Remember the Women Institute and Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan in partnership with National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene & National Jewish Theater Foundation

present

Women, Theater, and the Holocaust 2023 Yom HaShoah Program

*Little Louis* by Michael angel Johnson
Premiere performance, directed by Adrienne D. Williams

*The Ruins of Memory: Women's Voices of the Holocaust*, Excerpts, by Laura Ferri
Directed by Dr. Meghan Brodie

*The Match* by Cynthia L. Cooper
Premiere performance, directed by Tasha Gordon-Solmon

*The Last Dinosaur*, a monologue by Eleanor Reissa
Directed by Eleanor Reissa
This Women, Theater, and the Holocaust Yom HaShoah program is an annual project of Remember the Women Institute. The fifth edition of our new interactive on-line publication, Women, Theater, and the Holocaust: A Resource Handbook, written and edited by Rochelle G. Saidel, Karen Shulman, and Samantha McLaughlin, is being launched at the event and then available on-line on our website: rememberwomen.org

Founded more than 25 years ago and based in New York City, Remember the Women Institute (501c3) conducts and encourages research and cultural activities that include women in history, especially Holocaust history and sexual violence during the Holocaust. Through research and related activities, the stories of women -- from the point of view of women -- are made available to be integrated into collective memory. The work of the Institute has influenced academic research and publications, as well as popular culture, by encouraging the inclusion of all of humanity in historical and commemorative representations. Projects include co-publishing books, creating exhibits, organizing groundbreaking conference panels internationally, and cooperating with individuals and other organizations. Donations to further our work are welcome.

Dr. Rochelle G. Saidel is the founding executive director of Remember the Women Institute. Her focus is on Jewish women, especially women during the Holocaust, as well as violence against women. She is the author, editor, or co-editor of eight books including The Jewish Women of Ravensbrück Concentration Camp, Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust, and Women, Theater, and the Holocaust: A Resource Handbook. She was the coordinator and catalog co-editor for the VIOLATED! Women in Holocaust and Genocide international art exhibition shown in 2018 in New York City.

WEBSITE: mmjccm.org

OUR MISSION:
Together with our community, the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan creates opportunities for people to connect, grow, and learn within an ever-changing Jewish landscape.

OUR VISION:
The Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan imagines Jewish life that is diverse and engages meaningfully with its values, culture, and ideas in everyday lives.
**Program**

**Introduction**
Rochelle Saidel, Founding Executive Director of the Remember the Women Institute

**Little Louis by Michael angel Johnson**
Premiere performance, directed by Adrienne D. Williams
*Indicates Member of Actors’ Equity Association

**Setting**
Time: 1941, WWII, Evening
Place: (Baker) Morocco, hotel room; (Snow) Copenhagen, Denmark, hotel room

**April Armstrong** (Valaida Snow) presented her one-woman play, *Two Wings to Heaven: The Bessie Coleman Story*, at the Kravis Center. She has been on Broadway national tours for *Ragtime* and *Carousel*, and performed Off-Broadway in *Confidence and the Speech, ‘Tis Pity She’s a Whore*, and *The Skriker*. She has also performed in regional theater, on television, and in film. [aprilarmstrong.com](http://aprilarmstrong.com)

**Justine J. Hall** (Josephine Baker) recently was seen as Mamair in *The White Blacks* and Voice in *Brotha Shakespeare* at Theater for the New City. Other credits include the voice of Nia in *Alma’s Way* on PBS.

**Michael angel Johnson’s** (playwright) plays have been produced in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Cleveland, Amherst, New Haven, and other places across the U. S. Her screenplay, *Seasons*, is a semi-finalist in The Chesterfield Film/Writer’s Project. She is a member of the League of Professional Theatre Women, New York Women in Film & Television, and Honor Roll. She is an Associate Professor at The Fashion Institute of Technology. She is a graduate of The Yale School of Drama in Playwrighting. [michaelangeljohnson.com](http://michaelangeljohnson.com)

**Chris Tipp** (stage directions/off-stage voices) is an actor, singer, and guitar player who grew up in Saint Louis, but now proudly calls The Bronx home. He is a member of New Circle Theatre Company, and has performed in New York and around the country; favorite roles have included Tommy in *The Who’s Tommy*, Thom Pain in *Thom Pain (based on nothing)*, and Roland in *Constellations*. For more information, please visit [ChrisTipp.com](http://ChrisTipp.com).

**Adrienne D. Williams** (director) is a New York-based actor, director, and educator. She is an Artistic Associate for the Martha’s Vineyard Playhouse, a member of Honor Roll, The Bechdel Group, NCTC, and the Rattlestick Theatre Community. Adrienne most recently directed *The Gospel Woman* by Tylie Shider, Off Broadway for NBT. She has taught and directed on the faculties of Juilliard, Tisch, Yale, and Hunter College. This season she was featured as Khadijah on the Godfather of Harlem (MGM+). [adriennedwilliams.com](http://adriennedwilliams.com)

**Brian Hurley** (sound design)

**The Ruins of Memory: Women’s Voices of the Holocaust, Excerpts, by Laura Ferri**
Directed by Dr. Meghan Brodie

**Setting**
Time: 1939–1943
Place: Multiple Locations in Eastern Europe
Music: We have chosen to adapt portions of Henriette Bosmans’s Sonata for Piano & Cello for this evening’s performance. Henriette Bosmans, a Dutch composer and musician born to a Jewish mother, was banned from performing in public during World War II.

Meghan Brodie (director) is Associate Professor of Theater and chair of Theater and Dance at Ursinus College. She is also a director, dramaturg, and playwright. Meghan directed the English-language world première of In the Underworld, a darkly comic operetta written by Germaine Tillion while Tillion was in Ravensbrück concentration camp during World War II. Her other directing credits include plays by dramatists such as Sarah Ruhl, Charlotte Jones, Diana Son, Angela Carter, Emily Mann, and Paula Vogel. Meghan holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University. meghanbrodie.com

Sophia Bush (ensemble & violinist) is a current first-year student with double majors in Theater and Environmental Studies at Ursinus College. Her previous theater experience includes acting, singing, stage managing, and designing sets. Recent acting credits include performances in Execution of Justice, 365, and Small Mouth Sounds.

Evan Chartock (ensemble) is a sophomore majoring in Theater & Media and Communication Studies and minoring in Legal Studies at Ursinus College. Previous acting credits include Small Mouth Sounds, Execution of Justice and And Baby Makes Seven. Evan also did dramaturgical work for Execution of Justice.

Laura Ferri (playwright) is an award-winning playwright/director from Seattle who specializes in creating performance pieces from historical research. She served as a 2022 US/UK Fulbright Scholar at Queen’s University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, where she researched, wrote, and directed a play on the impact of WWII on the women there. Her newest production, Friends Across the Wires, explores the impact of WWII Japanese American Incarceration on Seattle’s young people. alchemysts.org/about-us/

Kate Isabel Foley (ensemble & violinist) is a senior English and Theater honors student at Ursinus College. Ursinus acting credits include Pride and Prejudice, The Oldest Profession, Execution of Justice, and Small Mouth Sounds. Kate is the playwright of Pride and Prejudice at Pemberley College—a contemporary, queer adaptation of Jane Austen’s much-loved classic. In Remember the Institute’s 2022 Yom HaShoah Presentation, Kate played Esther in an excerpt from The Bird of the Ghetto.

Abbie Painter (ensemble) is a senior double majoring in Psychology and Theater at Ursinus College. Some previous Ursinus acting credits include Small Mouth Sounds, Rumors, 365, and Rocky Horror Picture Show. They are currently sound designing a student production of Trail to Oregon.

Zara Tabackin (ensemble) is a senior majoring in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and Theater at Ursinus College. She was previously seen on the Ursinus stage as Jane Bennet in Pride and Prejudice, Donkeyskin/Beast in Kissing the Witch, Doralee in 9 to 5, and Cassie in Rumors. Some of her other past experiences include Annie Who in Broadway’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas, as well as voiceover work and commercial work with Nickelodeon.

Annie Zulick (ensemble) is a sophomore at Ursinus majoring in Theater and Media and Communication Studies with a minor in Film. She most recently appeared in several roles in Working and as Mrs. Bennet in Pride and Prejudice. She has been performing since middle school in productions such as Shrek, Les Miserables, Little Women, and Curtains.

**The Match by Cynthia L. Cooper**

Premiere performance, directed by Tasha Gordon-Solmon

Setting

Time: 1943

Place: Mexico City
Cynthia (Cindy) L. Cooper (playwright) is an award-winning playwright with works in seventeen books and with productions in New York, across the US, in Israel and elsewhere. Her full-length play, *I Was A Stranger Too*, about asylum seekers and helpers, was recently seen in Minnesota. Works in Yom HaShoah readings for “Women, Theatre and the Holocaust” include *The Spoken and the Unspoken* about sexual abuse, *Here Lived (Hier Wohnte)* about Holocaust memorial stones, and *Gretel Bergmann*, about the Olympic athlete. cyncooperwriter.net

Nadia Diamond (Helen Deutsch), originally from San Francisco, CA, is a happy Brooklyn transplant. Past NYC collaborations: Brooklyn Generator; Upstart Creatures; Theater in Asylum; Party Claw Productions; Blackberry Productions Theater Co. and New Professional Theatre; The Civilians R&D Group; New Perspectives Theatre Company; Jewish Plays Project; and Brave New World Repertory Theatre, of which she is a company member. With gratitude for the creative team who brought us together tonight in remembrance.

Tasha Gordon-Solmon (director) is a playwright, director and lyricist. Her plays and musicals have been seen at the Humana Festival, Clubbed Thumb, Northern Stage, New Georges, Sun Valley Center for the Arts, The Playwrights Realm, Ars Nova, and The Flea. Tasha’s directing credits include EST, Dixon Place, The Tank, The Flea, INTAR, The Brick, Brooklyn Museum, Project Y, Pipeline, InViolet, Brooklyn Museum, HB Studios, Boomerang Theater, Fire This Time Festival, Columbia University and NYU Graduate Playwriting programs.

Steph Van Vlack (Anna Seghers) loves working with wonderful artists to bring a story to life. Info about Steph and her exploits can be found at StephVanVlack.com

*The Last Dinosaur*, a monologue by Eleanor Reissa

Directed by Eleanor Reissa

*Indicates Member of Actors’ Equity Association*

**Setting**
Time: The End of the Last Century
Place: New York City

Eleanor Reissa* (playwright/director) is a Tony-nominated director; Broadway, film and television actor; prize-winning playwright; and international singing artist. Current film/tv includes *The Plot Against America, Dead City,* and *The Zweiflers* German television series. She hosts Yale University’s podcast: “Those Who Were There: Voices from the Holocaust.” Her book, *The Letters Project: A Daughter’s Journey* was recently published by Post Hill Press. eleanorreissa.com

Robert Zukerman* (performer) has been acting professionally for fifty years, mostly Off-Broadway and in regional theatre. He holds a Ph.D. in Theater History from CUNY, and served as Theater Program Director for the NY State Council on the Arts. He’s currently the Co-President of the Chatham (NY) Synagogue. robertzukerman.com

**Acknowledgments**

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We thank Patti Askwith Kenner and the Indian Trail Charitable Foundation and the Five Millers Family Foundation for providing funding for this event and publication of our resource handbook.

We thank Dr. Meghan Brodie and Cynthia L. Cooper; our Women, Theater, and the Holocaust project colleagues; for generously sharing with us their time, talent, and love of meaningful theater for eight years.
We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers’ Unions: Actors’ Equity Association, American Guild of Musical Artists. American Guild of Variety Artists, SAG-AFTRA through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the artists to appear in this benefit program.