

CAPE COD
HARWICH JUNIOR
THEATRE
COMPANY

A True Story of
Art and Resistance
during World War II



RED SWANS

— WORLD PREMIERE —

BY WENDY LEMENT DIRECTED BY NINA SCHUESSLER

APRIL 29 - MAY 15, 2022

THURSDAY, FRIDAY, AND SATURDAY EVENINGS AT 7 PM AND SUNDAYS AT 4 PM

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Cape Cod Theatre Company

Presents

Red Swans

by

By Wendy Lement

Producing Artistic Director

Kate Pazakis

Directed by

Nina K. Schuessler

Scenic and Lighting Design by

James P. Byrne

Projection Design by

William Hopper

Costume Design by

Robin McLaughlin

Sound Design by

J Hagenbuckle

Technical Direction by

Matt Kohler

Cast of Characters

Lisa Gervai Egler	Brittany Rolfs*
Katja Caselles	Leanne McLaughlin
Franz; Guard	Matthew Gardner
Professor Tomk	Edward Donovan
Nixe Albrecht	Lindsay Walbridge
Meme (Mietje) Bontjes van Beek	Alice Murphy
Cato Bontjes van Beek	Emily Entwistle
Heinz Strelow	Christopher Houghton
Harro Schulze Boysen	David Wallace
Libertas Schulze Boysen	Kathy Hamilton
Gestapo Agent	Robert Moore
SS Agent; Polish bartender	Matthew Lambert
Elvira Paro	Samantha Walker
Courtney Bolton	Art Student; Guard
Olivia Thompson	Art Student; Prisoner
Ensemble	Art Students, Watchmen, Berliners; Gestapo; Guards; Prisoners, etc.

PLACE

Act I - Berlin Germany

Act II Lobowo, Poland; Berlin; Satellite of Buchenwald Concentration Camp

PROJECTIONS

Katja documented her and Lisa's experiences in a diary made up of gouache paintings and handwritten notes. Images from Katja's Diary comprise the scenic projections of RED SWANS along with Lisa's paintings and charcoal drawing of the camp.

TIME Span: 1940 -1945

1940 – The Perfect Aryan Foot: Katja and Lisa meet at Art School

1941 – The Red Orchestra: Katja and Lisa join the resistance

1942 – The Arrests – members of the Red Orchestra are arrested

1943 – Firebombing of Kaiser Wilhelm Church; Trials and Executions

1944 – Buchenwald Concentration Camp

1945 – The War Ends

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and stage managers in the United States of America.*

Production Team

Producing Artistic Director	Kate Pazakis
Director	Nina K. Schuessler
Scenic and Lighting Design	James P. Byrne
Projection Design	William J. Hopper
Costume Design	Robin McLaughlin
Sound Design	J Hagenbuckle
Technical Direction/ Computer Programmer	Matthew Kohler
Production Stage Manager	Samantha Walker
Swan Choreography	Lisa Canto
Properties	Marybeth Travis
Set Construction	Matthew Kohler
Lighting Operator	Kyle Goff
Sound Operator/Computer Programmer	J Hagenbuckle
Scenic Painting	James P. Byrne; Matt Kohler
Sign Painting	Marybeth Travis
Poster Design	William Hopper
Program	Terri Adamsons
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Red Swans, by Wendy Lement

Overview of the Play: Red Swans explores the power of art as means of defiance and survival. The play tells the story of the early lives of young artists who attended the Kunstakademie, a prestigious art school in Berlin during WWII. Both students, Lisa Gervai Egler and Katja Caselles had Jewish mothers. While in school, Lisa and Katja were recruited into a resistance group by a talented potter Cato Bontjes Von Beek. They hid partisans, served as couriers, aided French and Russian prisoners, and embarked on other dangerous missions.

Following a daring operation, a majority of the Red Orchestra's members were arrested and murdered in Plötzensee prison. Women, including Cato, were beheaded. Katja and Lisa escaped to a farm in Poland, where Katja's parents found a safe house. The restless teenagers made frequent trips from the safe house to Berlin to visit Lisa's family, obtain ration stamps for food, and replenish their arts supplies. Their final trip to Berlin coincided with the firebombing of the city. The girls took refuge in the basement of the Kaiser Wilhelm Church; they hid there when it was bombed and partially destroyed.

After the firebombing, Lisa tried to find her parents who had fled to Munich. On route Lisa was detained and taken to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp. The war ended soon after, and the camp was liberated. Against all odds, Lisa and Katja survived and were reunited in Berlin. Throughout their ordeal they created art to keep their spirits up. Katja later recalled that their artwork gave them hope and a reason to stay alive.

Research: Lisa's daughter, Nina Schuessler is Producing Artistic Director of Cape Cod Theatre Company in Harwich, Massachusetts. In 2011 playwright and colleague Wendy Lement began working with Nina on the development of the play. Over the next decade, Wendy conducted research on the Red Orchestra and the lives of the protagonists. Nina had interviewed Katja twice in Berlin, and provided Wendy with interview transcripts. In 2012 Wendy traveled to Berlin; Lubowo, Poland; and the Buchenwald Concentration Camp to trace Lisa and Katja's journey.

Nina kept a diary of her mother's recollections from WWII, on rare occasions when Lisa shared them. In 2019 Nina read the diary to Wendy, who recorded and transcribed it. The diary provided insights into Lisa's perspective of her wartime experiences and added details that proved essential to the play. When Lisa died, she left Nina a "diary" consisting of approximately thirty gouaches, painted by Katja, chronicling their amazing journey. These gouaches encapsulated key moments they shared, and served as inspiration for visual world of the play.

Historical Background: Lisa Gervai Egler was born in Berlin in 1924. Lisa's mother's family was Jewish, of Polish and Hungarian ancestry. Her father was German and worked in the Berlin stock market. Lisa was a talented artist who was accepted into the Kunstakademie at age 16 in 1940. She met fellow artist Katja Caselles, when she asked to borrow a pencil. That was the beginning of their life-long friendship. They shared a love of art, Bach, Goethe, and life. They were allowed to stay in school until the Wannsee Conference in 1942. Katja and Lisa kept their student papers, which they used to avoid being captured; whenever stopped, they innocently proclaim that they were "just students."

Cato Bontjes Van Beek (who was Christian) became a close friend of Katja's. Cato ran a ceramic studio owned by her father and hired Lisa to help. Later Cato told Katja that she was part of an emerging anti-fascist group. The Gestapo called the movement "Die Rote Kapelle" or "The Red Orchestra" – an attempt to discredit the group as a communist spy network. In fact, the movement never had a name or a common political goal beyond defeating the Nazis. Its members came from all walks of life. The oldest member arrested was eighty-six and the youngest was sixteen. Forty percent of members were women. They were Jews, Christians, communists, Catholics, and political conservatives.

Post-War Information: Lisa met David Eizenberg, a soldier in the U.S. Army, who later headed the JOINT Relief Committee in Berlin through the UNRRA. They married and came to the US. Lisa worked as an Occupational Therapist at the VA Hospital in Brockton, MA. Katja stayed in Berlin and reunited with her fiancé Karl Meirowsky. Katja began "Die Badewanne Cabaret" in Berlin in 1948; the first theatre cabaret in Berlin in the post-war. It was a cabaret for artists, by artists. Die Badewanne was extremely successful, presenting neo-expressionistic drama with post-modern sets, backdrops, jazz, and performance art. Louis Armstrong visited the Cabaret when he traveled to Germany. Katja's "Die Badewanne" was partly responsible for bringing art back to Berlin in the post-war years. Katja and Carl moved to Ibiza, Spain in the early 1950's and Katja became well-known as one of the Ibiza 59 artists.

WHO'S WHO in the CAST

COURTNEY PIERCE BOLTON (*Ensemble Student; Watchman; Guard*) has acted in many Cape theatres and got her start as a Glasstown Player. She is overjoyed to get her stage legs back in Red Swans after a hiatus raising her two sons. Some favorite roles include MaryAnn in *Only Child* by Cape playwright Larry Marsland, Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Yonah in *Children of Eden*, Laurie in *Oklahoma!*, Mona (then) in *Come Back to the Five & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean!* Her performances at CCTC/HJT were memorable as the Frog in *Honk!*, the Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*, and in *Beehive* as Janis Joplin.

EDWARD DONOVAN (*Professor Tomk; Zookeeper*) is grateful to be a part of this story. He's excited to work with old theater friends, and meet new ones. He grew up at the HJT, and his recent roles include George Newnes in *The Sherlock Problem*, Caterpillar & Baby in *Alice*, Sir Toby in *Twelfth Night*, Tuck in *Tuck Everlasting*, and Emperor in *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Welcome! to Kate P., thanks to Sam for so much work, and endless thanks to Nina.

EMILY ENTWISLE (*Cato Bontjes van Beek*) is a theatre program graduate of Dean College (B.A., acting concentration). She has performed in Langford Wilson's *Balm in Gilead* (Darlene), *Lysistrata* (Myrrhine) and *Medium: Rare* (Boggy) to name a few at Cape Cod Community College; for Dean College's productions she adapted scripts for *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and served as Assistant Director of *Twelfth Night*, and a Dramaturge for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Emily enjoys acting in all forms and has worked on various film projects with GR Films portraying Roberta in *Night Owls*, the Hostess in *Dessert*, and Alice in *Private Eyes* film, *New Years*. She's excited to return to her acting roots and is thrilled to portray an artist and activist so close to her heart. Emily is honored to be a part of this production

MATT GARDNER (*Franz; Watchman; Guard*) This is Matt's first play since playing one of the seven dwarves when he was six. His favorite pastime is reading Harry Potter to his son and performing as all the characters. He dedicates this performance to his grandfathers, both served in WWII. He is thrilled to be a part of the HJT/CCTC community.

KATHY HAMILTON (*Libertas Schulze - Boysen*) - is honored to have been cast in *Red Swans*. She has trod the boards at numerous Cape theatres over the years, most recently at CDG as "The last Countess" in *Murder on the Orient Express*. Her past credits at CCTC/HJT include multiple roles in *Bill W. and Dr. Bob*; Wardrobe in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Ghost of Christmas Past in *A Christmas Carol*. Kathy lives in Chatham with her actor/director husband, Scott.

CHRIS HOUGHTON (*Heinz Strelow*) is a Cape Cod kid, born and raised in Barnstable, MA. Chris has been performing for large crowds since his days acting in the Barnstable High School Drama Club, whose impressive program was featured in a docuseries by Warner Brothers in 2008. Chris' #1 passion is performing stand-up comedy. Having been inspired by his family and many professional comedians, Chris enjoys nothing more than helping people forget about the woes of everyday life by getting lost in a good joke. Chris is also a video producer and sketch comedy enthusiast. He started the sketch-comedy YouTube troupe 'WorkTime Comedy' out of college, whose videos have been viewed more than 10,000 times. Chris recently appeared as Dr. John H. Watson in *The Sherlock Problem*.

MATTHEW LAMBERT (*Polish Bartender, SS Agent, Guard*) This is Matthew's first play with CCTC/HJT. At the University of New Hampshire, Matthew studied Finance and Theater. He is a working Actor in both Film and Theater. Matthew is very excited to shed light on a forgotten story from the past in this Production of *Red Swans*.

LEANNE MCCLAUGHLIN (*Katja Caselles*) is happy to be making her return to the Cape Cod Theatre Company's stage (last time was in 2007 for a collaboration with Theatre Lila on *The Lear Project*) and to be working on this special play with Nina, who she hadn't worked with since being directed by her in *Bridge to Terabithia* in 1998. Leanne would like to thank Nina for being a mentor, another mother and a friend over the last couple of decades. Good luck on this next chapter. Leanne is also working on a feature film with her partner which will be shot on Cape later this year. Stay tuned! www.leannemclaughlin.com

BOB MOORE (*Gestapo Agent*) Bob's last appearances here were as Tim Slickmann in *Crude*, the *Climate Change Musical* and Dr. Livesey, *Treasure Island*. Favorite roles have included Dr. Montague in *Haunting of Hill House* at the Academy Playhouse, Ernst Ludwig in *Cabaret*, *Nashoba Players*, Dr. Watson in *Sherlock Holmes, the Final Case* - Sudbury Savoyard, and Judge Danforth (in *The Crucible, Misfit Players*). Red Swans remembers an overlooked past, and Bob is honored to play a part.

ALICE MURPHY (*Meme*) is a senior at Monomoy Regional High School. Last summer, she began her internship at CCTC/HJT and has been working with classes ever since. She is honored to play a part in this powerful story and would like to thank Nina and the whole production team for making this happen.

BRITTANY ROLFS* (*Lisa Gervai Eglar*) was last seen at CCTC/HJT as the White Queen/ March Hare in *Alice*, which she also directed. Upcoming productions: Woman in *Marry Me A Little* at Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre running June-July, and Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale* with Campfire Quorum in Provincetown running on Sundays throughout the summer. She performs weekly at Tin Pan Alley and The Post Office Cafe in Provincetown. She dedicates this performance to the memory of Lisa Gervai Eglar.

OLIVIA THOMPSON (*Ensemble*) is a Sophomore at Barnstable High School. She has been acting since she was 8 years old. Her most recent roles include Winnie Foster in *Tuck Everlasting* and Briar Rose in *Sleeping Beauty: Briar Rose* at CCTC/HJT, Minihata in *Over A Barrel*, a radio show with Cape Noir Radio Theater, and this fall she was in a performance with the Young Company (YoCo) at Cape Rep Theatre. Apart from acting she enjoys singing, reading and writing, and fashion design. This was such a great show to be apart of and she is so grateful for the experience. Enjoy the show!

LINDSAY WALBRIDGE (*Nixe Allbrecht*) is proud to be acting in her first play at the CCTC/HJT. Lindsay was born and raised in Ashland, Massachusetts and attended school in New Hampshire for communications and film. To be a part of such a mighty production representing the sweet character Nixe, is a true honor. She hopes she can bring as much joy to you as she receives from doing what she loves.

SAMANTHA WALKER (*Elivira Paro and Production Stage Manager*) works as a first-grade teacher at Hyannis West Elementary. She also serves as clerk on the Board of Directors for CCTC/HJT and is a teacher with the theater as well. She enjoys singing, acting, working with her students, and spending time with family. She would like to dedicate this performance to her parents, especially her mother, who continues to be her source of strength.

DAVID C. WALLACE (*Harro Schulze - Boysen*) is a Graduate of the Boston University School of Fine Art and has been privileged to work in quite a few productions at CCTC/HJT starting with the *Scottish Play* as McDuff to Nina's Lady McDuff in the mid-eighties, and most recently in *Wolf Hollow*; *Tuck Everlasting*; *Treasure Island*; and *The Boxcar Children*. Thanks for the fab opportunities.

Who's Who in Production

KATE PAZAKIS (*Producing Artistic Director*) is thrilled to step into the role of her mentor, Nina Schuessler as Producing Artistic Director at the CCTC/HJT. For 6 years she was the Producing Artistic Director of Rockwell Table & Stage in Los Angeles. During that time, she created "*The UMPO series parodies*" which became one of the hottest theatrical series in Los Angeles. It was featured on Entertainment Tonight, Access Hollywood Live, and many morning shows. She was a co-producer of *American Idiot* on the West End and produced weekly shows for Jeff Goldblum and Ross Matthews. As a singer, she has sung backup for many famous people including Carole King, Cyndi Lauper, Kristin Chenoweth, Rosie O'Donnell. As an actor, she has performed on Broadway, at Carnegie Hall, Off-Broadway, Regionally, and was in many national commercials. Her favorite job ever was as a guest star on *SOUTH PARK*.

WENDY LEMENT (*Playwright*) has written over forty plays that have been produced regionally and nationally, including *Salem's Daughters*; *Remember Last Night*; *Woman with the Red Kerchief* (co-written with Firouzeh Mostashari); *Dolphins: The Myth of Persephone*; and *Keri Tarr: Cat Detective*—based on her children's book—which premiered at Cape Cod Theatre Company. While Chair of Theatre at Regis College, Lement created a series of oral history plays with students: *I'll Be Seeing You* (about war brides during WWII); *Testimonio* (exploring the plight of human rights workers and people who fled Central America); *Radio Stories* (highlighting female pioneers of radio), *Six Pairs of Hands* (about Gloucester fishermen's wives), and *Voicings: The Rosenberg Case*. Lement is Founding Artistic Director of Theatre Espresso, which continues to tour with plays that she wrote and co-wrote. During her tenure the company received a National Endowment for the Arts award for *American Tapestry: Children of the Bread and Roses Strike*. As Producer of Wheelock Family Theatre, she co-wrote an adaption of Pinocchio set in Japan. Lement wrote the introduction to Suzan Zeder's *The Ware Trilogy* (Dramatic Publishing), co-authored *And Justice for Some: Exploring American Justice through Drama and Theatre* (Heinemann), and wrote "*Theatre-in-Education as a Catalyst for Civic Dialogue*," for Learning Through Theatre (Routledge). Lement holds a PhD from New York University.

NINA K. SCHUESSLER (*Director*) recently retired as Producing Artistic Director at CCTC/HJT, after 26 years. Nina is thrilled and honored to welcome Kate Pazakis to the role and to direct the first play *Red Swans*, under her leadership. Nina produced and/or directed over 270 plays and musicals and is very grateful to bring *Red Swans* to her theatre home. She has been a driving force in Cape Cod theatre for four decades. The Arts Foundation of Cape Cod recognized Nina for her Lifetime Achievement in the Arts and for her commitment to inspiring people of all ages to discover and nurture their love for the performing arts. Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theatre presented Nina the Art Service Award in 2019. Recent directing credits include the world premieres of *The Sherlock Problem* by Susan Lumenello; *Wolf Hollow* by Lauren Wolk, adapted by Susan Kosoff; *The Secret Garden*; a musical by Susan Kosoff and Jane Staab; and *Tuck Everlasting* based on Natalie Babbitt's story and adapted by Mark J. Frataroli. Nina also directed Peter Boyer's *Ellis Island*, a collaboration with Cotuit Center for The Arts and Cape Symphony.

JAMES P. BYRNE (*Scenic and Lighting Design*) Jim is an actor/director/designer/teacher who grew up at CCTC/HJT. He has produced theatre from Boston to New Orleans, and New York to LA. Locally, Jim also worked extensively with Wheelock Family Theatre, The Gold Dust Orphans, and Provincetown Theater Company. Most recently, Jim directed and designed *Sleeping Beauty*, *Briar Rose*, *Pippin*, and *Matilda the Musical*. He designed the sets for *Silver Threads*, *A Rock 'n Roll Tribute to Linda Ronstadt* and *Alice, the New Musical* for CCTC/HJT. Jim is working his way through the Shakespeare canon. He is currently working on a one-man King Lear.

ROBIN MCLAUGHLIN (*Costume Design*) spent many years as our resident costume designer and most recently returned to design *Madeline's Christmas*, *Tuck Everlasting*, and *Alice the New Musical*. She is the resident costume designer at Cape Rep Theatre, as well as having her own business making journey bags and custom wedding accessories.

J HAGENBUCKLE (*Sound Design*) J is a freelance sound designer, composer, and musician. He is an NEA/TCG Design Fellow, an Elliot Norton Award recipient and earned an MFA in Theater Sound from Brandeis University. He is creator, writer and producer for *Cape Noir Radio Theater* heard twice monthly on WOMR radio in Provincetown and streaming worldwide on Dramafy.com.

WILLIAM J. HOPPER (*Projection Design*) William is originally from Dennis and has been involved with CCTC/HJT for nearly 30 years. In 2009 he graduated from The Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. He lives in New York City and works as Graphic Artist in set and prop design for feature films and television. TV credits include *The Americans*, *The Knick*, *Succession*, and *Billions*. Feature films include *In the Heights*, *John Wick 3: Parabellum*, *Uncut Gems*, *The Intern*, and the upcoming Disney sequel *Hocus Pocus 2*. To see more of his work, visit 1717graphics.com

MATTHEW KOHLER (*Technical Direction*) has been with CCTC/HJT since 2015 as the Technical and Facilities Director. Though he tends to stay behind the scenes, he does make the occasional appearance on the CCTC/HJT stage. His most recent roles include Buddy in *ELF the Musical* (2019), Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol* (2017), and Seymour Krelborn in *Little Shop of Horrors* (2017). He is very excited to be a part of bringing *The Red Swan* to life and is grateful for the opportunity to work with the fantastic cast and production team at CCTC/HJT.

MARYBETH TRAVIS (*Properties; Signage*) has been happily applying her graphic arts, window dressing, and wild goose chasing skills to sign painting, set dressing, and props at CCTC/HJT since 2007.

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Rebecca Hughes	Anna Murphy	Richard A. Smith
IMO Kevin Hughes	Gerald Najarian	Virginia Smyth
Mark & Sheila Hull	Wendee Nussle	Kathryn Storm
Jane & Stergios	Christopher Ostrom	IMO Hope Cavendish
Karantzoulidis	Debbie and Bruce Paige	Laurie Sullivan
Link Thacher	Diana Parad	Maryann Taormina
Alice Krieg	Pem Schultz	Kathleen Teahan
Sharon Krysiak	IHO Nina Schuessler	Ellen Vacco
Janet Lee	Susan Peterson	Liz and Dave Van Wye
Mary Ellen Loreface	Sandi Philbrook	Margery Gray Walsh
Carryl Lynn, Forrest	Bob & Paula Phillips	Patty and Peter Watson
& Alexis	Connie L. Pina	John & Dona Webber
Lois M. Mahoney	Sandi B. Porter	Jack Wilson
Clifford Manchester	Jane Porter	Carol Ann Yeaple
Carmine & Joyce		

UPCOMING 2022!

Indoor Stage

BOB MARLEY'S THREE LITTLE BIRDS

July 8 - July 30. Wednesday - Saturday at 7, Sunday at 2

This joyful musical is about Ziggy who is afraid to leave the house. She's too busy worrying about tropical storms, evil spirits, and the sneaky, hair-grabbing trickster, Duppy. But, with the help of his feathered friends, Ziggy will learn that "every little thing is gonna be alright!" Don't miss this timeless tale of peace and love that uses classic Reggae music to jam Jamaican style! Story by Cedella Marley. Music and Lyrics by Bob Marley

SCHOOL OF ROCK

August 5 - 28th. Wednesday - Saturday at 7pm, Sundays at 3pm

After being kicked out of his rock band, Dewey Finn becomes a substitute teacher at an uptight elementary private school, only to try and turn his class into a rock band. Story by Julian Fellowes. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Lyrics by Glenn Slater

THE LADIES OF STEPHEN SONDHEIM

September 1 - 11. Thursday - Sunday at 7pm

The hit musical revue of your favorite Stephen Sondheim songs presented with electrifying performances by incredible vocalists.

Outdoor Stage

LILY'S PURPLE PLASTIC PURSE

July 1 - July 21; Monday - Thursday at 3 pm

Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse is a tale that emphasizes the importance of being considerate, apologizing when in the wrong, and forgiving others when they apologize. Story by Kevin Kling and directed by Jane Staab.

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

July 25 - August 16. Sunday - Tuesday at 6 pm

The widely known tale takes place on a farm and concerns a pig named Wilbur and his devoted friend Charlotte, the spider who manages to save his life by writing about him on her web. Story by E.B White and directed by Rob Zapple.

FAIRY TALE HEROES

August 3 - 19. Wednesday - Friday at 10 am

Three twenty minute fairy tales adapted by local playwrights. Presented by the Junior Players and directed by James Byrne.

To purchase tickets:

Box office: 508-432-2002

Online: www.capecodtheatrecompany.org