

Yad Vashem Jerusalem

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“Generation to Generation”

International Mission 2018

(pp. 4-5)

“It Came from Within”

New Online Exhibition Marking 80 Years since *Kristallnacht* (pp. 10-11)

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Translated by: **James Joseph McIntosh**

Assisted by: **Alexander Avram,**

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Photography: **Yossi Ben-David, Isaac Harari**

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■ On the cover: Holocaust survivor **Felice Zimmern Stokes** with **Allyson Setton**, member of the Young Leadership Associates of the American Society for Yad Vashem, during the 2018 International Mission (see pp. 4-5)

A people who in its
darkest of hours
could raise its eyes
to culture could
never be destroyed

■ On 24 July 1943, a concert was held in secret in the Kovno ghetto, marking the anniversaries of the deaths of the visionary of modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl, and the celebrated Hebrew and Yiddish poet **Chaim Nahman Bialik**. Seventy-five years later almost to the day, this concert was revived in its entirety at Yad Vashem on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem.

After its establishment in August 1941, the leadership of the Kovno ghetto sought to hearten those who had survived the horrific *aktionen* by promoting Jewish educational and cultural life. In 1942, a group of some of the most talented musicians in Lithuania turned to the ghetto leadership with the request to hold concerts of Jewish and classical music. After deliberation over the appropriateness of conducting such events in the shadow of so much suffering and death, the decision was made to ask the Germans for permission. This was granted – on the grounds that it would “raise the spirit” of the slave laborers, and on the proviso that the first performance would be for the German civilian administration.



■ Kovno, Lithuania. The ghetto orchestra

The former Slobodka yeshiva was chosen to house the orchestra performances, and in order to protect the orchestra musicians from deportation and forced labor, they were formally inducted as police officers. In 1947, the *Fun Letstn Khurbn* (The Final Destruction) journal described the effect of the orchestra's performances – over 80 in one year – as follows: “Tears fell from the eyes of the audience members, as well as from the musicians, as the first chords pierced the silence of the hall. However, these were not tears of sadness; rather, they were tears of

“Tears of Anguished Pride”

Secret Concert at the Kovno Ghetto Revived at Yad Vashem

Leah Goldstein



■ “A Concert Where Everything is Blue (Tchelet)” held at Yad Vashem 75 years after it was performed in secret in the Kovno ghetto | Aranen Productions: Evyatar Nissan

joy and anguished pride. A people who in its darkest of hours could raise its eyes to culture could never be destroyed.” Although moved to the extreme by the performances, the attendees respected the commonly agreed decision not to applaud, in deference to the thousands in their community being murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators.

In March 1944, during the horrific “Children’s *Aktion*,” members of the Kovno underground buried the ghetto’s archives, which were discovered two decades later. While conducting his doctoral research on the Kovno ghetto, Israeli scholar Rami Neuderfer spent a year-and-a-half perusing the archives. Amongst the 40,000 documents, including hundreds of pages about the Kovno ghetto orchestra, Neuderfer discovered a detailed program of the secret Zionist performance lauded by the ghetto leadership as the “crowning glory” of the ghetto’s cultural endeavors, and which one of its initiators had entitled “A Concert Where Everything is Blue (Tchelet).”

The concert program brought together the various educational and cultural movements that operated in the ghetto at the time, and

In 1942, a group of some of the most talented musicians in Lithuania turned to the ghetto leadership with the request to hold concerts of Jewish and classical music

presented content that supported Zionism and solidarity. Among the songs played were “Shir Ha’emek” (Song of the Valley), “Shir Hanamal” (Song of the Port), “Shir Ma’apilei Betar” (The Betar Movement Song), and “Nomi Nomi,” a children’s lullaby. Popular Eastern European Jewish music was also played, as well as a string of tunes perceived as Yemenite melodies. The concert concluded with the singing, in Yiddish, of “Hatikvah” (The Hope), the anthem of the future State of Israel.

Under the direction of Neuderfer, and in cooperation with Israel’s Ministry for Social Equality, the authentic revival of the secret

concert took place at Yad Vashem’s Jewish Fighters and Partisans Monument. The concert was performed by the Raanana Symphonette Orchestra alongside the Ankor Choir – made up of teenage girls studying at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance – and featured several popular Israeli singers, including Karolina, Yonatan Razel and Ofir Ben Shitrit. In between the songs, the story of the secret concert was retold through testimonies, photographs, artifacts and videos from the Yad Vashem Collections.

At the concert, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev recalled “the enormous strength of human spirit of the people who cleaved to and believed in the Zionist endeavor and wished to express it in every manner possible, under the harshest of circumstances... Today we show our appreciation for that strength of spirit, of the ideas developed by the Zionist movement in the hills of Kovno and elsewhere, which in the wake of WWII and the Shoah proved to be the only way to ensure the continuation of the Jewish people: that is, the State of Israel, which came into existence 70 years ago. We will do our best to guard this most valuable of pledges, charged to us all.”

“Generation to Generation”

International Mission 2018



■ Members of the 2018 International Mission in Austria



■ Left to right: Dorit Novak, Adina Burian, Leonard Wilf, Holocaust survivors Leon Green and Naftali Deutsch, Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz

■ In 2014, marking its sixtieth year, Yad Vashem held its first biennial International Mission, with some thirty participants. In July 2018, one hundred of Yad Vashem’s friends and supporters – aged 16 to 96 – took part in the third mission of its kind, including the Director General of Yad Vashem Dorit Novak, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem Leonard (Lenny) Wilf and Holocaust survivors.

Entitled “Generation to Generation,” the Mission began in Austria with an opening gala dinner. “This is such a wonderful family gathering of the First, Second and Third Generations,” said Dorit Novak at the dinner. “We really appreciate each and every one of you here. Tonight we look at the past, at the rich Jewish life before the war; we appreciate the path our parents paved for us to bring us here to the present; and we pledge ourselves to the future of the Jewish people, of Yad Vashem, of the State of Israel, and of Holocaust remembrance around the globe.”

The group learned from Yad Vashem’s professional guides and scholar-in-residence, Yad Vashem Chief Historian Dina Porat, the history

of Jewish Vienna from medieval times, through the various struggles they faced, the cultural blossoming of the community and the birth of modern Zionism – which began in Vienna – up to and including the destruction of the community during the Holocaust. Participants had the privilege of meeting the Chancellor of Austria, H.E. Mr. Sebastian Kurz, as well as Austrian parliament members. Touring Vienna with Yad Vashem was a unique and moving experience, evoking powerful thoughts and feelings about the Jewish people – its past, its present and its future. The final day in Austria was spent at the Mauthausen–Gusen concentration camp complex, where some of the Holocaust survivors on the Mission were incarcerated during the war. “Visiting Mauthausen with survivors who were imprisoned in the very camp we were standing in was an experience unlike anything else,” said Third Generation member Dana Rogozinski. “The feeling was indescribable. It was then that I realized it is up to me and my generation to share these first-hand encounters, what we saw and how we felt. It is up to us to carry on the legacy and stories of the Holocaust, and Yad Vashem makes this possible.”

From there, the group travelled to the city of Linz for an inspiring meeting with the Austrian Friends of Yad Vashem. The Austrian leg of the mission concluded with a festive 4th July dinner, marking the day that American forces liberated Mauthausen, and expressing gratitude for the freedom most Jewish communities enjoy today.

As the plane approached Israel, Cantor Shai Abramson, who accompanied the participants throughout the trip in Austria, gave a beautiful rendition of the Prayer for the State of Israel. After a visit to the Kotel (the Wailing Wall)

in Jerusalem, a celebratory dinner opening the Israel leg of the mission began with Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev welcoming the esteemed group to Israel. Shalev suggested that one of the most important challenges today is ensuring that the Holocaust remains relevant to the younger generations. Shalev, who has placed education at the forefront of Yad Vashem’s activities, acknowledged that educators need to cope with new environments of technology and learning. The main objective, he said, is establishing “meaningful remembrance.” New educational tools are being developed at Yad Vashem that will take advantage of the newest technological advances, without losing the human context of events.



■ Young mission participants visiting the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center at the IDF training campus in the Negev

The visit to Israel was packed with behind-the-scenes tours of the Mount of Remembrance and other sites in Jerusalem and around the country; meetings with Yad Vashem experts, who introduced the group to different aspects of the World Holocaust Remembrance Center’s diverse activities; and ceremonies in honor of new Benefactors Steven Baral (US) and Jaime and Evelyn Ellstein (Mexico). Shabbat in Jerusalem with Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council and

The Mission demonstrated the importance of the role of Yad Vashem and Holocaust remembrance in shaping and strengthening Jewish identity and continuity

Sari Granitza

Holocaust survivor Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Rabbi Benji Levin and Yair Stern, all of whom have strong ties to the history of the establishment of the State of Israel, was an important time for reflection and spiritually uplifting for so many members of the group.

The group experienced modern-day Israel from different perspectives. At the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center at the IDF training campus in the Negev, participants were welcomed by IDF Chief Educational Officer and Head of the Training Campus Colonel Avi Motolla. The group learned how teams from Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies develop and carry out educational programs at the training campus as an inherent part of IDF training activities. Dealing with the story of the Holocaust as a pivotal event in the history of the Jewish people, alongside examining values such as Jewish identity, mutual responsibility, heroism and attachment to the Land of Israel, forms the basis for cooperative educational endeavors between Yad Vashem and the IDF. This partnership allows the next generations of soldiers and commanders to commit to passing on the torch of remembrance. The group then continued to Kibbutz Chatzerim, where they heard about the struggles of developing agriculture and technology in a barren desert,



■ Israel's President Reuven Rivlin was guest of honor at the closing ceremony

and not giving up the dream of a blooming Land of Israel until it became a thriving reality. After learning about Israel's army and booming technology, the group concluded the day with a cultural experience – a performance by Vertigo, a unique dance troupe in the Kibbutz Netiv HaLamed-Hey ecological village.

"It was especially significant for Mission members to celebrate Israel's accomplishments after leaving Vienna," recalled Adina Burian, Chairperson of the Mission. "We stood in Austria



■ Yad Vashem Archives Division Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation Dr. Haim Gertner shows Mission participants items from Yad Vashem's Collections in the new exhibition "They Say There Is a Land"

"I realized it is up to me and my generation to share these first-hand encounters... to carry on the legacy and stories of the Holocaust. Yad Vashem makes this possible."

Dana Rogozinski

talking about Theodor Herzl's vision, and now here we have the opportunity to experience Israel after seven decades of statehood. It really brought us full circle. It was meaningful to see the seeds of Zionism in Austria and then to see them fulfilled in the modern State of Israel."

The group opened its final day with a ceremony marking the commencement of the campaign for the new Shoah Heritage Campus, which will provide greater storage, restoration and display facilities for Yad Vashem's invaluable Collections. The participants also experienced workshops in Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies on different topics such as using digital resources to educate on the Holocaust and against antisemitism, in which they learned about Yad Vashem's MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses), educational films and survivor testimonies, as well as "The Holocaust and Jewish Identity" mobile teaching unit.

The Mission, which ended with a moving and celebratory ceremony in the presence of the

President of the State of Israel, H.E. Mr. Reuven (Rubi) Rivlin, demonstrated the importance of the role of Yad Vashem and Holocaust remembrance in shaping and strengthening Jewish identity and continuity. International Relations Division Managing Director Shaya Ben Yehuda called Yad Vashem "far more than a memorial to the events of the past century. Its educational and commemorative activities, programs, and courses ensure a greater commitment and understanding not only of the Jewish past, but also for the Jewish future and that of humanity as a whole."

The 2018 Mission deeply touched all of the participants, some of whom spontaneously committed to generous pledges of support for Yad Vashem's vital work. Many remarked how the connection between the Second and Third Generations, as well as to Yad Vashem and to Israel, had been considerably strengthened, and how the Mission had inspired them to rededicate themselves to partnering with Yad Vashem in achieving its goals. "Our family was involved with the American Society from its inception," said Lenny Wilf, "Their efforts showed me the way, and I hope to show my children the same way – to support Yad Vashem and to support Israel."

The Yad Vashem "Generation to Generation" 2018 International Mission was generously sponsored by Mark Moskowitz, Lenny and Beth Wilf, David and Sharon Halpern, Peter and Debra Till, Shrub Kempner, Skip and Louise Levine, Avi Katz, Lili Stawski, the Krakowski Family, Benjamin Warren, Barry and Marilyn Rubenstein, Adina and Lawrence Burian, and Chick and Shelley Paradis.

The author is Deputy Director of the International Relations Division.

Education

Holocaust Education in a World without Survivors

■ *I'm afraid that in the future the Holocaust will become just another historical episode; that's why it's important that the story be told from a personal perspective: Numbers alone have no meaning.*"

Holocaust survivor Rena Quint, volunteer guide in Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum

One of the most common and urgent questions asked by many Holocaust educators and scholars is what form teaching about and commemorating the Shoah will take in the not-too-distant future, when the survivors are no longer with us. What will Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremonies look like? In which way will roots trips to Poland differ without an accompanying survivor? And most importantly, how will we be able to transfer the importance and relevance of Holocaust memory to future generations without them hearing testimony from the eyewitnesses themselves?

Yad Vashem has, of course, been preparing itself for this eventuality since it came into existence in the 1950s. By recording and gathering testimonies of survivors – first written and audio, and in recent decades, video – the World Holocaust Remembrance Center has ensured that the personal stories of those who witnessed the darkest of periods in human history will last in perpetuity.

For educators, however, the challenge is perhaps even greater. As Shulamit Imber, Pedagogical Director of Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies and Fred Hillman Chair in Memory of Janusz Korczak, succinctly explains, "whereas historians talk about the past, educators must give the past a meaning."

For more than two decades, Imber and her colleagues at Yad Vashem's International School have recognized the immense value of survivor testimony, and are now considering the challenges educators will face when that generation has passed from the world. In an exclusive interview for *Yad Vashem Jerusalem*, Imber was joined by two other senior members of staff at the International School – Director of the Educational Guiding Department Masha Pollak-Rosenberg, and Deputy Director of the European Department Dr. Noa Mckayton – in assessing and tackling this thought-provoking topic:



■ Holocaust survivor and artist Yehuda Bacon speaking at the 2018 International Educators Conference (see p.7)

By recording and gathering testimonies of survivors, Yad Vashem has ensured that their personal stories will last in perpetuity

Why does hearing survivor testimony make such an impact on an audience?

"When people meet survivors, they suddenly realize that history is about human beings, and that helps them connect to the event," says Dr. Mckayton. "Hearing about how they tried to cope with persecution, what decisions they made within a world of 'choiceless choices,' and their tremendous efforts to rebuild their lives after the Holocaust – all these contribute to the realization that we are first and foremost talking about a story of humanity."

Pollak-Rosenberg concurs. "Hearing from and meeting with survivors allows a personal connection, awakens empathy, and enables one to internalize that the Shoah happened to people (and was committed by people, too). These people were no different from ourselves. That is what creates an emotional connection, and engenders a curiosity to learn more."

"We won't be able to replace the survivors," Imber adds. "When they are no longer with us, it just won't be the same. In order to understand

why this is so, we have to first ask – what did the survivors contribute to Holocaust education that is so important? The answer is that they gave us something *beyond* their testimony, more than simply relating their experiences in a particular period of time. What impacts their audiences is actually *meeting* with them, conducting a dialogue with them. When people meet a survivor, they connect to them and become committed to their memory, as well as to finding meanings from the Holocaust."

Will we be able to recreate these feelings when meeting with survivors is no longer possible?

"We must remember that meetings with eyewitness to the events of the Holocaust have already begun to dwindle," says Pollak-Rosenberg. "For many years already, it has been increasingly rare to hear from a survivor who was an adult during the Shoah, and can talk about his or her experiences as a parent, the head of a family, or his or her professional life. Of course, we have preserved the experiences of the survivors by creating filmed testimonies that represent the broadest and richest spheres of Jewish life before the war. We also use the creative writings and artworks of that generation – these can certainly contribute to an understanding of how real people felt and interpreted the events of the time."

"We have a range of testimonies at our disposal, both at Yad Vashem and worldwide, that we can use in Holocaust education," agrees

"Whereas historians talk about the past, educators must give the past a meaning."

Shulamit Imber

Imber. "However, they do not all have the impact we are trying to recreate in the absence of the survivor. For example, if a survivor describes how she was starved in Auschwitz, that may not be enough. But if she says, 'Because I was starved in Auschwitz I am more aware of helping others in need' – that is something any student, any human being, can relate to. Teachers will have to work hard at choosing those testimonies that give meaning to the Holocaust."

Dr. McKayton concurs but warns, there is "no miracle solution... we will have to continue using recorded testimonies knowing that they will never replace a personal encounter with a survivor."

Is there a danger, then, of losing the main educational messages when trying to find more creative ways to engage young people with the story of the Holocaust?

"Meeting with survivors certainly evokes an emotional, almost visceral, connection with the experience being described," says Imber. "We have found that this experience can also be engendered through the use of interdisciplinary materials, such as art, music, literature and poetry. Nevertheless, everything must be placed in its historical context, and one must be careful not to trivialize the event – for example, by using animation without explaining the background – but utilizing these kinds of materials is an extremely effective way to engage with the students in order to generate the empathy and commitment that meetings with survivors created."

Pollak-Rosenberg points out that "every generation asks their own questions and searches for new ideas. It is important that we have testimonies that we can use for future generations, but we must also understand the post-survivor era could lead to a different kind of discussion, one that delves deeper into topics that would be difficult to discuss in the presence of survivors."

However, Imber is wary of going too far too soon. "There are some interesting developments being undertaken today, but we must remember there are no shortcuts in Holocaust education. We need to be open-minded in assessing new ideas, but always have in mind that what we are trying to do is produce that feeling of empathy and commitment to Holocaust memory, which the survivors so naturally managed to create."

"Time, Place and Relevance" Tenth International Conference on Holocaust Education

Leah Goldstein

■ *"The Holocaust was unprecedented – but it could be a precedent. And this is why you are all here – to do whatever we can, through the tremendous power of education; to limit – if not suppress – the kind of conditions which allowed it to happen."*

After three meaningful days of discussion and debate on the current challenges of teaching and learning about the Holocaust, these words, delivered by Yad Vashem Academic Advisor Prof. Yehuda Bauer at Yad Vashem's recent International Conference on Holocaust Education, resonated for all the participants.

This was the tenth such conference to be held in a period spanning only two decades. Of the 360 attendees from 50 countries (including Albania, China, Turkey and Venezuela), many were familiar faces, while others arrived at the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem for the very first time. Whether veteran Holocaust educator or new to the field, the common denominator expressed by so many was genuine enthusiasm for the issues at hand. "If I don't come to Yad Vashem's conference, where will I hear from others around the world about how they teach?"

Whether veteran Holocaust educator or new to the field, the common denominator expressed by so many was genuine enthusiasm for the issues at hand

Where will I get sound ideas for how to present the Holocaust in my classroom?" asked a teacher from Greece. "Gatherings like this, with so many experts, are vital to me," declared another participant from South Africa. "We all need support and we also need to feel encouraged, to be part of something like this, with so many opportunities to be inspired."

The conference placed its central focus on the various challenges of Holocaust education faced today around the world. Many presenters from across the globe brought their own local and cultural perspectives to the discussion,

enlightening other participants as to respective challenges in engaging today's students, and preserving memory in an age when there will be no more Holocaust survivors left to tell their stories (see previous page). It was clear that attempts to harness new technologies – such as presenting Holocaust survivors to audiences via recorded holograms (such as the USC Shoah Foundation's "Dimensions in Testimony" pilot) or creating exemplary online learning tools such as Yad Vashem and FutureLearn's Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Antisemitism – allowed the audience to appreciate the wealth of new resources aimed at preserving Holocaust history and teach against denial and distortion.



■ *The Conference provided unique networking opportunities for educators from around the globe*

Holocaust survivors were a central tenet of the conference. To mark 70 years since the founding of the State of Israel, Conference Director Ephraim Kaye, Director of the International School's Jewish World and International Seminars Department, requested that survivors share memories of their return to life in the fledgling State of Israel following the horrors of the Holocaust, and of how they rebuilt their families, their communities and themselves. "Listening to Frieda [Kliger], I really understood for the first time just how important the Jewish State was – and still is – for those who had fled Europe following the Holocaust," wrote a participant from the USA. "I cannot forget her face and her emotions while sharing what living in Israel means to her, her pride and her pain. Thank you so much for providing me with more food for thought."

The Tenth International Educators Conference was supported by the Asper Foundation, Adelson Family Foundation, Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Genesis Philanthropy Group, Azrieli Foundation, and Gandel Philanthropy.

Graduate Spotlight

Every year, over 300,000 students and educators from Israel and around the world attend hundreds of educational activities, in a dozen languages, at the International School for Holocaust Studies. Featured here is one of the School's graduates, and what she has achieved since:



Rachel Urowitz Canada

Leah Goldstein

■ Rachel Urowitz, a veteran Jewish History teacher at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (TanenbaumCHAT), recently gave a guest lecture at Yad Vashem's Tenth International Conference on Holocaust Education (see p.7). Her session, entitled "Jewish Life in the Aftermath of the Holocaust: Challenges in Jewish Education," addressed how the Toronto Jewish community embraces and encourages Holocaust education, and described a new full-year course called 'Holocaust in Film' offered to 12th-grade students at TanenbaumCHAT.

Urowitz attended a Yad Vashem seminar for educators in Jewish day schools in the summer of 2017. The intensive 12-day course brought together teachers from Jewish day schools to study, discuss and share experiences about teaching the Holocaust to their students. "The opportunity to share ideas with fellow educators and to learn with experts about new approaches to Holocaust education was a unique experience," recalls Urowitz. "I was especially inspired by the sessions on how to make Holocaust education relevant in the twenty-first century, and how to incorporate themes of art and poetry, as well as photography and film, into my history lessons."

When Urowitz returned to Toronto, she set about immediately implementing what she had learned at Yad Vashem into her high-school history classes. TanenbaumCHAT senior-level students always had the unique opportunity to



■ Graduate Rachel Urowitz

take a full-year course on the Holocaust and modern Israel, but beginning in September 2017 the students were introduced to a new course, "Holocaust in Film." In this course, students learn not only about film documentation as a Nazi political tool, but also about the use of documentary and fictional films in portraying the Holocaust – from the rise of the Nazi party through liberation. Participants are taught to critique these films' portrayals of the Holocaust and to question how the movies depict both the Jewish victims and the German perpetrators.

"After returning from the summer seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies last year, I knew that I would be ready to tackle this new course with my students," explains Urowitz. "The Yad Vashem educators gave me the confidence to weave survivor testimonies along with photography, poetry and artwork into the new film course in order to enrich the curriculum and give the students another lens through which to view the Holocaust. This provided me with an even greater opportunity to focus on the human stories in the Holocaust and to discuss and question moral and ethical issues with my students."

Having recently completed the inaugural year of the course, Urowitz received "extremely positive feedback" from her students. Attending a Jewish day school, the senior students already had a strong grasp of the history of the Holocaust from units studied in earlier years of their Jewish education. This enabled them to offer their own suggestions for themes to discuss in the classroom and films to watch during the course of the year, and gave them confidence to engage in meaningful discussions. Urowitz also discussed with them why some films about the Holocaust were more popular, enriching the class and the students' interest in the human stories of the Holocaust. Some of the students' suggestions were shared with other educators at the high school, and this allowed for lively discussions in the teachers' staffroom about the most relevant materials to use in the classroom.

"TanenbaumCHAT's commitment to offering students the opportunity not only to study, in depth, about the history of the Holocaust, but also to explore the portrayal of the Holocaust in film has allowed our students to engage in Holocaust education in a multifaceted and meaningful way," concludes Urowitz. "The introduction of the 'Holocaust in Film' course has helped our students wrestle more deeply with the challenging issues surrounding the Holocaust, and find the light, through the human stories of choices and hope, within the darkness of the Shoah."

New in E-Learning: Short Animated Films of Key Holocaust Concepts

Liraz Lachmanovich

■ In recent years, the International School for Holocaust Studies has been using advanced technology to develop online educational tools for teachers and students alike. Recently, ten short animated films have been produced, which aim to clarify key historical concepts regarding the Holocaust, using language and images that students will find informative, relevant and interesting. In keeping with Yad Vashem's educational philosophy, these films form part of broader learning environments that provide the students with the expansive historical background to which the concepts refer.



The films, which appear on the International School's section of Yad Vashem's website as well as on Yad Vashem's YouTube channels in Hebrew and in English, introduce concepts

such as Race Doctrine, the Nuremberg Laws, the Jewish Badge, and the Nazi Camps. The films are no more than two minutes long, but are still extensive enough to give the students the basic information they need. Featuring period images and archival video excerpts that create a multimedia educational experience for the users, the films are an invaluable tool for teachers, tutors and students, tens of thousands of whom have viewed them to date.

The author is the Head of the Projects Section in the e-Learning Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.

Birthday Gifts from the Shoah

New Artifacts Displayed in Visitors Center

Noa Or

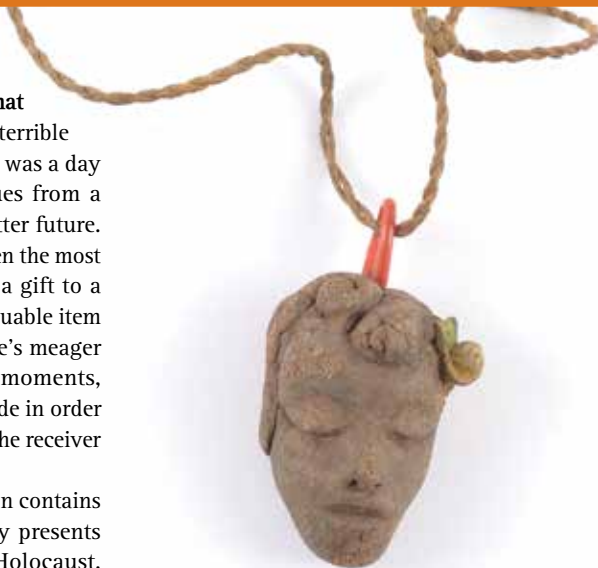
■ **During the Holocaust, while the world was collapsing, birthdays served as a point in time that could be singled out.** Despite the terrible difficulties of the period, a birthday was a day to mark love and friendship, values from a previous world, and hopes for a better future.

When it was difficult to meet even the most basic human requirements, giving a gift to a beloved often meant forfeiting a valuable item necessary for existence, such as one's meager daily portion of food. For a few moments, fundamental needs were pushed aside in order to support emotional needs, that of the receiver as well as of the giver.

Yad Vashem's Artifacts Collection contains a range of items given as birthday presents to somebody special during the Holocaust. The display case in the Visitors Center, which features rotating exhibits of personal items from the Holocaust era, now houses four of these unique items:

Decorated Box received in the Oskar Schindler Factory

■ Ruth Zacks (née Kohn), born in Krakow, was sent to the Plaszow concentration camp. Ruth was included in the list of workers sent to Oskar Schindler's factory in Brünnlitz, Czechoslovakia. "We pretended to work for the war effort... we didn't actually work but we were in a place of work as if we were working. Schindler would come from time to time, and walk amongst us," related Ruth in her testimony, "he was a very handsome and impressive man." In Brünnlitz, for her nineteenth birthday, which fell in February 1945, Ruth received a gift of three decorated wooden boxes.



Pendant Made of Bread

■ Hana Miko (née Frankl) was sent to work in an ammunitions factory in Oederan, Germany. For her twenty-first birthday in March 1945, Hana received a pendant made in secret from a piece of bread by one of the female prisoners of the camp. Two of her friends paid for the gift in exchange for their own portions of bread. "When I received the pendant, I was

overwhelmed," said Hana in her testimony. "More [valuable] than the actual item, was the knowledge that my friends had traded it for their precious portions of bread."

Wooden Car Carved by a Son for His Mother

■ The Dankner family from Czernowitz, Bukovina, was deported to Transnistria. Nineteen-year-old Armand was recruited to forced labor, paving roads. For his mother

Rosica's birthday, he carved her a small gift from wood – a Volkswagen-style car. On the underside of the car, he wrote a dedication: "To my mother for her birthday, 24 July 1943."



Pin from a Labor Camp in Poland

■ Julia Babiaczki (née Salat) was separated from her family in the Czestochowa ghetto and sent to a labor camp. For her twentieth birthday, which fell in June 1944 while she was in the Hasag Pelzery labor camp in Czestochowa, her friends decided to delight her with a birthday gift – a pin made of colored electrical wires.



The author is a Research Assistant in the Artifacts Department, Museums Division.

New Online Exhibition

“It Came from Within”

Marking 80 Years since *Kristallnacht*



■ Photograph from the album documenting the destruction of a synagogue in Vienna during Kristallnacht



■ Holocaust survivor Lore Stern Mayerfeld with her doll Inge dressed in the pajamas Lore wore the night of the Kristallnacht pogrom

■ On the evening of 9 November 1938, SA men burst into the home of the Zack family in Neidenburg in Eastern Prussia, Germany. The father of the family, Aron, who was standing at the entrance of the house, was stabbed in the stomach, and jumped out of the window. His wife Minna heard the tumult, came to the door and was stabbed in the neck. Minna hemorrhaged heavily, and did not survive the night. That same night, the city's synagogue was demolished.

After recuperating, Aron managed to flee Germany together with his five children. On 12 May 1939, they left Hamburg on a ship bound for Argentina. In one of the pages of the passport Aron used to flee Germany, Minna's record is deleted with the handwritten note: "Aron Zack's wife died on 10 November 1938."

The story of Minna Zack is highlighted in a new online exhibition recently uploaded to the Yad Vashem website marking 80 years since the *Kristallnacht* pogrom. Using photographs, documents, personal letters, Pages of Testimony,

films, testimony excerpts, artifacts and works of art from Yad Vashem's Collections, the exhibition depicts the brutal blow suffered by the Jews during *Kristallnacht*: the physical violence, the humiliation, the property damage, the synagogue desecration and destruction, and the horrifying sight of holy books and Torah scrolls in flames.

"That was the heart of the problem of German Jewry: It was so much a part of German society that the Nazi blow hit it from within. Until 1938, my parents never thought of leaving Germany." So testified Holocaust survivor and historian Prof. Zvi Bacharach z"l, when describing his experiences as a child during the *Kristallnacht* pogrom in Hanau, Germany.

During the pogrom, 91 Jews were murdered, more than 1,400 synagogues across Germany and Austria were torched, and Jewish-owned shops and businesses were plundered and destroyed. In addition, the Jews were forced to pay "compensation" for the damage that had been caused and approximately 30,000 Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps.



This exhibition brings the personal account of what happened that night – a story that dry statistics cannot possibly relay in full. Some of the stories displayed here are being told for the first time online.

A few days after that terrible night, Aharon-Arnold Rosenfeld from Vienna wrote to his son

Using items from Yad Vashem's Collections, the exhibition depicts the brutal blow suffered by the Jews during *Kristallnacht*: the physical violence, the humiliation, the property damage, and the horrifying sight of holy books and Torah scrolls in flames

Yona Kobo



■ Lore Stern as a young girl holding Inge



■ Passport belonging to Aron and Minna Zack of Neidenburg, Germany. Mina was murdered during Kristallnacht | Yad Vashem Archives

Haim (Robert) in Haifa: “The blessed house [synagogue] was attacked, all the windows were shattered, the pews were smashed, the curtain of the Ark was torn into pieces and a Torah scroll was thrown outside...The black memorial plaques on the walls were smashed.” Aharon was later murdered in Terezin.

Aharon’s words can be seen in an album preserved in Yad Vashem’s Archives. The album contains photographs documenting the destruction wrought by the rioters in Vienna that night. The photos depict burned and desecrated synagogues, as well as the vandalized hall of the Jewish cemetery.

The exhibition also includes, among other accounts, the story of Lore Stern Mayerfeld, from Kassel, Germany, who was a toddler when *Kristallnacht* took place. Lore’s father Markus was arrested and sent to Buchenwald. Their non-Jewish neighbors offered to hide his wife Kaetchen and their young daughter in their house, to protect them from the rioters who were breaking into and vandalizing Jewish

This exhibition brings the personal account of what happened that night – a story that dry statistics cannot possibly relay in full

homes. Lore, already in pajamas, hid with her mother at the neighbors’ until the pogrom was over. When they returned home, they found that the place had been torn apart, and was not fit for habitation.

After six weeks’ internment, thanks to the US visa in his possession, Markus was released on condition that he leave Germany immediately. Eighteen months after reaching the US, Markus succeeded in obtaining visas for his wife and daughter. Lore took Inge, the doll she had received for her birthday from her beloved grandmother Lena who was murdered in the Holocaust, with her

on her voyage. She dressed Inge in the pajamas she had worn the night of *Kristallnacht*.

In 2018, Lore donated Inge to Yad Vashem, and the doll is preserved in Yad Vashem’s Artifacts Collection. “Inge was very meaningful to me,” Lore explained in her testimony, “for the simple reason she was given to me as a gift from my grandmother...and of course the fact that I brought her from Germany with me. After I married and had children, I didn’t allow them to play with her... The pajamas she always wore – that was my memory of *Kristallnacht*.”

On 7 November 2018, Yad Vashem will be marking the 80th anniversary of the Kristallnacht pogrom with a public event featuring a short lecture on the topic and a screening of the 2017 film The Invisibles (German, with subtitles in English and Hebrew): Edmond J. Safra Lecture Hall, 18:30.

The author is a researcher and Online Exhibition Coordinator in the Digital Department, Communications Division. The information on Lore Stern’s doll was provided by the Artifacts Department, Museums Division.

Familiarity and Murder



■ **Yad Vashem's International Holocaust Research Institute's summer workshop, "Your Brother's Blood Cries Out to Me" was both fascinating and innovative.** The participants spoke about different places in Europe, where Jews were persecuted by people they knew – or where face-to-face murder occurred.

In the opening lecture, Yad Vashem Libraries Director Dr. Robert Rozett, author of *Conscripted Slaves: Hungarian Jewish Forced Laborers on the Eastern Front during the Second World War* (Yad Vashem, 2014), illustrated that the oppression of Jews by people who knew them did not begin with murder, but rather was part of the landscape of developing persecution. Children in particular suffered at the hands of the former playmates and teachers. In occupied France before the mass murders began, Jewish businessmen were denounced by their French rivals in order to ensure that their companies be shut down or "Aryanized." In Hungary, prior to the wave of deportations to the extermination camps in 1944, tens of thousands of Jewish

Physicians from around Germany sent their patients to Hadamar, knowing full well what would happen to them there

forced laborers met their deaths on the Eastern Front, owing largely to Hungarian policies and brutal treatment by Hungarian soldiers, who served alongside the Jewish soldiers and were responsible for them. Dr. Rozett suggested that the term "intimate" could be appropriate for describing this kind of persecution: intimate in the sense of a familiarity or a personal relationship, and as an antonym for cold, calculated and impersonal.

Prof. Rael Straus of Tel Aviv University spoke about the Hadamar psychiatric hospital in western Germany, one of the main sites of the so-called "T4 Euthanasia Program." Prof. Straus showed how Hadamar reflected critical



■ *Jews from the 108/56 "labor service" unit of the Hungarian army, September 1941 | Yad Vashem Archives*

The oppression of Jews by people who knew them did not begin with murder, but rather was part of the landscape of developing persecution

aspects of the first stage of the mass murder by the Nazi regime, before the "Final Solution," and he demonstrated the more intimate aspects of that murder. He discussed physicians from around Germany who sent their patients to

Hadamar, knowing full well what would happen to them there. He also described how Hadamar physicians observed the actual murder of their patients in the gas chambers constructed in the hospital.

French historian Tal Bruttman examined a largely unknown aspect of the final months of the German occupation of France. He described the murderous hunt for Jews carried out by French "ultra-collaborators." Often, these collaborators worked in their native areas hunting down Jews whom they knew. In the Lyon area alone, several hundred Jews were killed in this way.

Prof. Therkel Straede of the University of Southern Denmark investigated Bobruysk, one of 40,000 camps and camp-like facilities established by the Nazis, where Jews from the Warsaw ghetto were imprisoned. The camp was rather small, with about 1,500 inmates, and in that

situation, guards – among whom were Danish volunteers in the SS – and prisoners sometimes got to know one another well. Owing to the brutal regime, only 91 prisoners survived. The role of the Danish SS men in this intimate situation of murder was a new revelation, given the more familiar connection of the Danish people with the rescue, not murder, of Jews during the Shoah.

Other presentations discussed face-to-face murder in Lithuania, the Netherlands, Ukraine, and Italy, highlighting the fact that intimate persecution and murder were phenomena that touched the entire breadth and scope of the Shoah.

The workshop was held with the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund.

Revealing Personal Voices

Ego-Documents in the Soviet Sphere during the Holocaust

Dr. Arkadi Zeltser

■ **Is it possible to find individual expression in the official documents of the KGB?** How does this contribute to our understanding of the Holocaust in the USSR? These were some of many questions raised at a recent research workshop conducted at Yad Vashem's International Institute of Holocaust Research on the topic of "Ego-Documents in the Soviet Sphere on the Holocaust: Revealing Personal Voices."



The so-called "ego-documents" discussed at the workshop are personal documents, testimonies and memoirs that people, Jews and non-Jews alike, wrote in the USSR during WWII – including wartime diaries and letters, as well as postwar testimonies – that ended up in state-run organizations or in private collections. Eighteen young researchers from the United States, Germany, Switzerland, France, Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, Georgia and Israel were joined by specialists on the Holocaust from Yad Vashem and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), who jointly organized the workshop, to discuss different aspects of this fascinating topic.

One of the insights of the workshop was that in some cases, official documents and reports can be integrated into historical research, both presenting the personal voice and as a form of testimony, since they reflect the thoughts and ideas of the authors. This topic aroused an intensive discussion regarding the testimonies accepted during investigations conducted by the officers of the Ministry of State Security (MGB), the predecessor of the KGB, and the materials of the trials in the USSR.

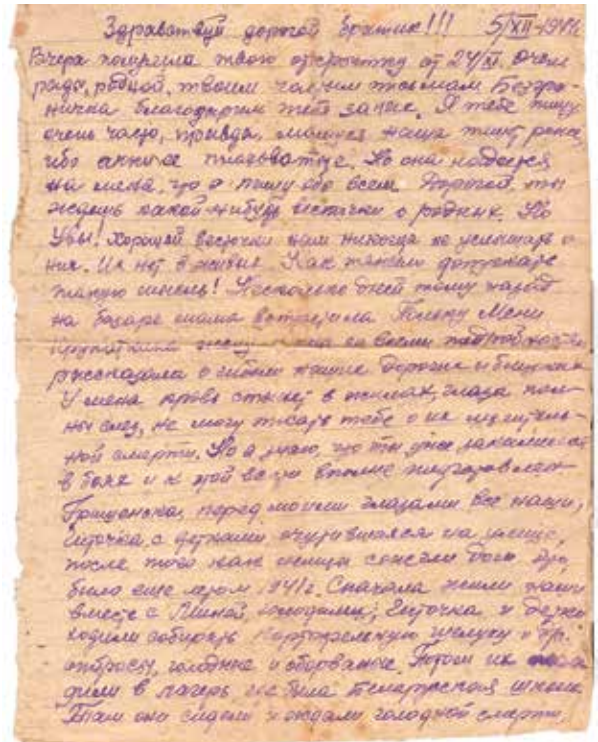
Wolfgang Schneider, a doctoral student from the University of Heidelberg, suggested the possibility of using such kinds of materials. He ventured that the authorities had enough

proof regarding the participation of local collaborators in the killing and persecution of Jews. Therefore, there was no reason for them to invent "false proofs" or record them incorrectly, as was acceptable with the Soviet security bodies in the years of the Great Terror (1937-1938). Accordingly, in Schneider's opinion, such materials contained relatively truthful and detailed information on the Holocaust, in addition to the personal voice. However, Dr. Franziska Exeler (University of Cambridge and the Free University of Berlin), who has previously discussed the influence of the war on the postwar situation in Belarus, suggested that the attitude towards such materials should be more cautious. Apart from the complication that in trial documentation most people tried to blur their participation in the killings of Jews, Dr. Exeler argued that the reliability of all Soviet official sources, especially of the MGB, that "routinely applied... beating and verbal threats," is very problematic. However, both scholars accepted that in such sorts of materials that were

In some cases, official documents and reports can be integrated into historical research, since they reflect their thoughts and ideas of the writers

inaccessible for the public, authorities did not conceal the mass killing of Jews, despite the authorities' insistence that Nazi murder policy was directed foremost against Soviet citizens and not Jews.

Additional impetus to the discussion on the reliability of the MGB documents was brought by Samuel Finkelman, a doctoral student from the University of Pennsylvania. Finkelman presented a detailed analysis of the MGB files regarding



■ Letter from Musya Shulrikhter to her brother Grisha describing the murder of their relatives in Lyady, 1944 | Courtesy Sofi Efros

Peretz Padison, a former Jewish policeman in the Kovno ghetto, who was arrested in 1952 and sentenced to 25 years in the Gulag (he was actually released in 1956 following the death of Stalin). While the collection contains personal documentation, such as denunciations against Padison by some former ghetto inmates, it is difficult to deduce from the materials reliable facts regarding his real behavior in the ghetto. Nevertheless, the knowledge that such "ego-documents" may be found among official papers certainly contributes to the understanding of the attitudes of survivors or witnesses to their recent past.

The workshop was organized by the Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, supported by Laura and Michael Mirilashvili, at Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research, in cooperation with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The author is Director of the Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, International Institute for Holocaust Research.

Biography of an Invisible Survivor

■ **Rika Benveniste, Professor of Medieval History at the University of Thessaly in the coastal city of Volos in Greece, recently gave a fascinating lecture as a visiting scholar to Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research on "invisible survivors."** Benveniste presented the unique research she conducted in recent years – a historical biography of a Greek Holocaust survivor who left almost no traces of memory.

Benveniste was born in Salonika (Thessaloniki), Greece. Her parents met after WWII, during which her father had fought with the partisans against the Germans and her mother had returned from deportation to Bergen-Belsen. She spent time in Israel, graduating from the History Department of the Hebrew University. She later obtained her doctorate in Medieval History from the Sorbonne and returned to Greece in 1986. Her book on the Jews of Salonika in the 1940s is due to be published in English by Yad Vashem.

Luna's mother tongue was Ladino; she didn't know how to write and read, she did not send letters, nor did she receive any

Her latest book, *Luna: An Essay in Historical Biography*, tells the story of a Jewish woman from Salonika who survived Auschwitz. The book focuses on the Jews of Salonika, on deportation, on poverty, and on the devastating postwar years. Luna's mother tongue was Ladino; she didn't know how to write and read, she did not send letters, nor did she receive any. Traces of Luna's life have been saved in the paperwork of the Jewish community's relief system: Her destiny had been attached to the fate of the community and its rehabilitation. Some memories of Luna were also left in those who knew her, but as time goes by, their number diminishes. Other traces of her life are her creations – the covers of armchairs and sofas that she produced and left behind. Photos and certificates complete



■ *The Jewish Allatini Orphanage in Salonika as it looks today. Luna lived here for more than twenty years | Courtesy: Rika Benveniste*

the material evidence. Through Luna's story, Benveniste explained how one can learn to reconstruct the life trajectories of those Holocaust survivors who are often considered invisible subjects.

Luna was born in 1910 and grew up in one of the main Jewish neighborhoods of Salonika, where the Jewish community housed roughly a thousand families left homeless after the great fire of 1917. She was married to Sam, a harbor worker. They left Salonika from the transit ghetto of Baron Hirsh, with the fifth transport to Auschwitz, on 27 March 1943.

In Auschwitz, Luna survived medical experiments, high fever and typhus. She was sent to the *Schneiderei Kommando*, to sew and fix clothes. At the war's end, a death march led her to Bergen-Belsen, where she was liberated. After a transit period in Brussels, Luna returned to Salonika, in September 1945. Together with dozens of other homeless Jews, she found shelter first in the city's Sygrou Synagogue and then in the Jewish Allatini Orphanage, which was transformed into a dormitory.

Luna lived at Allatini for more than twenty years, and then settled for the first time in a small apartment of her own, in a building constructed by the community. The neighbors, mostly Jews, were all familiar to her. In her new apartment, she continued to work as a seamstress. In 1982, when the Shaul Modiano Retirement Home reopened its gates, Luna was among its first tenants. She lived there for more than fifteen years. In 1998, she was taken to her final "residence" at the new Jewish cemetery of Salonika, the old one having been destroyed by the Germans.

Luna was, in fact, Benveniste's distant relative, who lost almost all her extended family in Auschwitz. When she came back to Salonika, Benveniste recalls, "she found in us a close family, and we found an 'aunt' in her. She used to visit us every single Saturday, bringing delicious fruits as well as caresses and the sound of Ladino and the Judeo-Spanish world; she was present in all the happy and sad moments of our family. However, this did not save her from her torments, nor from her loneliness.

Leah Goldstein

Attempting to represent their lives means that their silence is being broken by words which are not their own

When she passed away, I inherited a shoebox full of photos and some documents. I began to think of her not just as an aunt, but also as the subject of a tragic history.”

There are no photos of Luna in Benveniste’s book, although photos of hers are commented on as part of the narrative and the interpretation. “I was troubled by one photo of her youthful face before the war, others of a face swollen and marked by Nazi crimes, and finally those that regained its naturalness, aged and old. I chose to keep her many faces away from indiscreet gazes; I thought it wouldn’t be right to sum up her entire life in one injured face. The only photographs in the book are of the places Luna inhabited, since by following her movement through them (until her final resting place), I tried to weave the narrative of her life.”

Benveniste first visited Yad Vashem as a teenager, in 1975. In 1982, as a student at the Hebrew University, she performed research in the Yad Vashem Archives, preparing a seminar paper. Writing the paper was so painful for her that she actually abandoned the idea of becoming a historian of the Shoah. When she finally succumbed to her inevitable fate, Benveniste found Yad Vashem, its resources, its people and its environment “of invaluable importance for conducting research on the Holocaust.”

“Writing about Holocaust survivors who could not speak for themselves is particularly meaningful, although we should keep in mind that attempting to represent their lives, speaking or writing about them, means that their silence is being broken by words which are not their own,” says Benveniste. “Our understanding of the Shoah is largely dependent on the ability to turn our attention to all those who were caught in the maelstrom of destruction in order to make possible both the historical narrative and the subtlety of the individual’s story.”

“A Sense of Relief”

Orit Noiman

■ Early in February 2018, in the wake of the new Polish law that makes saying that Poles were involved in crimes against Jews during WWII a penal crime, Yad Vashem received a message from Sima Farkash. Farkash described how her uncle, Holocaust survivor Yosef Kornblit, had been restless and was hoping to talk to Yad Vashem about his family’s fate during the Holocaust. A meeting at Yosef’s home to film his testimony was scheduled right away.

Yosef was born in Toporów, near Mielec, Poland, in 1926, the youngest of six children. As he relayed his testimony to Ronit Wilder, an interviewer from the Collection and Registration Section in Yad Vashem’s Archives Division, Yosef described the complex relations between Jews and Poles during the Holocaust. “My parents had a tobacco shop in the front of our house, so lots of Poles from the area would meet up at our place,” said Yosef. “The village where I grew up was small, with very few Jews; we lived and went to school together with the Poles. Sometimes the Poles would say, ‘Jews, go to Israel,’ but I didn’t know what that meant at the time.”

In 1941, the Kornblits were deported to the Biesiadki camp near Mielec, where they were forced laborers. In the summer of 1942, after more than six months of dire conditions in the camp, the family decided to escape to the nearby forest. Yosef’s parents and the four youngest

“During the war, I was afraid of the Poles more than the Germans.”

Yosef Kornblit

children hid in the forest in a bunker that the family built. They were forced to steal food from their surroundings and lived in constant fear. “During the war, I was afraid of the Poles more than the Germans,” remembered Yosef. “The Germans didn’t come to distant places like where we were hiding. Most of the time, we were more terrified that Poles would inform on us.”

In the winter of 1943, Yosef’s father Yitzhak and brother Yirmiyahu died of typhus. In June 1944, two months before the area was liberated, the Kornblits’ bunker was exposed by the Poles, and everyone hiding there – Yosef’s mother Sarah, three of her children and two other young women, sisters who had joined them in the bunker – were laid on the ground and shot. Yosef and his sister Rosa managed to get away, and from that moment, they never saw their family again.

For the last two months of the war, Yosef and Rosa stayed alone in the forest with nowhere to hide, exposed to the elements. From time to time, a Polish acquaintance named Durek helped them obtain food. The sounds of combat from the front punctuated this period, raising their hopes that the war would soon end.

Following the recording of Yosef’s testimony, Sima Farkash, Rosa’s daughter, contacted Yad Vashem again. “My heartfelt thanks to you for



■ Holocaust survivor Yosef Kornblit holds a picture of his family – most of whom were murdered during the Shoah

sending a team to interview my uncle Yosef. I spoke with him yesterday, and he felt a tangible sense of relief,” she wrote. “The events of the war have been seared into his soul, and he only mentions them to a restricted group of family members. ‘I didn’t think I’d live to see the day when I would give my testimony to Yad Vashem,’ he told me. Uncle Yosef wishes he’d thanked the Holy One, blessed be He, as well as you at the end of the film for the privilege of having his personal story documented. He also wanted to say thank you to God for the good life he has now, so I am doing so in his name. Our deepest thanks go to you and to everyone doing this sacred work.”

The Yad Vashem Archives contain over 129,000 testimonies in video, audio and written formats. Yad Vashem records over 1,000 video testimonies annually. To schedule a time to give testimony in Israel, please call 02-644-3888.

Yad Vashem’s testimony collection efforts are supported by: Jack and Marilyn Pechter; Hudson Bay Capital; Vladimir Zemtsov, the Philip Chosky Trust; the Circle of Service Foundation; the Samson Charity Foundation, based in Switzerland; Friends of Yad Vashem in Austria; Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Liechtenstein; Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem; and Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur.

The author is Head of the Collection and Registration Section, Archives Division.

Whitewashing History

Dr. Robert Rozett

■ **For some time now, a trend toward a distorted discourse about the Holocaust has emerged in most former Communist countries.** Although not identical everywhere, there are salient commonalities. These include efforts to rebrand nations as victims, resisters and rescuers at the expense of the historical record, while concomitantly whitewashing the role played by local populations, as well as official and semi-official national institutions, in collaboration with the persecution and murder of Jews. Another phenomenon is the glorification of historical figures as national heroes, despite the documented role they played in persecuting and murdering Jews. Efforts to regulate history through governmental institutions and/or the passage of laws are part of this troubling reality.

The recent painful discussion about Poland's law that prohibits blaming the Polish people for Holocaust-related misdeeds reflects the desire to regulate history and to rebrand the nation. While overtly about protecting the good name of Poland, this law is actually tightly linked to efforts that over-emphasize the role of Polish rescuers during the Holocaust and characterize the Polish resistance as not only heroic, but also as sympathetic to the plight of the Jews, which it overwhelmingly was not. Following an official and highly problematic joint Polish-Israeli declaration about the law, since the declaration contained many distortions of history and the law still included penalties for violating it, Yad Vashem historians issued a firm and well-grounded paper (available on the Yad Vashem website) correcting the inaccuracies and condemning the law. The address for legal complaints based on the law is a governmental organization, the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), which as such is meant to serve as the arbiter for history.

In Ukraine, a law passed in 2015 makes it a felony to exhibit public disrespect toward or deny the legitimacy of a number of anti-Communist Ukrainian nationalist groupings. Among them are the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), both of which were involved in the persecution and murder of Jews, as well as the ethnic cleansing of Poles. As a corollary to this, figures like Stephan Bandera, the notorious leader of the OUN, have been celebrated by the Ukrainian state.

In Hungary, there is presently no law analogous to those adopted in Poland and Ukraine. There is, however, a governmental ombudsman regarding Hungarian history, the Veritas Historical Institute, founded in January 2014. Its leader, Dr. Sándor Szakály, has been engaged in trying to excuse Miklos Horthy, the wartime Regent of Hungary, for responsibility for crimes against Hungarian Jewry that occurred under his leadership; and despite solid documentary evidence to the contrary, even absolve him of any knowledge about the

A trend toward a distorted discourse about the Holocaust has emerged in most former Communist countries, including efforts to rebrand nations as victims, resisters and rescuers at the expense of the historical record

systematic mass murder of Jews. This is part of a government-supported crusade to blame the persecution of Hungarian Jewry entirely on the Germans after they occupied Hungary in March 1944, in the face of unassailable documentation about widespread complicity of Hungarian institutions and individuals before and during the occupation. Moreover, Horthy and other dubious figures from the period are often portrayed publicly as national heroes.

In Lithuania, too, public veneration of Lithuanian figures who were involved in the murder of Jews endures. Open discussion about the widespread participation, even initiation, by Lithuanians of the mass murder of Jews during the Holocaust, and how a great many Lithuanians benefited from the property of the murdered Jews, remains an anathema for large segments of the public. Thus, the focus is often on Lithuanian rescuers or Lithuanian suffering under the Soviets.

The list goes on: In Slovakia, Croatia and Latvia, there have been recent endeavors to extol figures from the war years and whitewash their role in the Holocaust. In Slovakia and Croatia in particular, the collaborationist and criminal regimes from the period are also often lauded publicly. In these countries, the extent and scope of rescue efforts on behalf of Jews by local Righteous Among the Nations is disproportionately represented, at the expense of open discussion about local complicity in the persecution and murder of Jewish neighbors.

To a significant extent, these phenomena can be traced to decades of Communist rule. Under Communism, the Holocaust was not addressed fully, objectively and thoughtfully, and what little discourse there was, was twisted to conform to its ideology. Additionally, the Communist regimes repressed discussion about their own crimes, and their extent only began to be unearthed after the fall of those regimes. A byproduct of these revelations has been a strong inclination to equate crimes committed by the Nazis to crimes committed by the Communists, blurring differences and engendering a sort of competition about victimhood. The revelations about the Communist crimes have also influenced – and accelerated – the search for national, anti-Communist heroes.

On a different plane, such factors as social and economic turbulence of the post-Communist years, anti-globalization, fear of loss of national identity and autonomy in a united Europe, and fear of inundation by multitudes of non-European immigrants, have all contributed to the distortion of public discourse about the Holocaust.

Despite this troubling landscape, determined citizens in these countries are conscientiously engaged in objective historical research, in presenting narratives anchored in the documentary record, and in genuine educational work and soul-searching. Yad Vashem has fully and actively supported such efforts, and will continue to do so. For the sake of the memory of the victims and survivors, for the sake of presenting an accurate historical narrative, and above all for the sake of a better future, we must all redouble our efforts to fight the whitewashing and distortion of the history of the Holocaust.

The author is Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries.

Engraved on a Silver Platter



■ Until recently, the name of six-year-old Michael Heshes was one of the more than one million names of Holocaust victims that are still missing from Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims Names. However, when 84-year-old Yoske Badichi, a longtime active volunteer in Yad Vashem's Names Recovery Project, came to Jerusalem in the summer of 2017 to participate in his great-nephew's son's Pidyon Haben ceremony – whereby a Jewish firstborn son is “redeemed” from service in the (destroyed) Holy Temple – he made an amazing discovery.



buried silver. However, when they went to the village to collect their son, they were faced with devastating news about his terrible fate: After learning of Yocheved and Moshe Aaron's deportation, the non-Jewish family had handed Michael over to the Germans.

The couple sadly never bore more children, and after her husband passed away, Yocheved felt truly totally alone in the world.

The silver platter and the

candlesticks were her only reminders of the past. One of the few people who visited her regularly was Chaya Gutein, a family friend. Towards her last days, as she lay in hospital, Yocheved decided to donate the platter to Chaya's son and daughter-in law, Yosef and Ruth Gutein, who had opened a *gemach* for accessories for Jewish circumcision ceremonies. Michael's name and a short account of what happened were inscribed on the tray, and the tray continued to be used as it had for generations before. This is how Yoske's family had come into its possession for their own Pidyon Haben ceremony.

“It took the ongoing awareness of a dedicated Yad Vashem volunteer for Michael's name to be commemorated for generations to come,” said Sara Berkowitz. “I implore anyone who discovers similar information, in whatever form, to be in touch with the Names Recovery Project team, so that together, we can ensure that no Holocaust victim remains forgotten.”

The Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project is generously supported by Dana and Yossie Hollander. Yad Vashem's names collection efforts are also supported by: Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, France; the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany; Swiss Banks Settlement; Genesis Philanthropy Group; the Noaber Foundation; the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism; the Nadav Foundation; Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem; the Zanker Foundation, the Maror Foundation; Friends of Yad Vashem in the Netherlands; and Friends of Yad Vashem in Austria.

For more information on filling out Pages of Testimony or donating other sources containing names of Holocaust victims, please contact: names.proj@yadvashem.org.il

A further inscription on the back of the platter turned out to be a short account of Michael's sad story

given money, jewelry and silver possessions by Michael's parents specifically so they would keep him safe. The parents survived, but never saw their beloved son again, and towards the end of her life, Michael's mother donated the tray to a *gemach* (charitable loan organization) in his memory. The inscription also detailed how Michael was believed to be a descendant of the Vilna Gaon and the Noda Beyehudah – two famous rabbinical scholars from the 1700s – and how the platter had been used throughout the generations for Pidyon Haben ceremonies.

Still at the reception, Yoske called Sara Berkowitz, Head of the Names Recovery Project at Yad Vashem's Hall of Names, and asked her to make an immediate search to check if Michael's name appeared in the Names Database. Sara told Yoske that the name was not in the Database, and asked Yoske to use the opportunity to gather as much information as he could about the story.

Yoske discovered that Yocheved and Moshe Aaron Heshes had hidden this heirloom platter, together with a pair of Sabbath candlesticks, in the yard of their home during the war. Surviving Auschwitz, they returned to their home, where they were able to retrieve the



In keeping with Jewish tradition, the baby was placed on a beautiful silver platter. Out of curiosity, Yoske took the platter afterwards and noticed a moving Hebrew inscription: “In memory of Michael, son of Moshe Aaron and Yocheved Heshes, who was murdered in the Shoah.”

Turning the tray over, Yoske noticed a further inscription on the back of the platter – which turned out to be a short account of Michael's sad story. Michael, it read, had been turned over to the Nazis by a non-Jewish family who had been

Mirroring Reality



■ GIS software allows exact locations to be identified on wartime maps

■ While in hiding, Machiel de Vries sketched the meeting of the Allied forces on German soil in April 1945

■ **When WWII broke out, Machiel de Vries, a 20-year-old Amsterdam native from a secular Jewish family, was drafted into the Dutch army.** He was taken captive by the Germans and released months later. When he returned to his parents' home, Machiel made his living from a Jewish employer. One evening on his way home, Machiel saw his parents, Marcus and Rosalina de Vries, being taken away by a German truck. He never saw them again, and he eventually found out that they had been murdered in Auschwitz in 1944.

After his parents were deported, Machiel joined the Dutch underground. Because he was Jewish, the underground sent him into hiding, where he continued his service by marking the war's progress on geographic maps while clandestinely listening to the BBC radio broadcasts. After the war, Machiel married Annie Walls. Annie and Machiel had no descendants, so after their passing, Annie's nephew, Jan Vrij, took responsibility for the collection of documents that attested to his uncle's actions during the Holocaust. In August 2017, Jan donated the documents, including 13 maps that Machiel had sketched while living in hiding, to Yad Vashem as part of the "Gathering the Fragments" project.

In the past seven years, since "Gathering the Fragments" commenced, some 11,400 people have donated over 250,000 Holocaust-era personal items to Yad Vashem for safekeeping. Some of the personal collections include

He continued his service in hiding by marking the war's progress on geographic maps while clandestinely listening to radio broadcasts

contemporaneous maps kept during the war. In certain cases, the maps were drawn from memory; and in others, contours and other kinds of information were drawn on a printed map. These maps are like a mirror of reality, often representing a person's way of thinking.

Some of the maps that Machiel de Vries sketched were political maps, while the rest were actual roadmaps, including markings for highways and railroads. Most of the maps show the region of Europe, and some of the maps specifically show Central and Eastern Europe,

Germany, France, the Netherlands and Italy. There is also one map of the war's progress in the Atlantic Ocean.

In the center of a map of Germany, for example, Machiel drew two arrows and a square. With the help of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, staff from the Yad Vashem Archives Division discovered why Machiel marked that spot on the map. GIS software programs make it possible to geo-reference the historical map to the exact coordinates on the planet and facilitate map digitization. This makes the maps interactive; allowing information to be added and various queries posed, such as measurements of distances and more. After uploading the map to a computer, Archives staff used a contemporary satellite photograph to geo-reference the map's precise coordinates. Then it all made sense: Machiel had marked the city of Torgau, Germany, which lies on the banks of the Elbe River. There, on 25 April 1945, the Western Allies and the Red Army made contact on German soil for the first time.

A different kind of map was donated to Yad Vashem in 2016. It is a map of the city of Bačka Palanka, in present-day Serbia. A German architect drew the map in 1982 for an organization of Swabian Germans who had

Piecing Together the Puzzle

Dr. Gad Schaffer

Hillel Solomon, Emmanuelle Moscovitz and Naama Shilo

been deported from Yugoslavia. The map was sketched based on testimony and documents given by the former residents of the town, and it describes the situation in 1944, before the deportation of the Jews. One of the houses that appears in the city map belonged to Bela and Sofia Deutsch, the grandparents of Ilana Melz, who gave the map to Yad Vashem. Their factory for manufacturing pipe organs is there, too, as are many other homes that belonged to the extended family until they were deported to Auschwitz in 1944. Using GIS software, it was possible to identify the exact location of the map on a current satellite photo, and by so doing identify the family home. Furthermore, with the help of digitization, the moment

By using GIS software, it was possible to identify the exact location of the map on a current satellite photo, and by so doing identify the family home

someone clicks on the house on the map, they will receive all existing information about the family, thus keeping the story of the deported Jewish family alive.

Yad Vashem runs the "Gathering the Fragments" campaign in cooperation with the "Landmarks" Program at the Israel Ministry of Jerusalem and Heritage and with the support of the Israel Ministry of Education; Dora Zitno (Argentina); The Hamburg Foundation for the Advancement of Research and Culture (Germany); and Friends of Yad Vashem in the Netherlands.

Since the "Gathering the Fragments" campaign began seven years ago, 11,400 people have donated some 253,000 items, including 147,000 documents, 98,000 photographs, 4,550 artifacts, 694 works of art and 185 original films. Representatives of Yad Vashem visit Holocaust survivors or their family members in their homes, in addition to holding collection days in centers throughout Israel closest to their place of residence in order to gather Holocaust-era personal items. To schedule a meeting in Israel: +972-2-644-3888 or collect@yadvashem.org.il

The author is a Coordinator in the Collections and Registration Section, Archives Division.

■ While attempting systematically to annihilate the Jewish people, the Nazis also destroyed and scattered numerous documents that attested to the industry of murder and to Jewish life before WWII. After the war, it was very difficult to locate information about the persecution and destruction of the Jews, as well as the stories of Jewish communities and individuals. For this reason, Holocaust-related collections can be found in various places worldwide. The digital age has heralded the opportunity to map and connect different collections of documentation, but has also created new challenges.

In June 2018, archivists, researchers, librarians and experts from Holocaust commemorative institutions from across Israel came together at Yad Vashem to address the challenges and systems employed to locate and connect Holocaust-era documentary collections in Israel and overseas. The symposium, entitled "Piecing Together the Puzzle," tackled questions such as: How can one manage a collection of Holocaust-related documentation that has been scattered across three continents? Is there a single place where information about Holocaust documentary material around the world is concentrated? What challenges does the digital age pose to administering collections of Holocaust-related material?



The 140 participants used this unique opportunity to meet, network, share information and learn from each other. The day began with a presentation about two important projects: Yehezkel Kassent from Israel's National Library presented "Project RAI," which makes it possible to map national heritage material on a large scale from archives across Israel; and Yad Vashem Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation Dr. Haim Gertner presented the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) project, which has been providing assistance in mapping the documentation that has been spread all over the

world. The objective of the international project – which was recently adopted by ESFRI (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) and thus will be able to continue its important work beyond 2019 – is to foster and promote access to Holocaust-related documents by building the technological infrastructure to connect the sources of information.

Later that day, several examples of dispersed collections and ways to deal with them were presented. Prof. Haim Saadon, Director of the Ben-Zvi Institute's Documentation Center of North African Jewry during WWII, presented the North African issue; Dr. Roni Stauber, Academic Director of the Wiener Library for the Study of the Nazi Era and the Holocaust, spoke about the Wiener Collection, which is spread across London, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem; and former Director of Yad Vashem's Righteous Among the Nations Department Irena Steinfeldt described the work of searching for information in various archives and databases in order to build a complete picture about stories of rescue during the Holocaust.

While the digital age helps map different archival material and makes it more accessible, it also poses moral dilemmas for the general public. Examples of these kinds of dilemmas were discussed in a panel about ethical and legal questions when using Holocaust-era photographs and films in the social media age. Dr. Tehilla Shwartz Altshuler from the Israel Democracy Institute moderated the panel, which included Dr. Iael Nidam-Orvieto, Director of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research; Dr. Daniel Uziel, Director of the Yad Vashem Photo Archive; and filmmaker Noemi Schory.

A project fair was also held during the day, allowing the audience to learn more about different Holocaust institutes in Israel and their collections. The participants saw existing material in different archives and learned how to access them. In the afternoon, they visited the "Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust" exhibition, as well as the Visual Center, where they heard a lecture about Yad Vashem's collection of Holocaust-related films from Dr. Robert Rozett, Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries.

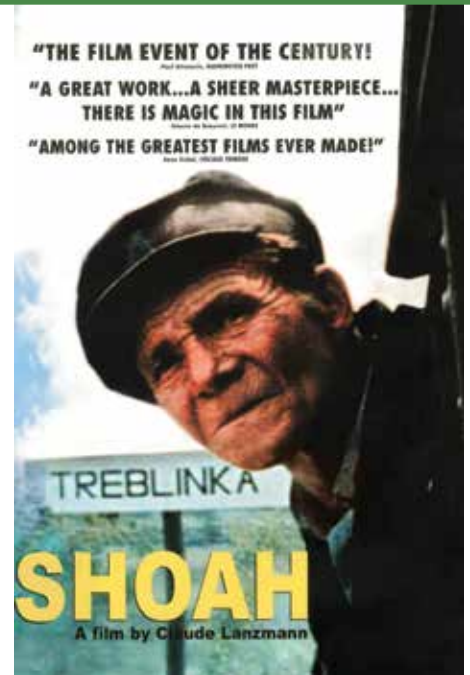
The symposium took place through the EHRI project and in cooperation with the Association of Israeli Archivists.

The authors work in the Archives Division.

How *Shoah* Changed Holocaust Remembrance



■ Claude Lanzmann signing the Yad Vashem “Declaration of Remembrance” at the ceremony marking 50 years since the establishment of Yad Vashem in 2003



■ Renowned French filmmaker Claude Lanzmann dramatically changed the way people commemorated and remembered the Holocaust.

Born in Paris in 1925 to Jewish immigrant parents from Eastern Europe, Lanzmann lived in hiding with his family during WWII, before joining the French resistance at the young age of 17. After reading Jean Paul Sartre’s *Anti-Semite and Jew (On the Jewish Question)*, Lanzmann began to explore his Jewish identity. On the release of his first film *Pourquoi Israël (Israel, Why)*, which documents the first twenty-five years of the State of Israel, Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs approached Lanzmann, encouraging him to create a film about the Holocaust from the Jewish point of view. The result was the iconic *Shoah*, a nine-hour epic endeavor which has been translated into more than 20 languages.

Following Lanzmann’s death in July 2018 at the age of 92, Liat Benhabib, Director of Yad Vashem’s Visual Center, reflected upon his monumental achievements in the field of Holocaust cinema:

Claude Lanzmann is best known for his non-fiction work *Shoah*. What can you tell us about *Shoah* and the way it changed Holocaust remembrance?

Shoah marks a tectonic shift in Holocaust cinema, and has become one of the foremost Holocaust-related films since its release in 1985. Rejecting archival footage, docu-drama, and all other genres, Lanzmann insisted on focusing on testimonies of Holocaust survivors who had been closest to the mass murder of their people. It is a work about the present, representing the way those who were there live with trauma and the memory of it. Holocaust films of all genres changed after *Shoah*, which also served to shine a spotlight on survivor testimony in an unprecedented scope and manner.

Why did Lanzmann prefer not to use archival footage?

Most archival images from the Holocaust period were produced by the Nazis for propaganda purposes, which Lanzmann refused to use. Other images were taken by the Allied forces – the Russians, the British, the Americans – at the liberation of the camps, which constitute post-

Shoah documentation. Even if these images were a close representation of what had happened in the camps, they were taken after the event, similar to a re-enactment of a crime scene. This, too, was unacceptable to Lanzmann. In addition, they are very difficult images to look at, and Lanzmann did not want to allow the viewer to look away, even for a second, from the screen.

What problems did Lanzmann encounter while relying on testimonies to tell the story of the Holocaust?

Lanzmann recorded more than 200 interviews over a time span of 10 years – Jewish survivors, but also Righteous Among the Nations, as well as Nazis. Lanzmann opened *Shoah* with the testimony of Simon Srebnik, who was a 13-year-old Jewish boy in the *Sonderkommando* [slave laborers who worked at the crematoria] in Chelmo. For several minutes we accompany Srebnik through his painful testimony, and then he explains that it is impossible to understand what happened: “No one can comprehend it; even I who was there, I cannot comprehend what really happened.” Lanzmann then seemingly makes a deal with the viewers. “You will not

Claude Lanzmann (1925-2018)

understand,” he is trying to tell us, “but we will tell you this story again and again, in depth, from several points of view, from several interlocutors, from several places, in order to even try to grasp some comprehension of how this was possible.” This was an extraordinarily courageous cinematographic decision.

Is it even possible to build a reliable documentary film solely on testimonials?

The value of the testimony raises historical as well as psychological questions. How does memory work? Are memories objective? How can one reconstruct a story from personal experiences? How do you bring an individual to recount memories that are decades old without reviving a trauma? All these questions are reflected in *Shoah*. For example, in a scene with Abraham Bomba, the hairdresser from Holon, who had to shave women on their arrival at Auschwitz, Bomba struggles to testify, and begs Lanzmann to leave him in peace. The viewer sees his suffering: Lanzmann films all their exchanges. He reassures Bomba, and convinces him to speak. The viewer witnesses the entire psychological process the witness endures. These are very important data for the duty of memory.

Thirty years after its release, how does *Shoah* continue to influence Holocaust-related film?

Before Lanzmann, there were archival films. With Lanzmann, there were testimonial films. Today, we combine both. Young filmmakers are returning to archival footage that, thanks to the digital age, is increasingly available, but they also continue to use or refer to Lanzmann's *Shoah*, which remains a prime example of Holocaust testimonial documentation.

During September and October 2018, the Yad Vashem Visual Center, together with the Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Herzliya Cinematheques, ran a program of screenings of Shoah in full length in memory of Claude Lanzmann.

Yad Vashem's Visual Center is open from 9am to 5pm from Sunday to Thursday. It contains more than 11,200 films, referenced in the online catalog (in English).

This article was written with the assistance of Mimi Ash, Film Research and Acquisitions Coordinator, Visual Center.

Black Honey Wins 2018 Avner Shalev Award

Liat Benhabib

■ The winner of this year's Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman's Award for Holocaust-related film was *Black Honey: The Life and Poetry of Avraham Sutzkever*, a documentary film



by renowned Israeli director Uri Barbash.

The jury for this year's Jewish Experience competition at the 35th Jerusalem International Film Festival included Susan Engel, Executive Producer of Recanati-Kaplan 92Y Talks in New York; Prof. Dan Michman, Head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and John Najmann Chair for Holocaust Studies; and director and screenwriter Amichai Greenberg.



■ Left to right: Mimi Ash from Yad Vashem's Visual Center, film director Uri Barbash, film producer Yair Kedar

The jury praised *Black Honey* for “introducing us to Avraham Sutzkever, the most prominent Yiddish poet of the twentieth century. Barbash draws a portrait of Sutzkever, the man and the artist, stressing not only the centrality of the Holocaust in Sutzkever's work, but also the latter's lifelong commitment to Yiddish poetry, even in Israel, where he did not receive the recognition he deserved.”

Yad Vashem Desk Calendar 2018-19: Marking Jewish Time during the Holocaust

■ Throughout the ages, Jewish individuals and communities strove to mark the Jewish holidays and festivals that are part of the Hebrew calendar, even under the most perilous of circumstances. This was true also during the Holocaust, when, despite the harsh and often untenable living conditions, many Jews struggled to continue the practice of Jewish traditions. They marked Jewish life-cycle events, they attempted to observe the holidays, they wrote their own prayer books, and they even created hand-drawn Jewish calendars from memory while incarcerated in the camps, in hiding or from within the ghettos. Religious items from the Holocaust period – Torah scrolls, Chanukah menorahs, prayer books and calendars – are symbolic of the quest for Jewish continuity and the desire to maintain observances prior to and during the war years, as well the eternal hope for a brighter, more promising future.

This year's calendar highlights a selection of items from Yad Vashem's Collections, highlighting efforts to mark Jewish time during the Holocaust era and the struggle to continue life in the shadow of death.

The Yad Vashem 2018-19 desk calendar was produced with the generous support of Galia and Axel Stawski and their daughters in memory of all the victims of the Shoah.

The calendar is available for purchase in the Yad Vashem Online Store: www.yadvashem.org



During June-September 2018, Yad Vashem conducted 28 commemorative events, including annual memorial ceremonies for Holocaust survivor organizations, ceremonies for Yad Vashem supporters and Righteous Among the Nations, and film screenings and concerts for the public. Following is a small selection of Yad Vashem events over these four months:

Memorial Ceremony for the Holocaust in Romania Gal Cohen

■ On 19 June, some 600 people assembled at Yad Vashem's Monument to the Jewish Soldiers and Partisans for a ceremony in memory of the Holocaust in Romania. The ceremony was the fruit of cooperation between Yad Vashem and AMIR, the umbrella organization of Romanian immigrants to Israel. This year's ceremony focused on the topic of the ghettos and the camps in Transnistria.

"In 2018, there are still people who don't know that the Holocaust happened in Romania," said AMIR Chairman Micha Harish. He explained that this unfamiliarity was not coincidental, but rather stemmed from how the Holocaust in Romania was different from the general story of the Holocaust. "The Holocaust in Romania took place mostly on Romanian territory, as a result of the policies of the Romanian administration, and was executed by the Romanian army and gendarmes – not by the Nazis. The other factor for this lack of awareness is decades of denial by the communist authorities in Romania."

Dr. Miriam Yahil-Wax, the daughter of Holocaust survivors, noted another factor in the

lack of awareness: the painful culture of silence among Romanian survivors. "My family had a saying: 'Children don't need to know about everything that happens.' Our parents' generation let us live with the illusion that they had made it through the war physically and psychologically intact. There was an outlook of restraint, where cultured people don't put their wounds on display or share their pain. 'The Missing Chapter' is the title that suits the story of all Romanian Jews. Fortunately, this absence is beginning to shrink, thanks to activity and programming like that of AMIR and Yad Vashem."

Yochanan Ron Singer, Chairman of AMIR's Yad Vashem Committee, President of the World Organization of the Jews of Bukovina, and himself survivor of Transnistria, also emphasized the distinctiveness of the Holocaust in Romania. "It can't be said that Romania imitated what happened in Nazi Germany or followed in its footsteps – it preceded them. Until the Wiesel Committee was founded in 2003, Romania claimed that not only had it not murdered Jews, but also that it had helped them. The Romanian



government has observed a memorial day every year since then, and the topic of the Holocaust is taught in Romanian schools."

"I am always surprised at how much these gatherings move me," said Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak. "The plaza is filled with the faces of young and old, the next generations together with the first. Gatherings like today restore confidence that our shared mission – to remember and remind – stands a chance."

The author assists production in the Commemoration and Community Relations Division.

The Road to Babi Yar

■ On 22 June 1941, the German army invaded the Soviet Union with massive military force, with the objective of decisively ending WWII by the winter. "Operation Barbarossa" was accompanied by the mass murder of the Jews in every town the Germans occupied in broad swaths of the USSR, committed within a few weeks after the territory fell under German occupation. Very few non-Jews risked their lives to hide Jews, and some of the population actively collaborated with the Germans in their murder.

Marking 77 years since the onslaught of "Operation Barbarossa," on 21 June 2018 Yad Vashem held a special film screening of *The Road to Babi Yar* – a documentary film that tracks the first hundred days of the invasion of Ukraine, when the Nazis realized they could kill the Jews where they lived, and even receive help from the locals. The audience in the packed Edmond J. Safra Auditorium included President Reuven Rivlin, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev, Genesis Philanthropy Group representative Natalie Shnaiderman, and the film's creators, Boris Maftsir and Zvi Shefy.



■ Left to right: Boris Maftsir, President Rivlin and Avner Shalev at the screening of *The Road to Babi Yar*

"For years, the public was less familiar with the fate of Soviet Jews during the Holocaust, although when the archives began to open up with the fall of the Communist Bloc, researchers started to encounter primary sources about it," said Liat Benhabib, Director of the Yad Vashem Visual Center. "How and why did the system of mass murder grow and evolve at hundreds of sites in Ukraine, which Babi Yar came to symbolize? By interviewing historians, local eyewitnesses and Jewish survivors, *The Road to Babi Yar* presents a broad, painful picture of

collaboration between the Nazis and the local population in Ukraine, where some 1.5 million Jews were murdered."

The Road to Babi Yar is the eighth and final entry in Maftsir's documentary film project, "Searching for the Unknown Holocaust," a project that seeks for the first time to give an extensive cinematic voice to the Holocaust in the USSR.

"There was no death as cruel, cold, brutal, concentrated and secluded as death at Babi Yar," said President Rivlin. "Men, women and children were massacred over two days; even their names went unrecorded. All that was said about them was 'They were also Jews.' What the Soviet authorities tried to blur for decades has been uncovered in recent years, but the puzzle is unfortunately still incomplete, the picture is not whole. We must spare no effort to reveal the scale of the destruction and the stories of the Jewish families who lived in the Former Soviet Union before the Holocaust. I would like to thank Boris for this film and for the entire film project, which has placed the Holocaust in the USSR at the center of remembrance."

Photo: Roni Katznelson

Kites for Korczak

■ On 7 August 2018, Yad Vashem marked the 76th anniversary of the deportation of Janusz Korczak, Stefa Wilczynska, and the children of their orphanage from the Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka.

Janusz Korczak (aka Henryk Goldszmit), a Polish-born doctor, author and educator, dedicated his life to caring for children, particularly orphans. He believed that children should always be listened to and respected, and this belief was reflected in his works. In 1912, Korczak became the director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. When the Jews of Warsaw were forced to move into a ghetto, Korczak refused to abandon the children, despite offers from Polish friends to hide him on the “Aryan” side of the city.



Korczak’s right-hand assistant at the orphanage was Stefania “Stefa” Wilczynska. In 1935, Wilczynska visited Eretz Israel and lived at Kibbutz Ein Harod before returning to Warsaw in 1939. After the Nazi occupation of Poland, the members of Ein Harod arranged for her to leave the country, but she refused and moved to the ghetto along with Dr. Korczak and the children.

On 5 August 1942, during a two-month wave of deportations from the ghetto, the Nazis rounded up Korczak, Wilczynska and the 200 children of the orphanage. They marched in rows to the *Umschlagplatz* gathering point, with Korczak in the lead. He and Wilczynska never abandoned the children, even to the very end. Together they were sent to Treblinka, where they were all murdered.

The memorial day at Yad Vashem began with a special academic symposium on the subject of respect, love and equality for all people and of all ages – in the spirit of the philosophy heralded by Korczak. Following the educational portion of the day, a memorial ceremony was held at Janusz Korczak Square, which was generously endowed by Holocaust survivor Maxi Librati. Members of the Hamahanot Haolim youth movement then flew dozens of kites in memory of Janusz Korczak’s unique educational worldview.

www.yadvashem.org ■ for a short biographical video featuring the story of Janusz Korczak and his revolutionary philosophy

Memorial Ceremony Marks 75 Years since the Jewish Revolt at Sobibor

■ On 9 October 2018, a memorial ceremony and event was held at Yad Vashem’s Synagogue, commemorating 75 years since the Jewish revolt at the former German Nazi death camp Sobibor. The memorial event took place in the presence of Holocaust survivors and next generations, as well as the Ambassadors of the Netherlands and Slovakia in Israel and diplomatic representatives from Poland and Russia.



■ Aleksander Pechersky

Naama Galil from Yad Vashem’s Commemoration and Community Relations Division lectured on the history of the camp and the revolt at Sobibor. One of three “Operation Reinhard” extermination camps, Sobibor began its deadly work in April 1942. Sobibor was chosen due to its proximity to railway tracks and its isolation from the surrounding population. Most of the victims of Sobibor arrived via trains. After several failed plans and attempts at escape, on

14 October 1943, two Jewish prisoners, Leon Felhendler and Lieutenant Aleksander (Sasha) Pechersky, a recently arrived Jewish POW from Minsk, planned and led the mass revolt and escape of some 300 Jews incarcerated and awaiting extermination at Sobibor. Nearly half of the inmates were killed while escaping, and many others were caught in the manhunt that followed. Approximately 50 survived by hiding in the nearby forests. Historians have since estimated that between 170,000 to 250,000 Jews were murdered at Sobibor by the time the camp closed in 1943 following the uprising.



“Despite the fact that it took place on occupied Polish soil, and was carried out by German Nazis and their collaborators, on Jewish victims from across Europe as well as North Africa, and despite its universal implications, Sobibor is above all a Jewish story,” stated Yad Vashem’s Director of Governmental and External Affairs Yossi Gevir. Gevir also praised the ongoing international and professional efforts to establish a new visitors

center at the site of the former death camp that will accurately educate future generations about its terrible history and fittingly commemorate its victims.

Devorah Fishman (Lichtman), daughter of the late Sobibor survivors Eda Fischer and Jitschak Lichtman, spoke about both the burden and honor of growing up as a member of the Second Generation. The most important lesson she learned from her parents was how they preserved their humanity in the camp, and later found “the proper way to live a normal life.” “How lucky we are to be connected to such heroism,” she concluded.

Since 2007, archeology doctoral student Yoram Haimi has led excavations at the site of the former death camp together with his Polish counterpart, Wojciech Mazurek, with the involvement and supervision of Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research and Directorate. In his lecture, Haimi revealed that over the past 11 years, teams of volunteers at the site have unearthed over 70,000 artifacts, including wedding rings, personalized pendants,

false teeth, keys, and even door signs with the names of families deported to the camp in the belief they were relocating. “Each small item carries with it a fascinating story,” Haimi emphasized.

Despite the German efforts to destroy the camp in an attempt to erase all evidence of its existence, and the subsequent building and roads laid over many important components of the camp, the archeological team showed, with the help of aerial and 3D images, much of the camp’s structure: the exact locations of eight gas chambers, 21 burial pits and nine open crematoria, in addition to the “Himmelstrasse” (Road to Heaven) along which the victims were hurried towards the gas chambers, the women’s disrobing hut and the living quarters of the camp’s commandants. “Our archeological work proves for future generations that Sobibor existed,” Haimi concluded. Gevir concurred: “You are exposing what the Germans tried to hide – the truth about Sobibor.”

During June–September 2018, Yad Vashem conducted 257 guided tours for some 3,850 official visitors from Israel and abroad. These guests included members of royalty, heads of state and local government, ambassadors, mayors, NGO officials, economists, environmentalists, religious leaders and personalities from the entertainment world. Following is a small selection of our honored guests over these four months:

■ **HRH Prince William Arthur Philip Louis of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge**, visited Yad Vashem on 26 June 2018, as part of the first-ever official British royal family visit to Israel. Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev accompanied the Duke throughout his visit to Yad Vashem. Prince William toured the Holocaust History Museum, participated in a memorial ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, visited the Children’s Memorial, and signed the Yad Vashem Guest Book.

In addition, the Duke spoke with two Holocaust survivors, Paul Alexander and Henry Foner, survivors of the *Kindertransport* rescue initiative. The private meeting took place in the Museum of Holocaust Art.

The British royal family has an honorable connection to the history of the Holocaust. In 1993, Princess Alice of Battenberg and Greece, great-grandmother of Prince William, was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for her role in rescuing the Cohen family in Greece during the Holocaust.

“It has been a profoundly moving experience to visit Yad Vashem today,” wrote Prince William in the Yad Vashem Guest Book. “It is almost impossible to comprehend this appalling event in history. Every name, photograph and memory recorded here is a tragic reminder of the unimaginable human cost of the Holocaust and of the immense loss suffered by the Jewish people. The story of the Holocaust is one of darkness and despair, questioning humanity itself. But the actions of those few who took great risks to help others are a reminder of the human capacity for love and hope. I am honored that my own great-grandmother is one of these Righteous Among the Nations.

“We must never forget the Holocaust - the murder of six million men, women and children, simply because they were Jewish. We all have a responsibility to remember and to teach future generations about the horrors of the past so that they can never reoccur. May the millions of Jewish people remembered by Yad Vashem never be forgotten.”



■ On 21 August, **US National Security Advisor Ambassador John R. Bolton** visited Yad Vashem, accompanied by US Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. David M. Friedman, and laid a wreath in memory of the six million Holocaust victims on behalf of the American people. In the Guest Book, he wrote: “In memory of the greatest tragedy which the spirit and resilience of the Jewish people has overcome, to help us prevent its like from ever happening again... to anyone.”



■ On 19 July, **Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán** (left) toured the Holocaust History Museum, where he was guided by Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries Dr. Robert Rozett (right), a historian of the Holocaust of Hungarian Jewry. During his tour of the museum, the Prime Minister received a comprehensive explanation of the Holocaust, as well as specific references to the destruction of Hungarian Jewry. Yad Vashem expressed an expectation to the Prime Minister that those chosen to lead institutions and museums dealing with the Holocaust in Hungary should be committed to the presentation and dissemination of authoritative and conscientious historical research in this field.



■ **Montenegro’s Foreign Minister Prof. Dr. Srdjan Darmanovic** visited Yad Vashem on 16 July. He toured the Holocaust History Museum and laid a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance.



■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 7 June, **Foreign Minister of Latvia Edgars Rinkēvičs** toured the Museum of Holocaust Art, where he viewed the biblical artwork created by Holocaust victim Carol Deutsch.



NEW BENEFACTORS

The Saban Family: Supporting IDF Seminars

■ During their compulsory national service, Israel's young people face experiences that provoke fresh examination of their character, beliefs, and their relationship to their nation and state. Accordingly, study of the Holocaust has become an integral part of the Israel Defense Forces' education programs. Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies cooperates closely with the IDF Education Corps to produce programs and develop day seminars, which are attended by some 70,000 soldiers every year, new recruits and veteran officers alike. These visits strengthen the soldiers' sense of personal commitment to defend the Jewish State in order to ensure the continued existence and growth of the Jewish people.

At the American Society for Yad Vashem's Annual Tribute Dinner in November 2017, new Yad Vashem Benefactors Haim and Cheryl



Saban made a generous pledge to support Yad Vashem's IDF seminars both on the Mount of Remembrance and at army bases and training centers throughout Israel. During their pledge, Haim pointed out that while military service is both a necessity and a rite of passage for young Israeli men and women, it is also one of the most important stages in their social

and moral development, and the family is thus delighted to be supporting Yad Vashem's vital efforts in this field.

A native of Egypt, Haim Saban immigrated to Israel and France before moving to Los Angeles in 1983. Now Chairman and CEO of Saban Capital Group, Haim launched the Saban Family Foundation in 1999 with Cheryl to support various medical, children's and educational programs. Among these programs are the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, the Soroka Children's Hospital in Israel and Friends of the IDF. Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for this latest contribution from the Saban Family Foundation that will help facilitate Yad Vashem's ongoing IDF seminars and workshops, stimulating dialogue on ethical issues, and helping participants internalize humanitarian values of tolerance and moral courage.

Steven Baral: Honoring His Father

■ In a recent ceremony that took place during the 2018 Yad Vashem "Generation to Generation" Mission (see pp. 4-5), new Yad Vashem Benefactor Steven Baral was recognized for his generous support of the International School for Holocaust Studies.

Steven's father Martin Baral was born in Krakow, Poland, in 1932. When he was eight years old, Martin and his family were interned in the Krakow ghetto, where they spent two years living in squalor and under constant persecution. In the midst of this living hell, he received assistance from Tadeusz Pankiewicz, a Polish Catholic pharmacist, who was later recognized by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations.

Martin and his brother Jim escaped the ghetto on the night before its liquidation. Aided by

Bronisława (Bronka) Porwit from Krakow, and Ilona (Ilonka) Nemes from Budapest, both of whom were also later honored as Righteous Among the Nations, Martin's mother Franka helped her three children as well as three nieces flee by foot via Slovakia and Hungary to Romania. There she received a treasured "certificate" from the British authorities, allowing them to immigrate to Eretz Israel. Her husband Samuel, who had been separated from the rest of the family and interned in the Plaszow concentration camp, was one of over 1,200 Jews saved by Righteous Among the Nations Oskar Schindler as prisoner Number 41 on Schindler's famous list. After liberation, Samuel was reunited with his family, who later moved to Australia, where Steven was born.

Now residing in Seattle, WA, Steven Baral has made it his life's mission to honor

the memory of his family members who were murdered in the Holocaust, as well as those who survived. He currently serves as Vice President in Seattle's Holocaust Center for Humanity, where he has been active for over twenty years. In his gracious speech at Yad Vashem in July 2018, Steven acknowledged, "Yad Vashem is the sole legitimate repository of Jewish memory and Jewish history... Yad Vashem has educated me and inspired me. My family's name has been placed in the heart of Yad Vashem, and for this I feel extremely honored."



Egon and Miriam Sonnenschein: Inspiring the Next Generation

■ As a Holocaust survivor from Slovenia in the former Yugoslavia, Egon Sonnenschein understands what it means to lose 17 family members, be dispossessed, and be left with nothing. He moved to many countries during and after the war. After serving in the IDF, he immigrated to South Africa, where he met Miriam. They married 61 years ago, had four children and are proud grandparents of 12 grandchildren. Tragically, their daughter Vivienne passed away, leaving behind her husband and four beautiful children.

Egon was the founder and Chairman of Nettex in South Africa, which grew from humble beginnings into the largest knitting factory south of the equator, producing and exporting laces and a large variety of knitted curtaining

in Cape Town, as well as importing and selling woven curtaining. The family immigrated to Sydney, Australia, in 1983, where they established a very successful textile business.



Egon and Miriam are actively involved with the Sydney Jewish Museum, where Egon tells his story as a Holocaust survivor and Miriam guides. Between them, they pass on a number of uniquely valuable lessons to

their students: that the Holocaust was real; that they must not forget the atrocities, which must never happen again; that many survivors suffered terrible psychological and physical damage; and that the students should never be bystanders to unjust acts, nor give up hope for a better future.

The Sonnenscheins are deeply committed to Israel and the Jewish people, and were included in the Sydney community's Jewish Communal Appeal list of major philanthropists over the last half-century, in particular for their support of the Sydney Jewish Museum. Their generous donation to Yad Vashem has been recognized in the Holocaust History Museum, where their names now appear on the Museum Partners Wall.

Friends Worldwide

USA

■ On 31 August, **Michael and Linda Shabot** (third from right and third from left) visited Yad Vashem with friends. They toured the Holocaust History Museum, and participated in a behind-the-scenes visit to the Archives, presented by the International Relations Division's Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (center).



■ On 26 September, **Ryan Zuckerman** (center) marked his bar mitzvah at Yad Vashem with his family in a meaningful twinning ceremony, following a guided tour of the Holocaust History Museum.



■ **Jacob Salzhauer** (center) marked his bar mitzvah with his parents **Eva and Michael Salzhauer** at Yad Vashem on 20 August. The family participated in a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, and the visit culminated with a special Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ Following a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, **Max Freud** (center) and his parents **Valerie Russo and Marc Freud** participated in a meaningful Bar Mitzvah Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue on 20 August.



■ On 19 August, **Zachary Brownstein, Spencer Buten and Nathalie Chen** (center) marked their bar and bat mitzvahs at Yad Vashem with their families. Following a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, Zachary, Spencer and Nathalie participated in a special Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ Yad Vashem Benefactor **Steven Baral** (second from left) visited Yad Vashem on 12 July with his friends **Jeff and Jamie Merriman-Cohen** (right). They were greeted by **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (left), and were given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Yad Vashem Archives, followed by a tour of the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial.



■ **Yakira Hoffer** (center) marked her bat mitzvah with her parents **Daniella and Ben Hoffer** and other family members at Yad Vashem on 16 August. After a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, their moving visit culminated in a Bat Mitzvah Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ On 30 July, **Jared Resnick**, grandson of Yad Vashem Builders **Jimmy and Lydia Resnick**, visited Yad Vashem with his summer travel program. During the visit, Jared viewed the dedication to his grandparents in the Square of Hope.



■ **Sasha Hurowitz** (second from left) marked her bat mitzvah at Yad Vashem on 17 June with a meaningful day at Yad Vashem. Together with her parents **Sharon and Richar Hurowitz**, and her brother, Sasha walked along the Path of the Righteous Among the Nations, and then toured the Holocaust History Museum, the Holocaust Art Museum and the "Flashes of Memory" exhibition. The visit culminated in a touching Bat Mitzvah Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ **Samantha Mann** (front row, second from right), granddaughter of Yad Vashem Trustees **David and Esther Mann**, visited Yad Vashem on 17 July, along with her teaching colleagues. During their visit, they toured the Children's Memorial, Janusz Korczak Square, and the Holocaust History Museum.



■ After a tour of the Holocaust History Museum on 17 June, **Asher Rossen, Kyle Pierce, Garrett Button, Zachary Rossen, Samuel Sachs, Tyler Button** and **Max Dombchik** marked their bar mitzvahs with their families through a special Twinning Ceremony in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ Following a memorable tour of the Holocaust History Museum on 14 June, **Coby Bronfman** and **Moise Safra** (center) commemorated their bar mitzvahs with their mothers, **Stacey Bronfman** (left) and **Marielle Safra** (second from right), and Director of the International Relations Division's US Desk **Michael Fisher** (right), in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ On 10 June, **Marcie and Cliff Goldstein** (third and fourth from left) and friends took a guided tour of the Holocaust History Museum

and the new "Flashes of Memory" exhibition. They were also shown fascinating documents and artifacts from the Yad Vashem Collections.



■ **Jim Breslau** (left) was greeted by **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right) before touring the Holocaust History Museum on 29 June.



■ After being greeted by **Michael Fisher** (center) and American Society West Coast Director of Institutional Advancement **William Bernstein** (right), **Peter and Leslie Strong** (third and fourth from left) toured Yad Vashem's "Flashes of Memory" exhibition on 8 June along with family and friends.



■ Following a tour of the Holocaust History Museum on 6 June, members of the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra held a meaningful wreath-laying ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, led by **Michael Fisher**.



■ On 19 August, the **American Society for Yad Vashem** and the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust partnered for the first time in a screening of the documentary *The Presence of Their Absence*. With over 100 supporters in attendance, the screening was followed by a discussion with filmmaker **Donna Kanter** and **Fred Zaidman**, whose family story is the subject of the movie. The session was moderated by **William Bernstein**.



■ On 23 May, the American Society held its Annual Spring Luncheon in New York City, honoring Holocaust survivor **Millie Zuckerman** and her three daughters **Ruth Katz, Ann Sklar** and **Deborah Zuckerman** (pictured with American Society Chair **Leonard Wilf** and her granddaughters, **Michelle Katz Rappaport, Stephanie Abromow, Hillary Katz, Debra Kaplan** and **Julia Kaplan**). Guest speakers were Holocaust survivor and author of *Survivor's Club: The Very True Story of a Very Young Prisoner of Auschwitz* **Michael Bornstein** and his daughter **Debbie Bornstein Holinstat**. The event was co-chaired by **Goldie Hertz, Danielle Karten, Abby Kaufthal, Jaci Paradis, Rachel Shnay** and **Michelle Taragin**.



■ On 22 July, **Eli Pechtold** (left) visited the Holocaust History Museum, the "Flashes of Memory" exhibition and the Children's Memorial.



Friends Worldwide

■ On 21 August, the American Society Young Leadership Associates hosted “An Evening at Citi Field,” chaired by **Rachel Shnay** and **Josh Gelnick**. Over 25 young professionals gathered to hear Holocaust survivor **Felice Zimmern Stokes** (left), introduced by **Allyson Setton** (right) – who struck up an extraordinary friendship during the recent 2018 Yad Vashem International Donors Mission (see pp. 4-5). **Marilyn** and **Barry Rubenstein** generously helped to make this special evening possible.



■ On 1 June, **Isabel Maxwell** (second from right) and **Frances Arnold** (right) were greeted by **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (second from left), at the beginning of their meaningful visit to Yad Vashem. They were guided by **Esther Bowalsky** (left).



■ On 26 September, the **American Society for Yad Vashem** in cooperation with Jewish Life Television (JLTV) honored **Phil Blazer**, retiring JLTV Chief Executive Officer, for his valued service and contributions to the development of the American Society in Los Angeles. Left to right: **William Bernstein**, **Phil Blazer**, **Kathy Blazer**, American Society Executive Director **Ron Meier**



■ Yad Vashem mourns the passing of Holocaust survivor and Yad Vashem Builder **Isaac Dickmann**.

Isaac was born on 11 November 1919 in Stryj, Poland, where he qualified as a dental technician. After the German occupation of Poland, he was sent to the Russian front, eventually joining the Polish army. In September 1944, Isaac’s army unit was stationed in Eretz Israel, where he joined the Jewish Brigade. From his entire family, Isaac was the sole survivor of the Holocaust.

In Israel, Isaac met his beloved wife Yona, to whom he was married for 63 years. He served in the IDF for two years and fought in Israel’s War of Independence. The couple moved to Washington, DC in 1959. Isaac and Yona were deeply committed to Holocaust education, and during their annual visits to Yad Vashem, they were always interested to hear about its pedagogic activities. This keen interest led to the couple making a generous bequest in support of Yad Vashem’s educational endeavors.

Yad Vashem extends its condolences to Isaac’s family. May his memory be blessed.

UK

■ On 17 June, Yad Vashem Pillars **Michael** and **Jackie Gee** (center) met with Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev** (second from left), Director General **Dorit Novak** (left), and International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right). Their visit included a tour of the two recently opened exhibitions, “Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust” and “They Say There is a Land’: Longings for Eretz Israel during the Holocaust.”



CANADA

■ Yad Vashem mourns the recent passing of Holocaust survivor **Hank Rosenbaum**, former Chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem.



Born in August 1936 in Warsaw, Poland, Hank and his family were forced into the Warsaw ghetto in 1939, where his brother died. In 1942, they escaped the ghetto through the sewer system, and were hidden in a cowshed by a childhood friend of Hank’s father. When the Germans learned of their whereabouts through an informant, the family escaped into the forest, where they hid until liberation by the Red Army.

After spending time in a DP camp in Germany, Hank immigrated to Canada in 1952 at the age of 16. He began his professional career in a clothing factory, and eventually built his own textile import business. A dear friend of Yad Vashem, Hank was committed to perpetuating Holocaust remembrance, serving as Chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem from 1995 to 2009. During this time, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Wall of Remembrance at Earl Bales Park, and helped initiate the Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremonies at Queen’s Park, during which special recognition is given to Holocaust survivors who have contributed to the wellbeing of Ontario.

Yad Vashem expresses its deepest condolences to Hank’s widow Helen, his children Brian, Cheryl and Warren, Steven and Debbie, and all the grandchildren. May his memory be blessed.

SOUTH AFRICA

■ Accompanied by extended family and friends, **Brian** and **Lee Joffe** (fourth and third from left) toured the Children’s Memorial and Holocaust History Museum on 14 June. Their visit culminated in a plaque-unveiling ceremony on the Warsaw Ghetto Square Balcony and the presentation to them of the Yad Vashem Key.



BELGIUM

■ Yad Vashem mourns the recent passing of Holocaust survivor and former Chair of Yad Vashem Friends in Belgium **Jack Graubart**, at the age of 97.



Jack was born in Sanok, Poland in 1921.

When he was 18 years old, he followed his brother Walter to Belgium. With the situation deteriorating in Europe, he volunteered to join the French resistance. As part of his initiation, he was required to kill a German officer. During his service in the resistance, he helped transfer hundreds of Jews from occupied France to Switzerland, thus saving their lives. He escaped arrest twice by the French police, but the third time he was sent to the Drancy transit camp and from there to Auschwitz. Jack spent nearly three years in four concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Buchenwald, surviving death marches between camps, of which only he and three others out of 1,400 prisoners survived.

Although he never completed high school, Jack was fluent in almost 12 languages. He became a successful diamond merchant in Belgium, and was a dedicated sports enthusiast. He loved the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and was on excellent terms with many diplomats, government officials and businessmen. Jack ensured he passed on the torch of remembrance to his children; on retiring as Chair of Yad Vashem Friends in Belgium, his daughter Yvette Graubart-Blaiberg continued in his place.

Yad Vashem expresses its sympathy and heartfelt condolences to Jack's children, Yvette and Jack Blaiberg, and Dorothy and Gabriel Kertesz, their children and grandchildren. May his memory be blessed.

AUSTRALIA

■ **Tom and Di Goldman, Barry and Sandra Smorgon, and Peter and Clare Palan** toured the Children's Memorial and Holocaust History Museum on 23 May. They were then given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Yad Vashem Archives by Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation **Dr. Haim Gertner**.



■ On 29 July, **Danny Gluck** (center) visited the Museum of Holocaust Art and the exhibition "Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust." He was also given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Yad Vashem Archives by Archives Division Deputy Director **Elinor Kroitoru** (left).



■ Yad Vashem Benefactors **Egon and Miriam Sonnenschein** and their son **Alan** visited the Children's Memorial and Holocaust History Museum on 3 June. A week later, they visited the Holocaust Art Museum as well as the "Flashes of Memory" exhibition, followed by a behind-the-scenes-visit to the Yad Vashem Archives and Artifacts Collections. They also met with Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev** and International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**.



■ On 24 July, **Andrew Peterfreund** toured the Holocaust Art Museum and two recently opened Yad Vashem exhibitions, "Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust" and "They Say There is a Land': Longings for Eretz Israel during the Holocaust."



■ On 28 June, **Vivienne Fried** (center) unveiled her plaque on the Australian Wall of the Memorial Cave, accompanied by her daughter-in-law **Timna** (left), her son **Noach** (right) and her dear friend **Helsie Brustman OAM**.



■ Accompanied by their son and daughter-in-law **Ian and Linda Gandel** (left), as well as Gandel Philanthropy representative in Israel **Avi Armoni**, Yad Vashem Pillars **Pauline and John Gandel AC** (right) visited the Mount of Remembrance on 28 June. They took part in the Tenth International Conference for Holocaust Education (see p. 7), and met with Australian conference participants. After **Shaya Ben Yehuda** presented them with the Yad Vashem Key, they met with Yad Vashem senior management and viewed the "Flashes of Memory" exhibition.



Friends Worldwide

■ On 7 June, **Ann Bryce** (center) and her partner **Aaron Kanat** (left) visited the Holocaust History Museum, Holocaust Art Museum and “Flashes of Memory” exhibition.



■ Accompanied by his granddaughter **Isabelle Worth**, **Harry Chojna** visited the Children’s Memorial and Holocaust History Museum on 24 June.



■ **Izhar and Jane Ronen** (left) and **George and Helen Proos** visited the Children’s Memorial and Holocaust History Museum on 21 June.



SPAIN

■ **David Hatchwell** (sixth from left) and a group of friends were accompanied by Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** (right) and **Moshe Hazan** during their visit to Yad Vashem.



MEXICO

■ Yad Vashem Builders **Inés and David Beja** (center) were joined by Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk in Yad Vashem’s International Relations Division **Perla Hazan** (second from left), Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (fourth from right), **Gina Beja Nizri** and her husband (third and fourth from left), Yad Vashem Builder **Jaime Braverman** and **Beatriz Masliah** (third and second from right) and **Daniel Leon** (right), at the unveiling of the plaque in their honor on the Builders Wall.



■ The Fastlicht, Russo and Azcarraga Families visited Yad Vashem to mark the bar mitzvahs of **Alex Russo** (second from right) and **Emilio Azcarraga** (second from left). They were joined by **Marcos Fastlicht** (right), **Marc Russo** (center) and **Emilio Azcarraga** (left).



■ Yad Vashem Pillars **Vicky and Ariel Picker** (third from left and right) visited Yad Vashem to mark the bat mitzvah of their daughter **Tali** (second from right) and the unveiling of the plaque in her honor, together with their sons **Alan and Uri** (left).



■ Yad Vashem Builders **Sharon and David Sitt** marked the bar mitzvah of their son **Alan** (fourth from right) in the Yad Vashem Synagogue, together with their sons **Edward and Daniel** (sixth from left and fifth from right) and other family members. They were joined by **Perla and Moshe Hazan**.



MIAMI SPANISH-SPEAKERS

■ Yad Vashem Sponsors **Daniel and Elizabeth Slimak** (left) were accompanied by Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** and **Moshe Hazan** (right) during their visit to Yad Vashem.



■ **Debra and Robert Kasirer** were joined by **Perla Hazan** during their visit to Yad Vashem.



■ **Alexandra and Daniela Hirschhorn** recently visited Yad Vashem.



PERU

■ **Jessica and Alex Wolfenson** (center) marked the bar mitzvah of their son **Ariel** (third from left) during a special visit to Yad Vashem together with their family.



■ **Valeria and Simon Fishman** (fourth and fifth from left) were joined at Yad Vashem by their family and friends to mark the bar mitzvah of their son **Rafael** (third from left).



ARGENTINA

■ **Vanina and Marcelo Cassin** (third from left and second from right) visited Yad Vashem with their children **Galia** (left) and **Avril** (fourth from left) to mark the bar mitzvah of their son **Michel** (third from right).



VENEZUELA

■ Yad Vashem mourns the passing of its distinguished and longtime friend, Holocaust survivor, and founder and president of the Venezuelan Association for Yad Vashem **David Yisrael**.



David's mother and little sister Eva, as well as his grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins, were all murdered in the gas chambers at Auschwitz. Having survived the horrors of the Holocaust together with his father and brothers, David immigrated to Eretz Israel, where he joined the nascent Israeli army to fight in the War of Independence.

Later, David and his wife Dora established a family in Venezuela, where he held a number of leadership roles within the Jewish Community in Caracas. A steadfast supporter of Yad Vashem, David was one of the founders of Yad Vashem's Memorial Cave, which offers survivors, relatives and friends of Holocaust victims a way to commemorate their loved ones and their lost communities. As president of the Venezuelan Association for Yad Vashem, David was one of the pioneers in emphasizing Holocaust education.

Yad Vashem extends its deepest condolences to David's wife Dora, daughter Goldy Yisrael Greenfield, and sons, Milton, Willy and Jacobo Yisrael. May his memory be blessed.

■ **Henrique and Mónica Radonski de Capriles** (third from left and center) visited Yad Vashem with members of their family, including **Andrés** and **Claudia Capriles** (left). Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** (right) accompanied the group during the visit.



Christian Desk with ICEJ and The Museum of the Bible

■ After ten years as the Director of the **Christian Friends of Yad Vashem**, **Dr. Susanna Kokkonen** (front, right) is leaving her position. Deputy Director of the International Relations Division **Sari Granitza** (back, right) will be the new director, with **Pastor Mark** and **Terrie Jenkins** (back, left) acting liaisons in the USA. The four held a recent planning meeting with International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (front, left).



■ During the Feast of Tabernacles 2018, Yad Vashem hosted a number of international visits. Various nations from around the globe were represented, including countries as far apart as Spain and New Zealand. Thousands of visitors from the Feast came to Yad Vashem and toured the Holocaust History Museum and the two new temporary exhibitions, "They Say There Is a Land" and "Flashes of Memory." **Dr. Susanna Kokkonen**, outgoing Director of the Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, also hosted a seminar at the Feast venue. At her VIP farewell reception, Dr. Kokkonen (center) was joined by ICEJ President **Dr. Jürgen Bühler** (left) and ICEJ VP Finance **David van der Walt** (right).

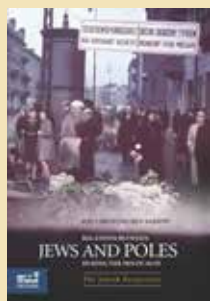


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Tel: 1-800-310-7495 or 1-212-220-4304
E-mail: info@yadvashemusa.org

American Society – Western Region
11911 San Vicente Blvd. Suite 215
Los Angeles, CA 90049
Tel: 1-424-273-4460
E-mail: wbernstein@yadvashemusa.org

CANADA:

Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
265 Rimrock Road, Suite 218
Toronto, ON M3J 3C6
Tel: 1-416-785-1333
E-mail: info@yadvashem.ca

UK:

Yad Vashem - UK Foundation
Stirling House, Breasy Place
9 Burroughs Gardens
London NW4 4AU
Tel: 020-8359-1146
E-mail: office@yadvashem.org.uk

GERMANY:

Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany
Joachimstaler Str. 13
10719 Berlin
Tel: +49-30-81825931
E-mail: yadvashem.deutschland@t-online.de

AUSTRIA:

Friends of Yad Vashem in Austria
Blütenstr. 18/B2
A-4040 Linz
Tel: +43-732-716 822
E-mail: gus@yad-vashem.net

SWITZERLAND:

Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem
CIG - 21 Avenue Dumas
1208 Geneva
Tel: +41-22-8173688
E-mail: jhg@noga.ch

AUSTRALIA:

Australian Friends of Yad Vashem
President: Joey Borensztajn
2 Huntingfield Road
Toorak, VIC 3142 Australia
Tel: +61-3-9299-9639
E-mail: afyv.exec@gmail.com

■ Donations may also be sent to:

International Relations Division,
Yad Vashem, PO Box 3477
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