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Sarasota Jewish Theatre Takes "I Never Saw Another Butterfly" to Sarasota and Manatee Schools This Month

The show will be presented to over 3,000 students at nine schools

SARASOTA, Fla. (Nov. 5, 2026) – Reprised from last season, Sarasota Jewish Theatre is pleased to share that its educational production of Celeste Raspanti's "I Never Saw Another Butterfly" will be performed for over 3,000 middle and high school students at nine schools in Sarasota and Manatee counties this month. The tour is made possible in part by Presenting Angel Leonard Engelberg, in memory of his wife Ida, who had a passion for butterflies.

Inspired by *I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942–1944*, the play is a stunning testament to resilience, humanity, and courage in the face of unimaginable hardship.

Nya Chambliss, 17, who portrays Raja in the play, stated, "I am so grateful to bring Raja's story to life as part of a production that teaches children about important moments in history that are often left untaught. I never knew much about the Holocaust before this; it was more of a lesson done for remembrance and we only talked about Anne Frank. Now I know about places like Terezin, other stories of survivors and of people lost, and I have a more rounded understanding of what went on during that time."

Gabriel V. Ortiz, vice principal of Oasis Middle School in Sarasota, said about last season's tour, "'I Never Saw Another Butterfly' had a real impact on my students. They connected with the children of Terezín through their poems and artwork, and it inspired them to use writing and poetry to tell their own stories. They saw how words can help us make sense of difficult experiences and share them with others."

For more information about Sarasota Jewish Theatre's programs and mainstage season, visit SarasotaJewishTheatre.org.

Sarasota Jewish Theatre's 2026-2027 season is supported in part by the Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, The Exchange, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, and Manatee Community Foundation.

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Sarasota Jewish Theatre (SJT) celebrates Jewish life and culture in all its beauty and complexity. SJT audiences enjoy contemporary and classic plays and programs which highlight the uniqueness and universality of Jewish heritage, values, humor, and cultural life. SJT is a proud member of the Alliance for Jewish Theatre. Visit sarasotajewishtheatre.org to learn more.