

# history theatre

*Experience the Unforgettable*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Rachel Flynn, 651.292.4323 x106  
pr@historytheatre.com

**“I think it’s up to us to protect each other.  
Remember, Helka, we must pretend. Our lives depend on it.  
No Yiddish words, no nicknames.  
We’re Polish girls, not Jewish girls. Polish Catholic girls.”**  
–Sabina, *Hiding in the Open*

**History Theatre revisits the remarkable true story of Sabina Zimering, a St. Louis Park resident who survived the Holocaust with her sister by using fake Catholic papers and escaping from their native Poland to live in Germany during World War II.**

Based on the memoir of Sabina Zimering, *Hiding in the Open* by Kira Obolensky originally premiered on History Theatre’s stage in 2004. Six years later, this true story of sisterhood, survival, and the Holocaust is as breathtaking and important as when it premiered. “This is an all new production, directed by a bright young director [Hayley Finn] with a new perspective on the events of history,” points out artistic director Ron Peluso. “It is always interesting to remount a show with a new design team and cast. This team will work with exactly the same script, but these artists are bringing a new and fresh look to the story.”

“There are two things I am thinking about,” said director Hayley Finn, discussing her approach to this play. “First, naturally, is the story – two girls with a will to live and brave spirits who manage to survive during the Holocaust. Second, I am thinking about the power of theatre and storytelling. Kira [Obolensky, playwright] retells Sabina’s story using a very theatrical style and therefore, my approach to staging this show is Brechtian; the actors will be visible on stage for most of the story and at times will appear to the audience as actors telling the story.”

In addition to the performances, there will be several activities and events happening in connection to the show. On March 7 History Theatre will host a workshop led by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, University of Minnesota exploring the issue of ‘hiding’ during the Holocaust – living with a secret identity; having profound experiences during the war and keeping them ‘hidden’ from family and loved ones; and presenting false images and information to a public that refused to believe the atrocities being committed in Europe. On March 14 History Theatre will host Family Day, an opportunity for patrons and community members to dive deeper into the story behind *Hiding in the Open* and learn more about other stories of survival, life in Europe during World War II, and a modern perspective on genocide. Experts and displays will bring audiences into the world of Sabina Zimering and the thousands who have survived in similar miraculous ways. History Theatre has also partnered with the Voice to Vision Project which helps Holocaust survivors and Genocide survivors share their experiences through art. The artwork will be on display at History Theatre throughout the run of *Hiding in the Open*. Details of these events are available below or at [www.HistoryTheatre.com](http://www.HistoryTheatre.com)

“As the memories of WW II begin to fade with the passing of ‘The Greatest Generation’ it is important that we not allow ourselves to forget the horrors, the courage, the triumphs, and tragedies of the past,” said artistic director Ron Peluso. “While holocaust survivors such as Sabina Zimering are still with us, History Theatre is proud to present her amazing story of courage and survival. To be sure, this play is still as important and relevant to the world in which we live today.”

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***Hiding in the Open*** was adapted for the stage by Kira Obolensky based on the memoir of the same title by Sabina Zimering. It is directed by Hayley Finn, with scenic design by Erica Zaffarano, lighting design by Chris Johnson, costume design by Amelia Cheever, sound by C. Andrew Mayer, properties design by Gunther Gullickson, choreography by Colleen McClellan Ueland, and stage managed by Janet Hall. Starring Elise Langer as Sabina and Devon Solorow as Helka, along with Peter Thomson, Elena Giannetti, Laura Esping, Kevin Lackaff-Gilligan, Rebecca Hurd, Rachel Keller, Sophie Fiore, Mike Lubke, E. J. Subkoviak, Jonah Harrison and Jack Romans.

### ***Hiding in the Open***

Opens: Saturday, February 27, 2010

Through: Sunday, March 21, 2010

Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 10 a.m.

Fridays @ 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m.

Sundays @ 2:00 p.m. (ASL/AD performance on 3/7/10)

At the History Theatre, 30 East Tenth Street, St. Paul, MN

For directions and parking information visit: [www.historytheatre.com/box\\_office.asp](http://www.historytheatre.com/box_office.asp)

**TICKETS:** Adults: **\$25-\$30.00**; Seniors: **\$22-\$28.00**; Students: **\$15.00**; Children: **\$10.00**.

Discount rates are available for groups of 12 or more.

To purchase tickets, call the History Theatre Box Office at 651.292.4323 or go to [www.historytheatre.com](http://www.historytheatre.com).

**ACCESSIBILITY:** History Theatre is equipped with an FM hearing enhancement system. We offer ASL interpreted and Audio Described performances. We have complimentary wheelchairs for those patrons who need extra assistance into the building. The handicap-accessible entrance is on Cedar St. Just inside the entrance is an elevator that will take patrons to the theatre level. Patrons are asked to indicate any special needs that when ordering tickets.

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## **Special Events**

### **The Holocaust: Hiding Identity, Memory, and Truth**

#### **A workshop by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, University of Minnesota**

March 7, 2010

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

History Theatre lobby

This workshop explores the issue of 'hiding' during the Holocaust – living with a secret identity; having profound experiences during the war and keeping them 'hidden' from family and loved ones; and presenting false images and information to a public that refused to believe the atrocities being committed in Europe.

Speakers include Dr. Sabina Zimering; actor Patrick Dewane, whose grandfather fought and rescued Czech Jews during the war and kept the information hidden for an entire lifetime; and Dr. Ellen Kennedy, interim director at the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, with the tragic story of Terezin, a concentration camp that deceived the world into believing that the Jews were safe.

All participants will see the 2:00 p.m. performance of ***Hiding in the Open*** at no cost.  
(Continuing education units are available for educators.)

The event is free, but space is limited; registration is required. [Register online](#)

Please Note: the workshop is open to those over age 18

For more information, please call **612-624-0256**.

Sponsors: The Bernard and Fern Badzin Education Fund for Holocaust Studies at the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, the Program for Human Rights and Health, and the Human Rights Program, University of Minnesota; World Without Genocide; Center for Victims of Torture; Minnesota International Center; League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions.

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## Family Day

Sunday, March 14, 2010

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

History Theatre lobby

Free and open to the public

Audiences are invited to dive deeper into the story behind ***Hiding in the Open*** and learn more about other stories of survival, life in Europe during World War II, and a modern perspective on genocide. Experts and displays will bring audiences into the world of Sabina Zimering and the thousands who have survived in similar miraculous ways.

The day will include a presentation about Nazi Propaganda by Mark Lagergren, 2005 United States Holocaust Museum Fellow; information about genocide happening in today's world by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies; "Children in the Holocaust" a display of children's writing and artwork from the Holocaust; meet the director, artists and survivors behind the Voice to Vision project that is on display at History Theatre and watch video on the process of making the art; and a Hiding Wall where visitors can write about a time when they hid - either literally or metaphorically.

## Voice to Vision

February 27 - March 21, 2010

History Theatre

Art created as part of the Voice to Vision project will be on display at History Theatre throughout the run of ***Hiding in the Open***.

The Voice to Vision project helps Holocaust survivors and Genocide survivors share their experiences through art. This project has been directed by David Feinberg and developed through the collaboration of an interdisciplinary visual research team that includes participants from the Art Department, and the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Minnesota, as well as participants from surrounding communities in the Twin Cities.

## Afterthoughts Discussion Series

Sundays, 2/28, 3/7, 3/14, and 2/21

Patrons are invited to join a discussion series that will immediately follow Sunday performances.

*Afterthoughts* will feature guest speakers and the artists who brought Sabina's story to life on our stage.

Check [www.HistoryTheatre.com](http://www.HistoryTheatre.com) for a schedule and details about special guests and topics.

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## About Sabina Zimering

Sabina Schwartz Zimering is a Holocaust survivor who wrote her memoir ***Hiding in the Open*** to bear witness and to fulfill a personal obligation to share her Holocaust experiences with her family members. Sabina was 16 when she and her family were rounded up by Nazis in 1939 and forced into a ghetto in her hometown in Poland. In 1950 Sabina graduated from Munich Medical School and then immigrated to Minneapolis with her husband Ruben, where they raised three children, and Sabina practiced medicine for 42 years. After retiring from her practice as an ophthalmologist in 1996, Sabina turned much of her time and energies toward speaking and writing about the Holocaust. She gained the courage to write her story while attending a creative writing course at the Loft Literary Center. Her first book was published in 2002 and she is currently working on a sequel: an anthology of short stories to preserve special memories she has of her childhood, family life, and Jewish culture living in Poland. Sabina is pleased that she has published her memoir to preserve the memories of her deceased family members, to honor those who risked their lives to save her own, and to promote greater understanding and respect for cultural differences.

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## About the Artists

### Kira Obolensky

#### Playwright

Kira Obolensky has worked collaboratively with choreographers and visual artists and is co-founder of The Gymnasium, a consortium of nationally known artists and scientists and innovators involved in the incubation of new work and ideas. *Force/Matter*, created by The Gymnasium, was recently produced by Shawn McConneloug and her Orchestra at Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center. She's collaborated with University of Minnesota students and theatre professionals Shawn McConneloug, Luverne Seifert, Michael Sommers and Eric Jensen on a site-specific University of Minnesota presentation and adaptation of *The Master and Margarita* (one of City Pages' top 10 productions of the year). She is currently working on a national initiative regarding online identity. Kira's new plays include *Modern House* (finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize) and *Lune, pronouncedloony*, commissioned and produced by the B Street Theatre, with thanks to the NEA and Irvine Foundation. Her play *Quick Silver*, which premiered as a play for puppets and actors in Minneapolis, was produced by 3Legged Race and The Playwrights' Center. Named by Twin Cities Critics as the "most outstanding experimental theatre event of 2003," it was presented in Prague, June 2006, where it was lauded for its script and visual landscape, and was subsequently produced by Gas and Electric Arts in Philadelphia. Other plays include *Lobster Alice* (Kesselring Prize, finalist for Susan Smith Blackburn, published in *Best Plays by American Women 2000*, and produced in Atlanta, California, Texas, Minneapolis, Off Broadway, and Los Angeles, with Noah Wylie as Salvador Dali); *The Adventures of Herculina*, (Honorable Mention Kesselring Prize, Edith Oliver Award, produced in Chicago and in Minneapolis). She is a recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including a Bush Foundation fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, two Jim Henson Foundation grants, a Jerome Fellowship and a McKnight Advancement Grant. Kira is a graduate of Williams College and the Juilliard School's Playwriting Fellowship Program and recently received her M.F.A. in Fiction Writing from Warren Wilson's M.F.A. Program for Writers. She is also a published author (*The Not-So-Big House*, co-author; *Garage: Reinventing the Place we Park*; and *Good House/Cheap House*). She teaches at Goddard's M.F.A. Interdisciplinary Arts Program and at the University of Minnesota.

### Hayley Finn

#### Director

Hayley Finn is the Resident Director and Lab Producer at the Playwrights' Center where she works with some of the nation's leading and emerging playwrights. Directing credits in the Twin Cities include *Permanence Collection* by Kira Obolensky and Ed Bok Lee (Walker Art Center) and *Doe* by Trista Baldwin (Workhaus Collective). She has directed the New York premieres of works by Sheila Callaghan including *Katecrackernuts* (The Flea Theater), *Scab* (Greenwich Street Theater), and *Metal* (Here Arts Center), Gary Winter's *The Lake* (The Flea Theater), *Golem* and *Dead Reckoning* (both at Cherry Lane Theatre), Randal David Cook's *Fate's Imagination* (Gotham Stage Company), Rona Munro's *Bold Girls* (Urban Stages), *The Shoe Box at Ebbets Field* by Ross Berger (Cherry Lane Theatre), Kendra Levin's *Double Sophia* (Cherry Lane Theatre), and *The Apology* which she co-adapted with actor Yusef Bulos (The Flea Theater). Additional credits include work by Mac Wellman such as *Bellagio* (the Playwrights' Center), *Fnu Lnu* (Theatre Outlet), and *The Bad Infinity* (Mac Wellman Festival), and Caryl Churchill's *Not, Not, Not, Not, Not Enough Oxygen* (Drama League). She is the director and co-creator of such projects as *Jigsaw Nation* (Relentless Theatre) which has toured across the country (South Coast Repertory, The Curious Theater, Ellis Island) and *Hysteria: Silence in Stills* (Women Center Stage Festival at the Culture Project). She has assistant directed numerous plays on and Off Broadway including the Tony Award winning productions of *A View From The Bridge* and *Side Man*. She has been a directing resident at The Flea Theater and has directed workshops and readings for such organizations as The Public Theater, New Dramatists, The New Group, and The Kitchen. Currently an Affiliated Artist at New Georges, Hayley is the recipient of the Ruth Easton Directing Fellowship, The Drama League Directing Fellowship, the TCG New Generations Future Leader Grant, and is a member of SSD&C. She holds both a B.A. and M.A. from Brown University.

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## About History Theatre

For 32 years, the History Theatre Experience has created:

- Inspiration. The History Theater Experience brings real stories about real people to the stage in an immediate experience that touches our lives.
- 105 world premiere performances, more than any other theater in the Twin Cities. The History Theatre is one of the country's most impressive new play development homes – bringing to full production new work by Jeffrey Hatcher, Melanie Marnich, Craig Wright, Kim Hines, Dorie Baizley, John Olive, Kira Obolensky, and more.
- Brave, entertaining explorations of all the histories that make up our diverse community. From *Farm Boys* to *Snapshots: Life in the City*, from the celebratory *Wellstone!* to the dark, complex *Piece of the Rope* about Minnesota's first public execution, HT has moved Minnesotans to rediscover, relive, and respect every piece of their history. More than 200,000 students have connected with history through performances at HT.

**Complete Performance Schedule Attached**

**Photos are available at [www.HistoryTheatre.com/press/](http://www.HistoryTheatre.com/press/)**

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# History Theatre

## *Hiding in the Open*

### Performance Schedule 2010

Friday, February 26, 2010 (preview)	7:30 p.m.
Saturday, February 27, 2010 (opening)	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, February 28, 2010 (A)	2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 2, 2010	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, March 4, 2010	10:00 a.m.
Friday, March 5, 2010	10:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 6, 2010	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 7, 2010 (A) AD/ASL	2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 9, 2010	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, March 11, 2010	10:00 a.m.
Friday, March 12, 2010	10:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 13, 2010	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 14, 2010 (A) FAMILY DAY 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 16, 2010	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, March 18, 2010	10:00 a.m.
Friday, March 19, 2010	7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 20, 2010	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 21, 2010 (A)	2:00 p.m.

(A) = performance will be followed by *Afterthoughts* discussion

AD/ASL = Audio Description & American Sign Language interpreted performance

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