

For Immediate Release

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A Time to Dance

Written and Performed by Libby Skala

Produced in association with Artistic New Directions

WINNER 'BEST SOLO PERFORMER' AWARD

London Fringe Theatre Festival

"Funny...captivating...charming!
Ms. Skala's convincing portrayal is the reason
Polk is brought to life with such vibrancy."

-THE NEW YORK TIMES

"...A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance..."

- ECCLESIASTES 3:4

[Presenting organization] proudly presents *A Time to Dance*, a magical fusion of storytelling and creative dance written and performed by **Libby Skala**. Performances are [dates and times] at [venue and address]. Tickets are [price] and can be purchased at [web address] or by calling [telephone number]. For more information on the show visit www.ATimeToDance.homestead.com.

Libby Skala has charmed audiences over the last few years with her internationally acclaimed solo play *LiLiA!* about her Oscar-nominated grandmother **Lilia Skala**. Now she returns with *A Time to Dance*, about Lilia's younger sister, Austrian modern dancer and award winning dance therapy pioneer **Elizabeth "Lisl" Polk**. Libby interweaves spoken word, improvised movement and creative dance to portray her great aunt, who dances to her own dazzling stories of a turbulent life spanning the 20th Century. Born in 1902 Vienna, Lisl survives two world wars, immigrates to New York, endures 9/11, and dances the Macarena on her hundredth birthday.

The daughter of a Catholic mother and Jewish father, Lisl deals with the conflicting forces of anti-Semitism in her own home as she dreams of becoming a famous dancer. Met with opposition from an autocratic father, she finds unexpected ways to fulfill her dream, while struggling to emerge from the shadow of her famous older sister. This intriguing modern dancer unexpectedly steals the show, proving herself to be the riotous and controversial star of her own life.

Playwright/Actress **Libby Skala** has performed *A Time to Dance* at The New York International Fringe Festival, in Vancouver as part of the 25th anniversary season of Pacific Theatre, in Germany at TU Dresden and Theater im Greenhouse (Berlin) and at the London Fringe Theatre Festival where she won the "Best Solo Performer" Award. The show has also received an award from The Pandella Cultural Fund in Switzerland. Libby's first one-woman play *LiLiA!*, has been performed across North America and in Europe, including the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Non-

solo work includes Viola in the St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival's production of *Twelfth Night* and Jeffrey Sweet's *Value of Names* at Theatre J in Washington DC. She appeared with Nicole Kidman in the film *Birth*.

(Subject of the show) Elizabeth Polk's broad professional background marked her as one of the country's authorities in teaching the joy of movement to emotionally, physically and mentally handicapped children. She had a long and rich career, teaching dance at every age level from preschoolers to adult education classes and in settings ranging from housing projects to college campuses. Born and educated in Vienna, Austria, her early music and dance studies included not only ballet, but Dalcroze eurhythmics, modern dance and gymnastics. She performed as a concert dancer and later acquired a physical education license enabling her to launch her own dance studio in Austria. In the United States, she pioneered creative dance and worked with children at the Children's Center for Creative Arts at Adelphi University, as well as in her own studio. She was a charter member of the American Dance Therapy Association, co-founded the National Dance Teachers Guild and taught methodology in teaching dance to children in Adelphi's dance department. In 1995, at the age of 93, she was honored with a lifetime achievement award as a chief pioneer in dance/movement therapy at the American Dance Therapy Association's 30th annual convention.

RUNNING TIME: 70 MIN. / GENERAL AUDIENCE / WWW.LIBBYSKALA.COM

A Time to Dance

Press Quotes

"*A Time to Dance* provides a worthwhile reason to bask in the company of a tenacious woman who fled Nazi-occupied Austria for New York. Funny...captivating...charming...Ms. Skala's convincing portrayal is the reason Polk is brought to life with such vibrancy."

- Gia Kourlas, *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

"A sparkling one-woman show. A vivacious actor, Skala brings childlike exuberance and lots of freeform expressive dance movement to her poignant portrayal of an undaunted survivor. Critics Pick."

- Lisa Jo Sagolla, *BACK STAGE*

"A beautiful life story worth telling, and hearing. Skala skillfully portrays her great aunt Elizabeth Polk... exuberantly with dance and drama. The music is fanciful and expressive - much like the performance by Skala, whose face speaks 1,000 words. (Four Stars)"

- Kathy Rumleski, *THE LONDON FREE PRESS*

"With elegant triumph, Skala manages to hold the audience's attention—and keep it smiling—with a pointed tale of hardship.... She ultimately leaves the audience with a...message of belief in a great and invisible love, and of faith in the strength of one's 'core' that nothing can touch. (Four Stars)"

- Katy Reddin, *TIME OUT NEW YORK*

"This is Libby Skala's much-applauded one-woman show...interweaving narrative and motion, the successor to her knock-'em-dead *Lilia!* of nine years ago."

- Jerry Tallmer, *CHELSEA NOW & DOWNTOWN EXPRESS*

"The elegant one-person play depicted the rich life of Austrian dancer Elizabeth Polk...A lovely dancer, Skala skillfully wove modern dance into glimpses of how her great-aunt, who lived to be 99, survived by never allowing severe disappointments to cloud the vibrancy and beauty of life."

- Dottie Ashley, *THE POST AND COURIER*

"*A Time to Dance* testifies to the theatrical power of a charismatic performer...[Skala's] extraordinary charm and skill brings to vivid life her great-aunt, captivating the audience and drawing them into Polk's extraordinary life...filled with humor."

- Miriam Rinn, *THE JEWISH STANDARD*

"This one-woman play is a portrait of a woman so full of love...that she danced her way through life. Events that made others shudder and give up, she was able to take as gifts. Ms. Skala has an excellent sense of dramatic rhythm...a polished gem."

- R. Pikser, *THEATRE SCENE*

"Libby Skala glows in her poignant portrayal of a zany great aunt. Skala captivates from the moment she leaps on stage...Her gift as storyteller is undeniable and the intensity of her energy unrelenting. Lisl's (Skala's) anecdotes are generously embellished with outrageous...comic commentary.... Her riotous sense of humor and...honesty...further endear us to this electric woman. By the show's conclusion she has the audience enthusiastically clapping to the rhythm of her final dance number. **GRADE A-**"

- Rachel Ward, *THE CHARLESTON CITY PAPER*

"Enchanting and flawless! You charmed our socks off the minute you stepped out on stage. I don't know how you could improve on the performance. "

- Jordan R. Young, Author of *Acting Solo: The Art of One-man Shows*

"It's difficult to explain accurately the charm of this show. As played by her niece, Polk was clearly one of the world's rarities - a deeply happy person who possessed the gift of bringing joy to others. Skala is an extraordinary performer. This is a great story, told with economy, verve and just a grain of the magical. It's for everyone."

- Carolyn Raship, *CAVIGLIA'S CABINET OF CURIOSITIES*

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Production History

New York International Fringe Festival	New York, NY	August 2009
Piccolo Spoleto Festival (Footlight Players Theatre)	Charleston, SC	June 2009
Pacific Theatre	Vancouver, BC	March-April 2009
Desert Foothills Theater	Scottsdale, AZ	January 2009
Theater im Greenhouse	Berlin, Germany	July 2008
The Shantigar Foundation	Rowe, MA	July 2008
San Francisco Towers	San Francisco, CA	June 2008
Lapham Community Center	New Canaan, CT	April 2008
Sundays at JASA (Jewish Assoc. Services for the Aged)	New York, NY	March 2008
Theater im Greenhouse	Berlin, Germany	November 2007
Die Buehne Theatre, Technische Universität Dresden	Dresden, Germany	November 2007
Claremont House	Oakland, CA	October 2007
American Dance Therapy Assoc. Annual Conference	Brooklyn, NY	September 2007
Franke Tobey Jones	Tacoma, WA	September 2007
Daystar	Seattle, WA	September 2007
London Fringe Theatre Festival	London, ON	July-August 2007
Principia College Summer Session	Elsah, IL	July 2007
Emerging Artists Theatre, One Woman Standing Series	New York, NY	April 2007
78 th Street Theatre Lab	New York, NY	September 2006
St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival	Prescott, ON	July 2006
Toronto Fringe Theatre Festival	Toronto, ON	July 2006