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SAVE
THE
DATE

VANCOUVER RAOUL WALLENBERG DAY

1 pm | Sunday, January 17, 2010

Wosk Auditorium, Jewish Community Centre
950 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver



THE HONOURABLE
IRWIN COTLER, P.C., O.C., M.P.

RAOUL WALLENBERG
RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS:
LESSONS FOR OUR TIME

ADMISSION BY DONATION | *Reception to follow*

Following the event the exhibit *More Than Just Games: Canada & the 1936 Olympics* will be on view at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

Presented in partnership with the Consulate of Sweden & the Second Generation Group



ZACHOR | Remember

VANCOUVER HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CENTRE

Editor: Frieda Miller

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Front cover: The Canadian Olympic swim team, 1936
(Joan McLagan, front row, second from the right)
– BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum

WALLENBERG: A PROFOUND IMPACT

BY GABRIELLA KLEIN

My mother Eva Klein's birthday falls on November 10th, a chilly month in most parts and nowhere less so than in Hungary, where she spent her thirteenth birthday on what should have been her Bat Mitzvah party, shivering on piles of bricks in a factory on the outskirts of Budapest. The infamous brick factory served as the holding station for thousands of Hungarian Jews who were deported to concentration camps in Poland as efficiently as the Nazi war machine allowed. The trains bulged with humanity as they left the brick factory but upon their return the boxcars echoed with a hollow emptiness, ready to be filled once again at the rate of 12,000 people a day.

A few days after that dismal birthday, my mother became ill and was taken by ambulance along with her mother and some other prisoners. In the only photo that I have of my mother from that time she appears undernourished and younger than her thirteen years. She and my quietly fierce grandmother, Yolan Hexner, had little more than their devotion to each other, as their fate appeared to be drawing to a dark impasse.

In a remarkable twist of fate, the ambulance drivers turned out to be members of the resistance working with Raoul Wallenberg. They took my mother and grandmother to the Swedish Consulate where they were issued 'Schutzpassen' and then to 13 Akacsa Utca, where a sign tacked to the front door, proclaimed the building to be under the diplomatic protection of the Swedish Consulate. This 'safe' house became my mother's home until the ghetto was liberated in 1945. To this day, when my mother speaks of Wallenberg her voice takes on a wondrous tone. "He was such a good man. [Because of him] we are here now."

To mark Vancouver Wallenberg Day 2010, the Honorable Irwin Cotler will speak on *Raoul Wallenberg, Righteous Among the Nations: Lessons For Our Time*. Currently serving as Liberal Special Counsel for Human Rights and International Justice, Professor Cotler is a distinguished academic and a prominent human rights lawyer, whose dedication to humanitarian causes has earned him the Order of Canada among many other awards.

Cotler was the Chair of the *International Commission of Inquiry into the Fate and Whereabouts of Raoul Wallenberg*. In 1989 he delivered the first lecture on Human Rights in the Soviet Union and was given contradictory versions by Russian authorities, as to how Wallenberg met his death.

"In August of 1990 I participated in an investigative mission to Vladimir Prison to explore evidence that Raoul Wallenberg lived in prison for many years after his supposed death. I submitted a supplement to the original report and I concluded that there was evidence clear and compelling that he did not die in 1947.

Raoul Wallenberg had a profound impact on my life; on what I do and what I aspired to be. I grew up hearing my father speak about Raoul Wallenberg as a hero. This engaged and fascinated me, that amongst all the horror this man was able to confront evil and to prevail. He is the ultimate role model. He lived the cliché of what a "hero" is." - Irwin Cotler



INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

SAVE
THE
DATE



Film Screening
Italian with English subtitles

PERLASCA, AN ITALIAN HERO

7 PM | SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2010

Norman Rothstein Theatre
950 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver

FREE ADMISSION | RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

604.264.0499 or email: iicvancouver@esteri.it

Following the film the exhibit *More Than Just Games: Canada
& the 1936 Olympics* will be on view at the Vancouver
Holocaust Education Centre

Commemorating the
65th Anniversary
of the Liberation of Auschwitz

To commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day (*Giornata della memoria*) 2010, the Istituto Italiano di Cultura and the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, in collaboration with the Norman Rothstein Theatre, present a screening of the made-for-TV docudrama "Perlasca, An Italian Hero" (*Perlasca: un eroe italiano*), a taut drama about one man's remarkable courage in saving 5,200 Hungarian Jews from deportation to Auschwitz.

This account of an Italian's resistance to Nazism is based on the true story of Giorgio Perlasca (Luca Zingaretti), a businessman who posed as the Spanish consul in Budapest at the end of World War II and managed to save thousands of innocent lives. Perlasca has been referred to as the "Italian Wallenberg." Streets in several provincial Italian towns as well as in Rome have been named after him. Perlasca was awarded the "Righteous Among the Nations" designation by Yad Vashem.

Presented under The High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy and the auspices of the Consulate General of Italy in Vancouver.



VANCOUVER
HOLOCAUST
EDUCATION CENTRE



THE CONSULATE GENERAL
OF ITALY IN VANCOUVER



ISTITUTO ITALIANO
DI CULTURA

THE NORMAN
ROTHSTEIN THEATRE



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly designated January 27th as an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Since the establishment of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre has formed an annual partnership with the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura* Vancouver and the Norman Rothstein Theatre to present performances of Jewish music, film and culture, by Italian citizens on the subject of the Holocaust. The event offers an opportunity to commemorate the Holocaust and reflect upon the destructive effects of racism and genocide on all people.

BY KARA GIBBS

Is there an artistic medium capable of describing one of the world's most horrifying instances of human brutality? And beyond simply describing it, is it possible for art to bring us to terms with it? These and other questions are tackled by Hotel Modern, an internationally acclaimed theatre collective from the Netherlands that is behind the creation of KAMP. Part of the 2010 PuSh International Performing Arts Festival, KAMP is an innovative work about Auschwitz that combines visual art, puppetry, music, film and live performance. The members of Hotel Modern are artists Arlène Hoornweg, Herman Helle, and Pauline Kalker—granddaughter of Auschwitz victim Josef Emanuel Kalker.



Based around an enormous scale model of the infamous concentration camp [Auschwitz], Hotel Modern's KAMP makes use of thousands of tiny puppets that have been painstakingly crafted from clay, wire and cloth, representing prisoners and their executioners. Though these tiny puppets stand a mere three to four inches tall, their sheer numbers and placement within this scale model allow audience members the chance to appreciate the almost incomprehensible magnitude of what happened within the confines of this camp almost seventy years ago.

These scale models play an important role in much of the work of Hotel Modern, enabling the artists, in their own words, to "look at the world literally from a macro-perspective." In a series of vignettes that represent glimpses into a day at Auschwitz, the three actors animate these puppets, moving through the set like giant war reporters filming and projecting the events in real time. As though the creators were at a loss for words to describe these atrocities, only a wordless soundscape accompanies the 60-minute work.

The act of creation is a way for us to tell our stories, both individually and collectively, providing a way to recount even the most horrific of events. It can function as a means of description as much as a means of expression; a window through which we are able to comment on and reveal both the horror and beauty that humanity is capable of. But can this art help us come to terms with these horrors? Maybe not, but it does indeed give us the opportunity to try, and if we fail, to try again.

KAMP reminds us that there can be power and potency in the miniature—in the small details of a human life—as there is within the large canvas of History. It reminds us of the need to keep an ongoing dialogue of remembrance between generations. It reminds us to tell and retell our darkest stories of horror and grief in the hopes that a collective awareness might prevent repetition. As audience members, witnesses to the story, our role is simply to approach with open ears, open eyes, and an open heart. Followed by a responsibility to acknowledge, to learn, to teach, and to remember.

Push Festival

KAMP

Talk back with Dr. Roberta Kremer

8 PM | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2010

Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre
181 Roundhouse Mews, Vancouver at the corner of Davie and Pacific

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT PUSHFESTIVAL.CASAVE
THE
DATE

PuSh

Hotel Modern's KAMP is part of the 6th annual PuSh International Performing Arts Festival, and runs from Feb 3-6, 2010 at the Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre in Vancouver.

A PATCHED BATHING SUIT

Joan McLagan's Experience at the 1936 Olympics

BY ALIA DHARSSI



Joan McLagan, one of six living Canadian athletes who participated in the 1936 Olympics, lives in Vancouver. Her Canadian team jacket, which she wore at the opening ceremonies, is on display at the VHEC exhibit, MORE THAN JUST GAMES: Canada & the 1936 Olympics. The story of her experience highlights how the Olympics, as well as the status of women, have changed over time.

At the beginning of the summer of 1936, thirteen year-old Joan Langdon boarded a train in Vancouver with other members of her swimming team and her coach, Percy Norman. They were headed to the Canadian Championships in Montreal with the hope that if they did

well there, go directly on to the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin.

Joan, like the other girls, was excited. She had never travelled so far from home before or been on a train trip. When I met her for an interview, Joan Langdon, now Joan McLagan, explained that, despite their excitement, the train trip was far from luxurious. "It was just near the end of the Depression and we took all our own food." There was no government funding for swimmers at the time, so they raised their own funds to attend the Canadian Championships, travelling "on a shoe string" during the multiple-day train ride.

After Joan was selected for the 1936 Olympic team, she set off for Berlin directly from Montreal "patched bathing suit and all" with the other members of the Canadian team. They sailed to France on the Duchess of Bedford followed by a train to Berlin. To practice in the tiny pool on board the ship, the girls tied one end of a piece of rope to the end of the pool and the other end around their waist so that they could swim against the rope. The pool was too tiny to swim actual laps.



Left: Joan McLagan in October, 2009.

Right: Team jacket worn by British Columbian Olympic Swimmer Joan McLagan at the Opening Ceremony in Berlin, 1936. - BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum



As one of the youngest members of the team, thirteen-year-old Joan faced some additional challenges. One day, she was in a cabin with several of the Canadian women trying on one another's team jackets, when Roberta Higgins, an older track-and-field athlete, tried on Joan's jacket. Higgins "found that it fitted her better than her jacket did. So, she appropriated my jacket and gave me her jacket," McLagan recalled. For the rest of the trip, Joan was stuck with Higgins's team jacket, which she wore during the opening ceremonies and eventually donated to the BC Sports Hall of Fame.

After she arrived in Berlin, Joan was struck by the cleanliness of the city and the facilities, at least those given to the men. The Olympic Village was complete with training facilities and a TV viewing room, an amazing amenity at the time. The women, however, were not allowed to stay there or even enter. "We were in what was called *Friesen Haus* and we called it 'freezing house,' said Joan of the dormitory near the Olympic stadium where the women stayed. It was surrounded by a wrought-iron fence and strictly supervised. While the men had training facilities in the Olympic village, the women were left to fend for themselves. Percy Norman, the Olympic swimming coach, found a pool in Berlin that Joan and the other female swimmers could practice in.

Once in Berlin, Joan rarely left the "Olympic atmosphere." As the youngest member of the swimming team, she was under strict supervision at all times and saw little of Berlin. She spent most of her time training, at the Olympic stadium or in "freezing house." Like many athletes participating in the impeccably organized 1936 Olympics, Joan left Germany with good memories of the country and no notion of the dark years to come. From what she does remember of the city, Berlin was strikingly well-kept and hospitable.

When Joan returned home, there was no big homecoming like there might be today. She simply arrived. At the time, sports were primarily considered an avocation with low levels of professionalism and commercialism. To emphasize the point, McLagan elaborated on her training schedule, which only involved going to the pool twice a week for a total of 2.5 hours. Each session cost 25 cents, a sizeable sum for her parents to scrape together at the end of the Depression.

With this training, Joan had been selected to attend the Olympics and participate in an event in which amateur athletes from all over the world came to test themselves against each other. "The Olympics these days are not the Olympics that I took part in," Mrs. McLagan stressed. "Once they let the professionals in, [the Olympics changed]. It's a commercial endeavor now."

Above: Members of the Canadian 1936 Olympic team en route to Berlin on board the *Duchess of Bedford*. – BC Archives

Front Cover: The Canadian Olympic swim team, 1936 (Joan McLagan, front row, second from the right) – BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum



Peter John Voormeij

ART & LIFE

Peter John Voormeij

INTERVIEWED BY LILLIAN BORAKS NEMETZ

Peter John Voormeij is a quintessential artist, who explores art through life and life through art.

He survived the Holocaust as a child in Holland. Peter's mother, Jenny Dingsdag, gave the 3 year-old Peter away to the Dutch underground after she was betrayed by a friend for not wearing the yellow star.

She was then taken to Sobibor Concentration Camp and murdered. Peter's aunt, Johanna Slagter his mother's sister, was executed by the Germans for working in the Dutch underground. There is a memorial in Northern Holland that commemorates the Dutch women underground fighters and a street named after Johanna Slagter. 144 members of Peter's family perished.

After the war, Peter's father found him at the home of a schoolteacher in Friesland, and left him with his paternal grandmother in Amsterdam, who took care of Peter until her death in 1952. Peter first learned that he was Jewish at the age of 12 when he went to live with his father and his new wife.

After high school, unhappy with life at home and a disagreeable stepmother, Peter went to study in Australia where he earned Bachelors degree in Fine Art. When he returned to the Netherlands, his father insisted that he avoid compulsory army service and study in Montreal, Quebec, where he received an MA in Art Education from Concordia University.



When his father died in 1982, Peter read the letters written by his parents and found one reference to himself as their child. He also found a document from a Jewish orphanage requesting that he go to live there, but does not remember the outcome.

Peter kept silent about his being Jewish until the age of 30, when he met someone who denied being a Jew. This made such a strong impact on him that for the first time ever, he said to this person, "I am a Jew and I am proud of it!"

Peter's painting career began when at a very young age he felt compelled to draw and paint on cardboard, walls, anything

that he could find. By the age of seven he knew he wanted to be an artist.

Since then Peter has won several awards for his work, including a 4-year Commonwealth Scholarship, an educational scholarship, the George Rowney First Prize for Painting, and the Governor General's Award for excellence in painting. He was commissioned to paint two kilometers of ceilings in the Dutch Council of State Buildings in The Hague and has met with Queen Beatrix of Holland.



When Peter talks about his large canvases it is he says, as if he were searching for his mother in their vast expanse. "I just love," he adds, "the possibility of being able to create something new. It gives me a feeling of enormous power. I can float into heaven in an angel's arms when painting goes well. Also down to hell when the painting is not working."

"Most of all," he concludes, "I am fortunate to have three beautiful daughters and three grandchildren who will carry on my mother's legacy and memory."



Top: Peter John Voormeij in his mother's arms, 1940. Bottom left: Peter John Voormeij, 1943. Right: Peter John Voormeij's mother Jenny Dingsdag, Holland, 1938.

VHEC SUNDAY OPENINGS
1 PM – 4 PM

January 17, February 14 & 21 and March 14, 2010
2 pm Docent Led Tour

YOM
HASHOAH

TIME: TBA | APRIL 11, 2010

Yom HaShoah Cemetery Service

7 PM | APRIL 11, 2010

Yom HaShoah Commemorative Evening
Wosk Auditorium, JCC

SAVE
THE
DATE

TRIBUTE CARDS

SEPTEMBER 16, 2009 – NOVEMBER 26, 2009

GET WELL

Robert Krell , Get Well. Susan Quastel

Alberta & Seymour Levitan, Get Well. Helen Alko

SYMPATHY

Frank & Binki Segal, On the loss of your brother, Jack. Avi Dolgin & Ruth Hess Dolgin

Lisa Boroditsky, On the loss of your Grandmother. Jody & Harvey Dales

Harley Rothstein & Family, In memory of your Mother, Annette Rothstein. Avi Dolgin & Ruth Hess Dolgin, Mark Rozenberg & Family, Neri & Aron Tischler

Boris Chenkis, In memory of your mother, Rose. Georges & Daisy Sommer & Family, Sally, Sid & Alex Coleman, Harold Folk & Kathryn West-Folk, Jack & Karen Micner, Robert & Marilyn Krell & Family, Cathy & David Golden & Family, Ida Kaplan, Les & Karen Cohen & Family & Rose Lewin, Ralph & Clare Swartz, Bob & Nancy, Josh, Joel & Seth Bluman

Arthur Chinkis & Family, On the loss of your wife, mother & grandmother, Rose. Cathy & David Golden & Family, Lillian Boraks Nemetz, Ida Kaplan, Les & Karen Cohen & Family & Rose Lewin, Izzy Fraeme & Leonor Etkin, Debby & Mark Choit & Family, Jocy, Gary, Steven & Richard Lowy

Sid & Sally, Coleman & Family, On the loss of your father & grandfather, Abe Miedzygorski. Robert & Marilyn Krell & Family, Cathy & David Golden & Family, Jody & Harvey Dales, Lis, Garry, Sam, & David Zlotnik, Lana & Mendy Landa, Myra & Carey Adirim & Family, Lola & Norman Pawer, Les

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Uri & Leah Levy & Family, On the loss of your Father & Grandfather. Neri & Aron Tischler, Mark Rozenberg & Family

Janos & Noni Mate, On the loss of your cousin, George. Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro

Sharon Beard, On the loss of Cheryl Brice. Jocy, Gary, Steven & Richard Lowy

Michael & Phyllis Moscovich & Sybil Williams, On the loss of your Mother. Rosa Ferera, Birgit Westergaard & Yos & Norman Gladstone

Lotti Smith & Family, On the loss of your mother, Anne Philipp. Rosa Ferera, Nora & Lew Pullmer and Family

John & Lara Nagy, On the loss of Judy Nagy. Veronica Winkler, Aggi & Tibor Bergida, Gerri, Gloria and the VHEC Survivor Drop In Group

Robert Philipp, On the loss of Anne Phillip. Neri & Aron Tischler

Norm & Lola Pawer & Family, On the loss of your dear mother. Arnie & Susan Fine

Eppy Rappaport, On the loss of your father, Rabbi Sidney Rappaport. Neri & Aron Tischler, Avi, Fran, Leah & Nikki Ostry

Mel Krajden On the loss of your Uncle. Neri & Aron Tischler

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Kristina Berman, In memory of your Sister. Neri & Aron Tischler, Hymie & Rome Fox & Family

MAZEL TOV

Betty Ashkenazy, Happy Special Birthday! Cecilia & Alanna Brauer

Alex Buckman, On your Special Birthday! Merle & Manuel Rootman, Jody & Harvey Dales, Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro

Norman Gladstone & Birgit Westergaard, Happy Anniversary. Rita & Ben Akselrod

Aviva Glassman, On your Bat Mitzvah. Jennifer Shecter & Jeff Balin

Paul Heller, On your Birthday! Ethel Bellows

Rabbi Jonathan Infield & Lissa Weinberger, Avishai, Yair and family, On the birth of Naomi Nechama. Myer (Ben Tzvi) and Roy Grinshpan, Susan & Joe, Michelle, Jenna & David Stein

Talya Lewin, On your Bat Mitzvah. Janice, Randy, Aaron & Benjamin Ling

Richard Menkis, In honour of your wonderful contribution to our community. The Kroft Family

Bernice Neuwirth, On your 90th Birthday! Aron, Sam & Al Szajman, Sarah & Betty Mandelbaum, Izzy Fraeme & Leonor Etkin, David Feldman, Gloria & Gerri & the VHEC Survivor Drop-In Group

Marla & Rob Richards, On your first Wedding Anniversary! Rome & Hymie Fox & Family

Ilana Strummer, On your Special Birthday! Shoshana & Moshe Fidelman

Gershon Growe, On your special birthday. Neri, Aron, Yael, Ben, Raphy & Bluma Tischler

Jody & Harvey Dales, On your 'Chai' Wedding Anniversary! Rome & Hymie Fox

THANK YOU

In honour of the VHEC exhibit: More Than Just Games: Canada & the 1936 Olympics, Rowena & Josh Kleinman

Peter Parker, Thank-you for speaking to our students. Coquitlam Alternate Basic Education, Burnaby District Symposium.

Alex Buckman, Thank-you for speaking to our students. Upper Lynn Elementary, Belmont Secondary School. 2nd Annual Coquitlam District Symposium, Ron Smith & the Grade 11 Students at Bodwell High School

Louise Sorenson, Thank you for speaking to our students. Guildford Learning Center.

Robbie Waisman, Thank you for speaking to the students at the 5th Annual Surrey District Symposium.

Lillian Boraks Nemetz, For donating a classroom book set of *The Old Brown Suitcase*. Nina Krieger & the VHEC

Jody Dales, Thank-you. Rome Fox

Lorne & Melita Segal, Thank-you. Harvey & Jody Dales

Patricia Wilensky, Thank-you. Charles & Susan Weinstein

A sincere thank you

To our VHEC volunteers

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*Errata, Fall issue of Zachor | Irving Meretsky
not Warren Meretsky*

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15 Years*

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