The Newsletter of the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

Zachor Remember"

Number 4, October 2003













Information For Survivors

New Medical and Emergency Funds for Survivors

The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre and Jewish Family Service Agency have been authorized to administer a number of funds to victims of the Holocaust that meet specific criteria. Some of the funds are part of larger Swiss litigation funds, some are from Germany and others are unclaimed insurance funds. Some of the funds are only available to former Austrian citizens. These funds are specifically to provide medical or emergency help to Holocaust victims. Many of these funds are time sensitive and must be distributed within the next fourteen months. If you are a victim who is finding it difficult on your income, to pay for medical needs or have an emergency we may be able to help. Contact Gisi Levitt at (604) 264-0499 or (604) 257-5151.

New Visiting Program for Survivors Launched

If you are a survivor who would benefit from more contact with other people, or would like some company there is a service to answer this need. The Friendly Visiting Program is made up of members of the second generation and child survivors who would like to visit survivors who would enjoy some company on a one to one basis. For more information please contact the VHEC office (604) 264-0499 and leave a message for Cathy Golden.

All Survivors Are Invited To the next Survivor Drop In

Tuesday, October 14, 2003, 2-4 p.m. Rabbi Philip Bregman will be speaking freshments will be served.



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PLEASE JOIN US



OPENING RECEPTION 7:30 PM, October 16, 2003

silent voices speak

Remembering the Holocaust Paintings by Barbara Shilo

> Sponsored by the Bertha Fraeme Fund, Bluman Family Fund, and the Terry Szajman Endowment Fund of the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

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Cover Image: Auschwitz–Selected for the Gas Chamber, Hungarian Jewish men, women and children selected for death in the gas chamber wait in the wooded area next to the killing facility at Auschwitz-Birkenau

silent voices speak

Remembering the Holocaust Paintings by Barbara Shilo

OPENING RECEPTION 7:30 PM, OCTOBER 16, 2003

Silent Voices Speak: Remembering the Holocaust represents artist Barbara Shilo's attempt to draw attention to a number of significant moments in the history of the Holocaust. Her strong desire to put a human face on these horrific events resulted in a series of 14 mixed media paintings that focus attention on specific Holocaust themes.

The paintings are based on images taken from documentary historical photographs from the archives of the Washington Holocaust Memorial Museum. Some of the paintings rely heavily on the documentary images while others take more artistic licence to bring the viewer in more immediate contact with the events or with individuals portraved in the photographs. In some cases, such as in an image of a group of Hungarian Jews waiting in the wooded area outside of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the artist has repeated the images with fewer people in each frame until the last frame is completely empty of life. In Behind Barbed Wire, which focuses attention on the plight of children in the camps, the same image is repeated many times on the same canvas to suggest the tragic number of children, over 1.5 million Jewish children that perished.

The fourteen paintings are presented sequentially in a didactic format that allows students to see the evolution of the genocide of European Jewry as a sequence of interrelated events, yet separate moments in time. Themes such as: Resettlement and Deportation, the Establishment of the Death Camps, The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Children in the Holocaust, Death Marches, and Liberation are each addressed in separate paintings; a kind of visual shorthand which attempts to cover a complex history in a way that can be absorbed by students encountering the events of the Holocaust for the first time.

Barbara Shilo has manipulated the images by adding colour to what were originally black and white images, changing proportions, combining images, to create dynamic compositions.

"I hope that students will get a rudimentary education about the Holocaust because it was a momentous catastrophic event of the 20th century and it created a new understanding of the dangers of totalitarian governments. - Barbara Shilo

Continued on p. 4



Barbara Shilo states that; "By using colour on original black and white photographs I attempted to show the Holocaust in reality. We see the world around us in colour and when we see black and white rendition of reality we can detach from it because it is not how we see the world. By using colour, as you mentioned, these images were changed, they became more real, more immediate and I believe more emotional. That has been the feedback from people who have seen the exhibition."

At no time was the artist interested in painting an impression or interpretation of the Holocaust, nor of telling a personal story. This project is entirely focused on teaching the history of the Holocaust and visually chronicling the events.

Barbara Shilo was born in Fulda, Germany, later the site of one of the largest Displaced Person Camps for survivors. She vividly recalls, as a young child in 1933, when Hitler's Nazis came to power and life for the Jews of her little town changed forever. Like all the Jewish children of Germany she was forbidden to attend school. She remembers adults whispering about arrests and Brown Shirts with swastika armbands marching through the streets.

"I did not want to do another interpretation of the Holocaust, I did not live through it." – Barbara Shilo

Alerted by warnings from Christian friends, Barbara's family moved to Czechoslovakia soon after, although there too the majority of the population was fiercely pro-Nazi. After her father was arrested at the Czech border while returning from a trip to Germany, and his

car was confiscated, her parents knew it was time to leave the country. In 1938, the family immigrated to the United States, where her mother's family had been living for many years. She was not even 10 years old when she left Europe, but "as a Jew I was subliminally aware I was different. It sort of just came with the territory."

It was many years before they learned that those family members who had remained in Europe had not survived the Holocaust. After attending university, Barbara continued to study and create art. For many years she painted numerous subjects and had exhibitions throughout the United States. But when images of the Holocaust surfaced from her subconscious, she felt it imperative to somehow represent this tragedy in her work.

The need to transform these images and express them through art led her to visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.. Documentary photographs from the archives of the Museum were her primary resource. She multiplied the photographs, as if these portraits in multiples had a better chance of survival. She cut, shaped, and added colour to the black-and-white photographs "attempting to show the Holocaust in reality." Making the finished multi-media images, what she believes are, more immediate and emotional.

"I know my painting is 'unreal'—only a replica, of sorts—but the events I portray were real, terribly real. I hope I have been able through my paintings to give the viewer a sense of the horror visited upon these millions of people. I hope to give them back their individuality by recreating their images on paper and canvas, and in this way to preserve and honour their blessed memory."



With appreciation to the VHEC Restitution Committee

A group of volunteers with legal expertise, Stan Taviss, Dmitri Stone, Mark Rozenberg and part-time consultant Marla Morry have been continuously assisting survivors in filing various restitution and compensation claims. They have had the onerous job of filling forms and assessing each request on a case by case basis. These services are offered by the VHEC at no cost to the survivor and no percentage of what is received is requested. Without the dedication and commitment of those listed above the VHEC could not be helping those in our community to file claims. For some it is a story of success, for others another painful reminder of what was lost.

There have been many success stories. One survivor received \$155,000 (CDN) from the Swiss banks for an account of his mother's, which Marla Morry identified on the internet. The same survivor received about \$20,000 from the fund for unclaimed Austrian bank accounts and looted property. Another survivor received \$12,000 (USD) from Generali Insurance Company for life insurance her father had purchased before the war, which was also identified on the internet. This settlement was shared with her sister and sisterin-law. Many of the Russian survivors, helped primarily by Dmitri Stone have received lump sum payments of \$3,500.

These success stories are in addition to over a hundred survivors the VHEC has helped who have already received the slave labour funds of about \$7,000 each. We are sure that there are others who have received funds, compensation for looted property, etc. that we helped, but have not identified themselves or let the VHEC know about the amount of the settlement.

One story relating to our compensation work is recounted by Marla Morry: "I was helping one survivor, and located the name of an uncle on the website for unclaimed insurance policies. The survivor told me that he was the closest surviving heir to his uncle, as the uncle's family had all perished in the camps. A claim for the insurance money was made. The survivor then received a call from Israel (where the claims are being processed), telling him that the son of the uncle (i.e. his cousin) now living in Israel had also made a claim for the same insurance money. The survivor was dumbfounded as he thought that his cousin had died in the Holocaust. After verification of information between the two men, it was confirmed that they were indeed long-lost cousins. This survivor will be going to Israel in October to reunite with his cousin. "This treasure is worth more than money.



Claims Conference Funds Website to Trace Possible Stolen Art

The American Association of Museums (AAM) has launched the Nazi-Era Provenance Internet Portal, a central registry of objects in U.S. museums that could have changed hands in Europe during the Nazi era, 1933-1945. The Web site, www.nepip.org, is the first to centralize information about such objects in U.S. museums. It is partially funded with a grant from the Claims Conference.

The Claims Conference funded the project in order to better assist heirs of Holocaust victims in finding and filing claims for artwork stolen from their families by the Nazis. As restitution of art objects presents unique obstacles, the Claims Conference believes it important to provide as much assistance as possible to those seeking lost assets. A summary of art restitution efforts is available on the Claims Conference Web site at www.claimscon.org

The AAM adopted the "Guidelines Concerning the Unlawful Appropriation of Objects During the Nazi Era," instructing museums to research the provenance, or ownership history, of objects in their collections that could have changed hands in Continental Europe between 1932 and 1946. The guidelines, available online at www.aam-us.org under "Ethics Guidelines," also instruct museums to make the resulting information available to the public.

Using the Portal, a person seeking a missing object can search by Artist's Name, Nationality of Artist, Title, or Keywords among other options. The Portal will return information about potentially matching objects in the collections of its participating museums. For additional information about an object or to make a claim, the person can then contact the participating museum using information provided by the Portal. The presence of an object in the Portal does not mean it was looted by the Nazis; rather, it means the object might have been sold or transferred somewhere in Continental Europe between 1932 and 1946.

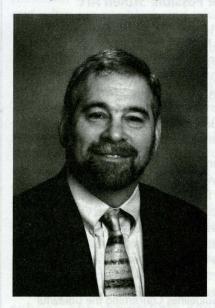
For additional links to art restitution organizations, please visit www.claimscon.org

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) distributes a weekly e-mail bulletin on current restitution developments and Claims Conference activities. You may subscribe to this free service through the homepage of the Claims Conference's website, www.claimscon.org, or by sending an email to news@claimscon.org.

Kristallnacht Commemorative Lecture

Contested Memory: The Role of the Holocaust in Contemporary Jewish Identity and in Moral Discourse by Dr. Michael Berenbaum

7:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 9, 2003 at Congregation Beth Israel



Michael Berenbaum, scholar of international stature will give the community-wide Kristallnacht lecture at Congregation Beth Israel on Sunday, November 9th at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Berenbaum's talk will explore the sense of Jewish identity on the current generation, the first to mature after the tragedy of the Holocaust. His talk will probe the impact of the Holocaust on Jewish consciousness and the imprint of North American culture on Jewish identity. He details the changing relationship of North American Jews to Israel through an examination of the tensions between victimization and empowerment in Jewish tradition.

Berenbaum received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Queens College, and studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Hebrew University and Boston University, before receiving his Ph.D. in humanities, religion and culture from Florida State University. Berenbaum was President and Chief Executive Officer of the

Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation founded by Stephen Spielberg in Los Angeles. From 1988 -1993, he served as Project Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where he was responsible for the conceptualization and development of the museum's permanent exhibition. He was the Ida E. King Distinguished Professor of Holocaust Studies at Richard Stockton College for 1999-2000 and the Strassler Family Distinguished Visiting Professor of Holocaust Studies at Clark University in 2000. Currently he is the director of the Sigi Ziering Institute for the Study of the Ethical Implications of the Holocaust and is an adjunct professor of theology at L.A.'s University of Judaism. An internationally recognized writer, lecturer, teacher and consultant, Berenbaum guides the development of museums and historical films as president of The Berenbaum Group in Los Angeles.

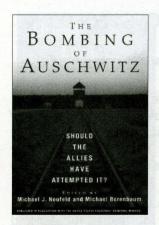
Of Berenbaum's book, After Tragedy and Triumph, Raul Hilberg said, "All those who want to read only one book about the condition of Jewry in 1990 would do well to choose Michael Berenbaum...In description of contemporary Jewish thought, he sacrifices neither complexity nor lucidity." Charles Silberman praised Berenbaum's book The World Must Know as "a majestic and profoundly moving history of the Holocaust...It is must reading for anyone who would like to be human in the post-Holocaust world." The Village Voice praised Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp with, "The scholarship, broad and deep, makes this the definitive book on one of our century's defining horrors."



In film, his work as co-producer of One Survivor Remembers: The Gerda Weissman Klein Story was recognized with an Academy Award, an Emmy Award and the Cable Ace Award. He was the historical consultant on The Shoah Foundation's documentary, The Last Days, which won an Academy Award for the best feature length documentary of 1998. In 2001, Berenbaum was the chief historical consultant for HBO's Conspiracy, for NBC's Uprising, and the History Channel's The Holocaust: The Untold Story, which won the CINE Golden Eagle Award and a Silver Medal at the US International Film and Video Festival. He was also Executive Producer, writer and historian for a film entitled Desperate Hours on the Holocaust in Turkey. For his work in journalism, he won the Simon Rockower Memorial Award of the American Jewish Press Association three times in three different categories during a two-year period.

Bombing of Auschwitz, Should the Allies Have Attempted It?

Edited by Michael J. Neufeld and Michael Berenbaum



Did we "know" the gas chambers were there? Could we have destroyed them? Why didn't we bomb? For decades, debate has raged over whether the Allies should have bombed the gas chambers at Auschwitz and the railroads leading to the camp, thereby saving thousands of lives and disrupting Nazi efforts to exterminate European Jews. Was it truly feasible to do so? Did failure to do so simply reflect a callous indifference to the plight of the Jews or was it a realistic assessment of a plan that could not succeed? In this volume, a number of eminent historians address and debate those very questions.

Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, this is the first paperback edition of a book that has been widely hailed by critics and cited by Kirkus Reviews as "the definitive resource for understanding this deeply troubling episode in the twentieth century's greatest horror." Prominent scholars such as Sir Martin Gilbert, Walter Laqueur, Michael Berenbaum, Gerhard Weinberg, and Williamson Murray offer a diverse array of mutually supporting and competing perspectives on the subject. In the process, they shed important light on how much knowledge of Auschwitz Allied intelligence actually had and on what measures the Allies might have taken to halt the killing.

Ultimately, these contributions show that the dilemma over Auschwitz was far more complex than criticisms of inaction would suggest. *The Bombing of Auschwitz* is an unusual volume that confronts life-and-death questions and addresses a matter of enduring interest for all readers of World War II and Holocaust history.

"An excellent study, objectively edited, with all points of view represented eloquently and substantively by major scholars of the subject." –William J. vanden Heuvel, Forward

"An intense book and one that deserves a wide readership. . . . It cuts to the core of Allied policy on Jewish affairs during the war and on the changes that have transpired in attitudes toward the Holocaust since the war ended."—Jewish Book World

"The authors have assembled not only the best and most technical assessments but thoughtful reflections on how to judge the hard-pressed political leaders and generals of the time. The broader questions may be unanswerable, but they merit pondering nonetheless—particularly in an age that has seen its share of massacres uninterrupted by external intervention."—Foreign Affairs

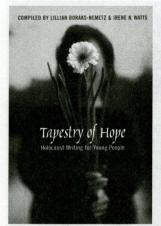


Recent Books by Dr. Berenbaum

- The Bombing of Auschwitz: Should the Allies Have Attempted It? (2000). Co-editor with Michael Neufeld
- The Holocaust and History: The Known, The Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined (1998). Co-editor with Abraham Peck
- Witness to the Holocaust: An Illustrated Documentary History of the Holocaust in the Words of its Victims, Perpetrators and Bystanders (1997).
- What Kind of God? Essays in Honor of Richard L. Rubenstein (1995).Co-editor with Betty Rodgers Rubenstein
- Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). Co-editor with Israel Gutman
- The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust (1993).
- A Mosaic of Victims: Non-Jews Persecuted and Murdered by the Nazis (1990).
- After Tragedy and Triumph: Modern Jewish Thought and the American Experience (1990).
- Holocaust Religious and Philosophical Implications (1989).
 Co-editor with John Roth
- From Holocaust to New Life (1985).

Cherie Smith JCC Jewish Book Festival

A number of authors writing on Holocaust themes are coming to the 19th Annual Cherie Smith JCC Jewish Book Festival, from November 15 – 20, 2003



TAPESTRY OF HOPE: HOLOCAUST WRITING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE Edited by Lillian Boraks-Nemetz & Irene N. Watts

BOOK LAUNCH – 7 PM, Sunday, November 16 – Esther & Ben Dayson Boardroom, JCC, 2nd floor.

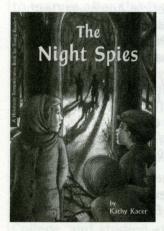
The Cherie Smith JCC Jewish Book Festival, Tundra Books and the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre join together in celebrating the Vancouver book launch of *Tapestry of Hope: Holocaust Writing for Young People*. Vancouver authors, Lillian Boraks-Nemetz and Irene N. Watts will read excerpts from the book. Publisher of Tundra Books, Kathy Lowinger will join them from Toronto. Also in attendance will be other contributors to the book who live in the Vancouver area.

Tapestry of Hope is an extraordinary anthology, which gathers together first person accounts and well-known published writing from authors such as Mordechai Richler and Leonard Cohen, to reveal the heartbreak, courage, and hope that define one of history's

darkest hours. Through poetry, drama, prose, and first hand accounts, the contributors address different aspects of the Holocaust. Some write about hiding from the Nazis. Others record the misery of life in the ghettos, the struggle for survival in the camps, resistance and life after the Holocaust. Although each selection encompasses the terror and evil of the times, it also reflects the reliance of the human spirit, and comes together to create what is truly a tapestry of hope for readers young and old.

Lillian Boraks-Nemetz is a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto. Her experiences are reflected in her poetry collection, *Ghost Children*, and in her Slava trilogy for young readers: *The Old Brown Suitcase*, *The Sunflower Diary*, and *The Lenski File*.

Irene N. Watts arrived in England by Kindertransport from Berlin, Germany in 1938. Since coming to Canada in 1968, she has been active in many aspects of Theatre in Education. She is the author of the trilogy of young adult fiction, *Good-bye Marianne*, *Remember Me*, and *Finding Sophie*.



THE NIGHT SPIES AND MARGIT: HOME FREE

Author, Kathy Kacer

SLIDE PRESENTATION AND READING – 1 PM, Tuesday, November 18 – Esther & Ben Dayson Boardroom, JCC, 2nd floor

Meet award-winning author Kathy Kacer as she reads excerpts from her new books, *The Night Spies* and *Margit: Home Free*.

The Night Spies is Kathy Kacer's most recent work for young people, the third in the trilogy, which started with her award-winning novel *The Secret of Gabi's Dresser* followed by Clara's War. It focuses on the Holocaust and on family stories that explore this critical time in history with young children.

Margit: Home Free is the first of a four-book collection included in the Our Canadian Girl Series of stories for young readers. Settling as refugees in Toronto's Kensington Market

neighbourhood in 1944, Margit and her mother are overwhelmed by the freedom and plenty of the new world in which they find themselves. Margit must also struggle with intolerance towards Jews in Canada.

Kathy Kacer is a former psychologist who worked with troubled teens before becoming a published author in 1999. *The Secret of Gabi's Dresser* is based on the real life experience of Kathy's mother who hid in a dresser during the Holocaust while Nazi soldiers searched through her home. Kathy Kacer is dedicated to writing about the Holocaust in a way that is sensitive to the age and stage of development of a young reader.

Cherie Smith JCC Jewish Book Festival

November 15 - 20, 2003



URIEL'S LEGACY

Author, Maurits Van der Veen

AUTHOR'S TALK AND READING – Date & time to be announced. Check the festival program for details.

Uriel's Legacy is a biographical history and an adventure that takes us on a journey that begins with the tumultuous life of a "heretic" in 17th-century Amsterdam. Through more than two hundred years, we follow the ancestors of the "heretic" from generation to generation: from the jungles of Indonesia, to the city of Shanghai, China, back to The Netherlands, and finally, to Vancouver, Canada. Throughout the story, these unique characters show bravery, defiance, endurance, and spirituality–together, they leave the reader with a strengthened faith in humanity.

Maurits Van der Veen was born in Shanghai, China. He spent his early teens in a Japanese Internment camp and was repatriated to Holland after the surrender of Japan. He completed secondary school, served with the Dutch Air Force then immigrated to Canada. In Canada, He attended the UBC School of Social Work, worked as a field social worker and became the Director of Welfare for the Yukon Territory. He worked for the Federal Department of Corrections and eventually retired as warden of a Federal penitentiary.



FACES OF COURAGE: YOUNG HEROES OF WORLD WAR II

Author, Sally Rogow

AUTHOR'S READING – 1 PM, Thursday, November 20 – Esther & Ben Dayson Boardroom, JCC, 2nd floor

Faces of Courage: Young Heroes of World War II, depicts the struggle for survival by brave young people who risked their lives to defy the Nazis. There is Kirsten, a young Danish girl who helped save a group of Jewish children from the clutches of the Nazis. Yojo, a Gypsy teenager, guided downed British pilots over the Pyrenees Mountains to freedom in Spain. Jacques, a blind French teenager, organized a student resistance group called Volunteers of Liberty. The Edelweiss Pirates were German teenagers who opposed the Hitler Youth and aided homeless Jewish children and runaways. Jacob, a young Pole, concealed his Jewish identity and went to work in a German armament factory. Three of the stories relate the heroics of real people; the others are about fictional characters but are based on documented events.

Sally Rogow is an educator and author. She has a keen interest in stories of heroism. Her experience working with children with disabilities gave her many opportunities to witness the courage of young people facing adversity. Her books for young people include *Lillian Wald: The Nurse In Blue* and *Rosa Minoka Hill: Native Woman Physician*. She is a Professor Emerita of the Faculty of Education, UBC and has written several books and articles for teachers on literacy, language development, play and social and emotional development. She is a docent at the VHEC and she is involved in Jewish community activities. She is presently working on a project about rescuers during the Holocaust.

Why and How I speak to Students,

Alex Buckman, Outreach Speaker and Child Survivor from Belgium.



I witnessed the Holocaust, which is why I must speak to students. I owe it to my parents and family. I was spared and survived; my parents did not. After I am gone, who will be a witness? It is my story that will survive. Those I speak to will know that I lived because they met me and heard my story firsthand.

When I am about to speak, I ask the students to get out of their chairs and surround me. I sit on the floor and show them a picture taken before the war in Brussels, Belgium. In the picture are my parents, my aunt, her husband, their daughter Anny and myself. I ask the students to return to their seats. I sit with them in a circle so they can see and hear me. I ask them to help me, because the subject is sensitive and it is a difficult experience to speak. I tell them of my family, what happened to them and to me when I was young and placed in hiding. I encourage the students to ask me questions, which they do.

I tell them how I was taken to an orphanage and then discovered that my cousin Anny was there. Our names were changed. We were now to be Catholic children posing as brother and sister. Vividly imprinted on my mind are memories of when the Nazis came to the orphanage and I was forced to hide under the wooden floor. The orphanage staff gave me a cloth to bite in case I cried out. They told me to be quiet for my own protection. I was scared of the dark. If the Nazis found boys they thought looked Jewish, they would force them to drop their pants. If the boy had been circumcised, he would be considered a Jew and taken away.

I tell the students what happened to my parents. My mother chose to go with her sister to the gas chambers. My father had foot problems and was unable to work. Both of my parents were murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Later I tell them about my uncle, who was interned in the Buchenwald Concentration Camp for 16 months. I tell them about my aunt, who was interned in the Ravensbrück Concentration Camp for 16 months. To keep her sanity, and to curb hunger in the camp, she wrote a recipe book. She would read the recipes to other women in her barracks. This unique book is often on display in the Vancouver Holocaust Centre. I tell them about my aunt's orange cake, and give each student a copy of the recipe. I suggest they might try baking it at home. I ask them to hug and kiss their parents, siblings and families when they get home this evening, and to tell them how much they love them, and to never forget that.

I get emotional at times. The students listen intently. When I have finished talking, I ask for their questions. Most of the time the students are stunned and shy. My history touches

them deeply. Some even cry. I tell them, if you ask me questions, I will continue to talk. One student begins and then more follow. I ask them to respond to the experience of hearing a Child Survivor speak.

At the end of my talk, I feel emotionally drained, unable to say another word. Students come to me, they want to shake my hand. I respond. Others want to hug me. I let them. When they send their letters to the Vancouver Holocaust Centre and I have had a chance to read them all, I am deeply touched and amazed that they had understood my feelings. Their comments humble me. They touch my inner core and for a moment we share a common bond. Some tell me they made my aunt's orange cake with their mother. This touches an emotional chord in me. I know that my aunt, the woman I called "Mom," would be pleased to know her recipe lives on.

As I get older, telling my story becomes more difficult. I know that I must continue in memory of my parents, and of those in my family who did not survive. When I speak, I feel connected to all survivors and I understand why I was spared. I understand my parent's difficult decision to leave and hide me with strangers. This was the biggest proof of their strength and their love for me, their only son.

I think it is really had that the mazis would cent Trus to concentration camps they would burn books all written by Jews. I just feel very very bad for all the people that suffered in the camps & I think you are very fourtunate to have lived through the war & lived to tell us the story. The story touched me so much in my heart & in my soul. I will hever forget the story you told us & you. I made the prange cake recipe & I laved it! It is the best cake I have ever had! I made it westerday. I have the orange taste to it I made it yesterday. I have the orange taste to it I made it yesterday. I have the orange taste to it I made it yesterday. I have the orange taste to it I made one for my mom & doct and one for my grandma & crandpa. They both laved it. I told them the story you told us & I told them. I have them. They cried & so aid I. I will rever forget you Mo. Buckman.

Hanging the Star of David on Blanshard Street

By Isa Milman



At the 'bereavement as healing' conference in Montreal the woman was shocked to see a Mogen David around my neck, surely no shield, no protection on the streets of Paris where she hid as a child. "Aren't you afraid to show yourself as a Jew?"

I grew up with fear, as familiar to me as my own bed, as the sound of my parents breathing in the next room.

After my kriat sh'ma, my prayer before sleep, the stars were always yellow, scrolled in black, falling off trains.

Rosie brought her yellow star, wrapped in a hankie, to my father's funeral in Miami. So fragile she only took it out for special occasions, but she let us hold it, and it had a surprising weight, as though my father's soul chose to linger there, as we remembered his lucky breaks, from Poland to the Gulag, then Uzbekistan, Germany, and the long road to freedom, to America.

The day we hung the Jewish Star on Blanshard Street, passers-by wondered what all the excitement was about. "Look, we're Jews", I said, "and we're hanging our symbol on our new building". We have hope for the future.

I still get shivers when we sing "Hatikva", "The Hope", that we still haven't lost our hope, our two thousand year old hope and I always think of Ben Gurion amongst survivors in the DP camps in Germany, where I was born, declaring to those who had lost everything, against all reality, that Eretz Yisrael will be, again, and I'm always in that crowd, under a blue Mogen David, singing, through my tears Od lo ovdah tikvateynu—we still haven't lost our hope.

So we've hung our Mogen David on our new space on Blanshard Street. Two triangles embracing, one reaching to heaven, the other to earth, the centre filled with hope, for our children and our neighbors' children, for any Jew from anywhere to feel at home, for refuge to those whose childhoods were destroyed by fear and hate, for the memory of our beloveds to become blessings, for the pleasures of being human, of being human together.

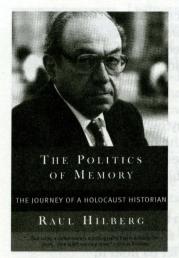
Our hope is hung on Blanshard Street.



This poem, written in honour of the official opening of the New Jewish Education and Cultural Centre of Congregation Emanu-El of Victoria, was recited on April 6, 2003. Survivor Jack Gardner, a major benefactor and driving force for this building, suffered a massive stroke that day and passed away on April 9, 2003. May his memory be a blessing.

The Politics of Memory: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian

By Raul Hilberg — Review by John Gort



published in 1996, Raul Hilberg, the author of "The Destruction of the European Jews", the monumental history of the Holocaust, describes his early life as a voung Austrian Jew under the Nazis, his escape to America by way of Cuba just before the outbreak of WW II. followed by his account of the difficult life of a refugee student in an American high

school. He continues with the description of his slow adaptation to American life, his service in the American Army and the problems encountered during his tenacious struggle for a toehold on the slippery slope of an academic career. Although these detailed descriptions of the many predicaments in Hilberg's personal and academic life, (told in the author's lively style), offer an entertaining diversion for a rainy afternoon, they contain little of enduring interest.

It is not until Hilberg outlines the subject of his doctoral thesis that this reader's attention is fully aroused. He proposes to write nothing less than a detailed, comprehensive account of the destruction of the Jewish communities of Europe by the Nazis. Hilberg asks Prof. Franz Neumann of Columbia University, the author of the famous work "Behemoth", to act as his academic supervisor. After studying Hilberg's lengthy thesis outline Neumann agrees to assume this responsibility Very significantly, Neumann advises Hilberg to delete just one passage from his proposal, namely the statement that "the Germans had relied on the Jews to follow instructions," and that "the Jews had collaborated in their own destruction." Neumann does not dispute the merits of Hilberg's research but finds his proposition, that the Jews were at least to some degree the authors of their own misfortune, "too much to take." From the outset of his Holocaust research Hilberg is well aware that his conclusions about the role of the Jewish victims of the Shoah, which form the foundation of his thesis and his forthcoming book, would "separate him from the mainstream of academic research." Moreover he is fully aware that the direction of his study would place him in direct opposition to the beliefs that were held by the overwhelming majority of members of the

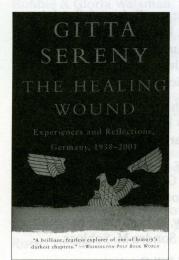
In his autobiography "The Jewish community in general and of Holocaust Politics of Memory," first survivors in particular. Hilberg emphatically rejects the picture of the typical victim of the Holocaust as a heroic resistance fighter in favour of the assertion that the majority of victims went to their graves without offering resistance to their murderers. He is especially critical of what he alleges to have been the willing cooperation of the "Judenraete", the community councils appointed by the Nazis, whom he believes to have enabled the Germans to murder millions of Jews. Hilberg views this readiness of the leadership of the Jewish communities to cooperate with the Nazis, as well as the willingness of the majority of European Jews to follow the directives of their Nazi-appointed leaders, to have arisen from the Jewish tradition of having members of the Jewish elite represent the interests of the Jewish communities before the gentile authorities. Hilberg bases most of his work on a meticulous examination of a great quantity of German documents of the Nazi era. When he tries to widen the foundation of his research by delving into the documentary evidence of the Jewish experience of the Holocaust preserved in the archives of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, it comes as no great surprise to him that he is regarded there as a "persona non grata" and refused help in conducting his research. Thus he is deprived of the opportunity of supplementing his encyclopaedic knowledge of the German documentation of the events of the Holocaust with a study of the archival records of Yad Vashem, a voluminous source of documents of the Jewish experience of the Shoa.

> The predominant reliance on German sources seems to have reinforced his view of those Jewish institutions that functioned during the Holocaust as extensions of the German bureaucracy, and thus to his contention that "Jewish cooperation (with the Nazis) included accommodation and precluded resistance." Hilberg pours critical scorn on the many well-known historians of the Holocaust who disagree with his conclusions. He accuses those of his fellow-historians who cast the victims of the Holocaust in a heroic light of "manipulation and debasement of history."

This stimulating autobiography demands the critical evaluation of anyone with an interest in the history of the Holocaust. Hilberg requires his readers to draw their own well-considered conclusions about the author's controversial propositions. Moreover, the book whets ones appetite for dipping into Hilberg's major work, "The Destruction of European Jews.

The Healing Wound: Experiences and Reflections, Germany, 1938-2001

By Gitta Sereny — Review by Anna C. Karlen



Sereny's great work The Healing Wound is comprised of autobiographical, historical and journalistic elements, woven together in an involving and captivating fashion, focusing on both people during the Holocaust and their testaments and development in the decades afterwards. Sereny's talent and charismatic writingstyle draws the reader in from the very start and one's interest is sustained by her fast-paced explorations, not only into history but also

deep into the human psyche. The author is not shy to address controversial issues and often points a frank finger at a government or an individual. The strength of the book lies undeniably in Sereny's ability to bring forward the humanity of those who appear inhumane and to further understanding and healing to those affected by that inhumanity.

The Healing Wound begins with Sereny's own experiences as a young Austrian school-girl during the early days of World War II and continues with her involvement with la résistance in Paris. After the war, Sereny began her career as a journalist and an anti-Nazi investigator. Proceeding into the journalistic element of her work, Sereny provides case studies on a variety of controversial subjects, such as the *Hitler Diaries*, the mystery surrounding the death of SS-man Globocnik, an analysis of Hitler's architect Albert Speer, and the trial and the sentencing to death of Demjanjuk, who was falsely accused to be "Ivan the Terrible" of Treblinka.

The book's intrigue lies not only in Sereny's original interpretation of the incentives of the Nazis and their followers but in its multitude of interviews with Hitler's surviving inner circle of friends and confidants, as well as relatives of those. The reader receives an insight into what motivated these people to trust and yes, love the man that posterity perceives only as a monster. While reading their testimonies I began for the first time to understand that their commitment to Hitler was not due to the underlying evil of a nation of people but due to Hitler's uncanny talent to reach and touch every individual with the fatherly authority and promises of prosperity that they needed in the post-Depression years. Sereny's ability to combine

psychology with history provides the reader with a level of reasoned understanding and rational empathy for the individual German that no writer has achieved before.

Sereny's work is a must for those who have ever asked "why" and for those who are curious as to how Germans have handled and continue to handle their haunting past. *The Healing Wound* is as much a detective story and a psychological analysis as it is a masterpiece of history and truly merits Sereny the title of the "Simon Wiesenthal of journalists".

New Donations to the VHEC Library

The Curtain: Witness and Memory in Wartime Holland. By: Henry C. Schogt. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003. Donated by the publisher.

What Was It Like In the Concentration Camp of Dachau? Trustees for the Monument of Atonement in the Concentration Camp of Dachau. By: Johannes Neuhausler. Donated by Ruth Hess-Dolgin.

Ghetto Diary. By: Janusz Korczak. New York: Holocaust Library, 1978. Donated by Ruth Hess-Dolgin.

Auschwitz Veterinarian: Five Years in the Death Camps. By: Tadeusz Kowalczyk. Marshfield, WI: Brush Wolf Press, 2003. Donated by the publisher.

Autopoiesis. By: Robert Zahornicky Niederösterreichisches Landesmuseum, 1991. Donated by George Oberlander.

In Fear of the Frail: The Treatment of the Disabled at the Eichberg Asylum for the Mentally Ill in Nazi Germany. By: Markus Benedikt Kreitmair. M.A. Simon Fraser University, 2000. Donated by Markus B. Kreitmair.

Journey to Poland. By: Alfred Döblin. New York: Paragon House, 1991. Donated by Jack Kuper.

Resilience and Courage. By: Nechama Tec. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003. Donated by the publisher.

The Inextinguishable Symphony. By: Martin GoldsmithNew York: JohnWiley & Sons, 2000. VHEC Purchase Fund.

10001

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Mazel Tov

In honour of Rina Pinsky. Wendy Oberlander

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In memory of Shia Moser. Wendy Oberlander

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Saul & Sheryl Kahn & Family, Our Thoughts & Condolences are with you at this very sad time. Ben & Rita Akselrod, Susan Bluman, Lisa Hollenberg, Carolyn Levy & Tony Aronson, Lisa Sirlin & Family, David & Tanis Goldman, Nancy Sky, Corinne Zimmerman & Jon Festinger, Caren Perel-Winkler & Tom Winkler, Shauna O' Callaghan, Patricia Williams, Anna Ezekiel, Michael & Michelle Fish, Jill Diamond & Andrew Abramowich, Elliot Glassman, Ethel Kofsky

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Thank You

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