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STORIES FROM THE VIOLINS OF HOPE Comes to Bondi Pavillion in May

Performances run 31 May to 18 June.

By: [Stephi Wild](#) Mar. 30, 2023



Stories from the Violins of Hope is a new stage play which brings to life the powerful true stories of violins played during the Holocaust, in ghettos, forests and concentration camps.

The moving and pertinent true story tracks the many violins which were saved during and after World War II by the Weinstains, a family of luthiers (makers and repairers of stringed instruments)

The play will be accompanied by Live music curated by Dr Noreen Green, founder and conductor of the Los Angeles Jewish Philharmonic Orchestra. Masterfully interwoven with music, this is the World Premiere of a live adaptation of the acclaimed film seen at the United Nations and by audiences world-wide, celebrating remarkable stories of human resilience and the struggle to restore beauty to the world.

In 2022 playwright [Ronda Spinak](#), founder and artistic director of The Braid, the largest independent Jewish theatre in the US, came to Sydney following the LA premiere, to workshop the play with Moira Blumenthal Productions.

The play is based on many conversations Lisa Pearl Rosenbaum (USA) who had with Israeli violin maker Amnon Weinstein who owned many violins people sold to him who were captured during the Holocaust. She also did research on the individual violins which his father, and his son restored.

Violins of Hope were played by humble klezmers in Eastern Europe and by virtuosi of the finest orchestras, each has a story to tell in the play.

The violinist who cannot bear to play the violin of her murdered Jewish friend but wants her to be remembered...The railway worker who rescued a violin thrown from a train bound for a concentration camp and after the war, honors its owner's last wish....The father who calls his violin 'Friend' because playing it for food saved his family from starvation....The waltz that saved a violinist from execution. The boy whose violin is his avenging weapon against the Nazis.

Such a heartbreaking chapter in history, but this slice - this thread of hopefulness - was so restorative and beautiful - patron The Braid

"As you hear the stories of the violins, you're also hearing the incredible family stories woven through, and that's what makes a stage play different from a concert," [Ronda Spinak](#).

Sydney violinist Ben Adler will perform the voice of the violins live on stage. Ben founded klezmer fusion band CHUTNEY in 2019, and the Nomad String Quartet in 2021. Upon graduating from Sydney Conservatorium of Music, he joined the Australian Chamber Orchestra (ACO) where he performed and toured nationally as both section member and soloist also plus with the ACO Collective.

Luthier Moshe Weinstein founded his violin-making and repair shop in Israel in 1939. He owned many violins Jewish people had sold to him who were caught up in Holocaust and Moshe stashed them away in an attic for over 50 years. Some had been rescued from musicians who could not bear to play German instruments, some came from survivors who arrived in Israel after the war with little more than their violins. Every violin came with a story. When Moshe passed away, his son Amnon took over the collection, named the Violins of Hope. Through concerts, exhibitions and other projects, these instruments serve to educate and memorialise lost lives.

Famous violinists who've had close ties with the Violins of Hope include Pinchas Zukerman, [Itzhak Perlman](#), Shlomo Mintz, Hagai Shaham, [Daniel Hope](#) Niv Ashkenazi (who has a Violin of Hope on permanent loan from the Weinstains, which he played in the original filmed version of the play) They have been played by The Berlin Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Israel Philharmonic, members of the Berlin Philharmonic and in concerts all over the world.