

# LIFESTYLES TODAY

## A beautiful life story worth telling, and hearing

**KATHY RUMLESKI**, Free Press Reporter



**INSPIRED BY PAST:** Libby Skala skillfully portrays her great aunt in *A Time to Dance*.

With her cheerfulness, Austrian accent and music-making, you might think you're watching Maria von Trapp.

But our entertainer is writer/performer Libby Skala, who skillfully portrays her great aunt Elizabeth Polk (Lisl), an Austrian-born dancer, in *A Time to Dance* at the London Fringe Festival.

Polk, who later lived in New York, taught dance and became a leading authority in dance therapy, working with emotionally, physically and mentally handicapped children. She seems like a remarkable woman.

Her life story is worth telling and Skala does so exuberantly with dance and drama.

Sometimes overshadowed by her big sister Lilia Skala (an Oscar-nominated actor, who is the focus of Libby Skala's first one-woman show

Lilia), Lisl reaches out to let her own light shine.

The music in *A Time to Dance* is a recording produced by Lisl that she used when working with children.

It's fanciful and expressive — much like the performance by Skala, whose face speaks 1,000 words.

While Lisl's life wasn't easy — she survived poverty, Hitler and the war and a husband who was "crazy" — her life story ends with her niece saying she had no regrets.

There are definitely no regrets in seeing this show.

### IF YOU GO

**What:** *A Time to Dance*

**Where:** Spriet Family Theatre (Covent Garden Market)

**Rating:** ★★★★★



**Fringe Benefit:** Waltz, tango, ballet, modern dance