
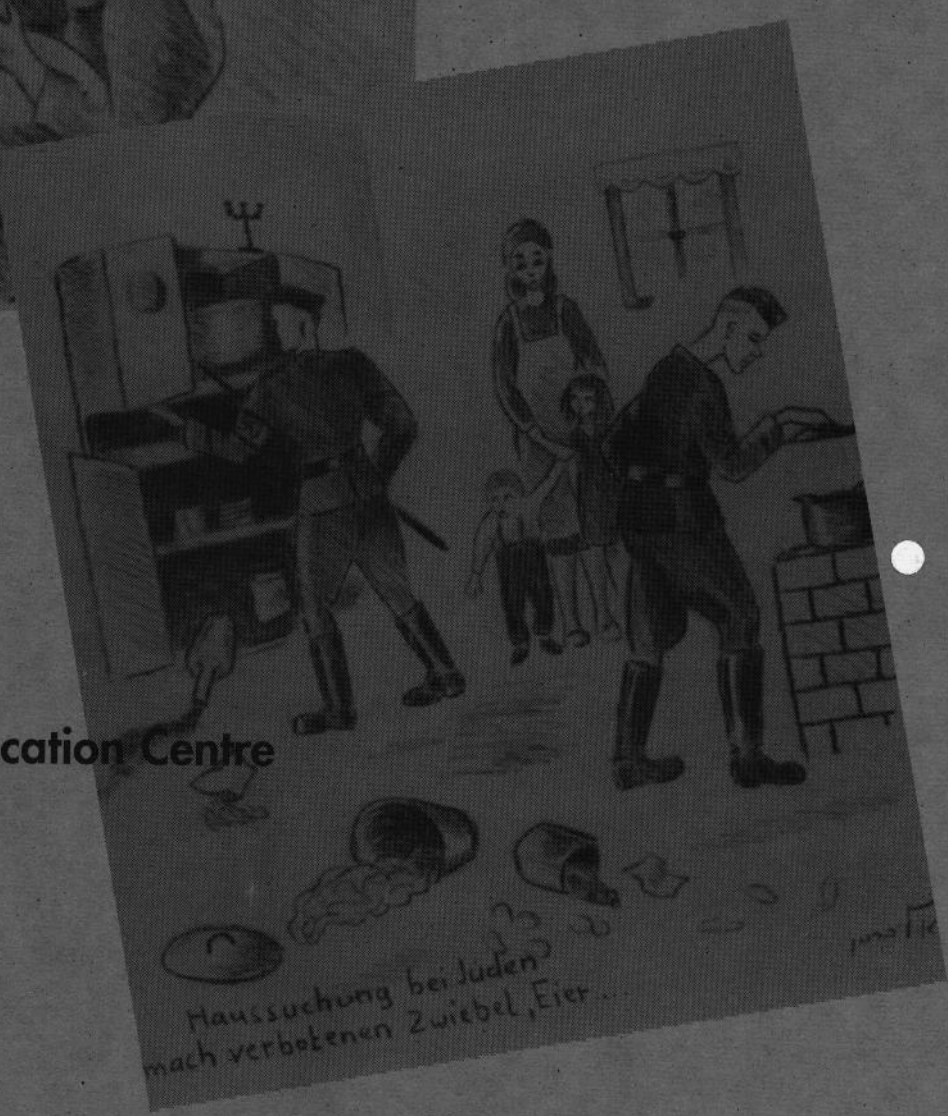


ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS



A Teacher's Guide



Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre
February - May 1997

Haussuchung bei Juden
mach verbotenen Zwiebel, Eier...

ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS

Drawings as Memory and Testimony

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

February - May 1997

This guide has been sponsored by
The Mordehai and Hana Wosk Family Fund for Education

Acknowledgments

This teacher's guide was sponsored in part by The Mordehai and Hana Wosk Family Fund for Education.

Special thanks are extended to Coleen Gold and Bob Steele for their insights into the transformative power of art and their contributions to this guide. Coleen's article "Helping Children Understand Images of Trauma" appears on page 3. Bob's "Drawing Network Pamphlet," prepared especially for this exhibit is available by contacting the Holocaust Education Centre.

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Bob Steele, Professor Emeritus, UBC has produced a series of "Drawing Network Pamphlets" and is currently involved in helping intermediate and social studies teachers incorporate drawing-as-a-language into their programs.

The exhibit ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS
produced by
Tampa Bay Holocaust Memorial Museum & Educational Center
in cooperation with
Beit Lohamei Haghetat, The Ghetto Fighter's House, Israel

ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS:
Drawings As Memory And Testimony / Teacher's Guide
developed by
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January 1997

ISBN 1-895754-21-6

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INTRODUCTION

Of all the eloquent and powerful survivor accounts that exist, those done in visual form – drawings or paintings – represent a unique category of Holocaust eyewitness testimony. These sketches and paintings are documents that are unmatched in their direct communication of feelings and events. Much fewer in number than the written testimonies, camp journals or dairies, these drawings are accessible as no translation or ‘reading’ interferes with their direct ‘reception.’

On The Edge of the Abyss features ninety-three drawings by Holocaust survivor Ella Liebermann-Shiber, which are part of the “post-war” response to the Holocaust experience; done after liberation and during a period of recovery and re-entry. Liebermann-Shiber's post-war drawings were produced from a position of relative safety; she records images in reaction to the aftermath of trauma, rather than from within it. Like others in the post-war tradition she drew in order to move from within the experience to an outside position – drawing it out of herself in order to look at it, reflect, or even to rid herself of the images. Looking at the drawings in this exhibit viewers will see how the survivor-artist is removed from the action rather than pictured within it. While undoubtedly a survivor of the experiences she records, as an artist she is an observer, drawing on memory.

This collection of sketches is a direct representation of a nightmarish memory. Many who view this exhibit will find the images disturbing. We may wish to ignore or protect ourselves, we may wish to turn away. It is especially difficult to face children's vivid depictions of what they suffered and viewed. It may help to consider that as harmful as these experiences were, relating the experiences was not harmful, but rather is evidence of both courage and strength. How much greater would have been the harm had these survivors not written, drawn or spoken of their experiences, or had we not been willing or able to receive them?

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The activities contained in this guide are primarily designed to be used in art and social studies classes, with the hope that teachers will feel free to borrow across the two disciplines.

To assist teachers and students in understanding these often disturbing images, art therapist, Coleen Gold has contributed an excellent article to this guide *Art And Healing: Helping Children Understand Images of Trauma*.

Of particular interest to art teachers is a new *Drawing Network Pamphlet*, produced especially for this exhibit by Bob Steele, Professor Emeritus, UBC. To receive this document please contact the Holocaust Education Centre.

As part of a class visit to the exhibit, students will have an opportunity to hear the oral testimony of a survivor, who like Ella Liebermann-Shiber, was a child during the Holocaust. *Preparing for a Survivor Talk* can be found on page 29 of this guide. They will also engage in a brief drawing activity, designed to let them use pencil and paper as Ella Liebermann-Shiber did, to record an event or portray emotions and expressions. Senior social studies students will sketch "notes from the exhibition" to enhance their understanding of pre-war experiences, the ghettos, the concentration camps, the death marches and the experiences of children.

ART & HEALING: Helping Children Understand Images of Trauma

by Coleen Gold, M.A., A.T.R.

Image-making is innate. Children automatically scribble and each culture develops its own art forms. Art therapists believe that all individuals not only have the potential and natural inclination to make art, but that the images one chooses to make (consciously or unconsciously) have meaning in relation to the individual's experience of life. It is not surprising then that images made by the survivors of trauma directly or symbolically depict the terror they witnessed or endured. The graphic portrayal, as well as the re-experiencing and sometimes even re-enactment of these events from the past are actually the natural and healthy tendency to attempt to process, make sense of, and recover from the traumatic experiences. Despite this positive therapeutic value, when faced with disturbing images depicting horrifying events, the viewer may recoil in disgust, despair or disbelief. Some may even question whether an exhibit like *On the Edge of the Abyss* should be encouraged. Educators who strongly advocate the telling of history might nonetheless be concerned that the viewing of traumatic images could be harmful to the viewer, especially children. Clinically, it is more and more understood that indeed 'vicarious traumatization' can result from second-hand exposure to traumatic material. How can parents and educators facilitate the child's healthy, educational appreciation of Ella Liebermann-Shiber's drawings of traumatic memories as not only a documentation of historical fact, but of a positive personal healing process, without being overwhelmed and possibly even harmed by the content?

Understanding Art and Trauma

Traumatic memory has a particular dynamic of its own. As a means of coping and self-protection the survivor might block out the memory of the traumatic event as well as the painful feelings by entering altered states of reality through dissociation, thought suppression, minimizing and denial. Often survivors experience doing an alternating dance between being flooded by traumatic memories and sensations and feeling numb, out of touch or confused. Healing this shift between extremes always entails remembering the truth. By acknowledging what really happened, and especially by communicating it to supportive witnesses, the past is less likely to intrude and the survivor is free to heal and grow in the present. This current understanding of trauma is expressed wisely and articulately by Judith Lewis Herman in Trauma and Recovery, in which she explains that the 'dialectic' between the intrusion and constriction of traumatic material is actually the survivor's natural attempt to recover from the trauma.

What is remarkable about the images in this exhibit, besides their value as a historical document and as an attestation to the personal strength of Ella Liebermann-Shiber, is their illustration of the healing potential of art to provide a

way of working through this dialectic. The images become a testament to the truth and to coping instead of a confusing dance of overwhelming terror alternating with denial and paralysis. The artist uses images to concretely demarcate each traumatic experience, to acknowledge its reality and situate it in the past. Her art process illustrates how the disclosure of the truth is an essential element of recovery.

In Trauma and Mastery in Life and Art, Gilbert J. Rose described the process of depicting trauma through art as turning passivity (the disempowerment inherent in trauma) into activity (by being the one who controls what is depicted in the image). By refusing to adhere to the perpetrators' distorted view of the events for which they characteristically refuse to take responsibility, and by refusing to remain subject to the helplessness, violation and indignity inherent in the traumatic events, the survivor reclaims their own power and identity. Ella Liebermann-Shiber knew instinctively that drawing what happened could accomplish this and followed these healthy impulses towards healing.

Helping Children Understand

There are two components to helping children to view these drawings without being traumatized themselves. The first principle is to put the drawings in context, not only historically or politically, but psychologically. The second principle is to debrief the experience to allow the viewer to process individual reactions to the images.

To contextualize the images psychologically, the educator can help the child to understand that the making of these drawings was therapeutic for the artist.

Exercise 1

Even young children who cannot pronounce 'catharsis' know that it feels good to draw. The educator can point out that it might feel good to make sharp, quick strokes on paper when angry. A simple art exercise to illustrate this would be to encourage a group of children to name various moods and then invite them to depict them with line, color, shape, etc. one by one. In this way, children can come to understand the concept of self-expression through art.

Older children and adolescents will see that what was therapeutic for Ella Liebermann-Shiber was not just the use of marks to express herself but the concrete recording of events, that is, the content of the drawings.

Exercise 2

To understand this through an art-making activity children can be invited to graphically depict the details, perhaps in pencil to more closely resemble the content in the exhibit, of a positive or negative

event that was important to them. Help them share their drawings in small groups by first giving them skills in making empathic and supportive statements to each other. Explain the concept of respecting another person's experience of an event.

It is not only therapeutic for an individual to be able to acknowledge important aspects of their experience to themselves, but when others acknowledge and understand their perceptions of the world they feel validated as a person and reconnected to others. For this reason, support groups have been a particularly effective form of treatment for Holocaust survivors who see that others have had similar experiences and therefore feel accepted. Help children make the link with the exhibit by explaining that survivors benefit not only from telling the truth but from being believed and supported by witnesses. In this way, children can begin to understand that, while the drawings in the exhibit depict horrific events, for the artist, drawing them was a positive, healthy and healing experience. By being courageous like Ella Liebermann-Shiber and acknowledging the full facts of the Holocaust they can not only help in reducing the risk of repeating these events through denial but of helping the individuals who experienced these events heal by being believed, validated and supported.

Another exercise for older children and adolescents follows Gilbert J. Rose's idea of the passivity inherent in traumatic experience versus the activity of art-making.

Exercise 3

Using one or two drawings or giving the children their choice of drawing to work on, focus on the positive coping aspect of survival by suggesting the children either:

- 1. draw a way that the survivors coped or helped each other*
- 2. modify one of the drawings to include a new way of coping or surviving.*

If the educator feels that focusing on the drawings in this way is not advisable for a particular group they might suggest instead that the children (especially younger children) depict how they helped or were helped in a difficult situation. Explain that while Ella Liebermann-Shiber lived through traumatic events that should never occur in everyday life, she still witnessed helpful acts of great courage and kindness that helped her survive and remain hopeful under horrific circumstances. Identify and discuss those drawings in which she has depicted instances of courage, kindness and hope that helped her to survive.

The second principle that is effective in preventing vicarious traumatization and which helps children to gain a better understanding of trauma depicted through images, is debriefing. Debriefing is simply the processing of an overwhelming experience immediately after the event in a safe, supportive environment.

Debriefing exercises

Educators can facilitate one-on-one discussions, small group discussions, private journal writing or personal drawing of their reactions to the exhibit or of what will help counteract the effects of the disturbing material, such as illustrating a favourite place, person or memory. (Individuals in concentration camps often drew, told stories or thought of positive experiences in their past to maintain hope and a connection to life. As discussed by Victor Frankl in Man's Search for Meaning, in this way victims asserted that the perpetrators could not control their inner lives). Educators can also do simple relaxation or visualization techniques to help children reconnect with their safe and nurturing environment.

Parents and educators should be aware that vicarious traumatization in individuals exposed to trauma second-hand does occur and looks very similar to the post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms experienced by victims. They may experience the same dialectic; feeling overwhelmed and flooded, and are then compelled to deny or shut down. Interestingly, this may account for the viewer's doubts about whether or not this material should be shown. Like the survivor, the viewer-witnesses may protect themselves from horror and the unspeakable nature of the trauma by turning away, doubting or blocking out. Clinical research shows us that for health to be restored, it is necessary to tell the truth and be heard. We can make this process safe for all by understanding the dynamics of recovery so that the working through of trauma does not risk becoming the re-experiencing of it. Ultimately, healing from the trauma of the Holocaust becomes the responsibility of the whole community. As viewer-witnesses, we play a special role, and may experience feelings and dynamics similar to the survivor as we share knowledge of the truth and learn, together, how to recover, regain control and continue to live and grow.

References

- Herman, Judith Lewis. Trauma and Recovery. New York: Basic Books, 1992.
Rose, Gilbert J. Trauma and Mastery in Life and Art. New Haven: Yale UP, 1987.

ART ACTIVITY

NARRATIVE DRAWING

The drawings of Ella Liebermann-Shiber are much like vignettes, moments of time, frozen in memory and recorded on paper. This narrative form is ideally suited to the act of bearing witness. The events chosen to be recorded in this way are those of the most searing importance.

I have tried to express through my drawings all that I felt and saw in my youth, all that made my world dark, so that my work will bear witness to those terrible things. It is a meager attempt, for I do not believe it possible to convey the horrors we suffered either through drawings, or any other form of expression.

I began to draw, to sketch whatever was released from within me, grey lines on faded paper.

I reconstructed each picture shortly after I was liberated. With trembling hands I began to reconstruct the hell from which, by a miracle, my mother and I had emerged. I felt that every drawing that disclosed the horrors I had endured in some way eased my mind. My faith in mankind and the world of today gradually returned, despite the cruelties my people and I had so recently suffered.¹

Pencil Drawing

Have students read the account of Ella Liebermann-Shiber's life (see *Student Study Document on page 30*). Secondary students may also wish to read the study documents about the Bendin Ghetto and Auschwitz (*pages 31-34*), which provide the context for her experiences.

Have students select a significant or meaningful event from Ella's life story to relate in a narrative drawing. Like Ella, students may choose to draw in pencil or elaborate more fully using stick pigments or paint.

¹ Ella Liebermann-Shiber. *On the Edge of the Abyss*. Ghetto Fighters' House, Israel, 1992. 5.

ART ACTIVITY

EXPRESSIVE DRAWING

The drawings of Ella Liebermann-Shiber are the untutored work of a seventeen year-old who spent what should have been her school years in Bedzin Ghetto and Auschwitz. Strongly etched lines and clearly delineated forms were chosen to graphically render her experiences. In some ways, the effect is that of distant and detached observer. It is as though a more gestural and emotive style would have undermined Ella's ability to draw as an act of testimony.

Nevertheless, beneath the direct and spare lines of the narrative drawings lie powerful emotions. The helplessness and terror of the victims and the hard-heartedness and cruelty of the perpetrators are mirrored in facial expressions.

Ella Liebermann-Shiber chooses a direct, unadorned and exact form of representation, but which conveys "whole-hearted hate." Her sketches give expression to the helplessness and terror of the those subjected to the horrors. It is a voice that warns against the evil and the bestiality in man, against the hardheartedness and the cruelty which becomes uppermost in a society that has lost touch with its humanity, for "the imagination of the murderer far exceeds that of the victim." ¹

Reading Facial Expressions

Provide each student with a copy of the facial expressions worksheet that follows and have them write one or more words describing the emotion(s) portrayed by each face. Have pairs of students compare worksheets and descriptors.

The words *helplessness*, *terror*, *evil*, *bestiality*, *hard-heartedness*, and *cruelty* are used in the quote above to describe some of the emotions expressed by Ella's work. Students should consider whether they would like to apply any of these descriptors to the worksheet images. It is painful to confront the fact that a child had to endure the kinds of experiences,

expressed by these drawings. Students should discuss the value of visual testimony and its impact on students.

Students who bring their worksheets along on their visit to the Holocaust Centre will be able to examine the original drawings from which these faces have been excerpted. At that time, students will be able to add to, or make changes to, their list of descriptors.

Drawing following the Survivor Talk

Ella Liebermann-Shiber's drawings represent one form of survivor testimony. As part of their visit to the Holocaust Centre, students will have an opportunity to hear the oral testimony of another survivor. Following this visit, have each student select a significant or meaningful aspect of the survivor's oral testimony to record as a narrative drawing. Attention should be given to the facial expressiveness of people within the drawing. Students may wish to write an *Artist's Statement* about the expressive intent behind their work.

Classes who wish to share some of their drawings with their survivor-speaker can do so by forwarding them to the Holocaust Education Centre. Survivors and staff at the Centre would be delighted to receive these efforts.

¹ Goldberg, Leah. *On the Edge of the Abyss*. Ghetto Fighters' House, Israel, 1992. 7

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS WORKSHEET



1



5



2



6



3



7



4



8

ART ACTIVITY

SYMBOLIC DRAWING & TEXT

"The heavy German boot. Every step means suffering, tears, blood and death."

As part of her visual repertoire, Ella Liebermann-Shiber makes use of both symbols and written text. Common objects are portrayed in her work, both literally and metaphorically, as symbolic representations of concepts and emotions. Soldiers' boots and burning books can be interpreted literally, as the common objects that they are. For example, books like those of Einstein and Freud were really burned as they were deemed decadent and destroyed by Dr. Goebbels, the Minister of Culture and Propaganda. But boots and books can also be interpreted, respectively, as symbols of oppression or of learning and culture.

Liebermann-Shiber's liberal use of written text is also an integral part of her drawings. Sometimes text is used as a title describing a work as in "*The Gestapo Cellar*," sometimes as inherent dialogue, "*You wanted the war!*," and at other times as a form of editorial comment, "*The Nazi boot threatens the world.*" Liebermann-Shiber's use of words to reinforce meaning, contributes to the intensity of her work. It is clear she wanted there to be no misunderstanding about the intent of her drawings.

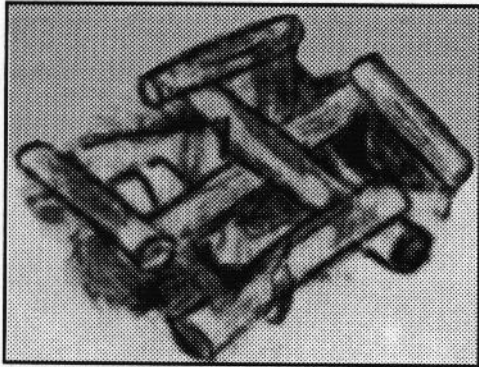
Reading Symbols

Working in pairs or small groups, have students list possible meanings for each of the symbols, reproduced on the worksheet. Students can then examine the worksheet symbols in the context of the larger drawing when visiting the Centre. Students may wish to add to, or change some of their initial ideas. Have students discuss whether the words found on the drawings, alter or reinforce their understanding of the works.

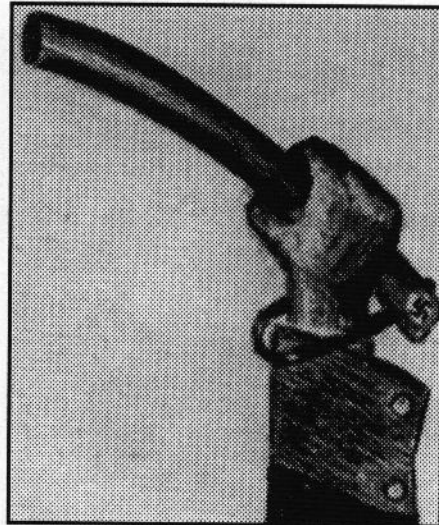
Extension Drawing

Genocide and the forced relocation of refugees have not ended with the Holocaust. Troubling events continue to be reported in the news media. Canada's checkered history includes on the negative roster; the Komagata Maru, the Japanese Internment, the Somalia affair and on the more positive side; the reception of Vietnamese boat people and recent humanitarian efforts in Rwanda. Students can use events such as these and other current news stories as the source for a narrative drawing which makes use of symbols and text to enhance its meaning. Have students share and discuss each other's drawings to judge the degree to which their visual symbols have been transmitted to and understood by the viewer.

SYMBOLIC DRAWING WORKSHEET



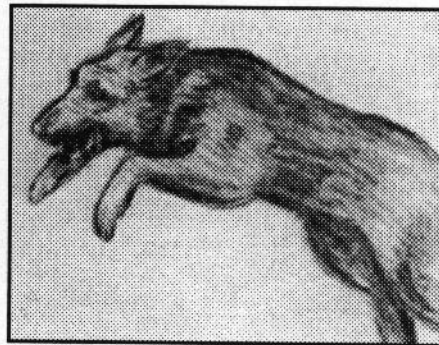
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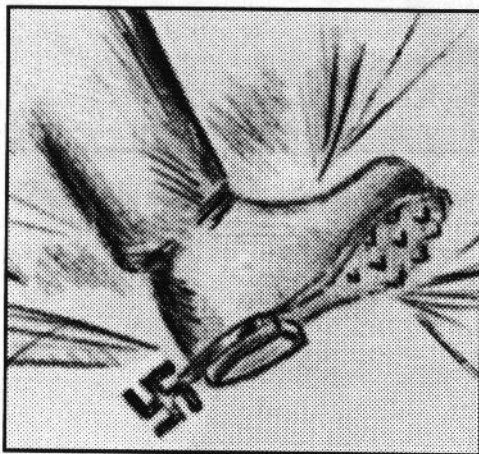
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2



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3



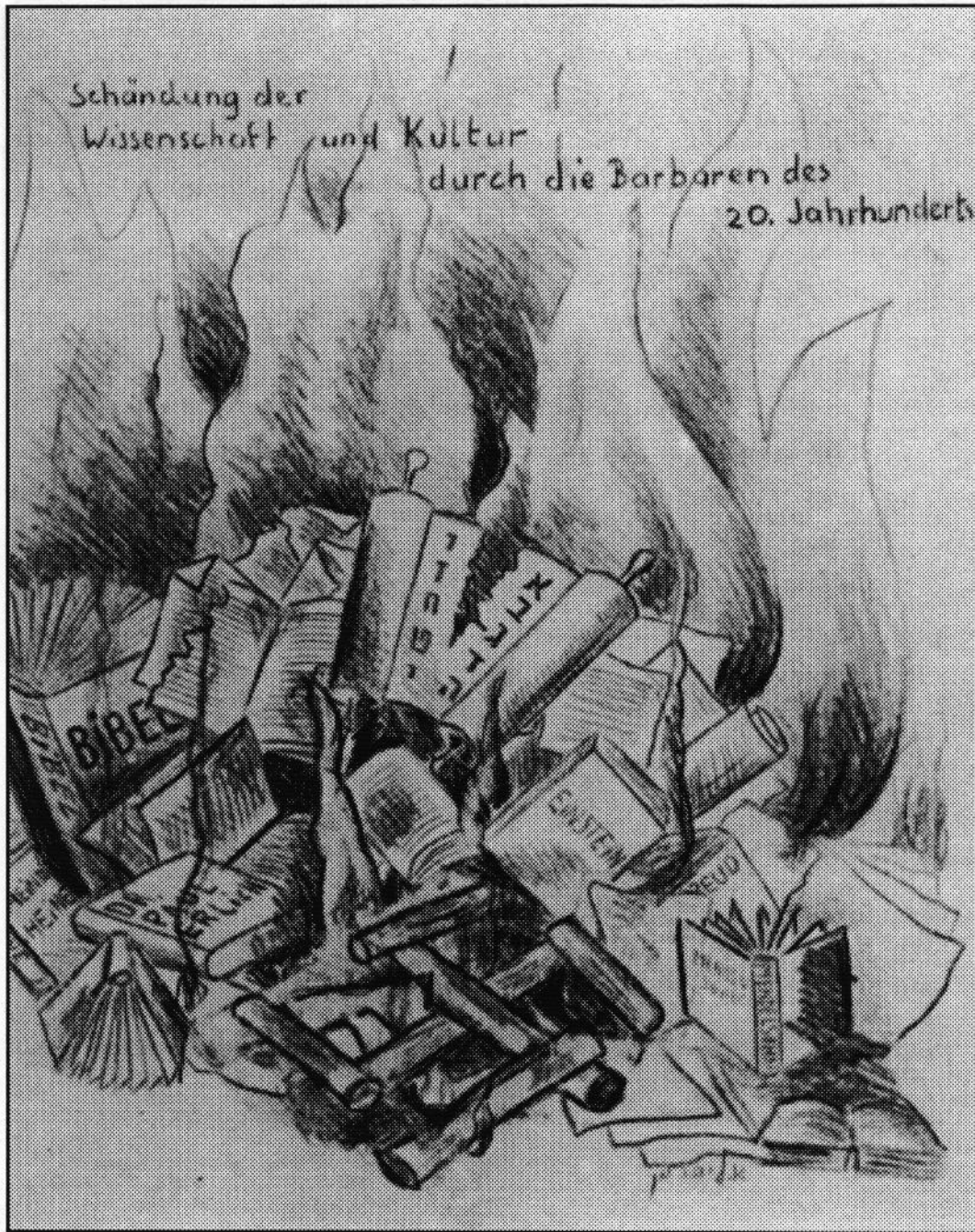
6



The master, his dog, and a victim!



The Nazi boot threatens the world, 1933-1945



*Attack on science and culture by the barbarians of the twentieth century
Hebrew numbers one through ten (signifying the Ten Commandants)*



To what destination?



Desecrating a cemetery
Sh'ar'HaTzedek (Gate of the Righteous)

ART ACTIVITY

ART OF THE HOLOCAUST

In many ways, an art of the Holocaust seems unimaginable. In reality such a body of art has emerged and is as diverse in origin, form and intent as the written works, with which we are more familiar. Some of this art was produced clandestinely by its victims during the Holocaust and others by survivors, the second generation and others over the last fifty years. The writer Elie Wiesel once explained that he was incapable of writing about his experiences for some ten years, but others like Ella Liebermann-Shiber felt compelled to use her art immediately upon liberation to confront her experiences and to bear witness.

Whether done in the camps or after liberation, drawing was very much a life-affirming act. The body of art work that was produced in hiding, ghettos, transit camps and concentration camps, stands as a testament to the victims' senses of identity and dignity, in face of all efforts to deprive them of the same. Some drew as a form of visual diary similar to the written diaries of hidden children.

At a time when a crust of bread could be lifesaving, pencil and paper were priceless commodities. As one might expect the art produced during the Holocaust generally exploited simple, readily available materials. Those inmates that found the strength and motivation to draw while in the camps had the greatest difficulty obtaining materials and in preserving their works. Yet sometimes drawing materials, such as pencils were easier to get than food.

"When artists could not get the materials they needed, they improvised, often with extreme resourcefulness. Auschwitz artists scavenged empty toothpaste tubes from officer's garbage bins and used them to store and mix paints"(Art of The Holocaust).

The drawings done inside concentration camps were significant attempts to communicate and to record what so many men, women and children had experienced and seen. But the images that remain are precious, whether produced by professional or untutored artists or by children. By contrast, the art produced after the Holocaust reflects a greater variety of styles and media.

A substantial portion of the art produced during the Holocaust comes to us from the transit camp Terezin or Theresienstadt (German). As a "model" camp, presented by the Nazis to the International Red Cross, a semblance of Jewish life, including schooling, art and music was permitted. Of the art produced in Terezin, some of it was the officially sanctioned propaganda, but some was the authentic expression of its internees.

Other survivors still, drew to relive and recall the scenes of happy pre-war life replete with loving families. Such drawings, done for self comfort, stand in contrast to those drawings which vividly document the treatment and conditions of the ghetto or camp. Also present are bitter satirical drawings in which anger and revengeful acts are directed by victims toward their perpetrators – thus producing a different kind of comfort.

Responding to Holocaust Art

The goal of this activity is to sensitize students to the range of artistic expression to have come out of this history and to initiate discussion about the role of Holocaust art as testimony and as therapy.

Have students form small groups and provide each group with one of the following reproductions. Have students examine the work closely and individually record their first feelings or impressions.

Describe and Interpret

Students should take turns writing descriptive words about the reproduction on a list. Have students pass the descriptive list around until all of the group's ideas have been explored. Each group discusses their reproduction by interpreting its meaning, the reasons and conditions under which it was made, and speculating about the age, nationality and background of the artist. The group writes a summary statement about their ideas.

Read & Share

Each group is given the biographical sketch, related to their reproduction to read. Have students compare it with their initial responses and interpretations. Students can present their understanding of the artist and the work to the class. Have the class compare the range of expression across the various works and discuss the role of Holocaust art as testimony and as therapy.

Research Extensions

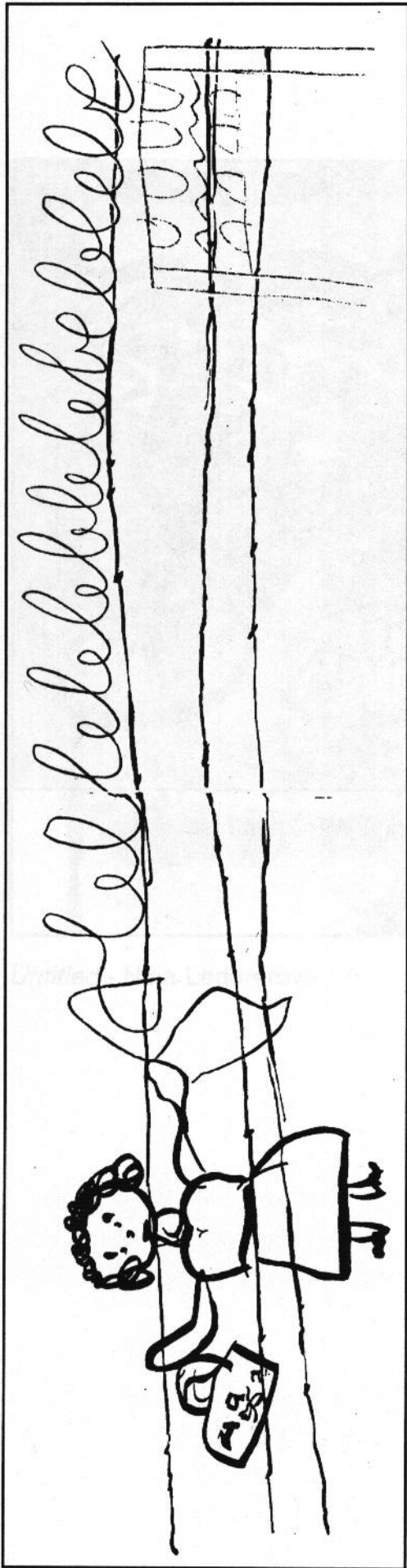
Students may wish to compare Holocaust art with other art to have emerged out of war or oppression, historical or contemporary. The bibliography at the conclusion of this document offers sources for additional images which can be used to extend this lesson.



Girl with Star - Leo Haas

Describe and Interpret

Students should take time asking descriptive questions about the artwork. They should list a list of questions that they can ask about the artwork. They should have been exploring the artwork and discussing it in class. They should be able to describe the artwork and discuss it in class. They should be able to describe the artwork and discuss it in class. They should be able to describe the artwork and discuss it in class.





Cart/Hearse with Bread for Children - Helga Weisssova Hoskova



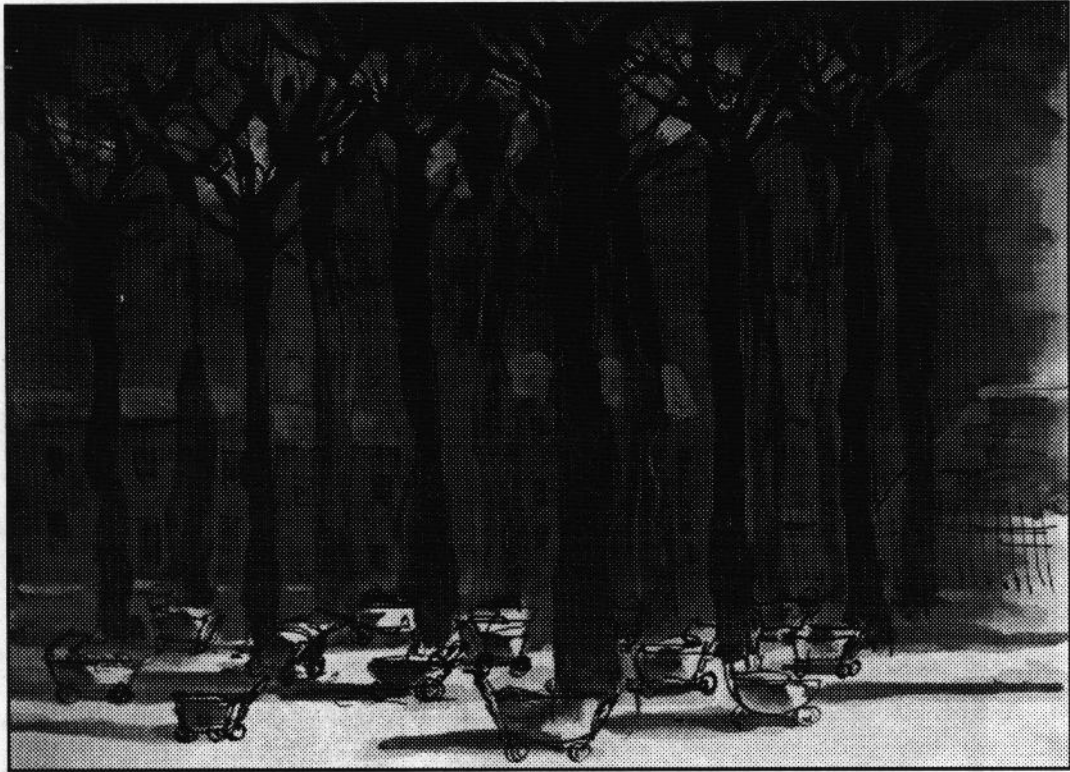
Untitled - Nina Ledererova

- Ghettos
- Concentration Camps
- The Death Marches and Deportations
- Children and the Holocaust

After reading and discussing the material, have a 15-20 minute writing activity. Each group will be assigned a topic to write on. The topics are: *What was the role of the ghettos?* *What was the role of the concentration camps?* *What was the role of the death marches and deportations?* *What was the role of children and the Holocaust?*

Visiting the Exhibit

Each group should find examples in the drawings and the witness testimony that correspond to or simply describe one of the topics on which they are responsible.



Baby Carriages - Fritz Taussig

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY

"DRAWING" ON HISTORY

Introduction

The study of the Holocaust in social studies classes is commonly associated with written texts, documents and videos. The exhibition, *On the Edge of the Abyss* provides social study students with a unique opportunity to "read" and respond to drawings as an additional source of understanding. These drawings do not provide a definitive understanding of World War II or the Holocaust. They present the experiences of one survivor / witness. Through the eyes of Ella Liebermann-Shiber, students gain insight into Jewish life after the Nazi rise to power, in the ghettos and concentration camps. Ella was five when the Holocaust began, ten when she and her family were forced into the Bendin Ghetto and fifteen when deported to Auschwitz. As such, these drawings also offer insight into the particular experiences of children during the Holocaust.

Study Documents

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group one of the following study documents:

- Pre-War 1933 - 1939
- Ghettos
- Concentration Camps
- The Death Marches and Liberation
- Children and the Holocaust

After reading and discussing the material, have each group develop a visual aid, chart, web or drawing to help them present their material to the other groups. Each group is to share their findings with the class.

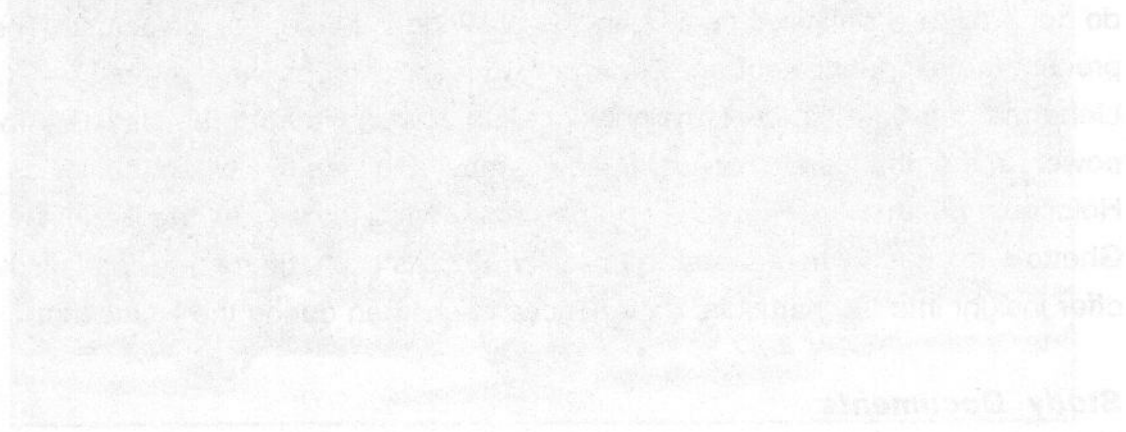
Visiting the Exhibit

Each group should find examples in the drawings and the survivor-speaker's testimony that correspond to or amplify the theme of the study document for which they are responsible.

Post-Exhibit Discussion

Have each group answer the following questions and share their ideas with the class:

- Which drawing or survivor experience did you find to be important, surprising or meaningful?
- Which drawing or survivor experience best supported or added to your understanding of your study document?
- Compare study documents, drawings and survivor testimonies as alternative strategies for learning about the Holocaust.
- What questions do you still have about your study document?



Divide the class into small groups and assign each group one of the following study documents:

- Pre-War 1933 - 1939
- Ghettos
- Concentration Camps
- The Death Marches and Liberation
- Children and the Holocaust

After reading and discussing the material, have each group develop a visual aid that will be helpful to help them present their material to the other groups. Each group is to share their findings with the class.

Viewing the Exhibit

Each group should find examples in the drawings and the survivor-speaker's testimony that correspond to or amplify the theme of the study document for which they are responsible.

PREPARING FOR A SURVIVOR TALK

SURVIVOR TALK: EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY

The speaker's presentation will last about 30 minutes, followed by a 15 minute discussion period.

Students may wish to record the answers to their own personal questions for further discussion.

SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Provide class with some historical background on the Holocaust.

Have each student write a question s/he would ask a survivor.

In groups, have students share each other's questions. Let them choose the best one or combine questions. Consider the appropriateness and sensitivity of the questions.

Have students discuss why they think survivors are interested in sharing their experiences with student groups. Be sure to ask the survivor-speaker about their motivation for speaking.

POST-VISIT DISCUSSION / DEBRIEFING

- Why do you think this person was willing to share their experiences?
- In what way do the "Stages of Grieving": denial, anger, depression, acceptance, resolution, relate to the survivor testimony?
- What was something significant you learned?
- What was something about the presentation that surprised you?
- What was something you wish you could have heard more about?
- Did anything in the presentation remind you of something in *your* life?
- What problems or issues raised by the speaker are still with us today?
- What are people doing now to solve the problems of racism? What can *we* do?

FEEDBACK FOR THE SPEAKER

Survivor-speakers would be delighted to hear from students. Please send all correspondence to the Holocaust Education Centre.

THE LIFE OF ELLA LIEBERMANN-SHIBER

Ella Liebermann-Shiber lived nearly half of her life under Nazi rule. Born in Berlin in 1928, her family was forced to leave for Poland in 1938. With the German invasion her family found themselves in the Bendin ghetto, "in a hovel where the lack of air was such that one could not even light a candle." She witnessed the humiliations, torments and destruction of life and property which no family was spared. In August 1943 Bendin was declared "Judenrein." Ella was sent, together with her family, to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Her father and brothers were sent to their death, however Ella's artistic ability provided a 'passport' to survival. Only she and her mother survived – her ability to draw SS portraits while in the camp contributed to this survival.

As the Russians advanced towards Auschwitz in 1945, Ella Liebermann-Shiber and her mother set out on the westbound "death march" to Germany. They survived the march and were released in May 1945. The uninterrupted flow of drawings created by Ella Liebermann-Shiber during the years immediately following her release from imprisonment was the beginning of a process of rehabilitation, a process of return of life.

When Ella Liebermann-Shiber was released from Nazi captivity in May 1945 near Hamburg, Germany she was only 17 years old. Though she was emaciated and clad only in a striped prison garment she immediately began to document her experiences through her sketches. She has stated that her one motivation was to bear witness, and the vehicle she chose was drawing.

BEDZIN GHETTO

Also known as Bendin or Bendzin; pronounced Bend-zhin.

A town in the Katowice district in Poland, founded in the Middle Ages. ... In 1931 the Jewish population numbered 21,625 (45.4 percent of the total), and by September 1939 had grown to approximately 27,000.

The German occupation of Bedzin began on September 4th 1939. On September 9th the Nazis set fire to the main synagogue and fifty adjacent houses without giving the residents advance warning, and a numbers of Jews were burned to death. A series of anti-Jewish economic decrees was enacted, providing for the confiscation of Jewish property and the imposition of personal restrictions on Jews.

A "Judenrat" (Jewish Council) was established at an early stage of the occupation, headed by local Jewish public figures. ...The most difficult anti-Jewish decree ordered Jews to report for forced labour, which at times led to their being seized and deported to forced-labour camps in Germany. It soon became the Judenrat's task to organize these deportations. The Judenrat also helped establish workshops (known as "shops"), owned by Germans and using Jews as workers, on the assumption that by engaging in work benefiting the Germans, the city's Jews would be saved.

The local Jewish Youth Movements resumed their educational activities and also took on the teaching of children (who had been left without any schools) and vocational training, with an emphasis on agriculture. The Judenrat allocated a 100-acre (404. sq. km) plot of land at one end of the city to establish a farm.

In May 1942, deportation of the Bedzin Jews to the Auschwitz extermination camp was launched, in the guise of "resettlement." The deportation reached its peak on August 12, when all the Jews of the city had to assemble on a

central city plot, ostensibly in order to have their papers stamped. A *Selektion* was made, and 5,000 Jews were dispatched to their deaths.

The Youth movements intensified their operations, embarked on an anti-Judenrat information campaign, and cautioned Jews not to report for the deportations. The farm was used as the site of clandestine meetings with leaders of the *Zydowska Organizacja Bojowa* (Jewish Fighting Organization; ZOB). One of them was Mordecai Anielewicz, the future leader of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, who told the local youth movement activists about the extermination of Jews ... and helped organize the local resistance organization. The farm became the centre of the youth movements' underground operations and the site of a defense headquarters, in which representatives of all the youth movements took part.

The Bedzin Jewish underground made attempts to establish contact with the Polish underground, but these failed, as did the attempts to stage an armed uprising outside the ghetto. ... The underground concentrated its efforts on acquiring weapons, preparing for defense, and constructing bunkers; these efforts were accompanied by a debate among the youth movements, between those who demanded that the emphasis be on the struggle inside the ghetto walls and those who stressed the search for escape routes, mainly by way of the border with Slovakia.

In the spring of 1943, the Bedzin Jews were confined to a ghetto that was set up in Kaminonka, a suburb close to Srodula.... On August 1st 1943, the final liquidation of the ghetto was launched. Youth movement members offered armed resistance in several bunkers. The operation took more than two weeks, the Jews being deported to Auschwitz. Some of the survivors in the ghetto escaped to Slovakia and Hungary, where they resumed underground operations. A handful of Bedzin Jews returned to the city after the war, but the Jewish community was not revived.

This excerpt was written by Shlomo Netzer for The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Vol. 1, [1990].

AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP

Auschwitz was the largest Nazi concentration and extermination camp, and was located 60 km west of Kraków. Auschwitz was both the most extensive of some two thousand Nazi concentration and forced labour camps, and the largest camp at which Jews were exterminated by means of poison gas.

On April 27, 1940, the head of the SS and German police, Heinrich Himmler, ordered the establishment of a large new concentration camp near the town of Oswiecim in Poland. The first labourers forced to work on the construction of the camp were three hundred Jews from Oswiecim and its vicinity. Beginning in June 1940, the Nazis brought transports of prisoners into the camp. During the first period, most of them were Polish political prisoners. On March 1, 1941, the prison population was 10,900 – most of it still Polish.

Very soon Auschwitz became known as the harshest of the Nazi concentration camps. The Nazi system of torturing prisoners was implemented here in its most cruel form. In one of the camp's buildings, the so-called Block 11, a special bunker for the severest punishments was erected. In front of that building stood the "Black Wall," where the regular execution of prisoners took place. Ironically, above the main gate of the camp was a large inscription that declared: "Arbeit macht frei" (Work leads to freedom).

In March 1941, Himmler ordered the erection of a second, much larger section of the camp, which was located at a distance of 3 km from the original camp. This was called Auschwitz II, or Birkenau. This camp was composed of nine sub-units which were isolated from one another by electrically charged barbed-wire fences. The original camp became known as the Stammlager (main camp) – Auschwitz I.

In March 1942 a women's section was established in the main camp but was moved in August to Birkenau. By the end of March more than 6,000 women prisoners were being held in the new section. In nearby Monowitz a third camp was built, which was called Auschwitz III (Buna-Monowitz). Auschwitz II (Birkenau), which was the most populated camp of the Auschwitz complex, also had the most cruel and inhuman conditions. The prisoners of the Birkenau camps were mostly Jews, Poles and Germans. For a time, the Gypsy family camp and the family camp of the Czech Jews were located there.

It was in Birkenau that the gas chambers and the crematoria of the Auschwitz killing centre operated. Auschwitz III and its other forty-five sub-camps were mainly forced labour camps. The inmates, chiefly Jews, were worked to the point of total exhaustion for German firms.

Prisoners were brought to Auschwitz by train. As the trains stopped at the railway platform in Birkenau, the people inside were brutally forced to leave the cars. They had to leave behind all their personal belongings and were made to form two lines, men and women separately. These lines had to move quickly to the place where SS officers were conducting the *Selektion*, directing the people either to one side (the majority), for the gas chambers, or to the other, for forced labour. Those who were sent to the gas chambers were killed that same day and their corpses burned in the crematoria. The belongings left in the cars were gathered and sorted in a warehouse ironically called "Kanada" (so termed because Canada was a symbol of wealth to the prisoners). These items were to be shipped later to Germany for the benefit of the Third Reich's coffers.

Those victims not sent to the gas chambers were sent to that part of the camp called "quarantine." They were taken to the camp's bath, the "sauna." Their clothes and personal belongings were taken from them, their hair was shorn and were given striped prisoner's garb. In quarantine a prisoner, if not soon transferred to slave labour, could survive only a few weeks; in the forced labour camps the average life expectancy was extended for a few months.

A small group of people were spared the gas chambers by being selected for pseudo-medical experiments. Many of these "experiments" were carried out on young Greek Jewish men and women. They underwent unbelievable suffering and torture. Also among the victims selected for these experiments were group of twins, including children and dwarfs.

Auschwitz was the largest graveyard in human history. The number of Jews murdered in the gas chambers of Birkenau is estimated to be at up to one and a half million people: men, women, and children. Almost one-quarter of the Jews killed during World War II were murdered in Auschwitz. Of the 405,000 registered prisoners who received Auschwitz numbers, only about 65,000 survived. Of the 16,000 Soviet prisoners of war who were brought there, only 96 survived. According to various estimates, at least 1,600,000 people were murdered in the killing centre at Birkenau.

This excerpt was written by Shmuel Krakowski and Jozef Buszko for the Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Vol. 1, [1990].

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Leo Hass
1901-1983

Born April 15, 1901 in Opava, Czechoslovakia, Hass studied in Karlsruhe and at the Berlin Art Academy, and then worked as a portrait painter and lithographer in Opava. During the year 1939 he was a prisoner of the concentration camp Nizko. In Terezin, where he was deported December 30, 1942 from Ostrava, he was employed in the Drawing Office of the Technical Department. For his art work he was arrested on July 17, 1944, and together with other painters, imprisoned in the Small Fortress. On October 26, 1944 he was deported to Auschwitz. He later passed through the concentration camps Sachsenhausen and Mauthausen, and was liberated in the camp Ebensee. After the war he worked as a cartoonist in Prague, and from 1955 on he was professor at the Art Academy in Berlin.

Ruth Heinova
1934-1944

Heinova was born on February 19, 1934, in Prague and deported to Terezin on July 30, 1942. There are forty-nine drawings by her included in the collection which deal with themes of life in Terezin, and also recall the past. Several of these are dated from the first half of 1944. In Terezin she lived in house number C III 104, later in building L 410, house 16, and belonged to Group I. She died October 23, 1944, in Oswiecim.

Helga Weissova Hoskova
1929-

Born in Prague in 1929, she was transported to Terezin at age 12 with her mother and father. Too old to participate in the children's drawing classes, she drew independently. She also illustrated a book written by her father, *God Came to Terezin and Saw That It Was Bad*. In 1944 she was sent to Auschwitz and on to work camps; she and her mother survived the war and returned to Prague. After the war she studied art with Emil Filla, and then taught art for many years. She is married, with two children and three grandchildren, and lives in Prague.

Nina Ledererova
1931-1944

Ledererova was born September 7, 1931, in Prague and deported to Terezin on September 8, 1942. She has ten drawings among the collection of children's art from Terezin, most of which were based on assigned themes. They date from April to May, 1944. She was a member of Group II. Her last drawings, "Flower Study" and "Sketch," were done on May 9, 1944. She died in Oswiecim on May 15, 1944.

Felix Nussbaum
1904-1943

Born in Osnabruck, in 1904, to a comfortable middle-class Jewish family, Felix Nussbaum studied art in Hamburg and Berlin and traveled in many countries. In 1933 Hitler's ascension to power forced Nussbaum to emigrate. He stayed in Italy during 1933 and 1934 and moved to Belgium via France. In France, caught by the war, he was interned in Gurs in 1940. Somehow he escaped from Gurs and hid in a villa in Oostende, Belgium. He was there with his wife and a youngster, probably a member of his family. Many of Nussbaum's oil paintings and drawings, made in his hiding place, were inspired by the drama of the Nazi persecutions. They were acquired by a Brussels art dealer and are now in great demand by art museums. The artist, his wife, and their young friend were recaptured by the Nazis in 1943 and deported to Auschwitz where they perished.

Fritta (Fritz Taussig)
1906-1944

Born September 19, 1906 in Visnova u Frydlantu in Bohemia, he was active as a cartoonist and graphic artist in Prague. In Terezin, where he was deported as part of the Aufbaukommando (the construction battalion charged with the preparation of the Terezin camp for the prisoners) on December 4, 1941, he became director of the Technical Department which became the centre of artists and of unofficial art work. On July 17, 1944 he was arrested together with other painters for alleged "horror propaganda," and transferred with his wife, Hansi, and their three-year old son Tommy to the Small Fortress (Terezin Prison). Together with Leo Hass, he was deported to Auschwitz on October 26, 1944. He perished there on November 8, 1944.

PRE-WAR 1933-1939

On January 30th, 1933, Adolf Hitler was named Chancellor, the most powerful position in the German government, by the aged President Hindenburg, who hoped Hitler could lead the nation out of its grave political crisis. Hitler was the leader of the right-wing National Socialist German Workers Party (called the "Nazi Party" for short); it was, by 1933, one of the strongest parties in Germany, even though – reflecting the country's multi-party system – the Nazis had only won a plurality of 33 percent of the votes in the 1932 elections to the German parliament (Reichstag).

Once in power, Hitler moved quickly to end German democracy. He convinced his cabinet to invoke emergency clauses of the Constitution that permitted the suspension of individual freedoms of press, speech, and assembly. Special security forces – the Special State Police (the Gestapo), the Storm Troopers (SA), and the Security Police (SS) – murdered or arrested leaders of oppositional parties (communists, socialist, and liberals). The Enabling Act of March 23, 1933 – forced through a Reichstag already purged of many political opponents – gave dictatorial powers to Hitler.

Also in 1933, the Nazis began to put into practice their racial ideology. Echoing ideas popular in Germany as well as most other western nations well before the 1930's, the Nazis believed that the Germans were "racially superior" and that there was a struggle for survival between them and "inferior races." They saw Jews, Roma (Gypsies), Gays and Lesbians, and the physically and mentally challenged as a serious biological threat to the purity of the "German (Aryan) Race," what they called the "master race." Other groups also seen to be a political threat included Jehovah Witnesses, trade unionists and communists.

Jews, who numbered nearly 600,000 in Germany (less than one percent of the total population in 1933), were the principal target of Nazi hatred. The Nazis mistakenly identified Jews as a race and defined this race as "inferior." They

also spewed hate-mongering propaganda that unfairly blamed Jews for Germany's economic depression and the country's defeat in World War I (1914-1918).

In 1933, new German laws forced Jews to quit their civil service jobs, university and law court positions, and other areas of public life. In April 1933, a boycott of Jewish businesses was instituted. In 1935, laws proclaimed at Nuremberg made Jews second-class citizens. These "Nuremberg Laws" defined Jews not by their religion or by how they wanted to identify themselves but by the religious affiliation of their grandparents. Between 1937 and 1939, new anti-Jewish regulations segregated Jews further and made daily life very difficult for them: Jews could neither attend public schools, go to theatres, cinemas, or vacation resort, nor could they reside, or even walk, in certain sections of German cities.

Also between 1937 and 1939, Jews were forced from Germany's economic life: the Nazis either seized Jewish businesses and properties outright or forced Jews to sell them at bargain prices. In November 1938, this economic attack against German and Austrian Jews changed into the physical destruction of synagogues and Jewish-owned stores, the arrest of Jewish men, the destruction of homes, and the murder of individuals. This centrally organized riot (pogrom) became known as *Kristallnacht* (the "Night of Broken Glass").

GHETTOS

During the war, ghettos, transit camps, and forced labour camps, in addition to the concentration camps, were created by the Germans and their collaborators to imprison Jews, Gypsies, and other victims of racial and ethnic hatred as well as political opponents and resistance fighters. Following the invasion of Poland, three million Polish Jews were forced into approximately 400 newly established ghettos, where they were segregated from the rest of the population. Large numbers of Jews were also deported from other cities and countries, including Germany, to ghettos in Poland and German-occupied territories further east.

Most of the ghettos were located in German-occupied Poland and were established in the poorer, more dilapidated sections of towns and cities. Ghettos were fenced in, typically with barbed wire or brick walls. Entry and exit were by permit or pass only; like a prison, armed guards stood at gates. Families inside the ghettos lived under horrid conditions. Typically, many families would be crowded into a few rooms where there was little if any heat, food, or privacy. It was difficult to keep clean. Tens of thousands of people in the ghettos perished from malnutrition, starvation, exposure, and epidemics. Typhus, a contagious disease spread by body lice, was common, as was typhoid, spread through contaminated drinking water.

In Warsaw and elsewhere, ghettoized Jews made every effort, often at great risk, to maintain their cultural, communal, and religious lives. The ghettos also provided a forced labour pool for the Germans, and many forced labourers (who worked on road gangs, in construction, or other hard labour related to the German war effort) died from exhaustion or maltreatment.

Between 1942 and 1944, the Germans moved to eliminate the ghettos in occupied Poland and elsewhere, deporting ghetto residents to "extermination camps" – killing centres equipped with gassing facilities – located in Poland. After the meeting of senior German government officials in late January 1942 at a villa in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, the decision to implement "the final solution of the Jewish question" became formal state policy, and Jews from western Europe were also sent to killing centres in the east.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

The concentration camp is most closely associated with the Holocaust and remains an enduring symbol of the Nazi regime. The first camps opened soon after the Nazis took power in January 1933; they continued as a basic part of Nazi rule until May 8, 1945, when the war, and the Nazi regime, ended.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began. Within days, the Polish army was defeated, and the Nazis began their campaign to destroy Polish culture and enslave the Polish people, whom they viewed as "sub-human." Killing Polish leaders was the first step: German soldiers carried out massacres of university professors, artists, writers, politicians, and many Catholic priests. Thousands of other Poles, including Jews, were imprisoned in concentration camps.

As the war began in 1939, Hitler initiated an order to kill institutionalized, handicapped patients deemed "incurable." The doomed were then transferred to six institutions in Germany and Austria, where specially constructed gas chambers were used to kill them. After public protests in 1941, the Nazi leadership continued this euphemistically termed "euthanasia" program in secret. The "euthanasia" program contained all the elements later required for mass murder of European Jews and Gypsies in Nazi death camps.

In 1940 German forces continued their conquest of much of Europe, easily defeating Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. On June 22, 1941, the German army invaded the Soviet Union.

World War II brought major changes to the concentration camp system. Large numbers of new prisoners, deported from all German-occupied countries, now flooded the camps. Often entire groups were committed to the camps, such as members of underground resistance organizations who were rounded up in a sweep across western Europe under the 1941 "Night and Fog" decree. To accommodate the massive increase in the number of prisoners, hundreds of new camps were established in occupied territories of eastern and western Europe.

Six camps were chosen as killing sites because of their closeness to rail lines and their location in semi-rural areas. These camps were at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmno, Majdanek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Chelmno was the first camp in which mass executions were carried out by gas, piped into mobile gas vans; 320,000 persons were killed there between December 1941 and March

1943 and between June to July 1944. A killing centre using gas vans and later gas chambers operated at Belzec, where more than 600,000 persons were killed between May 1942 and August 1943. Sobibor opened in May 1942 and closed one day after a rebellion by the prisoners on October 14, 1943; up to 200,000 persons were killed by gassing. Treblinka opened in July 1942 and closed in November 1943; a revolt by the prisoners in early August 1943 destroyed much of the facility. At least 750,000 persons were killed at Treblinka, physically the largest of the killing centres. Almost all of the victims at Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka were Jews; a few were Gypsies. Very few individuals survived these four killing centres, where most victims were murdered immediately after arrival.

Auschwitz-Birkenau, which also served as a concentration camp and slave labour camp, became the killing centre where the largest numbers of European Jews and Gypsies were killed. After an experimental gassing there in September 1941 of 250 malnourished and ill Polish prisoners and 600 Russian POWs, mass murder became a daily routine; more than 1.25 million people were killed at Auschwitz-Birkenau, 9 out of 10 of them Jews. In addition, Gypsies, Soviet POWs, and ill prisoners of all nationalities died in the gas chambers. Between May 14 and July 8, 1944, 437,402 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz in 48 trains. This was probably the largest single mass deportation during the Holocaust. A similar system was implemented at Majdanek, which also doubled as a concentration camp and where at least 275,000 persons were killed in the gas chambers or died from malnutrition, brutality, and disease.

The methods of murder were the same in all the killing centres, which were operated by the SS. The victims arrived in railroad freight cars and passenger trains, mostly from ghettos and camps in occupied Poland, but also from almost every other eastern and western European country. On arrival, men were separated from women and children. Prisoners were forced to undress and hand over all valuables. They were then driven naked into gas chambers, which were disguised as shower rooms, and either carbon monoxide or Zyklon B (a form of crystalline prussic acid, also used as an insecticide in some camps) was used to asphyxiate them. The minority selected for forced labour were, after initial quarantine, vulnerable to malnutrition, exposure, epidemics, medical experiments, and brutality; many perished as a result.

THE DEATH MARCHES AND LIBERATION

After the war turned against Germany and the Allied armies approached German soil in late 1944, the SS decided to evacuate outlying concentration camps. The Germans tried to cover up the evidence of genocide and deported prisoners to camps inside Germany to prevent their liberation. Those camps that were being approached by the Russian armies to the east were taken apart and the prisoners were forced into the roads in the bitter January cold of 1945. Most recent estimates suggest between 50 to 60 percent of the inmates died during the long journeys on foot known as "death marches."

These marches were particularly brutal as prisoners were moved from the camps over long distances with little to no food, water or rest. The distances covered on the marches would vary from 60 to 880 km, and were often intended to incur heavy losses. Many prisoners who did not die from exhaustion were often shot. On one march from Dora-Mittelbau to Bergen-Belsen a convoy of prisoners was forced into a barn that was then set on fire; the next day, when American forces reached the site, they found hundreds of burned corpses.

The evacuations and death marches were kept up literally until the Third Reich's last day. The final camp from which prisoners were sent on a death march was at Reichenau; this took place on May 7th, the day on which Germany surrendered to the Allies.

During the final days of the war, in the spring of 1945, conditions in the remaining concentration camps also exacted a terrible toll in human lives. Even concentration camps never intended for extermination, such as Bergen-Belsen, became death traps for thousands, including Anne Frank, who died there of typhus in March 1945.

In May 1945, Nazi Germany collapsed, the SS guards fled, and the camps ceased to exist as extermination, forced labour, or concentration camps. Some of the concentration camps, including Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and Landsberg, all in Allied-occupied Germany, were turned into camps for displaced persons (DPs), which included former Holocaust victims unable to be repatriated.

CHILDREN AND THE HOLOCAUST

Up to one-and-a-half million children were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933 and 1945. The overwhelming majority of them were Jewish. Thousands of Roma (Gypsy) children, disabled children, and Polish children were also among the victims.

The deaths of these children were not accidental; they were the deliberate result of actions taken by the German government under the leadership of Chancellor Adolf Hitler. The children were killed in various ways. Many were shot; many more were asphyxiated with poisonous gas in concentration camps or subjected to lethal injections. Others perished from disease, starvation, exposure, torture and/or severe physical exhaustion from slave labour. Still others died as a result of medical experiments conducted on them by German doctors in the camps.

During the Holocaust, "non-Aryan" children – ranging in age from infants to older teens – were, like their parents, persecuted and killed. Yet even children who fit the Aryan stereotype suffered at the hands of the Nazis during World War II. Non-Jewish children in occupied countries whose physical appearance fit the Nazi notion of a "master race" (fair skin, blond-haired, blue-eyed) were at times kidnapped from their homes and taken to Germany to be adopted by German families. As many as 50,000 Polish children alone may have been separated from their families in this manner. Some of these children were later rejected and sent to children's camps where they died of starvation or as a result of the terrible living conditions within the camps. Others were killed by lethal injections at the concentration camps of Majdanek and Auschwitz.

Wartime, Hitler suggested, "was [also] the best time for the elimination of the incurably ill." Among the first victims of the Nazis were disabled persons, and children were not exempt. Many Germans, influenced by Nazi ideas, did not want to be reminded of individuals who did not measure up to their idealized concept of a "master race." The physically and mentally handicapped were viewed by the Nazis as unproductive to society, a threat to Aryan genetic purity, and ultimately unworthy of life. Beginning almost simultaneously with the start of World War II, a "euthanasia" program was authorized personally by Hitler to systematically murder disabled Germans. Like disabled adults, children with disabilities were either injected with lethal drugs or asphyxiated by inhaling carbon monoxide fumes pumped into sealed mobile vans and gas chambers. Medical doctors cooperated in these so-called "mercy killings" in six institutions, and secretly at other centres, in Germany. Though some were Jewish, most of the children murdered in this fashion were non-Jewish Germans.

With the onset of war, Jewish children in Germany suffered increasing deprivations. Nazi government officials confiscated many items of value from Jewish homes, and even more importantly, food rations were curtailed for Jews as were clothing ration cards. Throughout eastern Europe, Jewish families were also forced to give up their homes and relocate into ghettos. Some children managed to escape deportation to ghettos by going into hiding with their families or by hiding alone, aided by non-Jewish friends and neighbours. Children in hiding often took on a secret life, sometimes remaining in one room for months or even years. Some hid in woodpiles, attics, or barns; others were locked in cupboards or concealed closets, coming out frequently and only at night.

Children were often forced to live lives independent of their families. Many children who found refuge with others outside the ghettos had to assume new identities and conform to local religious customs that were different from their own in order to survive. Some Jewish children managed to pass as Catholics and were hidden in Catholic schools, orphanages, and convents in countries across Europe.

The experiences of children who were victims of Nazi hatred varied widely. Factors such as age, gender, family wealth, and where a child lived affected their experiences under German domination. Generally, babies and younger children deported to ghettos and camps had almost no chance of surviving. Children in their teens, or younger children who looked more mature in their years, had a better chance of survival since they might be selected for slave labour rather than for death. Some teens participated in resistance activities as well. Orphaned children in the ghettos lived on the streets, begging for bread and food from others in the ghetto who likewise had little or none to spare.

Near the end of the war in 1945, the German concentration camps were liberated by Allied soldiers. By this time, many of the children who had entered camps as teenagers were now young adults. For most, the food and gestures of kindness offered by liberating soldiers were the links to life itself. Children who had survived in hiding now searched the camps trying to locate family members who might also have survived. Returning to hometowns, they had hopes that a former neighbour might know of other survivors. Yet life as it had been before the Holocaust was forever altered. Many of those who attempted to return to their former places of residence found their homes had, in many instances, been taken over by others and personal possessions been plundered.

It was rare for an entire family to survive the Holocaust. One or both parents were likely to have been killed; brothers and sisters had been lost; grandparents were dead. Anticipated reunions with family members gave surviving children some hope, but for many, the terrible reality was that they were now alone.

GLOSSARY

Anti-Semitism

Opposition or hatred of Jews. As a term, it came into wide-spread use in the 1870's. Subsequently, it has come to denote hatred of Jews, in all of its forms, throughout history.

Auschwitz

A concentration camp established in 1940 at Oswiecim, Poland. In 1942, it became an extermination camp. It contained a labour camp, the death camp, Birkenau and the slave labour camp, Buna-Monowitz. Up to 1.5 million Jewish men, women and children were murdered in this camp and 100,000 victims from other ethnic and cultural groups. Only 7,650 were found alive at liberation.

Concentration Camps

Immediately after assuming power on January 30, 1933, the Nazis established camps where they "concentrated" and imprisoned perceived enemies of the state. Enemies of Nazism included: actual and potential political opponents (Communists, Socialists, Monarchists), Jehovah's Witnesses, Gypsies, homosexuals and others deemed "anti-social." The general round-up of Jews did not begin until 1938. Before then, only Jews who fit the other categories were interned in the camps. The first three camps were: Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen.

Final Solution

Nazi code name for the plan to destroy the Jews of Europe.

Gestapo

A political police unit established in 1933; its official name was Geheime Staatspolizei, or secret state police. The Gestapo acted above the law and were notorious for their brutality.

Ghetto

The ghetto was a section of the city where all Jews from the surrounding areas were forced to live. Surrounded by barbed wire or walls, the ghettos were often sealed to prevent people from entering or leaving. Established mostly in Eastern Europe, ghettos were characterized by overcrowding, starvation and forced labour. All were eventually destroyed as the Jews were deported to death camps.

Hitler, Adolf

Nazi party leader from 1921 to 1945. He became the German Chancellor on January 30, 1933 and President on August 2, 1934. He committed suicide in his Berlin bunker on April 30, 1945, following Germany's defeat by the Allied powers.

Holocaust

The destruction of some 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their followers in Europe between the years 1933-1945. Other individuals and groups were persecuted and suffered grievously during this period, but only the Jews were marked for complete and utter annihilation. The term "Holocaust" – literally meaning "a completely burned sacrifice" – tends to suggest a sacrificial connotation to what occurred. The word Shoah, originally a Biblical term meaning widespread disaster, is the modern Hebrew equivalent.

Judenrein

"Clear of Jews" – the Nazi term for the result of the Final Solution: the clearing out of all Jews from a specific locality. As far back as 1933, the Nazis created "Jew-free villages" by terror and destruction. The SS would arrive into a town, and at a given signal they would begin destroying Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues. They would smash and burn personal belongings and Torahs. The Jews would flee the town and it would become "Jew-free."

Kapo

The word "kapo" comes from the Italian "capo" meaning head or chief. Kapos were jail inmates who were professional criminals, former soldiers, foreign legionnaires and other rough unskilled prisoners who directed the forced labour work details of Jews in concentration camps. They were appointed by the SS work detail officers, and they had equally cruel foremen assisting them. Prisoners often had to bribe Kapos to avoid being beaten to death. To distinguish them from Jews wearing yellow stars, Kapos wore black arm bands with white lettering on their left arms.

Kristallnacht

"The Night of Broken Glass." It was a pogrom unleashed by the Nazis on November 9-10, 1938. Synagogues, Jewish institutions, stores and homes in Germany and Austria were destroyed and looted. Ninety-one people were killed, 900 synagogues were demolished, and approximately 35,000 Jewish men were rounded up and sent to concentration camps. As a result, Jews were completely isolated from the general population.

Nazism

The ideology of the National Socialist German Workers Party and the party's system of rule from 1933 to 1945. Also a form of fascism. The ideology included: 1) anti-liberalism and anti-parliamentarianism, 2) anti-communism and anti-socialism; 3) the Fuhrer principle which replaced parliament with a hierarchical dictatorship based on the concepts of leader and follower, command and obedience; 4) nationalism, 5) racism and anti-Semitism, 6) imperialism and 8) militarism.

Nuremberg Laws

Two anti-Jewish statutes enacted in September 1935 during the Nazi party's national convention in Nuremberg. The first, the Reich Citizenship Law, deprived German Jews of their citizenship and all pertinent, related rights. The second, the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, outlawed marriages of Jews and non-Jews, forbade Jews from employing German females of childbearing age, and prohibited Jews from displaying the German flag. Many additional regulations were attached to the two main statutes, which provided the basis for removing Jews from all spheres of German political, social, and economic life. The Nuremberg Laws carefully established definitions of Jewishness based on bloodlines. Thus, many Germans of mixed ancestry, called "*Mischling*," faced antisemitic discrimination if they had a Jewish grandparent.

SA

An abbreviation for *Stürmabteilung*; the storm troops of the early Nazi party, organized in 1921.

SS

Abbreviation usually written with two lightning symbols for *Schutzstaffel* (Defense Protective Units). Originally organized as Hitler's personal bodyguard, the SS was transformed into a giant organization by Heinrich Himmler. Although various SS units were assigned to the battlefield, the organization is best known for carrying out the destruction of European Jewry.

Star of David

A six-pointed star formed of two equilateral triangles; a traditional symbol of Judaism. Used by the Nazis as an identification mark for Jews. By Nazi decree, Jews over the age of six had to wear a yellow Star of David badge on their clothing.

Swastika

Symbol of the Nazi party. A cross with equal arms each of which is bent at a right angle. It appeared on Nazi uniforms and flags.

TIMELINE OF THE HOLOCAUST 1933-1945

1933

January 30

Adolf Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany.

March 20

Dachau concentration camp opens.

April 1

Boycott of Jewish shops and businesses.

April 7

Laws for re-establishment of the Civil Service barred Jews from holding civil service, university and state positions.

April 26

Gestapo established.

May 10

Public burnings of books written by Jews, political opponents of the Nazis, and others.

July 14

Law permitting the forced sterilization of Gypsies, the mentally and physically disabled, African-Germans and others considered "unfit." East European Jewish immigrants stripped of German citizenship.

1934

August 2

Hitler proclaims himself *Fuhrer und Reichskanzler* (Leader and Reich Chancellor). Armed forces must now swear allegiance to him.

October - November

First major wave of arrests of homosexuals.

1935

March 17

Hitler's army invades the Rhineland.

April

Jehovah's Witnesses banned from all civil service jobs and are arrested.

September 15

"Nuremberg Laws," anti-Jewish racial laws enacted; Jews lose the right to German citizenship and to marry Aryans.

1936

Summer

Olympic Games take place in Berlin. Anti-Jewish signs are temporarily removed.

July 12

First German Gypsies are arrested and deported to Dachau concentration camp.

October 25

Mussolini and Hitler form Rome-Berlin Axis.

1938

March 13

Austria is peacefully annexed (*Anschluss*) by Germany. All anti-Semitic decrees immediately applied in Austria.

July 6-15

Representatives from thirty-two countries meet at the Evian Conference in France. Most countries refuse to let in more Jewish refugees.

November 9-10

Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass): anti-Jewish pogrom in Germany and Austria; synagogues destroyed; Jewish homes and shops looted; nearly 30,000 Jewish men sent to concentration camps.

November 12

Decree forcing all Jews to transfer retail businesses into Aryan hands.

November 15

All Jewish pupils expelled from German schools.

December 2-3

All Gypsies are required to register with the police.

1939

March 15

Germans invade Czechoslovakia.

August 23

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed: non-aggression pact between Soviet Union and Germany.

June 1939

Cuba, the United States and Canada refuse to admit Jewish refugees aboard the *S.S. St. Louis*, which is forced to return to Europe.

September 1

Germany invades Poland; World War II begins.

September 10

Canada declares war on Germany.

October

Hitler extends power of doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically disabled people in the "euthanasia" program.

October 12

Germany begins deportation of Austrian and Czech Jews to Poland.

October 28

First Polish ghetto established in Piotrków.

November 23

Jews in German-occupied Poland forced to wear an arm band or yellow star.

1940

Spring

Germany invades Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and France.

May 7

Lodz Ghetto sealed.

May 20

Auschwitz concentration camp established at Oswiecim, Poland.

August 8

Battle of Britain begins.

September 27

Italy, Germany and Japan form an alliance called the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis.

October

Warsaw Ghetto established: ultimately contains 500,000 people.

1941

March 22

Gypsy and African-German children are expelled from schools in the Reich.

March 24

Germany invades North Africa.

April 6

Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

June 22

Germany invades the Soviet Union. The *Einsatzgruppen*, mobile killing squads, begin mass murders of Jews, Gypsies and Communist leaders.

July 31

Heydrich appointed by Göring to implement the "Final Solution."

September 23

Soviet prisoners of war and Polish prisoners are killed in Nazi test of gas chambers in Auschwitz.

September 28-29

Approximately 34,000 Jews are murdered by mobile killing squads, at Babi Yar near Kiev, Ukraine.

October

Establishment of Auschwitz II (Birkenau) for the extermination of Jews; Gypsies, Poles, Russians and others.

December 7

Japan attacks Pearl Harbour.

December 8

Gassing begins at Chelmno extermination camp in Poland.

December 11

United States declares war on Japan and Germany.

1942

January 20

Wannsee conference in Berlin; fifteen Nazi leaders meet to discuss "the Final Solution," the plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe.

1942

Nazi extermination camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec and Majdanek-Lublin begin the mass murder of Jews in gas chambers.

June

Jewish partisan units established in the forests of Byelorussia and the Baltic States.

June 1

Jews in France and Holland are required to wear identifying stars.

1943

January

German 6th Army surrenders at Stalingrad.

April 19 - May 16

Warsaw Ghetto uprising; Jewish armed resistance to being deported to extermination camps.

June

Himmler orders the liquidation of all ghettos in Poland and the Soviet Union.

Summer

Armed resistance by Jews in Treblinka concentration camp, Bedzin, Bialystok, Czestochowa, Lvov and Tarnów ghettos.

October 14

Armed revolt in Sobibor extermination camp.

October - November

Rescue of Danish Jewry to Sweden.

1944

March 19

Germany occupies Hungary; Eichmann put in charge of plan to eliminate Hungarian Jewry.

May 15 - July 9

Over 430,000 Hungarian Jews are deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where most of them are gassed.

June 6

D-Day: Allied invasion at Normandy, France.

July 20

Group of German officers fail in their attempt to assassinate Hitler.

July 24

Russians arrive at Majdanek concentration camp.

August 2

Nazis destroy the Gypsy camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau; approximately 3,000 Gypsies are gassed.

October 7

Prisoners revolt at Auschwitz-Birkenau and blow up one crematorium.

1945

January 17

Nazis evacuate Auschwitz and force prisoners on "death marches" toward Germany.

January 27

Soviet troops enter Auschwitz-Birkenau.

April

U.S. troops arrive at Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps.

April 30

Hitler commits suicide in his bunker in Berlin.

May 5

U.S. troops arrive at Mauthausen concentration camp.

May 8

V-E Day: Germany surrenders; the war ends in Europe.

August 6

The U.S. bombs Hiroshima, Japan.

August 9

The U.S. bombs Nagasaki, Japan.

September 2

V-J Day: Japan surrenders; end of World War II.

November 1945 - October 1946

International Military War Crimes Tribunal held at Nuremberg, Germany.

RESOURCES ON HOLOCAUST ART AND ARTISTS

Available at the Holocaust Education Centre

BOOKS

Of Art Works Created During The War:

Blatter, Janet and Sybil Milton. Eds. Art of The Holocaust. Rutledge Press, 1981.

This book contains more than 350 works of art created by artists in ghettos, transit camps, in hiding, and in concentration camps. Of the works contained, sixty are in colour. In addition to the artwork the book records the story behind each work as well as a historical introduction and two articles by the editors. This book does not include crafts, religious and utilitarian objects, nor does it include children's drawings.

I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp 1942-1944. Schocken Books, 1986.

An expanded edition of the classic collection of drawings, paintings and poems that were left by some of the 15,000 children who passed through the Terezin concentration camp between 1942 and 1944.

In Memory of Human Tragedy. Museum of the Pawiak Prison, 1976.

Exhibition catalogue meant to show the public a part of the many paintings, drawings, sculptures, posters and handicraft created in Nazi concentration camps.

This book is for reference only and cannot be circulated.

Krizkova, Marie, Kurt Kotouc and Zdenek Ornest. Eds. We Are Children Just The Same: Vedem, The Secret Magazine By The Boys of Terezin. The Jewish Publication Society, 1995.

From 1942 to 1944, a group of 13 to 15 year old Jewish boys secretly produced a weekly magazine called Vedem (In The Lead) at the model concentration camp, Theresienstadt. The writers, artists and editors put together the issues and copied them by hand behind the blackout shades of their cellblock. The book includes reproductions of articles and poems published in the magazine as well as drawings (colour and black and white) from the children of Terezin.

Seeing Through "paradise": Artists and The Terezin Concentration Camp. Massachusetts College of Art, 1991.

An exhibit catalogue of the work of 21 artists from Terezin. It includes drawings and paintings (some in colour) along with several essays on life, the art, and the artists in Terezin.

Spiritual Resistance: Art From Concentration Camps 1940-1945. The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1981.

The 116 colour and black and white reproductions in this volume reveal the Holocaust, not as it was seen by the Nazis or the liberating Allied troops, but as seen by those who both witnessed and suffered the terrors of the Nazi extermination effort. Many of the forty-eight artists represented in this collection died in Nazi death camps. The book also includes three introductory essays by Lucy Dawidowicz, Tom Freudenheim and Miriam Novitch which define and explores the phenomenon of Holocaust art.

Terezin 1941-1945. Council of Jewish Communities in the Czech Lands, 1965.

A detailed history of the Terezin concentration camp which discusses the culture and art created in the camp. The book also includes many illustrations and sketches as well as colour plates of drawings, paintings and other art works produced.

This book is for reference only and cannot be circulated.

Witnesses in The Anteroom To Hell: The Theresienstadt Drawings of Paul Schwarz & Leo Lowit. The Jewish Museum of Australia, 1990.

Exhibit catalogue of the drawings of amateur artists Schwarz & Lowit produced while in Terezin. Both men were killed in Auschwitz in 1944. These drawings represent their work from 1941 to 1944.

Art Produced Post-war:

Eisner, Will. To The Heart of The Storm. Kitchen Sink Press, 1991.

Eisner's graphic novel examines how the anti-semitism a youth experiences in the America of the 1920's and 1930's shapes his personality and his life. It is a touching family history, told through flashbacks as the young man rides a troop train to basic training immediately after the entry of the United States into World War II.

Feinstein, Stephen. Ed. Witness and Legacy: Contemporary Art About the Holocaust. Minnesota Museum of American Art, 1995.

This exhibition poses a profound and fundamental question: How does one make art about such a moment of history as the Holocaust? Where do the threads of memory, experience, personal creativity and respect for those who perished intersect as a work of art? The intention of Witness and Legacy is to announce a contemporary movement, the phenomenon of American artists of various experiential perspectives (survivors and second-generation), using various strategies, working today to bring the Holocaust into our cultural dialogue.

Milton, Sybil. The Story of Karl Stojka: A Childhood in Birkenau. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1992.

This catalogue and the exhibition it documents tell the story of the Roma (Gypsy) survivor Karl Stojka and his immediate family through autobiographical art and reminiscences. Stojka's vivid art-as-memory canvases, painted since 1970, chronicle his childhood from 1939 to 1945. These documentary paintings recount his persecution as a Roma Gypsy growing up in post-Anschluss Vienna after 1938 and his incarceration from 1943 to 1945 in three Nazi concentration camps: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Buchenwald, and Flossenburg.

Spiegelman, Art. Maus: A Survivor's Tale. Pantheon Books, 1973.

This graphic novel introduces readers to Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and his son, a cartoonist trying to come to terms with his father, his father's terrifying story, and history itself. Its form, the cartoon, succeeds perfectly in shocking us out of any lingering familiarity with the events described, approaching, as it does, the unspeakable through the diminutive.

Spiegelman, Art. Maus: A Survivor's Tale II: And Here My Trouble Began. Pantheon Books, 1986.

This graphic novel continues to relate the story of Vladek Spiegelman from the barracks of Auschwitz to the bungalows of the Catskills.

POSTERS

The Enduring Spirit: Art of the Holocaust

Poster #30 from the poster set "Courage to Remember: The Holocaust 1933-1945." Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, CA. (42" X 26").
Reproduces five drawings and paintings done by survivors of the Holocaust and some written text.

RESOURCES ON AUSCHWITZ

Available at the Holocaust Education Centre

BOOKS

Auschwitz: 1940-1945. Route 66 Publishing Ltd., 1995.

Documents the daily existence of those imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz. Includes descriptions of sanitation and living conditions, crematoria and gas chambers, as well maps of the camp and of Birkenau.

Brewster, Eva. Progeny of Light / Vanished In Darkness. New West Publishers Ltd., 1994.

Eva Brewster and her mother were among the seven of one thousand Berlin Jews who survived deportation to Auschwitz and Birkenau on April 20, 1943. Brewster describes her youth, the events that led to her capture and transport to Auschwitz, the years there, and the time following her internment as she began to rebuild her life with a young British intelligence officer, Ross Brewster.

Czech, Danuta. Auschwitz Chronicle 1939-1945. I.B. Tauris Co Ltd, 1990.

From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives. This is the complete record of the events and developments over the entire five-year period: the construction, operation and eventual destruction of the gas chambers and crematoriums; transports and selections; medical 'experiments'; visits and inspections by SS leaders, physicians and the Red Cross; expansion and building projects; secret resistance activities; and the all-too-rare revolts and escapes. Includes an extensive glossary and bibliography.

This book is for reference only and cannot be circulated.

Gilbert, Marin. Auschwitz And The Allies. Mandarin, 1981.

By July 1944 the Allies knew both the location and purpose of Auschwitz, including the way in which Jews, deported to the camp from all over Europe, were killed by gassing. This book shows how the Allies responded to each new piece of information as it reached them. As the story unfolds, it becomes possible to see how the most terrible crimes could be committed with scarcely any effort being made to halt them.

Levi, Primo. The Drowned And The Saved. Vintage Int., 1988.

By the end of his life, Levi had become increasingly convinced that the lessons of the Holocaust were destined to be lost as it took a place among the routine atrocities of history. This book is a dark meditation on the meaning of the Nazi exterminations after the passing of forty years.

Levi, Primo. Moments of Reprieve: A Memoir of Auschwitz. Penguin, 1979.
Primo Levi was born in Turin, Italy, in 1919 and was trained as a chemist. Arrested as a member of the anti-fascist resistance, he was deported to Auschwitz in 1944. In the preface the author says, "At Auschwitz, and on the long road returning home, I had seen and experienced things that appeared important only for me, things that imperiously demanded to be told ... With the passing of the years ... I realized that my experience of Auschwitz was far from exhausted."

Levi, Primo. The Reawakening. Collier Books, 1965.
The sequel to Survival in Auschwitz, it opens with Levi's liberation from Auschwitz in January 1945 by the Red Army and tells of his journey home to Italy by way of the Soviet Union, Hungary, and Romania. Levi's railway travels take him through bombed-out cities and transit camps in which he describes the former prisoners and Russian soldiers he encounters along the way.

Matas, Carol. Daniel's Story. Scholastic Inc., 1993.
This book is written for youth and chronicles the life of Daniel, a fictitious character whose story was inspired by the real experiences of many children who died in the Holocaust. Daniel, whose family suffers as the Nazis rise to power in Germany, describes his life in the Lodz ghetto, his imprisonment in a concentration camp, and his eventual liberation.

Nyiszli, Miklos. Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account. Arcade Publishing, 1993.
When the Nazis invaded Hungary in 1944, they sent virtually the entire Jewish population to Auschwitz. A Jew and a medical doctor, the prisoner Dr. Miklos Nyiszli was spared death for a grimmer fate: to perform 'scientific research' on his fellow inmates under the supervision of the man who became known as the infamous "Angel of Death" – Dr. Josef Mengele. Nyiszli was named Mengele's personal research pathologist. In that capacity he also served as a physician to the Sonderkommando, the Jewish prisoners who worked exclusively in the crematoriums and were routinely executed after four months. Nyiszli survived to give this eyewitness account.

Swiebocka, Teresa. Ed. Auschwitz: A History in Photographs. Indiana University Press, 1993.
Through more than 280 documentary photographs form the archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and reproductions of artistic works by former prisoners, this book records the history of Auschwitz and what it looks like today. It includes photographs taken by the Nazis of the construction and expansion of the camp, of individual prisoners and scenes from daily life, and of the machinery of mass murder itself; clandestine photographs, taken by prisoners; aerial photographs, taken by the Allies; and photographs take at the time of liberation.

Vrba, Rudolf and Alan Bestic. *I Cannot Forgive*. Bantam, 1964.
Rudolf Vrba was shipped to Auschwitz at the age of 17. He not only managed to survive, but also to escape. Ultimately, through the intervention of Pope Pius XII, he helped to save the lives of 600,000 Hungarian Jews.

VIDEOS

Choosing One's Way - Resistance in Auschwitz/Birkenau.

00:30 min. colour / b/w. Ergo Media Inc., 1995.

This documentary is about the heretofore little-known story of resistance in Auschwitz/Birkenau. Accomplished through the smuggling of gun powder from a nearby munitions factory, the inmates succeeded in the destruction of Crematorium #4. The film features thirteen survivors, each of whom contributes to the piecing together of this incredible story of heroism.

IWM - Archival footage of the liberation of Auschwitz.

(no sound). 60 min., b/w.

Out-takes from the Imperial War Museum, England.

One Survivor Remembers.

colour. HBO, 1996.

It is an Academy Award winning documentary based on the memoir of Gerda Weissmann Klein's "All But My Life." It records the moving story of a young woman's three frightful years as a slave labourer of the Nazis and her miraculous liberation. It stands as the ultimate lesson in humanity, hope, and friendship.

Prisoner 88.

00:49 min. colour. Ark Films, 1995.

A documentary on Sigmund Sobolewski, a Polish Catholic survivor of Auschwitz, who, as one of the first prisoners of Auschwitz and as Chief of the Second Fire Brigade, brings a unique perspective as he bears witness to the Holocaust.

POSTERS

Auschwitz-Birkenau: The Death Factory.

Wiesenthal Poster Set (#31/40). Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, CA. (42" X 26").

Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest Nazi camp. Poster contains photographs of Zyklon-B, selections, burning corpses, and the gates and railway lines of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Auschwitz-Birkenau: Half Hell, Half Lunatic Asylum.

Wiesenthal Poster Set (#32/40). Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, CA. (42" X 26").

Between April 1942 and November 1944, 2,000,000 Jews were gassed and in addition hundreds of thousands of non-Jews, including Poles, Soviet POWs and Gypsies were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Sadistic and brutal medical experiments were conducted by Josef Mengele and other "physicians." To erase all signs of their horrific deeds, the Nazis reduced corpses to ashes in the crematoria.

The Last Agony At Auschwitz: Liberation, January 1945.

Wiesenthal Poster Set (#33/40). Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, CA. (42" X 26").

November 1944, the Auschwitz gas chambers were dismantled. Last minute mass murder, death marches, starvation or death from exposure in overcrowded camps typified the last days of the Nazi terror. Poster contains photographs in liberated Auschwitz.

Additional books and videos are available on Auschwitz and other related topics at the Holocaust Education Centre.

