

Chava Pressburger (born Eva Ginzova in Prague) lost all her family but her father in the Holocaust. The Diary of Petr Ginz is her edition of the recently discovered diaries of her brother, murdered in Auschwitz in 1944 at the age of sixteen.

The diaries consist of two notebooks made by hand (Jews were unable to buy stationery in Prague in 1941), and date from September 1941 to August 1942, when he was transported to Theresienstadt for two years until he was finally sent to die in Auschwitz. Also included in the book are stories, linocuts and paintings, some dating from his time in Theresienstadt, where he edited a magazine.

Petr Ginz was an irrepressibly creative boy, intelligent and curious. He documents the increasing restrictions on Czech Jews in a mordant poem which satirises not only the Nazi rules but the Jew who ‘follows all the rules he’s got / and doesn’t care one little jot.’ In a matter-of-fact way he tells of relatives, teachers, and classmates who are ‘leaving’ Prague, while he continues misbehaving and getting As at school. In this beautifully produced book, his sister has given him a belated chance to speak despite his unspeakable fate.