

SURVIVORS

A touring play teaching the Holocaust and tolerance

SURVIVORS, an hour-long, educational and inspiring drama enacts the history of the Holocaust through the eyewitness testimonies of ten survivors. A young and diverse cast guide us on this perilous journey from the past and encourages us to be Upstanders to today's antisemitism and identity hate.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
~Nelson Mandela



WHY THIS PLAY?

SURVIVORS is suitable for middle school through adult audiences and serves to:

Teach the history of the Holocaust through enacted eyewitness accounts.

Warn of today's parallels to periods in the past where hatred was normalized.

Provide hope and life lessons on surviving present-day prejudice and trauma.

Encourage being an Upstander to today's antisemitism, identity hatred, and bullying.

WHY IS HOLOCAUST EDUCATION IMPORTANT?

We teach the Holocaust to **NEVER FORGET** the genocide of six million Jews.

We must also never forget the brutal murder of five million of Hitler's other "undesirables" including people of color, gay people, the mentally and physically challenged, priests, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Roma and Sinti people.

We teach the Holocaust because **NEVER AGAIN** can hatred become normalized!

With the continued frightening rise of antisemitism, identity and religious hate, homophobia, and hate crimes, we can't silently stand by and allow selected groups to be singled out and marginalized.

We teach the Holocaust because **NEVER IS NOW.**

**"SURVIVORS SHOULD BE AN INTEGRAL
PART OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM
IN ALL SCHOOLS..."**

HENRY STERN, CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR



NEVER FORGET! NEVER AGAIN! NEVER IS NOW!

WATCH THE SURVIVORS TRAILER



PRODUCTION HISTORY

In 2017, Ralph Meranto, the Artistic Producing Director of CenterStage Theatre in Rochester, NY, commissioned Wendy Kout to write a school touring play based on Holocaust survivors who immigrated there. A year later, when the play began touring Rochester schools, word spread of its impact. Today there are six independent productions of SURVIVORS which have and continue to reach tens of thousands of students, teachers, and adults in the U.S. and Canada. Our West Coast tour is the sixth production and honored to be partnered with Holocaust Museum LA, the Holocaust Education Center of StandWithUs, and Tzedek America. Since our launch in March 2023, and thanks to our donors, sponsors and grants, we have impacted thousands of students and educators from over 50 schools in California, many of which are Title One.

PAST PERFORMANCES

Loyola High School for Boys – LA
Amino Jackie Robinson – LA
Museum of Tolerance
Burbank High School
PUC Excel – LA
LA Leadership Academy
Burbank Human Relations Council
PUC Inspire Academy – LA
Ronald Reagan Library
John Burroughs High School – Burbank
PUC CC Middle School – LA
March of the Living Reunion
Glendale High School – ASL included
Granada Hills Charter
Camp Alonim – Simi Valley
Herbert Hoover High School – Glendale
PUC Triumph Academy – LA

Santa Barbara Middle School
TVT Country School – Irvine
Merage JCC – Irvine
Santa Barbara Junior High
Crescenta Valley High School – Glendale
Ednovate Legacy – Irvine
Santa Barbara High School
Hamilton High School – LA
John Marshall High – LA
Dos Pueblos High – SB
Saban Theatre – Beverly Hills
Moorpark Unified Middle Schools
Savanna High – Anaheim
Amino Pat Brown – LA
Bernstein High School – LA
Calabasas High School

Amino City of Champions – Green Dot
Amino Compton
Fairfax High School
Grant High School
Santa Monica High School
Moorpark Unified Middle Schools
Calabasas High School
IAC – Woodland Hills
Canoga Park High School
Culver City High School
The Ebell of Los Angeles, Multi-School
Performance: Summit View School, Shery
High School, New Village Girls Academy,
Cheviot Hills High School
Museum of Tolerance - FREE Public
Performance
Cleveland High School

PRESS

J Living

Crescenta Valley Weekly

Jewish Journal

Beverly Press

Entertainment

SURVIVORS

A Play That Changed My Life

By Casey J. Adler

BY A THEATRE COLLECTIVE

I first saw the play when I was 10 and I am grateful to have seen it again. The play is a powerful one-hour play that recounts the experiences of 10 Holocaust survivors before, during and after World War II.

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Crescenta Valley Weekly

'First They Came' - An Exploration of Nazi Escalation

By Chloé Winkler on April 17, 2025

The poetic constellation "First They Came" by concentration camp survivor and reformed Nazi sympathizer Pastor Martin Niemöller is a well-known overview of Nazi escalation during the Holocaust. Niemöller did not speak out when Nazis came for Jews, communists, socialists or trade unionists. The poem concludes with "Then they came for me. And there was no one left to speak out for me."

JEWISH JOURNAL

'Survivors' Brings Holocaust Stories to Life for Students

"Survivors" is a powerful one-hour play that recounts the experiences of 10 Holocaust survivors before, during and after World War II.

On Monday morning Nov. 11, the Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills was filled with hundreds of students from 12 schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). It was clear that these 8-12 graders were drilled at the chance to leave their classrooms and watch a live performance. The theater buzzed with excitement and chatter.

BEVERLY PRESS

Holocaust play turns stories of the past into lessons of today

"Survivors" turns stories from the Holocaust to teach students about hatred and racism.

Students from Los Angeles public schools packed into the Saban Theatre on Nov. 11 for "Survivors," a play using the racism, hatred and bigotry of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust to teach lessons of tolerance and understanding.

Coast & Valley Properties

COAST & VALLEY PROPERTIES

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Repair the World:
The Heart & Soul of Arts for Change

"SURVIVORS should be an integral part of the education system in all schools."

A Collaboration between Wendy Kout, playwright/co-producer, Genie Benson, co-producer, Nancy Lancher, Producer and Claudia Butler, Founder of Blessed Ordinary Business.

Inspired by the lives and words of ten Holocaust survivors.

I met Wendy Kout several years ago during a real estate transaction. She was not ordinary. Her story and her husband went out of their way to ensure that the transaction was a win-win for all parties and approached the challenges that arose with such grace, respect, and kindness that I couldn't help but be touched by her caring heart. A few months ago, we ran into each other at the Fund for Santa Barbara's annual fundraiser. Broad and Rosen, which Wendy co-created 15 years ago. She invited me to the Santa Barbara premiere of her play, SURVIVORS. I attended with a few

JEWISH JOURNAL

"Survivors" Premiere

Inspired by the lives and words of ten Holocaust survivors.

The cast of "Survivors" from left: Sheri Avizon, Selb Kell, Yahn Steinberg, Almanna Nardis, Michael Bosen, Nami Fenty, Casey Adler and Andrea Aharis. Photo by Katherine Koll

THE JERUSALEM POST

'SURVIVORS' fuses with on-stage diversity

By URIEL FREED

A play that is currently being staged in schools and theaters throughout the US provides an innovative and inclusive approach to teaching the Holocaust.

SURVIVORS teaches about the Shoah through the various testimonies of 10 survivors. According to playwright and co-producer Wendy Kout, what differentiates this play from others on the subject is the diverse cast that consists of and reaches out to non-Jewish ethnic groups.

the Montecito JOURNAL

'The Voice of Survivors'

Finding Inspiration, Tolerance, and Hope From Our Past

A play that is currently being staged in schools and theaters throughout the US provides an innovative and inclusive approach to teaching the Holocaust.

eJewish Philanthropy

NEVER FORGET

Needed now more than ever: 'Survivors,' with its diverse cast, teaches the Holocaust to teens

Play's co-producer says Oct. 7 attacks gave the show, which has been running for six years, a renewed sense of purpose

Actor Almanna Nardis is Sikh and identifies as culturally Indian; she was raised in Bangkok and Mumbai, a product of displacement and in a family of refugees seeking sanctuary during the partition between Pakistan and India. In Mumbai, a millennia-old symbol for protection and peace was a big part of her childhood — only as a teenager did she discover that the interlocking lines of the swastika were not to be benign, she told the audience after a September performance of the play 'Survivors' at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.

We Are in America

באסרנה

שורדים

The play 'Survivors' is a powerful one-hour play that recounts the experiences of 10 Holocaust survivors before, during and after World War II.

Jlife

Jlife

'Survivors'

The women behind the play from left to right: Genie Benson, Wendy Kout, Evie Abat.

Their Story is Our Hope

"SURVIVORS" is an acclaimed play enacting the eyewitness accounts of 10 Holocaust survivors. A young and diverse cast gives an impressive and emotional performance that won't leave a dry eye in the house. Now, Jewish community leaders want this important play to become part of educational curricula throughout the state.

The Wrap

THE WRAP

How 2023 Became One of the Biggest Years for Jewish Theater: 'That Lifelong Has Risen'

As acts of antisemitism have grown in the U.S., American theater on Broadway and beyond holds steady.

In Minneapolis, the Children's Theater Company is staging an adaptation of the animated movie "An American Tail" through June 18. This story centers on the Montecito Jewish Community Center. It is a movie inspired by turn-of-the-century immigration and the story of a young boy named Fievel Mousekewitz who moves to New York City with his family. And first launched in 2008 by Rochester Jewish Community Center, and based on actual interviews with Holocaust survivors, Wendy Kout's play "Survivors" is being done in schools, museums and theaters around the U.S. — a film version was recently shot.



THE TEAM

Wendy Kout (Playwright/Producer)



Wendy Kout is an award-winning writer/producer of stage, film, virtual screen, and television. *SURVIVORS* was commissioned by CenterStage Theatre of Rochester, New York, and has been touring schools and stages there since 2018.

There are productions of *SURVIVORS* in California, New York, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Illinois, and BC, Canada.

NEVER IS NOW, an iteration of *SURVIVORS*, had an acclaimed world premiere at Skylight Theatre Company in Los Angeles, in September 2019 and was also performed at the USC Fisher Museum, and the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.

Wendy's film credits include Co-Writer and Co-Producer of *Jacob the Baker*, which is now streaming on Amazon Prime Video and On-Demand, and writing award-winning *Dorfman in Love*, starring Elliott Gould, Sara Rue, and Haaz Sleiman. Television credits include Creator and Co-Executive Producer of the Golden Globe and ASCAP award-winning ABC series *Anything but Love*, starring Jamie Lee Curtis and Richard Lewis.

Wendy considers the writing and launching of *SURVIVORS* to be her greatest responsibility and her greatest honor. She can be reached at wendy@artsforchange.world.

Genie Benson/TEEV (Producer)



Genie Benson is the Executive Producer at TEEV. Founded in 1994, this full-service company produces concerts, conferences, festivals, galas, and live-stream events for organizations, universities, and cultural festivals throughout North America.

Genie has worked on the productions of *Israel 60* at the Kodak Theatre, Save a Child's Heart galas at CSUN and UCLA, all local Los Angeles shows with TEEV artists, and built national tours for TEEV's Israeli artists.

Genie is also the Executive Director of Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble, an Israeli contemporary dance company that tours the world breaking down barriers of difference through dance.

The child of Holocaust survivors, Sidonia and Lewis Lax, Genie is an unassailable advocate for Holocaust Education and is determined to bring the play *SURVIVORS* to students everywhere. She can be reached at genie@artsforchange.world.

THE TEAM (CONT'D)

Evie Abat (Director)



Evie Abat is a former doctoral-level psychotherapist turned actor turned writer/director/producer. As an actor, she has been seen on stages around LA in such productions as *Bloodletting* (Playwrights Arena), *Othello* (Griot Theatre), *America Adjacent* (Skylight Theatre), *The Late Wedding* (Son of Semele), *Titus Andronicus* (BoomStick Theater), and the world premiere of *NEVER IS NOW* (Skylight Theatre), which was developed from the personal accounts, included in this production of *SURVIVORS*.

She has also appeared on hit shows, including *The Morning Show* and *Loot*, and in numerous award-winning shorts and features. She made her directorial debut in film last fall with a short she wrote and produced, called *Dad's Gone Wild*, which is currently in post-production, and whose script has made official selection in several diversity script festivals. Her feature-length romcom script has also won and been named an official selection in writing festivals and is currently in pre-production for the Fall.

Evie is proud to be directing the West Coast tour of *SURVIVORS* and thanks Wendy, Genie, Gary, and her actors for their trust and support!

David Azulay – Co-Producer/Consultant

Gary Benson – Project Coordinator

Tomer Ronen – Technical Director

Tedd Rosenfeld – Technical Assistant

Shellie Yaseen – Hospitality

Randy Fried – Deputy Executive Director of California Jewish Action Network

Ali Hurwitz-Kelman – Talkback Moderator from Facing History & Ourselves

Jeremy Broekman – Publicist

Gary Grossman – Skylight Theatre Company (Consultant)

Ralph Meranto – JCC CenterStage (Consultant) EAST COAST



Presented by

ARTS FOR CHANGE

For more information about SURVIVORS, please contact Genie Benson at genie@artsforchange.world or 818-78400344

In partnership with:



www.artsforchange.world

Credits:

Photographs: Kathrine Kohl
Video Trailer: Ian Fischer

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