

## Linda Kass Collaborates with String Quartet for *Tasa's Song*

Linda Kass, author of the new novel *Tasa's Song*, teamed up with violinist Charles Wetherbee and the Carpe Diem String Quartet to create a series of original compositions based on the book that Wetherbee and the Carpe Diem String Quartet performed this past weekend for the first time, during their season finale performances at the McConnell Arts Center in Worthington, Ohio.

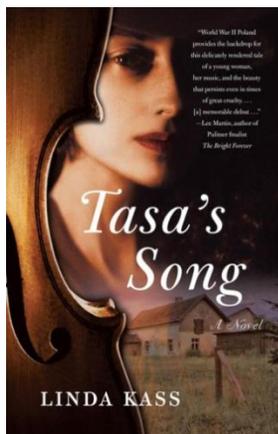


Kass (left) on stage with the Carpe Diem String Quartet

More than 500 people attended the programs, which featured readings by Kass interspersed with the compositions. Kass also gave a brief introductory reading so that audience members who had not read the book could follow along.

Published on May 3 by She Writes Press, *Tasa's Song* is a historical drama spanning the years 1933-1947. Inspired by the author's family history, the novel follows a young Jewish girl named Tasa. During her childhood in eastern Poland, Tasa dreams of becoming a world-renowned violinist, but as Europe descends into the madness of World War II, Tasa's story becomes one of physical and spiritual survival.

"The powerlessness of people facing any kind of persecution is more visible through the eyes of a child," said Kass. "It really illustrates how people lived through war, how lives are shaped by the brutality they lived in."



Despite calling herself a relatively "late bloomer" with regards to fiction, Kass has an extensive background as a journalist writing for *Time* and the *Detroit Free Press*. The decision to start writing fiction, she explained, grew out of a family history project she undertook prior to her parents' 60th wedding anniversary. She accumulated a great deal of material about the family's history but was unsure what to do with it until a friend and writing mentor suggested she tried turning it into fiction. Over the next several years, that idea stuck with her and gradually turned into *Tasa's Song*.

"The trigger for this book was my family's history," said Kass. "I had parents with accents and a mother who survived that period and came to this country after the war. It was always in my mind."

Kass, who lives in Columbus, Ohio, has known Charles Wetherbee for a long time through her work with the Columbus Symphony. Music permeates *Tasa's Song*, weaving in and out of the narrative, and about a year ago Kass had the idea of collaborating with Wetherbee and his quartet. She showed Wetherbee the manuscript to *Tasa's Song* and proposed the idea of doing something together. Recalled Kass: "he loved the idea." --[Alex Mutter](#)