

ELEANOR REISSA

reading selections from her memoir

The Letters Project: A Daughter's Journey



In 1986, when her mother died at the age of sixty-four, Eleanor Reissa went through all of her belongings. In the back of her mother's lingerie drawer, she found an old leather purse. Inside that purse was a wad of dried-up papers in a brittle baggie: fifty-six letters handwritten in German by her father, in 1949 — only four years after Auschwitz — to her mother, also a refugee, already living in the United States.

Forty years later, Eleanor finally had the letters translated. With her father's letters as her silent guide, Eleanor goes on a journey down the River of Time, unearthing the unknowable about her family's past and her own present.

ARTIST BIO

Eleanor Reissa is a Brooklyn born and bred victim/beneficiary of the NYC public school system from K through college. In spite of that (or because of it) she has lived a life greater than her own expectations. She is a Tony Award-nominated director (*Those Were the Days*); Broadway/television actress (Paula Vogel's *Indecent*/ HBO's *The Plot Against America*); a prize-winning playwright, former artistic director of the Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre, host of the Yale University/Fortunoff Video Archive podcast: *Those Who Were There: Voices from the Holocaust*, and currently shares the audio guide duties with Juliana Margulies at the Museum of Jewish Heritage's latest exhibition *The Holocaust: What Hate Can Do*. Reissa has sung in every major venue in New York City and in festivals around the world. She is a storyteller in English and Yiddish, and is often the voice for the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, including their new episodic radiocast: *Who is Guilty?* Many of her musical performances can be found on You Tube and the Internet. Most recently, in Italy, she filmed "Musical Tales of the Venetian Jewish Ghetto" and "Chopin and Liszt" with Hershey Felder. Her memoir, *THE LETTERS PROJECT: A Daughter's Journey*, is available now.

ABOUT THE STORYTELLING SERIES

Our monthly storytelling series is all about community engagement. We believe that stories impact change, that we better our world by coming together to learn about our shared and unique experiences. We are so excited to finally be able to gather again in person, but we want to be true to all we've learned these last few years. A few times each year, we'll be live NYC while also being on Zoom; throughout the rest of the year, we'll continue to be on Zoom, featuring all sorts of works in progress. Please keep on joining us!

UNDISCOVERED WORKS NEEDS YOUR STORIES!

Are you a creative artist looking for an opportunity to share new work? We'd love to consider including you in our storytel series! Please contact us at leaha@undiscoveredworks.org. Undiscovered Works is dedicated to supporting artists as they develop plays, music, monologues, comedy, and film.

NON-PROFIT PARTNER



Tonight, a portion of your donations will be shared with TBI Preservation Society, dedicated to using their unique perspective as Holocaust survivors and children of survivors to inspire an interfaith approach to community building. The society's home is in its Danielson, CT building, listed on the National Register of Historical Places in 2013 and originally built as a synagogue in the 1950's by Holocaust survivors, long-term Jewish residents, and non-Jewish neighbors.

<https://www.tbipreservation.org/>

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