

"These ones you do!" the *Nyilas* barked.

No one could have imagined such a scene unfolding, least of all Zoli. Two *Einsatzkommandos* quickly disarmed the big Hungarian officer and locked his hands in handcuffs before he had a chance to

react. In response, the other Arrow Cross guards started shoving Jews onto the trains. It took several minutes before the whistle rang out again.

It was Paul again. The noise died down. The Swede still sat at his table. Wallenberg said, "These are in no particular order: Kepes, Robert! Kepes, Klari! Dr. Felix, Janos! Zene, Laszlo! Enekes, Aniko!"

People jubilantly shouted out, "Here!" as they were plucked from the crowd and made to stand behind Wallenberg. It was Zoli himself who had taken their pictures for the papers Wallenberg had brought. On this occasion, though, the Swede had no more than 45 *schutz-passes* to distribute. It was difficult to keep up with the pace of Eichmann's deportation machine. Sometimes in an afternoon, Wallenberg and his deputies forged and stamped papers complete with photos for a couple of hundred Jews. At other times, Eichmann's people out-foxed the peacemaker and cleared out ghetto buildings not yet scheduled for evacuation, buildings the Arrow Cross had stocked with Jews. The makeshift ghettos themselves had been created as quickly as they'd been looted.

Just as the list petered out, Paul spotted Zoli. He regarded the younger man impassively at first. He did not want to betray familiarity to the guards. But then the thought raced through his mind at the same time it raced through Zoli's: that there was nothing whatever to be done. The young man stood by a deportation train wearing a star of David affixed to his chest. Paul's darting eyes asked, "Where is your cape? Where are your Swedish papers?" And Zoli's eyes reassured him: "It's all right." Paul tried to attract Wallenberg's attention, but he was too distracted to pick up the signal. When Wallenberg did catch on, he stood up, as helpless in the circumstance as Paul, or Zoli himself.

"*Genug!*" the German commander barked. "Enough!"

His soldiers, eagerly assisted by the *Nyilas*, resumed hustling their captives onto the trains. Zoli found himself no more than an arm's length from the young girl who'd slapped him, but a man stood between them. She was wearing a green velvet dress and clutching a small, white patent leather purse that perfectly matched her white socks and shiny white shoes. She looked terrified at first, but now for some reason, once she saw that Zoli was being hustled aboard a boxcar, too, she calmed down and even smiled as their eyes met.

Then Zoli looked back at Paul on the crowded platform. The Swede beside Paul had a pained, pale look on his face. He ran his fingers back through his thinning hair. Paul turned away from the sight, a first for him. When he looked again, Zoli's train door was clamped shut.

Zoli lost his balance for a moment in the dark as the impact of what had just happened struck him. To steady himself, he grasped for the basic elements of his life, as if he were grasping for the fundamentals of earth, air, fire and water. These were his Rozsi, his camera and the image of his parents on their last morning, his father getting set to go into his dark room, his mother asking Zoli to hurry, come see the oriole finch in the back garden. Someone behind Zoli spoke the name Rozsi, and he turned in the car, his eyes groping in the dark for her, though he knew that it had to be another Rozsi.

Wallenberg turned boldly now on his heel and asked one of the brand new "Swedes", Dr. Janos Felix, to help him with his folding table and chair. Dr. Felix happened to be staring proudly at his papers, his own photo looking confidently back at him, the words "*Schweden*" and "*Svedorszag*" at the foot of his description and photograph and a triangular arrangement of three crowns to protect him.

"Is everything all right?" Wallenberg asked as he handed the small, folded table to Dr. Felix and hoisted up the briefcase and chair.

"Yes, of course," Dr. Felix said. The two joined the others, doubling back on the same street, Ulloi, that they'd just descended. In a moment, they came upon the dead gentleman, Laszlo Zene, and several of the walkers now felt free to sob. The gentleman lay peacefully, his arms out and inviting. Bunched beside him lay a familiar cape.

Paul bent to retrieve the garment, and the camera tumbled out. Paul folded the Hasselblad back in the cape and took it with him, under his arm.

As they resumed their walk, Dr. Felix spoke in German. He said that he had one question.

"Yes, anything," Wallenberg answered.

"I'm wondering, sir," said Felix, "because I haven't been able to go for a while, if my Swedish pass entitles me to admission at the opera."

Wallenberg paused, turned to look down at the pavement and the fallen man and the train yard beyond. He glanced at Paul, sighed, then continued walking.

Paul was inconsolable all afternoon and evening. He paced for an hour in Wallenberg's office, then sat staring out the window, chewing on his pencil. Wallenberg came in with some more espresso. He put his hand on Paul's shoulder and told him, "We'll do what we can to get him back. He's a Swedish national."

Paul acknowledged the hand with his own. "We haven't figured out how that part of the operation goes, have we? We can prevent some from going, but we can't get them back. Except—"

"No, Paul," Wallenberg said. "You're not going with the car again. I can't afford to lose you. Or the car."

"It worked once."

"Yes, once and once only. We can figure something out. I have been lobbying."

"I know," Paul said. He patted the comforting hand. "It's just difficult, taking the tally all the time: I lost my mother before the war, then my father—I know you never even *met* your father, Raoul—then my brother Istvan in Szeged. I have no idea what became of him. Even that friend of his, the poet, Miklos Radnoti, has disappeared. Now my future brother-in-law—what a good young man he was."

"Is."

"Is. Of course *is*. We'll have to get his film developed. My sister knows where his place is too, where the others films are hidden."

"Good idea," Wallenberg said. "And I have news for you."

Paul turned to look at the Swede.

"Adolf Eichmann has agreed to see us. He wants to talk—bargain probably."

"When?" Paul stood.

"First thing in the morning. Stay with me, we'll talk strategy and go together in the morning, only the two of us—that's the deal."

Paul bit down on the end of a pencil, tapped it against his forehead, and then snapped it in two. Wallenberg watched him. "Steady now," he said. "We have to do this right."

"Shouldn't I go tell my sister tonight what happened?"

"She'll sleep better if you don't."

"I want to take a pistol."

"They'll confiscate it and shoot you with it."

*Budapest, October 10, 1944*

Eichmann was now headquartered in a grand white house behind the Octagon, off Andrássy Street. Wallenberg and Paul took the Alfa Romeo and made an impression as they glided along the wide avenue of Budapest. They came to the house, which was guarded on all sides of its iron fence.

When Paul and the Swede disembarked, special guards came at them from both sides while two more created a barrier with their rifles crossed in front of the visitors. The men were frisked. Then the two rifles were uncrossed.

"You are—?" an officer asked in German.

"Swedish diplomats, both of us." Paul offered their papers.

The soldiers lowered their rifles altogether, and the officer trotted to the house, tapped lightly on the door and was admitted. Wallenberg and Paul waited with the other guard. The two "Swedes" stood facing the house, admiring its white, gabled porch, the generous bay windows which received the autumn sun. On how many occasions had this gracious house received friends and relatives? How often had it offered celebration, retreat, music, love, laughter and supper with equal generosity?

SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, the special commander of this region, greeted Wallenberg and Paul with a surprisingly limp handshake. Paul loomed over the German. Eichmann looked the two of them over, especially Paul. The unlikely Jew was tall, had sharp, fierce eyes and an impressive head of red hair; he was bedecked in a light wool suit and his camel hair cape, like someone coming to call on the lady of the house. The visitors could hear the phonograph from the parlor, playing Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. How lovely. On whose gramophone, Paul wondered? Whose record?

"Nice house," Paul said in German. "Yours?"

"Yes," Eichmann said. He clasped his hands together. "It was abandoned."



Paul could feel the Swede's eyes on him.

The three were standing in the bright landing before a sweeping blonde oak staircase, leading to the bedrooms. Two guards stood before them at the banisters and another two behind them at the door.

The Beethoven was lovely. Paul's stomach rose to his throat.

"I have a proposition for you, gentlemen," Eichmann said. He showed the way into the living room, and the men followed and sat in peach-colored chairs. It was too summery a room for the time of year. Eichmann sat in a chair facing them, and two guards stood behind the visitors.

"There are wealthy Jew industrialists, like Manfred Weiss. Do you gentlemen know him?" Wallenberg turned to Paul, and Paul shrugged. Eichmann said, "I need his holdings transferred to me. I had underestimated how strong some of these men are. We need the steel, the munitions. For the war effort."

"You mean like Baron Louis de Rothschild, the Vienna Rothschilds," Wallenberg said, "who signed over their steel mills to the Hermann Goering Works in exchange for their freedom? Is that the sort of conversation you want to have?"

"Precisely."

Eichmann was a surprisingly unimposing man when he sat, with thinning hair, like Wallenberg's, and small bones to go with a small voice.

"Why are you asking us?" Paul asked. "What makes you think we have any sort of power over such people?"

Eichmann paused. At first Paul thought the man might be listening to the Beethoven. The symphony's country carnival celebrations were being played out.

"You Swedes are the people everyone listens to now. You have attractive powers of persuasion. We want the holdings of a number of people, and we're prepared to trade safe passage for their families to Switzerland. I've already spoken to Carl Lutz about the arrangements."

"What about the other deportees?" Paul asked. Wallenberg glanced at his companion. "What happens to them?"

"No one is being deported, merely relocated."

"Call it what you will."

"Well, you gentlemen, I take it, seem to show up at some of our relocation launches, and you skillfully sniff out Swedes among the Jews."

Paul noticed a large discolored rectangle where a painting must have hung. The wall looked strange, undressed.

The German Lieutenant Colonel looked to his side at the parlor where Beethoven's soft sun was coming out after the celebrations. The birds of the countryside outside Bonn were singing sweetly and twittering.

Paul looked at the phantom rectangle on the wall again, and Wallenberg joined him. "Maybe some of the people you describe are actually Swedish," the diplomat said. "We'll have to check. There are some very powerful Swedes who have invested here in Budapest."

The commander rubbed his chin. He looked askance, then into the parlor again. Beethoven's fragrant countryside was ablaze with color now. "You are students of contemporary history, Mr. Wallenberg? Mr.—?"

"Beck."

The German ran his soft hand over his chin again in exaggerated contemplation. "My good Beck. Good Swedish name, Beck."

Paul nodded his appreciation. He didn't dare look at Wallenberg's face to read the anxiety there. Paul thought he could hear his own heart beating.

One of the guards took a step toward his commander. He stood beside Paul now. But Eichmann lifted a pale hand, and the guard stepped back obediently. "I asked you, gentlemen, about your awareness of contemporary history."

"Yes, we are quite aware," Wallenberg said. "Paul studied at Cambridge, and I studied at the—"

"University of Michigan," Eichmann said for him. "Yes, I know."

The commander stared at both men for too long, looked each straight in the eye, but then looked away, stood and turned his back on them altogether. "You will lose this war," Paul wanted to tell him, "and you'll lose the whole century with it, maybe more."

What would the weasel say? Was he the one who ordered Paul's father to be executed? Would the weasel say, "I was merely following orders. I'm a good soldier."

"Is that all you are, a good soldier, neutral on all matters—Jews, Gypsies, Communists—a good soldier awaiting a promotion?" he wanted to ask.

"Yes," would be the answer.

"And it doesn't matter what your boss asks?"

"Not at all."

"Would you kill Germans the same way, if asked—grandmothers only, if asked—all pet dogs?"

"Yes, the content of the order doesn't matter. I have my superiors."

"I don't think they're all the same to you."

"Think what you want."

"I think you like German grandmothers better than Jews. I think you like dogs better."

"I do like dogs."

"You'll lose this war," Paul would say.

"Yes, Swede, possibly," Eichmann might say. "But we won't lose in the way you have in mind. We'll lose the war in a way even we could not have foreseen. I am and have always been an ordinary man with ordinary ambitions, like the Jews. But the Jews have always been victims. It's a great racket. And no one else comes close to the Jews in playing it up. For two millennia, maybe longer, the Jews have been victims.

Did you know that, Swede?"

"Are we on some sort of philosophical cliff here, German, our claws hooked into the other's neck?"

"Do you know what we'll do, Swede? We'll turn each and every Jew into a martyr. We have nailed them to a cross as big as Europe, and the hammering has been loud enough to attract the attention of the whole galaxy. The Jews have always been despised; you might know that. Maybe you have even felt a touch of hatred yourself. Even when people *like* Jews, or appear to, they despise them. The Jews of my hometown of Cologne despised themselves—what do you think of that? They wanted always to be German. They begged to be German. And for a time we let them."

Might Paul ask, "Is it possible for us to have an idea between us that is not profane?"

"Let me try," the little German with thinning hair would say: "We were only doing the world a favor. But it will backfire worse than any punishment ever inflicted upon the Jews. Jews have always been inventive. Now they will become the world's greatest inventors. They'll become our best scientists, our best poets, our best composers—oh how they'll sing like the lark soaring above a flaming countryside, unable to land." Here Eichmann would spin, as he himself sang out the words to accompany the Beethoven coming from the other room. "We will lose this war if a mere dozen Jews survive because we will turn them into warriors, Jews seeking justice, Jews on a mission. Oh, may the God of the Jews save us all from the furors we unleash today."

"So what are you then, Mr. Eichmann? Are you the sounder of the sirens? Are you the one who points to the fire but can't put it out? No, you are more than that. You're the one wearing the uniform, so it is you who are on a mission. And you are possessed with your mission, ready and willing in a second to blame your bosses. You'll lose in yet another way—do you know that, Commander—Lieutenant Colonel, is it?—not quite Colonel? You'll lose because you are a soothsayer, and that is the worst curse. You'll lose because you're sharp enough to foretell your own downfall, yet not courageous enough to subvert it while you still can."

Beethoven's quivering countryside heaved itself into the room where the men were meeting.

"Is it courage you're describing, Swede, or is it determination? Or better, is it cunning?"

"It's courage."

"The sanctimony has already begun."

Beethoven's storm clouds darkened the land.

Wallenberg said, "If I can persuade Manfred Weiss and some others to sign over their factories, what then? Would you stop the transports?"

"I am under orders," Eichmann said. "But I can stop the *surprise* transports. You can know when each one is occurring."

"So there will be no surprises?" Paul asked.

"Please, gentlemen, I am a soldier who receives direction from Berlin. I am not Berlin myself."

Paul looked to see if there was a blunt object nearby. The Beethoven was finished. Wallenberg took Paul's upper arm sharply, painfully, into his clutch. The man was as instinctive as he was brave.

In the back of the car, Wallenberg told Paul, "I felt you in there—your intensity. I know you didn't say anything, and yet I'm surprised we made it out alive. I shouldn't have taken you along. I can't take you along everywhere."

Paul threw his cape back off his shoulders. "Of course I was intense. Do you know who that was?"

"I know who it was, but you're making him much more complex than he is. He's a man of a single note. When birds sing and sing, they're not driving home a point. They're singing. Eichmann is that bird. Even Beethoven in the background doesn't give him an additional dimension."

"Maybe birds are saying something to one another," Paul said, "not singing for *our* benefit."

"Maybe they are, but their message is simple: danger, food, rain. Not *why are you over in that other tree?* Not *why do you insist on ignoring me?* If we psychoanalyze the Reich, we'll get nowhere. We'll kill ourselves with despair, or stand in the line of fire. If we concentrate on figuring out how to save lives and then *save* them, we'll beat them. Sometimes. *Occasionally.*"

Paul threw himself back against the car seat. "Yes. Occasionally."

"Look," Wallenberg said. He turned to face Paul. "I'm a simple man. I'm like Eichmann, but with different values."

Paul looked at the Swede. "You are much more complex than you know."

"Not today. Today we have a job to do. Tomorrow, if we survive, we'll reflect."

"Tomorrow," Paul said. "Yes."

**Joseph Kertes' Biography:**

Joseph Kertes was born in Hungary but escaped with his family to Canada after the revolution of 1956. He studied English at York University and the University of Toronto, where he was encouraged in his writing by Irving Layton and Marshall McLuhan. Kertes founded Humber College's distinguished creative writing and comedy programs. He is currently Humber's Dean of Creative and Performing Arts and is a recipient of numerous awards for teaching and innovation. His first novel, *Winter Tulips*, won the Stephen Leacock Award for Humor. *Boardwalk*, his second novel, and two children's books, *The Gift* and *The Red Corduroy Shirt*, met with critical acclaim. His latest novel, *Gratitude*, won a Canadian National Jewish Book Award and the U.S. National Jewish Book Award for Fiction.

# Syd Lieberman

## Historical Narrative

### Statement:

My great aunt Helen survived the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, but she had never talked about it. When I interviewed her about what it had been like to grow up in a small village in Hungary, she asked, “What am I going to tell you?” Then she talked for two hours about village life and the Holocaust. I became the repository for her story, but I didn’t yet know how to tell it.

Many years later, I decided to write a piece about Raoul Wallenberg, who risked his own life to save Hungarian Jews. As I worked on his story, I began to wonder whether my Aunt Helen had been in Budapest when Wallenberg arrived. I got out her tape and turned it on. The first thing I heard her say was, “We walked and walked and walked. There were so many of us. People was dying.” Helen had been on one of Eichmann’s death marches. I had just finished writing about Wallenberg’s attempt to save people on those marches. Now I was hearing about a march from a victim’s point of view. At that moment, I realized I would combine my great aunt’s story with Wallenberg’s. She was one of the people he had come to Hungary to save.

The following is an excerpt from my hour-long story, *One Righteous Man: The Story of Raoul Wallenberg*. It’s meant to be told, so what you’ll be reading is a portion of the script I used for my performances. Please go to my website to find out how to obtain a recording of the piece. You can also hear it or watch excerpts. Just click on the tab “Recordings” and scroll down. This excerpt starts with the death marches in November of 1944, and ends with Wallenberg’s death and the meaning of what he accomplished. I tell my Aunt Helen’s story using her words and try to recapture her voice.

### Excerpt from: *One Righteous Man: The Story of Raoul Wallenberg*

Handling the Arrow Cross was one thing; dealing with the Nazis was another. Eichmann had returned to Hungary to resume the deportations to the death camps. With the Russians approaching Budapest, Eichmann had become even more obsessed with murdering the remaining Jews. But he faced a problem. The Nazis couldn’t spare any trains for this purpose. That didn’t stop Eichmann.

His solution was to march Budapest’s Jews 125 miles west to the Austrian border. There they could board the trains that would take them to a death camp. Eichmann marched women, children, and old men 125 miles in the cold, rain, and snow of early November. They were expected to cover 20 to 25 miles a day. They had no food, no water, and no shelter. These were death marches. Stragglers were beaten. When people fell, the Hungarian guards released their dogs or simply shot them. Countless people collapsed and died. Others lay down at the end of a day never to rise again. Some froze to death. Rather than face the suffering, many hanged themselves from trees. An estimated 10,000 Jews died on those marches.

Wallenberg drove along the lines of marchers giving food and clothing and medicine to as many people as he could. He carried blank Schutz Passes, filled them out on the spot, and pressed them on people as they walked along, saying he would save them when they reached the trains. When confronted by the guards, he paid them off, often with cigarettes and cognac.

Then he would drive to the train station where the box cars were being loaded. He knew that the Germans respected authority, so Wallenberg dressed in a long leather coat and fur hat, and carried an official looking large, black book. Pulling up to the station, he would act the part of an outraged official. He'd leap out of his car and advance upon the Germans, his official papers held high. He would shout, "I am Wallenberg of the Swedish legation. In the name of the Swedish government, I demand that you release people with Schutz Passes. Those with passes raise them high. Raise your passes. Everyone raise your passes." All the time, Wallenberg would be moving among the Jews quickly, talking loudly. He didn't care if a person had a pass or not. "You there, get in line. I know I issued you one. Perhaps the Arrow cross ripped it up. I'm sure I have your name in my book".... "You there, show me your pass." When the Jews caught on, they began emptying their pockets and showing him anything: drivers' licenses, pharmacy receipts, ration cards. Wallenberg accepted them all. Sometimes he would collect the passports from people who actually had them and slip them to a helper who would pass them out to other Jews.

If questioned, Wallenberg would grow enraged. He'd point to the passport and shout, "Aber das ist in meinem Ausweis geschrieben." Those are my initials. "What is your name?" he'd shout at the soldier confronting him. He'd promise to report him. He'd make the soldier gather the names of those in his unit, threatening to report them all. And all the while he would be lining up Jews to be taken away from the trains. The Germans were so surprised by his actions, so cowed by his authoritative manner, they did whatever he said.

Wallenberg's one regret was that he couldn't save all the people. Once as he was pulling away from the station with a truckload of Jews, he yelled to those he was leaving behind, "I'm sorry. I'm trying to take the youngest first. I am trying to build a nation." Not caring for his own safety, caring only to save Jews, Wallenberg personally pulled an estimated 2,000 people from those death trains.

My great aunt Helen was on one of those death marches. "This was when they take us," she said, "when Hitler take us. And I have boots. I have shoes. That saved my life. Otherwise I couldn't go. The lakes...they freeze. Because, if you go without shoes, then it was not enough. They take us out of there. They say that tomorrow all Jews we take. So I have boots and I have shoes."

"Then they take us. They take us and we walk and walk and walk and walk. There were so many of us. People were dying. It was something terrible. They take us in what was like woods. And then another girl and me we run away. Was over there a soldier and he don't see us. We run away in the woods. What will we do now?"

"We go and we go and we go. Even with boots, my foot was bleeding from walking and walking and walking. We come to what was like a farm. We come to the farm with a house in the field, but was empty. We want to go in the house. There was straw, a big pile. So we go over der. We make a little hole and we crawl in der. To take a rest. Like what will be with us will be. We will see."

"So quiet we was and we sleep and all of a sudden we hear, 'Ho, ho, ho, ho'. Was the farmer. 'What you doing here?' he ask. We say we escape from the ghetto. He ask, 'You hungry?'"

"We say, 'Yah, very hungry'. And he go away and bring us hot milk and some cake. 'So sit and eat.' And den he say, 'In the evening, when it is dark, you will come to my barn and you will wash up'. We go. And the wife and the kids, they look on us. And she make like a barrel with hot water. And we take a bath and we wash our hair. And we wash out some little bit of clothes. And they give us food. And den he say, 'I will take you back to the house in the field. But don't go right away after me. You follow where I go'. So he took us back over der."

"We were der a couple days. And he brings us food. And then you know in Europe, in a little town when something happens den they have a thing, a drum, and they boom, boom, boom, boom, boom when there is news. They say the news like dat. They say what happened. "

"So they boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. And den the farmer come, he say, 'Oh kids you'll have to go. They boomed out that if somebody hide the Jews, they will hang them'. He say, 'When will be dark, you'll have to go.'"

"So we go, we go, But we don't know where to go. So we go back in the line to the trains. And we walk and we walk and we walk and they bring us...I don't know where they bring us. And then they put us in the box trains. It was a train without windows. Without nothing. And they put us in dat. And they take us and we was going and going and going. People was dying. Was something terrible. We don't have nothing to eat. We can see through, you know what was like little holes. What we was looking for? And we scream, 'wasser, wasser, little wasser'. We scream and once when we stop an old German take a pail with water and he come. He want to give us a drink. The Nazi soldier hit the pail with his rifle and then beat him up."

"We was screaming. We was so thirsty and so hungry. We had nothing. They bring us here and nobody wants us. Den they bring us again over there. Den we travel again and den they bring us to Belsen."

"Over der, over der, dey put us in terrible barracks. In one room, like a living room maybe two hundred people. We sit like dat: one with de other. We don't stand, stretch our legs, nothing. And den somebody die and we are happy. We sit down or lay down. They give us a little bit soup, a piece of bread. and you hide it. A piece of bread. You put it away until you go to sleep. You hide it, that piece bread, and they steal it. Somebody steal it. Everybody grabbing cause everybody wants to live. Dat girl with who I was hiding with, she died. She cannot make it. You had to be something like you wanted to live. Ah was something so terrible. Sometimes I think to myself was that really me."

They die and they die. I was so sick. And dey make us to still walk around, to carry the dead over there to... it was big like a barn. They die and some not even dead, still breathing, but, honest to God, we have to bring them there and throw them over der."

The deaths Helen was describing resulted from a typhus epidemic that swept through Bergen-Belsen in the spring of 1945. Anne Frank was in this camp. She died of typhus just a few weeks before the camp was liberated. And Helen would have died, too. She was delirious with fever when the British entered the camp. When Helen awoke, she found herself on a bed with white sheets, being tended by people wearing white, people who were feeding her and speaking a language she didn't understand. "I wake up. I wake up" she said, "and I was thinking, honest to God, I was thinking I was dead. I was thinking I was in heaven. When someone finally tell me in Hungarian I'm alive, to tell you the truth, I didn't believe her."

Budapest had become a complete hell. Arrow Cross youths raged through the town searching for hidden Jews. If they found any, they beat them with clubs, whipped them with rock-studded belts, or shot them. On the street, any Jew was fair game. Wallenberg's safe houses became vulnerable, even Wallenberg's Jews.

The little children weren't exempt from the Arrow Cross butchery either. One day they raided an orphanage run by priests and began to herd the small Jewish children off to be shot. When Wallenberg found out, he rushed to the site. Only this time, he didn't play the enraged officer. He used a different method to get his way. He calmly talked to the Arrow Cross leader, and as he did, he slipped a small package into the man's pocket. Soon afterwards, the Arrow Cross left without the children.

But as the Arrow Cross stepped up their reign of terror, Wallenberg stepped up his response. To the Jews who had no one else, he became a legend. "Get Wallenberg" ... "Tell Wallenberg" ... "Wallenberg is coming."

Wallenberg used every means he could to save Jews: he bribed, he intimidated, he blackmailed, he cajoled. "If it will help," he said, "I will dine with the devil." He did that, too.



Wallenberg invited Eichmann to dinner, hoping to convince him to stop the killing. He argued that the Russians were on the outskirts of Budapest and the war was almost over. But Eichmann refused to listen. As he left, he warned Wallenberg to be careful, telling him that a diplomatic passport might not protect him. That didn't surprise Wallenberg since Eichmann was already on record as saying he wanted to kill him. Soon after the meeting, an armored vehicle ran into and crushed Wallenberg's car. Luckily, he wasn't in it.

Wallenberg knew that his life was in constant danger and that he could be shot or taken away at any moment. He wore hiking boots day and night, and he always carried his rucksack with a change of clothes. He never slept in the same place two nights in a row. And he only managed to get few hours of sleep a night for the calls kept coming asking to help. And Wallenberg would do whatever he could.

But even with all he already done, even with all the Jews he had already saved, Wallenberg had yet to perform his greatest miracle. Toward the end of the battle for Budapest, with the Russian artillery already pounding the outskirts of the city, the Nazis decided to hold a pogrom before they retreated from Budapest. Five hundred SS troops lined up waiting for the order to enter the ghetto and kill the remaining 70,000 Jews. When Wallenberg heard of the impending slaughter, he sent a message to the German general in charge, stating that if the massacre proceeded, he would personally guarantee that after the fighting ended, the general would hang as a war criminal. The general knew of Wallenberg's reputation, and with the Russians on the outskirts of the city, he feared Wallenberg's words. He ordered the SS to disperse; he called off the massacre. On that night alone, Wallenberg saved 70,000 people..

He never rested. He never stopped. And he refused to leave the city as the Russians approached. Even after all the other diplomats had left, Wallenberg stayed. He stayed to be with his Jews. "I have taken upon myself this mission," he explained, "and I would never be able to return to Stockholm without knowing that I have done everything that stands in a man's power to rescue as many Jews as possible." That sentiment would cost him his freedom.

Near the end, Wallenberg had to go into hiding. First, he took refuge in a bank vault; later he hid in the basement of the Red Cross. He was anxious to meet the Russians, for he had devised a plan to help rebuild Budapest and compensate the Jews for their losses..

When the Russians arrived, he showed them his diplomatic credentials and asked to see General Malinovsky, the general in charge. On January 17, he was granted permission and an escort arrived to take him to the general in Debrecen. The escort stayed by his side at all times. Wallenberg told a friend, "I'm not sure whether I'm going as a guest or as a prisoner."

He was going as a prisoner. Raoul Wallenberg never arrived in Debrecen. Instead, he was turned over to the NKVD, the forerunner of the KGB, and taken to Lubyanka prison in Moscow. Why? Some suggest that the Soviets resented his capitalist background or felt he was a spy because American money had funded the War Refugee Board, which hired him. Others say that the anti-Semitic Russians didn't appreciate his efforts on behalf of the Jews. Many believe that the Soviets feared Wallenberg because he had become a legend in Budapest.

To this day, the Russians have refused to say why they arrested him. They have also been close-mouthed about what happened to him. In 1945, they asserted that Wallenberg was safe in Russia under their protection. Two years later when he still hadn't been released, the Soviets changed their story. They said that records showed that he was not in the Soviet Union and never had been. They suggested that the Nazis had killed him in Budapest. But a prisoner they had released stated that he had shared a cell with Wallenberg in 1947. So the Soviets changed their story a third time, now stating that Wallenberg had been in a Soviet prison but that he died of a heart attack in 1947.

Yet this couldn't be true. Many of the prisoners released from the Gulag reported that a Swede was being moved from prison to prison. One remembered meeting him on a transport between prisons in 1953. Another saw him in a dentist's office in 1955. Yet, another described watching him taking exercise in a prison yard as late as 1959. A doctor

maintained that he examined him in 1961. A former prisoner declared that he had shared a hospital room with him in 1975. Wallenberg would have been 63. That same year, Maj, Raoul's mother, wrote the Soviet Ministry of Justice: "I am 83 and my husband, Raoul's step-father, is 89. For both of us, it would be a great happiness, if we, before our death, could embrace our beloved son. Give us that happiness." But it was not to be. In 1978, the 66-year-old Wallenberg was supposedly seen in a Soviet mental hospital in frail condition. The next year his mother, Maj, died at the age of 87.

In January of 2001 the Swedes and the Russians launched a combined investigation. The Russians finally apologized for their earlier lies about Wallenberg, but still insisted that he had died in 1947. Yet they offered no proof. To this day, we do not know what happened to him.

It's heart-breaking to think of this hero languishing and dying in a Russian prison in the Gulag. I prefer to imagine him in Sweden, receiving the honors and accolades he so richly deserved. I would like to think that he could spend the rest of his life with his loving family, who never gave up hope for his release.

Helen was able to do that. She arrived in Chicago after the war, married again, and lived surrounded by her brothers and sister, her cousins, her nephews and nieces. Before she died in 1995, I was able to record the story of her life. When I think of Helen, I picture her at a family event, sitting on our couch, smiling as family members swirled around her.

I'd like to think of Wallenberg that way, too, but I can't. So instead I think of him on the streets of Budapest. I think of what one man, one righteous man, was able to accomplish in the midst of evil. I think of what Wallenberg meant to a suffering and hopeless people...my people.

"He was a legend among the Jews," said, Tommy Lapid, a survivor. "In the framework of the complete hell in which we lived, there was a savior angel somewhere moving around and saving lives."

One night the Arrow Cross took Lapid's mother. He knew that they were taking her off to be killed. What he didn't know was that Wallenberg had intercepted that convey of prisoners as they were being marched to the Danube to be shot. He didn't know that Wallenberg had argued with the Arrow Cross until he won the release of these prisoners. All he knew was that two or three hours later, to Lapid's amazement, his mother returned. "It seemed like a mirage, a miracle," he said. "My mother was there—and she was alive and she was hugging me and kissing me. And the whole time she said only one word, 'Wallenberg. Wallenberg.'"

## **Syd Lieberman's Biography:**

Syd is an author, award-winning teacher, and internationally acclaimed storyteller. Many of his best-loved stories deal with growing up and raising a family in Chicago. He is also known for his original historical pieces. Syd received writing commissions from NASA, the Smithsonian Institution, Historic Philadelphia, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and the Van Andel Museum Center. Recently, he created stories for the docents at the US Capitol Visitors Center and taught 180 docents and volunteers how to tell them. Syd has also taught storytelling at the Kennedy Center and Disney World. Chicago's Golden Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching awarded Syd its prestigious Golden Apple Award for his work as a high school English teacher, and the National Storytelling Network inducted him into their Circle of Excellence. For more information about Syd and his work, visit his website: [www.sydliberman.com](http://www.sydliberman.com)

# Cecelia Margules

## Lyrics

### Statement:

We are all the sum of our background, the extension of our environment, and the reflection of our experiences; all mirrored in our reactions and responses. My first intense stimuli were my parents, both survivors of the Holocaust, each a study in tragedy, loss and triumph. It was a difficult weight for a child, then teenager, and finally adult, to bear. I was immersed in their sagas of trial and tribulation, but intermingled with my despair was the sense of awe and amazement at their ability to overcome and move forward with a continued zest for life. Understandably, this heightened my moral compass and shaped my introspective, emotional nature, leading to greater awareness of people and events surrounding my life. World events weighed heavily on my mind; injustice and the suffering of humanity, both individual and collective, could not be dismissed, no matter where it occurred. All these collective happenings found expression in prose and poetry, but they especially shaped me as a composer. All these images that surrounded my life, both past and present, slowly took form and brought my recent release *New Sound Sinai* to life. Each song tells a story expressing the gamut of emotions.

As a composer and member of the second generation, I felt impelled to compose pieces telling the story of the six million. Six million is not a number, it represents 6 million men, women, children, and babies annihilated during the Holocaust. As such, I have composed dozens of pieces relating to the Holocaust, many of which are performed extensively. "Last Night I Had a Dream" was performed by the Czesstochowa Philharmonic Orchestra, to thunderous applause. I am proud to be Chairman of Jossi Berger Holocaust Center in Jerusalem, for which I hold an annual event in which I present my original compositions.

Last year I wrote a piece entitled "Rainbow in the Night". Danny Finkelman, a talented filmmaker, suggested that we turn "Rainbow in the Night" into the first music video on the Shoah. Thus ensued months of planning, script writing and finally, filming in New York, Krakow, Poland and Majdanek Concentration Camp. The song was sung by the famous Cantor Yanky Lemmer, who truly conveys the pathos in expression and vocals. The film is only seven minutes. It is an educational tool, meant to target the YouTube generation, who have little patience and need quick delivery. It is meant to address the Holocaust deniers who are growing in number and voice as the survivors are sadly dwindling. It is meant to pay tribute to the survivors; for their courage, perseverance, endurance and power, their "Rainbow" in the darkest hour that was the Holocaust. And finally, it is meant to represent the greatest "Rainbow", which is the new generations of proud Jewish children, growing in spirit and number, the greatest answer to those who would destroy, the hope and promise for the future.

I was born in Sweden to survivors of the Holocaust, who were both sent there to recuperate after the war. From there we moved to New York, where I grew up. Raoul Wallenberg, also from Sweden, holds a special place in my heart. His name is synonymous with goodness, righteousness, empathy. He symbolizes decency and morality in the face of evil. He is a true hero.

I was moved to write a song about this special man, and I only hope it does him justice.

## **Raoul Wallenberg**

By Cecelia Margules

A tall man stands

At break of dawn  
Courage in his eyes  
Anxiously he paces  
As the train of pain arrives

He feels the tremor  
In the air  
He braces for his task  
Looks to the heavens  
For guidance he asks

### Interlude

#### Chorus

The name Raoul Wallenberg  
Shines larger than life  
His rising star  
Illuminates the night  
Wistfully, blazing cross  
The skies  
Gazing at us  
With his soulful light  
All that's kind and good

### *Verse #5*

And those he saved  
From the fire  
Never will forget  
The tall man  
With piercing eyes  
Who dared to save a life

### *Verse #2*

The train door  
Pried open  
He sees a tangled mass  
With frightened eyes  
Terrified  
They stare at Dante's gate

### *Verse #3*

The enemy  
Glares with hate  
The man racing for time  
Frantically handing out  
A special pass to life

### Chorus

### *Verse #4*

The young man  
All heart and soul  
With so much left to give  
His very name a legacy

## **Cecelia Margules' Biography:**

Cecelia Margules was born in Sweden to survivors of the Holocaust, each a study in tragedy, loss and triumph. This heightened her moral compass and reflective nature, which found early expression in prose, poetry and musical composition. A graduate of Brooklyn College with a B.A. in English, she freelanced writing prose and poetry for many publications. Margules is also a graduate of the New York School of Interior Design, and thus aesthetics has also influenced her career as a composer.

Margules is the chairman of the Jossi Berger Holocaust Center of Jerusalem. At their Annual Commemoration that has been held each of the past 19 years, her original compositions were introduced. Her first album "Harmony" enjoyed wide success. Margules' song "Last Night I Had a Dream" is performed extensively, most recently by the Czesochowa Philharmonic Hall in Poland. Her piece "Rainbow in the Night" was turned into a music video on the Shoah, telling the story of pathos and courage through the eyes of one survivor, culminating in the "Rainbow" of hope, a new generation of proud Jewish children. It is an educational tool addressing the YouTube generation and answering Holocaust deniers. Her recent release "New Sinai Sound" covers a gamut of emotions and events, both past and present, that surround and shape her life.

Margules wrote her song "Wallenberg" in honor of the centennial of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg. She pays tribute to the altruism and selflessness of this extraordinary man, who is a symbol of decency and righteousness. Wallenberg, a native of Sweden like Margules, holds a special place in her heart, as he does in the heart of humanity.

# Ali Myftiu

## Essay

### Biography/Statement:

I am a seventeen year old high-school student, born in Rome from Albanian parents. I study in the Liceo Scientifico Peano di Monterotondo, near Rome. I grew up listening to the story of how my grandparents saved eleven Jews from Nazi tyranny, and the story left a big impression on me.

### The Sling

Raoul Wallenberg was a well-known Swedish diplomat who saved tens of thousands of Hungarians during the Second World War by handing them Swedish passports. About ten thousand Jews from Budapest were saved. Having read his story, I've realized that his story isn't much different from my great-grandparents' story.

By the way, my name is Ali Myftiu, I'm seventeen years old, and I was born in Rome where I currently live and study. When I was young, I used to spend hours listening to my mother tell me the story about eleven Jews who escaped from a camp in Pristina during the Second World War and made their way to Tirana. My parents are both of Albanian origin.

I'll try to keep as faithfully as possible to the facts; however I will not be able to be one hundred per cent accurate because the story I'm about to narrate has been handed down to two generations. Nevertheless, I believe that what I'm about to say is not far from what really happened in Tirana during the last years of the war. However, before I start my short story, I feel the need to briefly mention some of the history of Albania at the end of World War II.

Following the surrender of Nazi Germany, Albania suffered one of the most cruel and ruthless Communist regimes that the world has ever seen. Albania closed all its borders, imprisoning or killing all those that belonged to the intellectual, noble, religious, or dissident groups - in general, the "pure" of heart. Nothing was allowed in or out of the country; any kind of contact with the rest of the world was forbidden. All radio channels, and later, television networks, were considered propaganda and, as such, enemies of the revolution. In addition, Albania did not recognize the State of Israel and never established a diplomatic relationship with them. Any foreign correspondence was regularly opened and read by qualified personnel, and correspondence from Israel never reached the country. Therefore, even my great-grandparents weren't able to keep in touch with the Jewish family who had moved to Israel.

My great-grandparents, Atif and Ganimet Toptani, belonged to the large Toptani family, a thousand year old dynasty that gave many distinguished people to the country. From its ancient roots six hundred years ago, Giorgio Castriota, commonly known as Skanderbeg, pushed back the powerful Turk invasion for twenty-five years. After he died, Albania surrendered to the Turkish army that reigned until 1912, the year in which the Toptani family members signed Albania's independence and helped found the new state. Albania's King Zog was a descendant from the maternal side of my family, as well as various other

ministers. My great-grandparents were Bej, the Bej of Tirana, and they were part of the noble class: rich, patriotic and well-read. My great-grandfather, Atif, studied in Vienna, and after achieving his high-school qualification he studied at the Universities of Padova and Voghera. My great-grandmother, Ganimet, studied in Switzerland and in Austria. They both spoke various languages fluently, such as Italian, German, French and English.

From 1939 until 1943 Albania was occupied by the Italian army. In 1943 Italy surrendered and Albania was invaded by land and sea by German troops. Throughout this period Albania was not much different from the other Balkan countries in the area, like Italy and Greece. The land was good and generous and fed the entire population well.

Poverty and richness were equally divided in Albania, as in Western countries, such as France or Poland. Life was the same. There were jewellery shops next to country taverns; there were luxury spectacles shops next to traditional embroidery shops; there was the blacksmith shop next to the Turkish restaurant; there was the Boutique Française next to the Slipper shop. My great grandmother was an excellent client of that Boutique. If certain clothes were in fashion in Paris, then within a week they would be fashionable in Tirana as well. Anything new and modern could be found there. She used to go to the shop, flip through the catalogue, and order what she wanted. The shop would then send a dressmaker to her house to take measurements.

One day a pale faced woman came to measure and caught by grandmother's attention. She was well-behaved, tidy and clean but poorly dressed, with hands that were once dedicated to fine work but now ruined by rough work in the fields. Because she was well-travelled and had seen the world it wasn't difficult for my great-grandmother to understand that the woman in front of her was a Jew. It all made sense; the odd dialect, the various languages she spoke, her unhealthy slimness, her sad eyes, her willingness to work, and above all the way she spoke neatly and chose her words carefully. Ganimet, in a firm but gentle voice, asked her, "You are a Jew, am I right?" The poor woman, (if I am not mistaken her name was, Mimi Altarac) almost collapsed. She couldn't stop crying; tears were pouring down silently from her tired eyes. Once my great-grandmother was able to settle her down, she learned that there was also a young boy in her family called Jasa, who was the same age as my grand-father, Adnan, known as Edi.

It was immediately decided to take them all to my family's country estate, twenty kilometres outside Tirana. And so it was, in the middle of the war, as shots were being fired train stations, taverns and shops were being thoroughly checked, and the cross roads and main roads into Tirana were being controlled, that a Jewish family (eleven in all) were all driven out of Tirana in my great-grandfather's Buick and taken to the country-side. Many years later, Jasa Altarac, the boy at the time of the war, wrote in the *Jerusalem Post*: "It was surreal, as half of Europe was languishing in debris, dying of hunger or wounds, suffering deportation or imprisonment, we found ourselves on a sort of luxurious ranch which seemed as if it had been cut off from the world. We had once again found life and grabbed it with joy and passion."

The first time that Ganimet had seen his pale little face, too serious to be a young boy's face, she noticed that he was holding a sling and the first thing that crossed her mind was the metaphor used when she was studying the language of Shakespeare in Switzerland: *To be as hungry as a hunter*.

All sorts of things happened and I'm afraid I do not recall very well how each fact is connected. However, I clearly remember one thing. As always happens, the high ranking officers of the invading army tried to get in touch with the local people. German Colonels and Generals got in touch with the Albanian nobility, especially with that part of the nobility who spoke languages and were therefore "worthy" of their relationship and friendship. My great-grandparents were on excellent terms with some of them, and they shared a love for culture and parlour games, a keenness for hunting and beautiful horses, a fondness for rare plants that were brought back from long travels abroad and for rare books, and a passion for good cooking and for jokes.

Above all my great-grandparents were very nice people, ironic, intellectual and hospitable. They often held banquets and hunting sessions and it was during one of these sessions that my great-grandparents, whose sense of humour was well-known, decided the Jewish family should sit at the table with them their German guests, mainly because the Germans might be suspicious if they found out that there were other people in the house who weren't sitting at the table with them. Jasa Altarac says: "I believe that in the history of the Second World War we were the only Jews who took part in a banquet with the Wehrmacht highest ranking officers."

When the war ended, my great-grandparents gave the Jewish family enough money to reach Palestine, and from then on nobody knew or heard anything back from them. When they left, my grand-father, Edi, gave the boy his Swiss watch, which had been given to him as a birthday present. The Jewish boy had nothing to give back except for things that my family had given him. Therefore, he gave him his sling. My grandfather Edi lost the sling, however, when the seizures and expropriations occurred during his tormented adolescence, when he was forced to live by going from one family member to another in search of a little bit of family warmth.

Another fact worth mentioning is that as the German troops were withdrawing from the city, the German officer, my great-grandfather's friend, halted the column in front of the villa in Tirana, and told my great-grandfather he should leave the country with them. He had the power to halt the column for just an hour as he was the man in charge.

They could collect all their jewellery from their house and leave, as there was going to be mayhem in the country, far worse than what happened during the Russian Revolution. However, Atif Bej was a patriot, the land had been in his family for thousands of years, he was Bej, and he had a code of honour and therefore he could not behave as a coward. Sometimes the rich have such self-confidence that they are sometimes vested with the idea of being immortal. They had always been there and whatever might happen they would still be there. A Toptani stays a Toptani. Nobless Oblige. They therefore stayed in Albania.

A few years later, once they realized that the German's predictions were correct, Atif Bej decided to flee, but the borders were by now closed. He packed two big suitcases with money, jewellery and documents, and paid a boatman, who was supposed to take them over the border. But he made one last mistake: he went to wish farewell to all his relatives, with tears at the thought of leaving them. "I've decided that we are going to go abroad, there is too much rumpus here and I can't do anything about it anymore, I'm against violence and I can't stop all this violence from happening. May God let us meet again in better days and may He protect you. I have spent unforgettable hours with you. I will miss you more than anything else."



It must have been one of the family members who reported them, because when they reached the beach on their property, where the boat was waiting for them, they were all captured and driven back to Tirana in a police jeep. During the journey back, my grandfather, Edi, who had a window seat, threw out all the family jewellery, piece by piece, because the more jewellery and money one had the more years they would serve in prison.

They were thrown out of their house; the only one who didn't leave the villa was Nickla, a bulldog that my great-grandfather had bought in Rome for my grandfather's birthday. Nickla was a famous dog that had a very long pedigree, as long as a queen's. It didn't want to leave and kept growling at the armed man., Edi was a boy of 13 years old when Nickla was beaten to death right in front of him.

Atif Bej was sentenced to 8 years in prison, of which he served 5. Ganimet served 2 years out of her 5 year sentence. Before the family was taken apart, they suggested that my grandfather not stay at our relatives houses for more than one week at a time, so as not to disturb them with his presence in the house for too long; therefore he had to spend his youth moving from one relative's house to the next. Atif Bej died in his sleep, without pain, on New Year's Eve 1964, a peaceful and gentle death. My great-grandmother Ganimet lived a longer life; she died in 1987 after suffering from peritonitis.

Although I never had a chance to meet her, my mother was lucky enough to live with her. She used to talk about her memories, and my mother never understood how Ganimet could laugh and sing and teach her Goethe's Ballads, or the Chopin Nocturnes or walk together in the countryside, all the while passing on indescribable emotions, as she picked beautiful flowers in the fields, or embroider works of art; or while they walked past the villa that was once theirs she would lightly say: "Can you see? once upon a time we used to live here, but the Lord wished it another way".

When the Berlin Wall fell and Communism came to an end, (Albania was one of the last Communist states to fall), Jasa Altarac had already submitted my great-grandparents documents to the authorities and got in touch with my grandfather, Edi. In 1992, my grandfather attended the ceremony that was held at Yad Vashem where my great-grandparents, Atif and Ganimet Toptani were recognised as *Righteous Among the Nations* and *Honorary Citizens of Israel*. Edi died on March 6<sup>th</sup> 1994, and I was born on December 25<sup>th</sup> the same year.

Before ending my story, I'd like to point out a fact that might seem insignificant at first: Yad Vashem recognized 69 Albanians as *Righteous Among the Nations*, a very high percentage considering the population of Albania stood at 1,000,000 inhabitants.

In the beautiful summer days before reaching Tirana, the Altarac family spent a few months in the south in a small town called Kavaje. Jasa a city boy, would spend his days with other children playing in the fields and feeling the evening breeze, experiencing the excitement of seeing a butterfly's colours, listening to the peasant's raucous voices while they sang, seeing the wind blowing between the ears of wheat. One evening this sight caught his attention; he stopped playing and stood in silence while he admired the wonderful view. He was so focused on the colours, the crackling music, and the sweet odour that he did not hear a man approaching. It seemed as though he was a peasant. He walked up to him, laid a hand on his head and said in a very gentle way: "Look at that, isn't it a beautiful corn field? Allah The Great knew

that the Jews would come and this must be the reason he gave such a good harvest, the best we've ever had." Jasa still feels that rough hand on his head, those gentle words, even though he has no memory of the man's face, a man he met by pure chance at the edge of a corn field on a summer evening during the Second World War, in a country that wasn't his own.

Many Jews were saved by many Albanians; the Albanian people's rectitude and code of conduct stood high.

In the end my great-grandparent's story was similar to that of Raoul Wallenberg. The difference was where the events took place and the number of lives that were saved.

The Talmud quotes: "Whoever saves one human life it is as if he has saved the entire world."

Yolande Mukagasana said, "...it would be a mistake to just remember the evils in history. It is true. Evil is almost always present but so is Good, we must remember that Good work is done by the righteous in Evil times..." And so I dedicate this paper to the righteous.

# Ben Olander

## Poetry

### Statement:

In 1957, when I was only seven years old, I heard of Raoul Wallenberg for the first time. My Danish grandparents took an active part in smuggling Jews and resistance fighters from Denmark to Sweden during World War II. They had a cozy, but effective “transition camp” in their glamorous apartment in Gothenburg. After my grandfather died in 1953, my grandmother kept up the tradition of helping refugees. Starting in 1956, she housed Hungarian women who had escaped from their homeland. One of them was always especially sad. One day she told me about her escape and her earlier experiences. She suddenly started to tell me about her hero who, only twelve years earlier, had come to her hometown as a savior. He had saved her life and the lives of thousands of other people. The man she was talking about was Raoul Wallenberg.

When I came home that day my father gave me another picture of what had happened. His face was flushed with rage as he spewed his anger out about the people who had kidnapped Raoul Wallenberg. Since then I have lived with the two pictures of Wallenberg, “the savior” and “the kidnapped.”

Throughout my life I have tried to follow the media quest that attempted to uncover his true fate. Together with millions of others I have gone from hope to despair. For all these years we have persisted in believing that Raoul Wallenberg is still alive. But no matter how long Raoul has lived, his life has been robbed from him. And we have been robbed of Raoul Wallenberg himself.

These songs are my attempt to show that none of us needs to take up such a perilous struggle as Wallenberg did in order to fight injustice. If each of us in our everyday life uses our gifts, we will reach the goal together. Then Raoul Wallenberg will live amongst us – for all time to come.

### Our Gleam of Hope (To Raoul Wallenberg)

By Ben Olander

In the midst of the black storm,  
So chokingly dense,  
Came a breeze of cleanest air,  
To a sparkle of brightest sense.  
A flame gave light  
So that lies would stand bare,  
And no one could crawl behind words  
Like “entrapped” and “ensnared”.  
This solitary man, amongst us  
Now with glory to his name  
Became our gleam of Hope  
In a world of guilt and shame.  
Like a cliff in churning water,

He stood firm to lead the way;  
So that no one could deny  
Or from truth go far astray.  
Salvaging the deserted,  
He took his last stand.

No shield upon his arm,  
No sword in his hand.  
But his words bit like steel  
On the slayer’s awkward lies;  
And with cunning tricks he snatched the victims  
Out of their bonding ties.  
This solitary man amongst us

Now with glory to his name  
Became our gleam of Hope  
In a world of guilt and shame.  
Like a cliff in churning water,  
He stood firm to lead the way;  
So that no one could deny

Or from truth go far astray.

When the light poured in,  
In freedom's sacred name  
By the twin headed dragon  
He was stolen without shame...

## **No Hesitation**

By Ben Olander

My word sits right in his heart,  
Like a thorn from a poisonous hedge  
And forces friendship to pain  
As an injuring splitting wedge.  
Let there be no hesitation  
For me to be brave  
Enough to heal the wounds  
That I viciously gave.  
And regret my bad deeds  
When I was caught in a hollering herd  
That led me by fraud  
And hoaxes so blurred.  
When they're harassing a friend  
Sheltered by each other's back  
And gathered in a threatening mob,  
I'll take my share of flak.  
Cause I'll stand by his side  
And scatter them to dust.

Using honest words as my sword,  
They shall vanish in a gust.  
Let there be no hesitation  
For me to be brave  
Enough to heal the wounds  
That I viciously gave.  
And regret my bad deeds  
When I was caught in a hollering herd  
That led me by fraud  
And hoaxes so blurred.  
From history we've learned  
He who turns evil to good  
Is he who was never in doubt  
But courageously stood  
On the barricade to lead us  
To think straight, free and bright  
And never tag after those  
Who only separate black from white

## **Ben Olander's Biography:**

Ben Olander was born in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1950. He enjoyed a particularly happy childhood. However, his family was singularly intolerant of music. In a period of pure teenage rebellion Ben started to play the guitar just to upset his parents. Once when his father came upon Ben practicing on his guitar, he roared at him, "Why in tarnation can't you be out chasing girls like the other guys, instead of sitting here fondling that scratch-box?!"

Eventually Ben discovered that his paternal grandfather had been a talented cantor. Armed with this knowledge, Ben vowed to revive the family musical tradition just to teach his parents a lesson. In his late teens he was always out playing in some kind of musical event – an enthusiastic ballad singer.

The last decade has seen Ben develop from a pure singer/songwriter to a more theatrical performer, as he incorporates the skills of acting, music, pictures, and speech into his performances. His historical knowledge has now found a platform for a bigger audience. His shows and performances have drawn great attention in the media, both in Sweden and abroad. One of the most recognized of his performances is the one about Raoul Wallenberg, which also lies very close to Ben's heart.