



Zachor | *Remember*

The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre Newsletter | Number 1 | January 2006



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Commemorative Concert

7:30 pm Thursday, January 26, 2006, Norman Rothstein Theatre (*See p. 4*)

Benefit Screening of "Fateless"

7:00 pm Wednesday, February 1, 2006, Fifth Avenue Cinemas (*See p. 3*)

Opening Reception for Shoes of Memory

7:30 pm Wednesday, February 8, 2006, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

For these and other upcoming event listings please visit our website www.vhec.org

FACES OF LOSS ONLINE EXHIBIT LAUNCHED.



Now the Memorial Exhibition *Faces of Loss* can be seen through our website.

To view the site please visit:
www.vhec.org/faces_online.html

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Starbucks, Granville Island Hotel

We apologize for any errors or omissions.

To volunteer call Rome Fox
604-264-0499 or email
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OF INTEREST FROM ISRAEL SOURCE:

An English edition of a memorial book has been made available that covers six exterminated communities in Wolyn Region of the Ukraine: Manyevitz, Horodok, Lishnivka, Troyanuvka, Povursk and Olki. This was a 56 year effort by the Organization of Holocaust Survivors-Wolyn Region in Israel and Overseas. It can be ordered from:

Yehudah Merin, Chairman
Organization of Holocaust Survivors-Wolyn Region in Israel and Overseas
76 Krinitzi Street
Ramat Gan, 52601 Israel
Tel 972-3-672-1567

The price is \$95 and 150 copies are available. This was a small print run and may be viewed as an important memorial book for library collections. Checks accepted to the above address.

Zachor | Remember

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Cover: Top Image – Ceramic Shoes by Jenny Stolzenberg.

Bottom Image – Shoes from the piles at Auschwitz

Printed with assistance from the Province of British Columbia

Benefit Screening for the VHEC
of the film

“FATELESS”

7:00 PM, FEBRUARY 1, 2006
FIFTH AVENUE CINEMAS
2110 Burrard Street

TICKETS AVAILABLE
AT THE VHEC ONLY

TICKETS:
VHEC MEMBERS: \$8.00
NON-MEMBERS: \$10.00

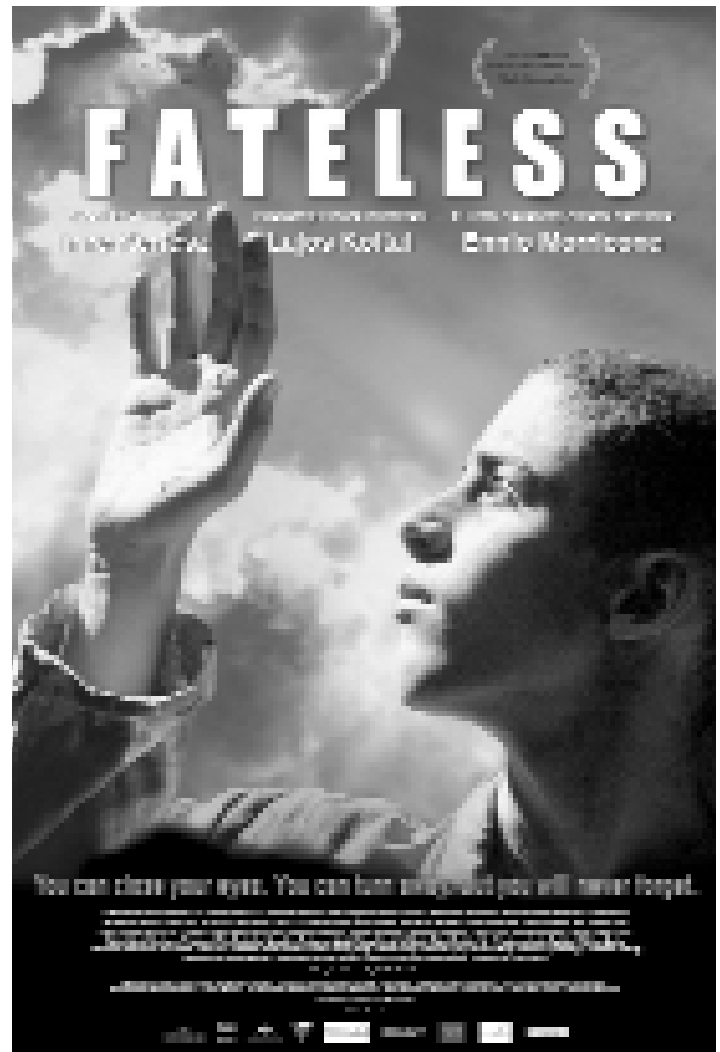
This event is expected to sell out.
To purchase tickets please call 604.264.0499

FATELESS, an epic adaptation of the contemporary classic novel by Nobel Prize winner Imre Kertész, represents the directorial debut of Oscar-nominated cinematographer Lajos Koltai, and boasts a screenplay by Kertész himself.

FATELESS opened in its native Hungary in February to massive box office, and, in its second week, was the highest grossing Hungarian film as well as the highest grossing independent film of all time.

“*FATELESS* shows us a vision of the Holocaust that has never before been portrayed on screen,” says Urman of the film. “It is a remarkable adaptation of a great novel, and the fact that Kertész himself has played such an important role in its genesis, makes it all the more meaningful an experience.” On behalf of the film-makers, producer Andras Hamori says:

It is passion and commitment that brought and kept fateless together during production, and that is what we were looking for in our distributor. We are ecstatic that we have concluded our deal with think Film, a company that proved with its recent successes that it operates with the same tools: ferocity and resolve.



Set in 1944, as Hitler’s Final Solution becomes policy throughout Europe, *FATELESS* is the semi-autobiographical tale of a 14 year-old Jewish boy from Budapest, who finds himself swept up by cataclysmic events beyond his comprehension. A perfectly normal metropolitan teen who has never felt particularly connected to his religion, he is suddenly separated from his family as part of the rushed and random deportation of his city’s large Jewish population. Brought to a concentration camp, his existence becomes a surreal adventure in adversity and adaptation, and he is never quite sure if he is the victim of his captors, or of an absurd destiny that metes out salvation and suffering arbitrarily. When he returns home after the liberation, he misses the sense of community he experienced in the camps, feeling alienated from both his Christian neighbors who turned a blind eye to his fate, and the Jewish family friends who avoided deportation and who now want to put the war behind them.

One of the most highly regarded and versatile cinematographers working today, Koltai is best-known for his collaboration with renowned director Istvan Szabo, resulting in the 1981 Oscar-winning *MEPHISTO* as well as four other Oscar-nominated films including last year’s highly acclaimed *BEING JULIA*.

*Under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy and
under the auspices of the Consulate General of Italy in Vancouver,
Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Vancouver, in collaboration with
the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, the Norman Rothstein Theatre & "Associazione Shalom" Present:*

A SPECIAL CONCERT
“ARIE DELLA DIASPORA”
 SONGS FROM THE LOST JEWISH COMMUNITIES

**7:30 PM THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2006 NORMAN
 ROTHSTEIN THEATRE, JCC**

On The Occasion Of
**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY
 OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST**

**FEATURING ANNA PESHES, ITALIAN MEZZOSOPRANO
 & OMER ARIELI, PIANO**

**TO ATTEND CALL 604.688.0809, EXTENSION 23, OR 604.264.0499 TO PRE-REGISTER
 THIS IS A FREE CONCERT. ALL ATTENDEES MUST BE REGISTERED TO ATTEND.**

A SPECIAL CONCERT
SONGS FROM THE LOST JEWISH COMMUNITIES

The program "arie della diaspora", dedicated to Jewish music, was first performed by Anna Peshes on Remembrance Day 2002. Her interpretation of Jewish repertoire includes songs in Yiddish like the well-known "kinder yorn" - written by Mordechai Gebirtig, a poet from Krakow who died during the destruction of his ghetto by the Nazis – and songs in Hebrew such as "Shir Hanoded" (The Wanderer Chant) of which Anna offers a touching personal performance. The song "If I were a Rich Man", in English, from the famous musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, represents the American diaspora and songs in Ladino reflect the other great Jewish diaspora of the Sephardic Jews. Omer Arieli, the virtuoso Italian-Israeli pianist and composer, created the original arrangements.

Anna Peshes, mezzosoprano, was born in Minsk, Belarus. In 1990 she moved to Israel, where she received her BA degree from the S. Rubin Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. In 1999 she entered the Music University of Vienna where she completed a Masters Degree in Opera singing and Lied-Oratorio Interpretation.

Her special love and great knowledge of Jewish music has led to various concerts all over Europe and Israel. As an interpreter of various types of Jewish music, from early folk songs to contemporary Jewish and Israeli music, Ms. Peshes has appeared in Festivals of Jewish music in Venice, Ferrara, Rome, Kiev, Bratislava, Vienna, Budapest and Jerusalem and performed in concerts in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Taiwan and Israel.

Ms. Peshes is winner of the International Vocal Competitions H. Zadek in Vienna (2002) and the International Aigris Competition in Sarzana, Italy (2004). She also received scholarships from the America-Israel Foundation in Israel, Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture and Swiss Robert and Lina Thyll-Dfrr Foundation.

The Florence-based *Associazione Shalom*, established in 1997, has organized hundreds of cultural events to promote Jewish culture within the Jewish community of Italy as well as in the public at large. The Honorary President of the Association is Elio Toaff, former Chief Rabbi of Rome.

International Holocaust Day

ON NOVEMBER 1, 2005 THE UNITED NATIONS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED JANUARY 27TH AS THE “INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST.”

The UN General Assembly recently established January 27 as an annual commemoration day for the 6 million Jews and countless other victims murdered in the Nazi Holocaust during World War II. January 27TH is the date in 1945 that allied forces liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Since the draft resolution was distributed in August, a total of 104 nations from around the world sponsored the measure. There was no vote on the resolution. Instead, General Assembly President Jan Eliasson banged the gavel, signifying consensus, after asking whether there were any objections and hearing none.

The resolution, first proposed by the United States, Israel, Russia, Australia and Canada, rejects any Holocaust denial and urges members to “inculcate” future generations with lessons on the genocide. The resolution also urges individual countries to develop educational programs to try to prevent future acts of genocide. It also condemns discrimination and violence based on religion or ethnicity, and calls for the UN to establish an outreach program to encourage the public to engage in Holocaust remembrance activities.

“I feel moved and privileged to present this historic resolution today, as an Israeli, a Jew, a human being and the child of Holocaust victims,” said Israel’s UN ambassador, Dan Gillerman, who introduced the measure.

The effort to declare an international Holocaust Day is consistent with the UN commemoration of the 60TH anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the concentration camps, which coincides with the 60TH anniversary of the United Nations, say those who drafted the resolution. In January the United Nations held a special session dedicated to the 60TH anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, called the Holocaust, “a unique evil, which cannot simply be consigned to the past or forgotten.”

General Assembly President Jan Eliasson and other speakers noted, however, “that the Holocaust and World War II did not mark the end of crimes of genocide. The Holocaust “must, therefore, be a unifying historic warning around which we must rally,” Eliasson said. “We can’t continue to repeat saying ‘Never again.’”

DONATIONS TO THE LIBRARY

FROM AUGUST TO NOVEMBER, 2005

Aliav, Ruth and Peggy Mann, *The Last Escape*. New York: Coronet Books, 1973. Donated by Dr. N.L. Cannon

Anatoli, A. *Babi-Yar*. London: Spere Books, 1970. Donated by Dr. N.L. Cannon.

Elon, Amos. *Timetable*. New York: Pinnacle Books, 1980. Donated by Dr. N.L. Cannon.

Herlin, Hans. *The Reckoning*. London: Pan Books, 1974. Donated by Dr. N.L. Cannon.

Jacot, Michael. *The Last Butterfly*. New York: New English Library. Donated by Dr. N.L. Cannon.

Wiesel, Elie. *Zalmen or the Madness of God*. New York: Schocken, 1985. Donated by Dr. N.L. Cannon.

Cable, Laura Chakrin. *Crossing the Stream*. Providence, R.I.: Robert Cable. Donated by Robert Cable.

The Jews of Czechoslovakia: Historical Studies and Surveys Vol. 1. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968. Donated by the Eisner Family.

The Marmaros Book: In Memory of a Hundred and Sixty Jewish Communities. (in Hebrew) Tel Aviv: Beit Marmaros, 1983. Donated by the Eisner Family.

Moszkiewiez, Helene. *Inside the Gestapo: A Jewish Woman’s Secret War*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1985.

Heuvel, Eric. *A Family Secret*. Amsterdam: Anne Frank House, 2003. Donated by Anne Frank Center.

Alexander, Zaia. *Beyond Babel: Translating the Holocaust at Centruy’s End (Ph.D thesis, 2002)*. Donated by Claude Romney.

SHOES OF MEMORY

Holocaust Ceramic Work By Jenny Stolzenberg

OPENING RECEPTION

7:30 PM WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2006 AT THE VHEC

VANCOUVER HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CENTRE

FEBRUARY 15 – MAY 30, 2006

Among the many powerful images of the Holocaust are the shoes once worn by the victims. Whether a photograph of the piles of shoes taken from prisoners in the death camps, or an actual single shoe worn by a child, these images have the ability to represent the magnitude of loss associated with the Holocaust. *Shoes of Memory* explores the ceramic work of acclaimed British artist Jenny Stolzenberg.

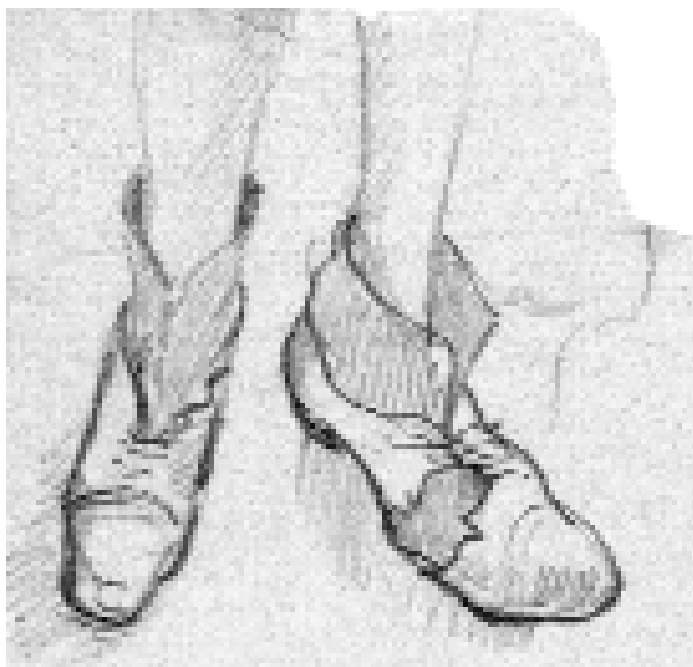


Why Shoes?

Shoes Meant Survival

Upon arrival at the camps inmates had to surrender all personal possessions. They lost all items that denoted individual identity, including their names. A few meager items, such as replacement shoes and camp clothing were issued. The loss of their warm clothing and shoes, that fit and were often in good condition, was a loss whose significance only came to be known later.

September 6, 1943. An old shoe warehouse in the Lodz Ghetto in Poland takes delivery of 12 freight cars filled with shoes stolen from murdered Jews.



Nothing belongs to us anymore; they have taken away our clothes, our shoes, even our hair; if we speak, they will not listen to us, and if they listen, they will not understand."

Primo Levi

Even women's stockings had been collected. On the other side of the synagogue children's shoes were lined up heel to heel in order of size. The smallest could not have fitted a child older than one. The sizes, the shapes were as varied as the people that had worn them. Some were scuffed, some badly worn. Some were brand new, perhaps waiting for the next religious holiday. They would never know their owners again. (My Bones Don't Rest in Auschwitz by Gitel Donath)

The few issued items took on a special significance, as these were the only personal possessions of inmates. Two of these items are mentioned more than any others by camp survivors as being essential to their ability to survive another day – the cup or bowl and a pair of shoes. The cup or bowl was an essential item needed to secure even the most meager of provisions. Some were more fortunate than others and received a spoon as well. The size of the cup could even make a difference, since the smaller the bowl, the less of the watery soup they could consume. Inmates carried their cups at all times, often hooking or tying them to their clothing. To lose one's cup meant to go hungry.

If you could not walk, you could not work. To be able to work was to survive another day and both required shoes. Shoes were an item worth stealing for: both to be able to work and also to maintain the ability to walk. Inmates recall that if you took off your shoes, you had to make sure you put them under your head, otherwise they would be stolen.

◀ Shoes drawing by Ravensbrück Dutch Inmate Aat Breur

Good footwear was essential to survival, especially working in that half-frozen mud in the rainy winter season. And people were prepared to risk their lives for a decent pair of boots, something I learned that first night we arrived.

M. Mielnicki, Survivor

Most destined for slave labour were issued wooden clogs, which the inmates called *Hollanderkis* – shoes from Holland or sometimes *Klumpes*. The clogs were difficult to walk in and slippery in icy conditions. In some instances inmates headed for slave labour were allowed to keep the shoes that they came in. However, if someone was deported in July, he or she may have been wearing sandals without stockings, which did not provide protection or allow someone to work in most of the slave labour conditions.

Inmates risked execution rather than wear the camp-issued wooden soled clogs, as they made work impossible. Walking in the clogs was noisy, which made clandestine activities or escape even more difficult. Some prisoners went so far as to trade extra rations for shoes from other prisoners. Those inmates who worked in the “Kanada” warehouses were in the enviable position of being able to steal shoes that they could use as barter to acquire extra rations from less fortunate prisoners.

The wooden clogs were also a threat to health and survival. The wooden clogs did not protect inmates from frost or snow, and feet blistered and became raw in these ill-fitting shoes. They slipped off the feet in muddy conditions, often leaving the inmate shoeless.

You knew if your feet froze or blistered, which they were certain to do in clogs or rotted leather...you would have difficulty walking. The Kapo would beat you. If they became infected or froze severely, gangrene would set in. Then someone would select you.

M. Mielnicki

The heel of a shoe was one of the few places that a survivor could hide money or other small valuables. The importance of the shoe can be seen in accounts of prisoners’ last acts when they were selected to die: the bequeathing of their shoes to a “camp brother” or friend.



Henri Pieck, Buchenwald, 1945, VHEC Archives

Liberation & Empty Shoes As A Symbol Of Death

Many witnesses and those visiting the concentration camps, especially the death camps, recalled their most shocking moment was that of seeing bodies and the piles of shoes. A reporter who visited Treblinka recalled his shock in seeing:

kilometers covered with bones and skulls, nearly tens upon tens of thousands of shoes, many of them children’s shoes. I took one pair as a token of those terrible days – one pair among one million such children’s shoes that are scattered over the fields of death. Cole, Images of the Holocaust.

The mounds of shoes became the concrete and visible marker of the millions who were murdered. There were many more children’s shoes because they could not be “recycled” for use by German soldiers.

These remnants, the piles of shoes in museums as well as at the camps communicate the enormous number of victims and have come to represent both the presence and absence of the victims. The single shoe, as well as the piles of shoes has become a symbol of the Holocaust. Many museums use the image of the piles of shoes or just one shoe to represent the absence of six million victims.

We found ourselves near a building to the right of which was a large mound about the size of a two-story building. As we neared the mound we saw it was entirely made of shoes: women’s shoes, children’s shoes, beautiful shoes, ugly shoes- shoes wherever the eye rested. And this was the rise we had mistaken for a hill!”

Reska Weiss, Auschwitz survivor

◀ Child’s Shoe from Auschwitz, VHEC Archives

Confiscation in the Death Camps

BY DAN FROMOWITZ

Confiscation of the property of Jews deported to the death camps and the eventual redistribution of this material in the Third Reich was an efficient, organized, and thorough process. As Holocaust historian Raul Hilberg has written:

The confiscation of personal belongings was a catchall affair. Everything the Jews had managed to keep, everything they had succeeded in hiding, was collected in the killing centres... Everything was collected and turned into profit. But the salvage of that property was a precise, well-planned operation.

Of paramount importance to the Nazis was that the confiscation process not impede the process of annihilation. Expropriation had to complement the industrial-like means of mass-murder, and in this endeavour, the Nazis were only too successful. “[C]onfiscation and killings,” according to Hilberg, “were fused and synchronized into a single procedure that guaranteed success of both operations.”

The operation began as soon as the train carrying deportees arrived at a camp. As guards ordered the newly-arrived off the train and the first selection of who was to live and who was to die was made, special prisoner work units, known as Kommandos, scrambled about gathering the possessions of all recent arrivals. Primo Levi describes this initial step of the confiscation process in *Survival in Auschwitz*:

...two groups of strange individuals emerged into the light of the lamps. They walked in squads, in rows of three, with an odd embarrassed step, head dangling in front, arms rigid. On their heads they wore comic berets and were all dressed in long striped overcoats, which even by night and from a distance looked filthy and in rags. They walked in a large circle around us, never drawing near, and in silence began to busy themselves with our luggage and to climb in and out of the empty wagons.



Cleaning Kommandos inmates sort through belongings of the victims of the Auschwitz gas chambers (Holocaust Chronicle)



Women inmates at Auschwitz sort footwear (Holocaust Chronicle)

Once the collection was complete, the Kommandos brought the suitcases, packages, and assorted possessions to large warehouses. While this action was performed, another Kommando unit undertook a second stage of collection, one targeting those who had been selected for immediate death. For those working the gas chambers, or in the case of Chelmno, the gas vans, this process involved cutting and gathering human hair; collecting the clothing and personal effects found in the dressing rooms; and extracting fillings and gold teeth from the bodies of the dead. Everything was to be appropriated by the Nazis. Everything was brought to the warehouses.

In Auschwitz, the Kommandos brought the possessions to a place called “Kanada”. Prisoners had given the warehouses this nickname, associating the piles of confiscated personal effects with the perceived wealth of the country Canada. Just as Canada was a land of plenty, so were the warehouses, which were filled with stolen valuables.

For prisoners working in the warehouses themselves, the piles of possessions represented a special opportunity. Whether to be used for personal use, a bribe, or trading (“organizing” in the camp vernacular), the chance to prolong survival was an arm’s reach away. Yet the SS guards strictly supervised the steps of sorting and the inventory of possessions. Prisoners had to be careful in how and when they stole items. Much to the consternation of Nazi officials, prisoners were not alone in taking from the piles. Theft by SS guards was a problem, evidenced by a November 1943 order issued from the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, warning “[W]hoever touches state property brands himself a criminal and excludes himself automatically from the ranks of the SS.”

With the exception of the Chelmno death camp, which sent its valuables after collection to a different location, sorting and inventory were completed in warehouses located on site. Following SS leader Heinrich Himmler’s orders, everything was to be thoroughly searched, accounted for, and inventoried.



A warehouse full of shoes and clothing confiscated from the prisoners and deportees gassed upon their arrival. (USHMM)

Not only was this exactness used to keep track of numbers and the types of goods, it was also employed to check if anything else of value was still being hidden. Rudy Vrba, local Auschwitz survivor and escapee, recalls witnessing this obsession with extracting every possible item of value:

One row of buckets was filled with tubes of toothpaste which the girls were squeezing out on to the bench and then throwing into the other, empty buckets. To me it seemed thoroughly un-German, an appalling waste of labour and material; for I had yet to learn that perhaps one tube in ten thousand contained a diamond...

After sorting and inventory were completed came the packing process, which led directly to the final stage, that of distribution. In effect, there were two stages of distribution. Stage one involved the distribution of material from a camp to a designated agency, ministry or location. These recipients included welfare organizations for ethnic Germans, the Economics Ministry, the Medical Department, and the SS itself. The second stage of distribution involved the dispersal or sale of possessions from the agencies, ministries, and locations to their final destination, the people who would make final use of the confiscated property. One example of this road from expropriation to distribution to ultimate use is the fate of human hair. First it was shaved off prisoners, then collected, sorted, inventoried and packed; next, the hair would be sent to the Economics Ministry and ultimately made into felt shoes; finally, the felt footwear would be worn by German U-Boat officers.

Various segments of German society and economy reaped rewards from the confiscation, but for the victims, the stealing of their possessions represented another, cruel step of dehumanization. Many Jews arrived at the camps with their remaining outward markings of individuality and class still in place. Jews could be seen wearing a fur coat or a 'schmatta' (rag); bespectacled or with sharp eyes; with long, flowing hair or a bald head. Yet the Nazis erased these traces of identity through the confiscation process, thus adding another dimension to the totality of destruction.

At the end of the war, the Nazis not only tried to hide the evidence of mass-murder in the death camps, but of the confiscation system as well. Before Soviet forces liberated Auschwitz in late January 1945, and mirroring liquidation procedures at other death camps, much of what remained in the "Kanada" warehouses was either sent to Germany or destroyed. However, not all of the thirty-five warehouses in Auschwitz were razed, and in the six left standing, there remained chilling reminders of the cold and brutal confiscation system—348,820 men's suits; 836,525 women's outfits; 7,000 kilograms of packed human hair; 388,000 pairs of men's shoes; and 5,255 pairs of women's shoes.

Visual Representations of the Holocaust

BY GABRIELLE MOSER

It has been more than sixty years since the sociologist, composer, and critic Theodor Adorno proclaimed, “poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.” Adorno argued the atrocities of the Holocaust changed the very way we thought about human nature and this, in turn, greatly affected the way we approach the visual representation of the Holocaust. Art could no longer lift us out of our everyday reality “after Auschwitz” because the Holocaust was now a part of that reality, too gruesome to be ignored. For many artists and thinkers, the Holocaust challenged our collective memory by presenting us with events we could never imagine happening. It became impossible for us to understand how humankind could create something as spectacularly beautiful as the Sistine ceiling and also be responsible for the inhumanity witnessed at Auschwitz.

Despite these issues of representation, artists have continuously attempted to create art about the Holocaust: to depict visually what is sometimes impossible to represent in words; to work through the issues of atrocity and tragedy with paint, clay, paper, concrete and even materials like straw or plastic action figures. Both first- and second-generation artists have engaged in the struggle to create works that interpret and represent the horrors of the Holocaust and, in so doing, have discovered remarkable

and powerful ways to visually depict the collective and personal experience of this trauma.

First- and second-generation artists, and those artists who do not have a direct connection to the events, all approach visual representations of the Holocaust in significantly different ways. For first-generation artists, visual representations of the Holocaust have centred on the documentation and recording of their experiences. According to Pnina Rosenberg, curator at the Ghetto Fighters’ House in Israel, first-generation artists produce Holocaust-related art to leave a stamp on the world when their lives are at risk; as documentation and visual representation of the inhumanity or evil they have witnessed; and as a form of spiritual protest. The production of art, after all, is an individual creative effort that marks out one’s unique identity and perspective. The very act of creating art in an inhuman and oppressive system, like that which existed in the Holocaust, is therefore an act of resistance.

For second-generation artists, making art about the Holocaust is, in part, about interpreting and understanding what happened to their parents and grandparents. It can be seen as an attempt to work through and contextualize their parents’ trauma and represents the continued impact of the Holocaust on those who did not directly experience it. Their art focuses more on the evocation of emotions and responses in their viewers than on the act of documentation. Art Spiegelman, for example, transformed his father’s account of the Holocaust into a Pulitzer prize-winning graphic novel, *MAUS*, which combined documentation with interpretation. When we read *MAUS*, we learn of Spiegelman’s father Vladek’s experiences, and also how those experiences have affected his son throughout his life.

The importance and immediacy of the Holocaust is also called up by the second-generation’s use of specific and unique materials in making their art. The artist Gabrielle Rossmer, for instance, has searched through documents in the German museum of the town where her grandparents were held until their death in 1942 and made copies of the letters, papers and telegrams related to her family. By placing these copies on the floor of the gallery and inviting visitors to sift through them, Rossmer challenges us to examine the gaps that exist between the memory of an event and the documentation of it. Marina Vainshtein, a third-generation artist from California, has taken this emphasis on materiality to new extremes by covering most of her body with tattoos of Holocaust imagery. Vainshtein says she is working to reclaim the Jewish body by marking it permanently and uses the Holocaust images to represent the internal traumatic scars of her grandparents externally.



Ceramic Shoes by Jenny Stolzenberg from the Shoes of Memory Exhibit.

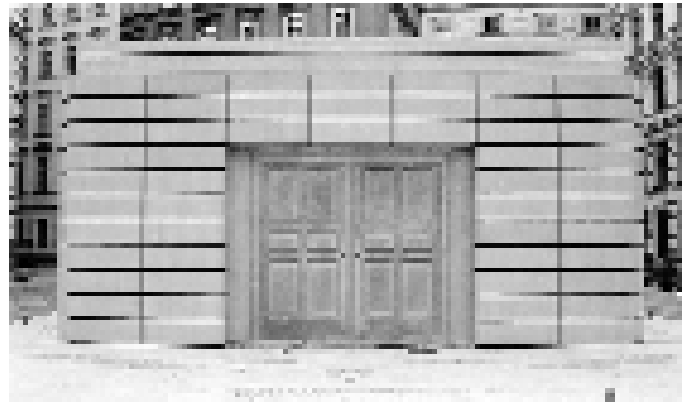


Gabrielle Rossmer, *In Search of the Lost Object: Sleeping on the pas* 1991 (detail)
Installation, Dimensions vary

Jenny Stolzenberg is a second-generation artist from London, England who has taken up the medium of clay to create ceramic works that address her family's Holocaust history while also evoking the memory of all victims in *Shoes of Memory*. Inspired by the piles of shoes, clothing, hair, glasses and suitcases found in the warehouses of Auschwitz at liberation, the seventy pairs of ceramic shoes that make up *Shoes of Memory* evoke the memory of the millions of lives that were lost in the Holocaust. Meticulously researched and rendered in clay, Stolzenberg's shoes return a sense of identity to the victims of the Holocaust by rescuing the shoes from their anonymity in the piles at Auschwitz. Her father, a survivor of Dachau and Buchenwald, rarely spoke of his experiences, either because he did not want to burden her with the stories, or because he could not face re-living the memories. Despite his reticence, Stolzenberg felt compelled to create beautiful and unique pieces of art which, for her, represent an "exploration to understand and come to terms with" her family's history. She visited Auschwitz and was deeply moved by the experience. She also studied shoe designs from 1930s England and Europe in order to render accurate replicas of the type of shoes worn by Holocaust victims. She feels that art which represents atrocity does not, itself, have to be shocking, even if the circumstances it attempts to portray are horrific.

When artists approach visual representations of the Holocaust, they are taking on a set of complex and difficult issues surrounding memory, loss, representation and materiality.

Another category of artists who have visually represented the Holocaust in their work are the people who Stephen Feinstein classifies as "empathizers." These are people who have not directly experienced or been affected by the Holocaust, but who take it up as a theme to address concepts of memory or contemporary social issues. Jenny Stolzenberg has been particularly inspired by some of these artists and the way they approach atrocity and the Holocaust. She cites the work of painter Anselm Kiefer, for instance, who paints semi-figurative acrylic works about German



Rachel Whiteread's Memorial to the Victims of the Holocaust at Judenplatz in Vienna.
The memorial is designed as a library turned inside out.
Photo credit: Florida Center for Instructional Technology

history and the horrors of the Holocaust on canvas, incorporating materials like straw, ash, clay and steel into his images. Another inspiration for Stolzenberg was British artist Rachel Whiteread's public monument in Vienna, the *Judenplatz Memorial to the Victims of the Holocaust*. Made of poured cement and moulded from the spines of books, Whiteread's memorial is haunting in its permanent and tangible marking of a neighbourhood that experienced trauma and loss. Like Stolzenberg's work, Whiteread's memorial represents a horrific event in a beautiful and understated manner, thereby sparing the viewer from being re-traumatized by reminders of the horrors of the Holocaust.

Rather than trying to lift the viewer out of our everyday reality, these artists attempt to remind us of our history and to demonstrate that these issues are still a part of our reality today. Through their innovation and creativity, these artists have demonstrated the ways in which contemporary art can evoke the past while addressing current social justice issues in compelling and unique ways.



The majority of Marina Vainshtein's body is covered with tattoos of Holocaust imagery.

My Father, My Saviour

BY JANOS BENISZ



This story covers one week of my childhood during a painful period of the Second World War. The time was March 1944. The place was Esztergom, Hungary.

On that day, my spirits were almost as high as the azure sky above. My father, step-mother and I, shared a warm and loving home on Petofi Street. This was the day my paternal grandfather was moving in with us.

My “Babie” had traveled from Budapest to be with us too. She was everything I ever wished in a grandmother. She was as sweet as she was wise. I had never thought to ask why she had left Budapest. I was too young to comprehend the events that were unfolding there. The Hungarian fascists, (the Arrows), began the systematic roundup of Jews and Gypsies to prepare for Nazi Germany’s bloodless occupation of my country.

My father was the oldest son of a large family. When he heard that the fascists were incarcerating his siblings and their children, he moved his mother to our house in Esztergom, hoping to spare her. Although his intentions were honorable, time and a cunning enemy were not on his side. Shortly, the SS moved into our town and started rounding up Jews.

I remember the events of the summer of 1944 as if they had happened yesterday. What began as a beautiful sunny morning turned into a nightmare when the goose-stepping SS entered our section of town. Almost immediately they painted a large yellow star of David on the front of our home. It was easy to recognize our religious identity since our home stood on the grounds of one of the few Jewish cemeteries in Esztergom. The soldiers marked all our household items such as works of art, religious articles, and furniture. No sooner had they left, when my young playmates and I partook in a silly game that children tend to play, and tore off all the stickers that marked our valuables.

My father, who was not home at the time, returned later that day and was I in trouble. Instead of scolding me as he usually did when I made mischief, he slapped me hard across the face. I was bewildered and traumatized. The slap marked an unforgettable moment in the life of this six- year-old boy, who had always received nothing but unconditional love from his Papa, for as long as he could remember. I was hurt and angry with my father after this incident. I could not, and would not look at him for days.

I was too young to understand the full implication of what had happened and that the Nazis were harsh and unforgiving toward Jews. One small act on our part could have proved to have had disastrous consequences on our lives. It might have gotten us killed.

Within a week or two of the incident, my father sent my step-mother and me into hiding, to live with some non Jewish relatives, who had converted to Christianity. Again I was bewildered and feared that Papa no longer loved me. Because of this, I suffered terribly and cried for days. Only years later, had I come to understand the stress and pressure that my father must have been under at that time. Sadly, I concluded that had our roles been reversed, I might have acted in the same manner. Later on I realized, that my father sacrificed his life to save mine.

Though I missed my Papa and Babie, we were made to feel at home at cousin Paulis, his wonderful wife and two sons played with me endlessly. My stepmother and I, regularly attended mass at the neighborhood Catholic Church. I made friends at the church and felt comfortable in my new religion as no one picked on me for being a Jew. This didn’t last long.

We had barely settled in our new surroundings when soldiers in dark uniforms came for us. They threw us into cattle carts and set us on our way to what was going to be our “final” destination. I was told later that a neighbor had reported us to the authorities. Paulis’ family had vanished on that fateful day as well, never to be seen or heard from again.

On the way to this destination - a death- camp in Austria, some of us marched, some rode in the carts. When we passed our home on Petofi Street, I saw two bodies lying on the ground covered with blood soaked white sheets.

The enforced march to Austria was nightmarish. As the lines grew larger and longer with additional captives, the killings started. Those who could not keep up were clubbed to death. I survived because I rode on a cart most of the way and I had my step-mother’s encouragement when I walked. I don’t know how long we were on the march, maybe ten days or more. But I recall feeling relieved on our arrival at the camp.

I had spent eight months in hell and survived. In the spring of 1945 the Red Army liberated us. I was six going on sixty. After days and nights of aimless wondering my step-mother and I, returned to Esztergom She had, by that time, suffered a complete mental breakdown and never recovered. When we arrived, a Christian woman confirmed our worst fears about the bodies, we saw lying on the ground in front of our home. My father had been shot trying to protect my Babie from being beaten to death by a brutal Nazi. In time, I found out that my dad was one of Hungary’s highest decorated soldiers in World War II, yet all his medals could not have saved him from being murdered in a country he had once defended so valiantly.

It was years later, that I reconnected with a few remaining members of my father’s family, but could not find any of mother’s relatives. It was as if they had never existed.

The *No Longer Alone* page welcomes submissions from Child Survivors. Send submissions to the NLA editor: Lillian Boraks-Nemetz
c/o VHEC, 50 – 950 W. 41st Ave, Vancouver, BC V5Z 2N7

In Memory of our parents Malka & Pinchus Reiman, Montreal. Jack & Gloria Altman

In Memory of Henry Nutkiewicz.
Pola Nutkiewicz

In memory of Albert and Anne Ballin.

In Memory of my Mother. Eva Dymant

THANK YOU <<

Alex Buckman, Thank-you for coming to speak at our school, Coquitlam Alternative Basic Education

Lillian Boraks Nemetz, Thank You for speaking to our class. Wondertree Learning Centre, Darcy Kaltio

Rabbi & Mrs. Rosenblatt, Thank-you.
Ben & Rita Akselrod

Jack & Karen, Micner, Mazel Tov & Thank you.
The VHEC Board and Staff

Alan & Gail Marcovitz, Thank-you & Shana Tova! Danya Fox

Bruce & Judi Taub & Family, Thank-you & Shana Tova! Danya Fox

Mr. & Mrs. B. Katz, Thank-you.
Lana & Mendy Landa

Marsha Sibthorpe, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Andy Horka & Laurie Parish, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Ted Roberts, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Rebekka Sorensen, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Anastasia Philips, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Richard Newman, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Jennifer Clement, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Anna Cumber, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Bill Dow, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Gina Chiarelli, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Ryan Beil, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Lee Vincent, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Nick Hunnings, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

David Bloom, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Tasha Faye Evans, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Sean Devine, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Caryn Fehr, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Pamela Jakobs, In gratitude for your work on, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Arts Club Theatre, 2005. Rachel Ditor

Louise Stein Sorensen, Thank-you for coming to speak at the opening of the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The Cast and Crew & Rachel Ditor

Mr. & Mrs. S. Levinthal, Thank-you. Lana & Mendy Landa

Neri Tischler, Thank-you. Nora Ferera & Rachelle & Lew Pullmer

Mr. & Mrs. S. Manning, Thank-you. Lana & Mendy Landa

Roberta Kremer, Thank-you. Kitty Heller

Mr. & Mrs. Pat Kerns, Thank-you. Lana & Mendy Landa

MAZEL TOV <<

Rosalind & Howard Karby, Mazel Tov on the birth of your grandson. Beth & Leon Bogner

Bill Kaplan & Etti Gelmon, Mazel Tov on your wedding! Ari & Lesley Morris, Kathy Gelmon & Neil James

Tova Kornfeld, Mazel Tov on your special Birthday! Neri & Aron Tischler

Shirley & Peter Barnett, Mazel Tov on the birth of your grandson. Beth & Leon Bogner

Mr & Mrs Samuel Belzberg, Mazel Tov on your 55TH Wedding Anniversary. Cindy Charkow

Rome Fox, Mazel Tov on the occasion of your special Birthday! Neri & Aron Tischler

Dr. Daniel Granot, Mazel Tov on your Special Birthday! Reva & Al Dexter

Mrs Elaine Rubell, Mazel Tov, In honour of your 75TH birthday. Rosa & Elie Ferera

Beth Bogner, Mazel Tov on your Special Birthday! Mel & Marlene Hershfield & Family, Linda and Ken Glasner, Karyn and Joe Gold, Marilyn Moss & Sam Hanson, Malcolm & Judy Weinstein

Lisi Rosenberg & Sheldon Franken, Mazel Tov on your recent engagement! Mark Rozenberg & Lynn Kaplan & Family

Frieda Ullman, Mazel Tov on the engagement of your granddaughter. Julie & Henry Gutovich

George & Yvonne Rosenberg, Mazel Tov on the engagement of Sheldon & Lisi. Julie & Henry Gutovich, Mark Rozenberg & Lynn Kaplan & Family

Leo Vogel, Mazel Tov on the birth of your Granddaughter, Vera. Vancouver Child Survivor Group

Fay Davis, Mazel Tov & Happy 70th Birthday! Evelyn Kahn, Alan & Marion Schapiro

Ruby Gales, Mazel Tov & Happy 70TH Birthday! Mendy & Lana Landa

Phyllis Tregert, Best wishes for your Special Birthday. Pola Nutkiewicz

Louie & Esther Sholzberg, Mazel Tov & Happy Birthdays! Debbie & Eddie Rozenberg & Family

Judy Walker-Promislow, Mazel Tov on your special Birthday! Neri & Aron Tischler

Gisi Levitt, Mazel Tov on becoming a Canadian! Eddie & Debbie Rozenberg & Family

Leo & Marlene Franken, Mazel Tov on the recent engagement of Sheldon & Lisi. Mark Rozenberg & Lynn Kaplan & Family

Dr. Jack Amar, Mazel tov on the Bar Mitzvah of your son, Julien. Irv Wolak & Susan Stein

Hadassah Goldberg, Mazel Tov on your 50TH Birthday! Neri & Aron Tischler

Derek & Marilyn Glazer, Mazel Tov on the birth of your Grandson, Ryan. Irv Wolak, & Susan & Joe Stein

Shirley & Jerry Kushner, Mazel tov on the occasion of your 50th Anniversary! Neri & Aron Tischler

Judy Thau, Mazel Tov on your Special Birthday! Neri & Aron Tischler

GET WELL ↔

Deborah Ramm, Get Well. The VHEC Board & Staff

David Rubin, Get Well, Refuah Shlemah, Rome & Hymie Fox

Pola Nutkiewicz, Get Well. Gloria, Gerri & Survivor Drop In

Jack Fraeme, Get Well. Gloria, Gerri & Survivor Drop In

Mrs Resia Nortman, Get Well. Ida Kaplan

David Tessler, Wishing you a speedy recovery! Gloria & Robbie Waisman

William Mendelson, Get Well. Ida Kaplan

Mary Bulles, Get Well. Jocy Lowy

Deborah Ramm, Best wishes for a Speedy Recovery! Louise Stein Sorensen

SYMPATHY ↔

Hedy Rubin & Family In Memory of your Father & Grandfather David Rubin. The VHEC Board & Staff

Rubin Family, Sorry for your loss of David, Mark & Susie Kierszenblat, Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan, Jacob, Talya and Nirit

Mrs Resia Nortman, Jack, Allan & Debbie & Family, Our condolences on the loss of your Husband & Father. Bill Brandt & Family, Mark & Debbie Choit, Goldie & Abe Miedzigorski & Family, Sally, Sid & Alex Coleman, Bernie & Lisa Conn, Shoshana & Moshe Fidelman, Gloria & Harry Harris, Odie Kaplan, Emerich Klein, Chaim & Susie Micner, Henia & Jack Perel & Families, Debbie & Eddie Rozenberg & Family, Harold & Bell Silverman, Irv Wolak & Susan & Joe Stein, George & Frieda Wertman, Sally Zimmerman

Jeffrey Rose, In Memory of Shirley Rose. Esther Brandt & Rochelle Brown

Ernie Fleischer, In Memory of your wife, Erica. Karl & Sabina Choit

Alex Zbar & Charlene Goldstein & Family, Sympathy on the loss of your Father & Grandfather, Chaim. Sally, Sid & Alex Coleman, Debbie, Eddie, Mira, Naomi & Aliya Rozenberg, Hymie, Rome, Aiden, Danya & Aylee Fox

Dena & Shalom Amouyal & Family, Sympathy on the loss of your Father & Grandfather, Chaim. Evelyn Kahn & Family, Sally, Sid & Alex Coleman

Thea & Rob Rosenstock & Family, Sympathy on the loss of your Father & Grandfather, Chaim. Sally, Sid & Alex Coleman, Paul R. & Cheryl Meyers

The Family of Chaim Zbar In Memory of your Father & Grandfather, Chaim Zbar. Izzy Fraeme & Leonore Etkin, Robert & Marilyn Krell & Family

Bernie & Marilyn Hooper, In memory of your devoted Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandma and a wonderful friend. Mark & Sylvie Epstein & Family

Charlotte Lewis & Family, In loving memory of Your Father & Grandfather. Hymie, Rome, Aylee, Danya & Aiden Fox

Alicia & Robert Matas & Family, In Blessed Memory of Chuck Ludwig who passed away in Winnipeg. Rosa & Elie Ferera, Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Marlene Hershfield & Family, In Memory of your Father & Grandfather. Hymie, Rome, Aylee, Danya & Aiden Fox

Ivor Levin & Family, Sympathy on the loss of your Brother & Uncle. Nora Ferera, Lew, David & Rachelle Pullmer, Neri & Aron Tischler, The Rozenberg/Kaplan Family

Estie Zion & Family, In Memory of your Father. Revi & Michael Ross, Shoshana & Moshe Fidelman

Peter & Shari Lutsky, Reva & Ken Davidson, Jack & Susan Mendelson & Families, In Memory of your beloved Mother & Grandmother, Miriam. Rome & Hymie Fox

Marney Buckwold & Family, With deepest sympathy on the loss of your beloved Mom & Grandmom. Norman Gladstone & Birgit Westergaard

Gordon & Eva Hoffman & Family, In Memory of your Mother & Grandmother. Rafael & Raquel Hirsch & Jennifer Hirsch, Charna Shapiro, Danny Shapiro & Frieda Miller, Marilyn Moss & Sam Hanson, Harold & Bella Silverman, Gloria & Robbie Waisman, Regina Wertman

Michael & Stephanie Dorchik & Family, In Memory of your Mother & Grandmother. Rafael & Raquel Hirsch & Jennifer Hirsch

Karen Ergas-Lenett, In Memory of your Mother. Mark & Susie Kierszenblat

Myriam Glotman, In Memory of your Mother, Betty. Mark & Susie Kierszenblat

Paul Watson, In Memory of your Mother. Susie & Mark Kierszenblat

Anita & Israel Chafetz, In memory of your Mother, Ruby. Mark & Susie Kierszenblat

Nadine Landa, On the loss of your Father. Mark & Susie Kierszenblat

Hinda Simkin, On the loss of your Husband, Lou. Mark & Susie Kierszenblat

Lisa Kafka, In Memory of Karl Sperber and the parents and sister of Lisa Kafka, who perished in the Holocaust. Frank Kohner

Reva Puterman, Condolences on the passing of your Brother. Robert & Marilyn Krell & Family

Hinda Simkin, In Memory of Lou Simkin, Husband, Father & Grandfather. Mendy & Lana Landa

Mr. & Mrs. Izzy Tischler, Our heartfelt sympathy on the loss of your brother & Uncle. Gerri, Mark, Dana & David London

Mrs. Leah Minovitch, Sorry to hear about Lloyd. Jocy Lowy

Mrs. Dasha Zottenberg & Family, With our deepest sympathy on the loss of your Husband, Father & Grandfather. Marilyn Moss & Sam Hanson

Ida & Sam Switzer, With our deepest sympathy on the loss of your beloved Father & Grandfather, Max Shulder. Sam Hanson & Marilyn Moss

Howard & Rosalind Karby & Family, Our heartfelt condolences on the passing of your Mother & Grandmother, Bertha Karby. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Julie Gutovich, In deepest sympathy on the loss of your Brother & Uncle. Henia & Jack Perel & Families

Mr. Leon Zetley, In Loving Memory of Greta Zetley Wife, Mom, & Grandmother. Jack & Henia Perel & Families

Roma Katz & Family, Our condolences on the passing of your Father, Moses. Marianne Rev & Tom Ross

Larry & Deb Katz, In memory of Deb's Father. Debbie & Eddie Rozenberg & Family

Sheryl Sorokin & Hillel Goelman & Family, Our heartfelt condolences on the passing of your Father and Grandfather, Milton Sorokin. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Jack Huberman, Condolences on the loss of your Mother. Aron & Neri Tischler

Esi & Sam Zion & Family, Heartfelt condolences on the passing of your Father & Grandfather, Chaim Shafir. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Joe & Ruth Ellen Shafir, Heartfelt condolences on the passing of your Father & Grandfather, Chaim Shafir. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Howard Karby, Condolences on the loss of your Mother. Neri & Aron Tischler

Dr. Lutz Marburg, Sorry to hear of the passing away of Jenny. Alan & Marion Schapiro

Mr. & Mrs. Ed Herbst, Our condolences on the loss of your beloved Father & Grandfather, Gershom Herbst. Zev & Eli Shafran & Girls

Avi Dattner. Our deepest sympathy on the loss of your Father. Susan & Joe Stein & Family

Mrs Manuel Rootman, On the Loss of Your Mother. Izzy Tischler & Reva Puterman

Mel Hershfield, Condolences on the loss of your Mother. Neri & Aron Tischler

Marlene Hershfield, Condolences on the loss of your Father. Neri & Aron Tischler

Uri Levy, Our condolences on the loss of your Mother. Neri & Aron Tischler

Evelyn Goldbloom, In Memory of your Husband, Father & Grandfather, George. Gloria & Robbie Waisman

Sheryl Sorokin, Condolences on the loss of your Father. Neri & Aron Tischler

Ruth & Cecil Sigal, My deepest condolences on the loss of your dear Grandson, Zachary. Heather Wolfe

Ralph Rosenberg & Family, In memory of your Wife and Mother, Rebecca Rosenberg. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Steve & Marion Rom & family, In memory of your Brother-in-law and Uncle in Australia. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family

Kathy Greenberg, In memory of your Father, Henry Greenberg. Mark Rozenberg, Lynn Kaplan & Family, Ruth, David, Albert, Rose, Jamie & Alex Stewart

A REMINDER: VHEC SPECIAL TRIBUTE CARDS

VHEC Tribute Cards are a meaningful way to acknowledge and celebrate special occasions, as well as expressions of sympathy. A variety of cards are available, messages can be personalized and the donor receives a tax receipt. To send a card please call the centre (604.264.0499).

Thank you for renewing your membership for 2006

Vancouver Holocaust Centre Society Memberships now correspond with the calendar year. Memberships run from January 1 to December 30th. If you paid your membership after August 2005, you are a member for 2006. There is still time to renew - it is as easy as a phone call (604.264.0499). Your membership is an essential part of our organization. Thank you for your continued support through membership.



VANCOUVER HOLOCAUST
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