

Le quartet funambule
Music and texts by Laurent Grynszpan

Life is a balancing act, much like that of a tightrope walker. Our lives are the fruit of choices and chance.

1942: 11-year-old Helene Grynszpan, native of Paris, becomes a "hidden child," seeking shelter at the Gare de Lyon train station to evade the mass arrests of Parisian Jews on July 16-17. Two strangers -- a station attendant and a passenger boarding a train -- make the perilous decision to help Helene, enabling her to cross the border into Free France and thereby saving her from sharing her parents' fate at Auschwitz. Helene returns to Paris after the war and goes on to raise a family there.

1944: Joseph Schlesinger, a 23-year-old private in the US army, lands on Normandy's Utah Beach on D-Day/June 6, fights on through the Battle of the Bulge in December, and witnesses the defeat of Germany the following May 1945. He survives the brutal fighting through a series of narrow escapes -- unlikely miracles -- and returns to the US after the war. He, too, marries and raises a family of his own.

Laurent Grynszpan is the son of Helene, and *Betsy Schlesinger* the daughter of Joseph. Both are pianists, and they chanced to meet each other through the gentle serendipities that grace peacetime. They married and raised two sons, *William*, now a violinist, and *Benjamin*, a cellist.

It is in recognition of the choices and chances that gave them life, love, and music that the family of four formed a quartet and named it *funambule*, the French word for "tightrope walker."

Le quartet funambule performs music and texts by *Laurent Grynszpan* to remember the suffering and courage of those who lived under tyranny and who risked their lives for freedom. It is a tribute to the universal and enduring truth of their stories.

Le quartet funambule is history, remembrance, and transmission through love, family, friendship and artistic creation.