

## Letters to Sala

Arlene Hutton

### Dramatic

ZUSI: 12 to 15

GUCIA: 12 to 15

SALA: 12 to 15

RACHEL: 12 to 15

*In October of 1940, SALA GARNCARZ, a Jewish teen in Sosnowiec, Poland, left her home and family and reported to a Nazi labor camp, volunteering to go in the place of her older sister. Although SALA was told she would work for only 6 weeks and be paid, she spent the next 5 years in seven different slave labor camps, in Poland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. She received over 300 pieces of mail, which she managed to hide. Over 40 years later she gave these letters to her daughter and granddaughters and they are now in the archives of the New York Public Library. The play tracks SALA's story as a teenager during the Holocaust and in New York City more than half a century later.*

*Schatzlar Labor Camp, Czechoslovakia, in May of 1945. SALA is on stage, reading a letter that is so old and frequently read that it is nearly falling apart. Pieces of paper are everywhere. SALA looks at the papers in amazement. SALA hears voices from*

*offstage and quickly puts the letter in her pocket. ZUSI, GUCIA, and RACHEL enter, excitedly. The lines overlap.*

ZUSI: Look! Look! Look!

GUCIA: They're everywhere!

SALA: What is it?

RACHEL: Don't touch them. Don't pick them up.

ZUSI: [Pointing.] There's the plane.

RACHEL: Are they going to bomb us?

SALA: Where's the plane?

GUCIA: Whose plane is it?

ZUSI: It's in the clouds. I can't see.

SALA: What do the papers say?

RACHEL: Don't touch them.

GUCIA: Maybe the war is over.

RACHEL: Maybe it's a trap.

SALA: How will we know?

RACHEL: Don't pick it up.

GUCIA: I can almost read it.

ZUSI: Do you think it's . . .

RACHEL: Is that a guard coming?

[*They all freeze.*]

SALA: I don't hear anything.

GUCIA: I don't hear . . .

SALA: I don't hear anything. It's completely quiet.

[*A long pause, while they listen.*]

GUCIA: It's too quiet.

SALA: It's never been this quiet.

ZUSI: I'm going to pick one up.

RACHEL: Don't pick it up. Just look at it. Don't touch it.

SALA: I'll watch out for the guard.

GUCIA: No. No! It is!

ZUSI: My God. My God!

SALA: [*Leaning over to read one herself.*] What?

RACHEL: What?

GUCIA: It's over.

[*They pick up some of the leaflets and read them.*]

ZUSI: [*Reading.*] Liberation.

SALA: What?

ZUSI: The war is over. That's what it says.

GUCIA: Germany has surrendered.

[*RACHEL begins crying hysterically.*]

ZUSI: Germany has surrendered!

SALA: It's over?

GUCIA: It's over! It's over!

SALA: Can we believe it?

[*They yell towards offstage, announcing the news.*]

GUCIA: The war is over!

ZUSI: [*Overlapping.*] The war is over!

SALA: [*Overlapping.*] The war is over!

RACHEL: [*Overlapping, still crying*] The war is over!

GUCIA: [*Overlapping.*] It's over!

ZUSI: [*Overlapping.*] The war is over!

[*GUCIA and ZUSI grab RACHEL and gleefully run offstage, laughing and crying. We hear them relaying the news offstage. SALA reaches into her pocket and pulls out her letter from home. She speaks to it.*]

SALA: What do we do now?

[*She runs off after the others.*]