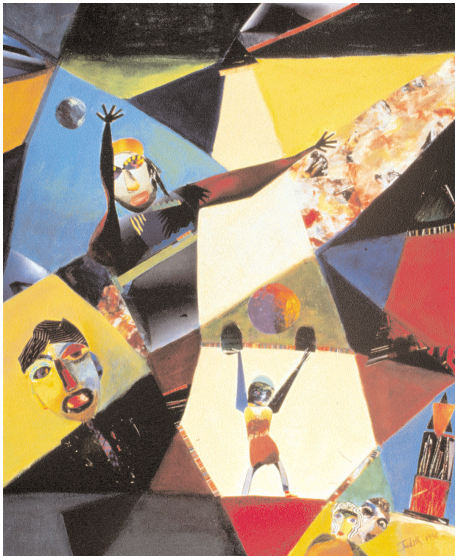
REFLECTIONS ON THE HOLOCAUST

INNOCENCE



ANGUISH

REBIRTH

IN SEARCH AND FULFILLMENT

Ruth Rintel, *Reflection*, 1999, mixed media on canvas, 60 x 48 x 2 inches

Cover: Judith Goldstein, *Reflections*, 1998, acrylic and collage on canvas, 30 x 24 inches (each)
A series of four paintings, based on a musical composition by the artist, portraying her childhood memories of life before, during, and after the Holocaust.

REFLECTIONS ON THE HOLOCAUST:

Works by Holocaust Survivors,
Family Members, and Friends

March 27 - April 22, 2001

Curated by Chana Benjamin

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HOLOCAUST MANTRA

How can anyone make up for
the pain and suffering
caused by the Holocaust?
It would take at least six million
lifetimes or more
To replace the lost love
The joys not shared with
family members
The moments of peace
spent without pain
The unrealized dreams
The never ending sorrow
Can anyone ever explain
the incomprehensible
the inconceivable
greed and disregard
for humanity?
How many tears can be shed?
How many words can be said?

Chana Benjamin

Daniel Paley Ellison, *Seamless Monument #4*, 1999,
gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

INTRODUCTION

Reflections on the Holocaust began as a photography project of mine which quickly grew into a major art exhibition. Because of the magnitude of this project, over the past year I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with many new acquaintances. I would like to thank everyone involved for their kind support and encouragement in making this exhibition and the corresponding events possible.

The purpose of this exhibition is to educate people about the everyday horrors of the Holocaust. We do not necessarily want to frighten people, but we do want to make people aware of what happened to innocent people - just like you and me - because they were targeted by an extremely corrupt government.

Can this happen again? Is this happening again? Maybe not on such a grand scale, but as long as humankind includes one group which perceives another as inferior to its own, pockets of similar types of terrorism and genocide will continue to prevail throughout the world.

I truly believe that each human being is created equal, and I hope you do, too. Diversity is a strength to society, not a handicap. Let us work together, learn together, and build a stronger united world. May there be peace on earth; may no human being in any part of the world ever have to endure the tragic hardships and loss that took place during World War II.

I would like to thank all of our sponsors for their generosity, especially the Puffin Foundation Ltd. for sponsoring this catalog and Modern Postcard for sponsoring the exhibition invitation. I would like to say a special thanks to the following people and organizations for their contributions: Hidden Child Foundation/ADL, Lisa and Rosina Rubin, Felicia Gironda, Judith Goldstein, John Balan, Ann Radding, Rabbi Burt Aaron Siegel, Francine Bonair, Paula Goldfader, Sheila Archer, Linda Dujack, Joy Rich, all the participating artists, the Holocaust Exhibition Committee, and the board members of *New Century Artists, Inc*.

May love surround us always,

Chana Benjamin
Curator, President and Director of *New Century Artists, Inc.*

JUDITH GOLDSTEIN

I was born in Vilna, Poland, now Lithuania. To the Jews of the world, it was known as "Jerusalem of Lithuania," a cultural center of Eastern Europe. We lived in the heart of town in a nice apartment with a terrace filled with flowers and plants, which was my father Chaim's love and hobby in addition to his love of music. He was a mechanical engineer and provided a comfortable living for his family of four: mother Yetta, who was a clothes designer, my brother Meir, and myself.

One Sunday morning in June 1941, my father was taking my brother and me to the river for a boat ride. Before we even had a chance to get there, we heard sirens all over the city. The bombs began to fall like hail, killing people and creating terrible destruction to the city. We were fortunate to get home safely.

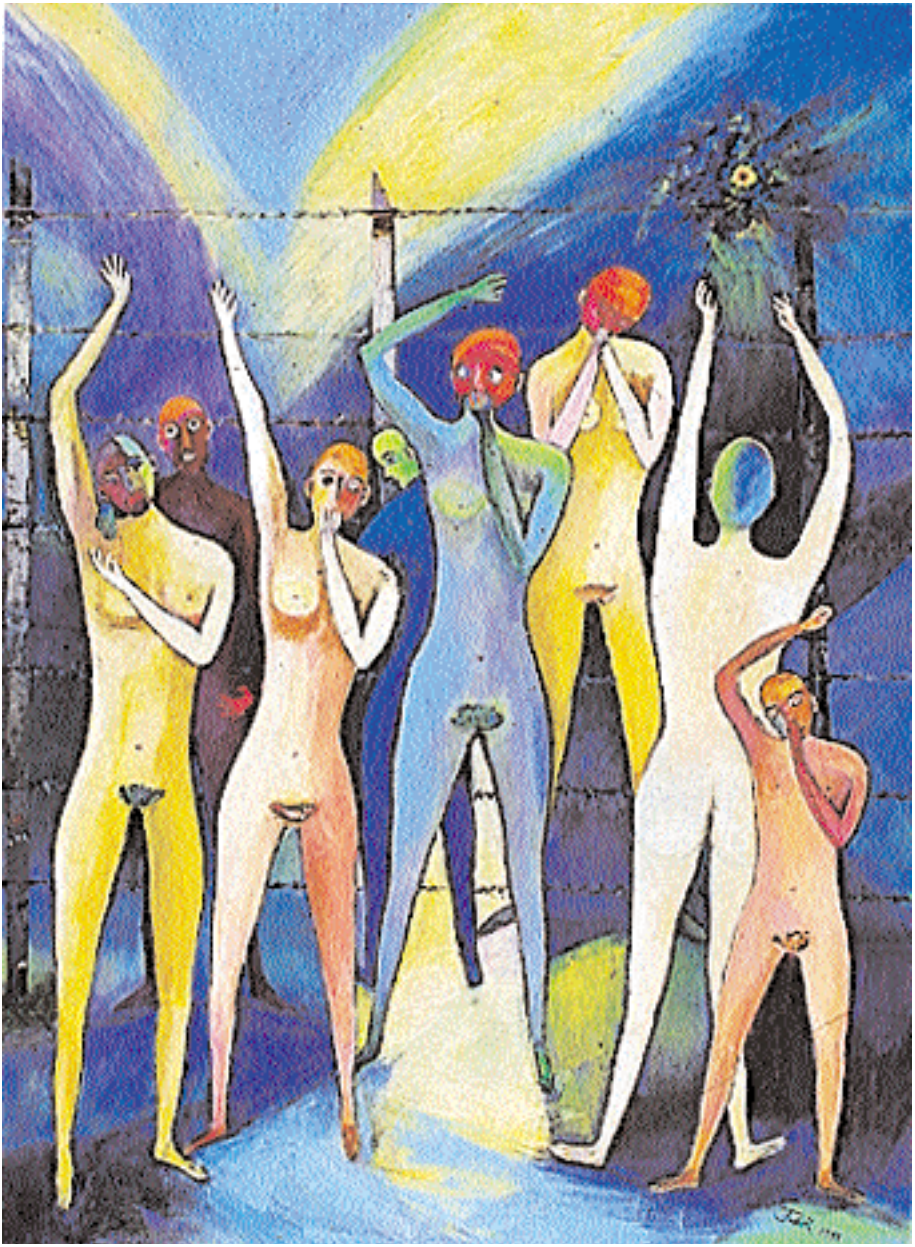
A few days, later, Nazi Germany occupied Vilna, and within a few months, my whole life changed completely. I ceased to be a child of seven-and-a-half and lost those precious, carefree, and playful years of childhood forever.

Soon after, even before the ghetto was created, mobs looted Jewish businesses, smashed windows, and vandalized synagogues, and Torah scrolls were burned. Jews were assaulted in the streets, particularly men and young boys. Many were beaten to death.

In September 1941, my father, mother, brother, and I were forced into the newly formed ghetto, with only knapsacks on our backs. We left all of our possessions behind, which were immediately looted by our neighbors. The rest of our family - aunts, uncles, cousins - never made it to the ghetto. They were taken from their homes to Ponary, where they were murdered and thrown into pits. Ponary was a place in the forest outside of Vilna. Fifty thousand Jews were murdered there.

In the ghetto, people were dying from hunger, disease, and extreme conditions. As many as ten families shared one apartment. In each room, a family occupied a corner. The kitchen and bathroom were shared by all.

Every few months, people were taken away to Ponary, especially the elderly and children who could not perform slave labor, while others were sent off to unknown destinations and never returned. The numbers of the population in the ghetto diminished within a short time.



Judith Goldstein, *The Unknown Fate*, 1999, acrylic and collage on canvas, 40 x 30 inches

This artwork deals with the artist's memories of times in the concentration camps standing naked outdoors in the cold, about to enter the showers, not knowing if the showers would spray water or gas.

JUDITH GOLDSTEIN (cont)

At the liquidation of the ghetto at the end of 1943, everyone was ordered to gather at the ghetto gate. Children and the elderly were being separated from the rest of the people. The SS fingered who would be shipped to concentration camps or be killed. My mother, anticipating what was coming, rolled up my braids to the top of my head so that I would look older. My heart pounding like a metronome, I watched the tall Nazi approaching my row. I stood lifeless. The resonant voice spoke to me: "You little one, you must go with the children." While he was about to pull me out of the row, someone called his name; he glanced away and no longer saw me.

I was shipped with my mother to a series of concentration camps: Riga in Latvia, Stutthof, and later Torun, Poland. There I experienced many tunnels of death but survived by many miracles. One particular miracle occurred one morning in Stutthof when all children under thirteen were asked to gather. Hundreds of children were taken away when suddenly they stopped the process and left a handful of children. I was one of them. We all know where the others went - the gas chambers.

We were transported from Riga to Stutthof by boat. This journey will always stay with me. All the women, and by now a handful of children, were placed at the bottom of the boat for days without food or water and without sanitation. Many died. I was very ill and thought at this tender age that the end was finally here. My mother cried and pleaded for me to stay alive, so I listened and fought and held on to life.

After a short stay in Stutthof, we were sent to Torun, Poland, as slave labor. After only a few months, with the threat of the Russian Army approaching, the Nazis forced a death march of the camp in temperatures below freezing. The SS seeing weakness in anyone shot them, while many others froze to death. In January 1945, my mother, Aunt Frieda, and I were liberated in Bydgoszcz, a town not far from Torun, by the Russian soldiers. We never knew what happened to my father and brother until the end of the war. We searched feverishly only to find out that my father did not survive. My brother was liberated and was hospitalized for many months. We were reunited in Lodz, Poland. We waited three years for our quota so we could immigrate to America, and during that time I studied music and developed a strong love for the arts.

Excerpted from a speech by Judith Goldstein at The Telfair Museum,
Savannah, Georgia, on September 14, 1999.

Chana Benjamin, *Judith and Harry*, 2000, C-print, 11 x 14 inches

JUDITH AND HARRY GOLDSTEIN

I met my husband Harry after the war in a displaced persons camp. We all had the desire to leave Europe. Some of us wanted to emigrate to Israel and some of us to America. Neither destination was easy. In the meantime, we all searched for relatives and tried to catch up after the lost years of the war. Harry attended dental school and worked in a dental office for his practicum. I came in to have my teeth fixed, and that is how we met. Before he had a chance to complete his studies, he left for America. I was left behind, not knowing if we would ever see each other again. I attended school and the conservatory of music. Finally, in 1949, I too arrived in America. A year later, when I turned seventeen, we were married. I continued with my education, and Harry studied drafting. That was much easier for him, especially not knowing the language. A lot of people changed their professions or jobs just to make a living. Harry and I have two children, Leslie and Renee. We also have a son-in-law, Joseph, and three grandchildren, Matthew, Jillian, and Liam. We are very blessed with health and happiness.

RUTH RINTEL

I was born in Otwock, Poland, in September 1939, just as the bombs were beginning to fall. About a year later, my family and I were moved to the Otwock Ghetto, where we remained almost until its liquidation. From there, my mother and I spent several months wandering from village to village, seeking shelter wherever we could find it. Finally, at the age of three, I was placed in a Catholic orphanage, where I remained for two years. During my stay there, my name was changed to a typically Polish name, and I was taught to be a very devout little Christian child who also learned to hate Jews. Therefore, it was no easy matter for me to learn, after the war, that my family and I were Jewish.

My parents, meanwhile, were in the Warsaw Ghetto, from which they both managed to escape and eventually find a hiding place with a Polish family, where they remained until the end of the war. Following the war, we were reunited and moved to a displaced persons camp, after which we settled in Belgium for almost four years. In 1950, we emigrated to the United States, where I resumed my education. I worked as a fashion designer, earned a B.A. degree from City College where I majored in art, and taught for a short time in the public school system. Shortly thereafter, I got married and raised two sons. While at home, I also pursued a career in art for many years, primarily sculpting, and then I returned to painting again. During that time I also decided to go back to school for a master's degree in art therapy. I am now working part-time as an art therapist, but I am devoting the vast majority of my time to my artwork, which is a very essential part of my life.

~

PEACE

Peace descends.
My treasured guest,
how can I convince you
to make this
your permanent home?

Ruth Rintel

Ruth Rintel, *Passing Shadows*, 1998, mixed media, 48 x 60 x 2 inches

TOGETHER, AT LAST!

Brothers and sisters
strangers amd friends
searching for roots,
have I found them again?
Wandering soul
moving ghostlike through life
trying to be
mother, daughter and wife
and if that's not enough
a professional too
all this without
even knowing quite who
is this person
I think of as me
trying so hard to live
why can't I just be?

Do I now seek to find
my reflection in them,
my adopted siblings,
who Baruch Hashem
or perhaps through blind fate
have come into my life
to share stories of late
To share pain, love and hope
and some emptiness too
Can I really find
my reflection in you?
My brothers and sisters
you've been ghosts just like me
when we look at each other
what do we see?

Ruth Rintel

CHAVAH LIVNI

I was born Eva Fuerst in 1926 in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, today Slovakia. Until World War II, I lived a normal and happy childhood in a well-situated and harmonious family. With the successive enacting of anti-Jewish laws, we could no longer attend school. I was active in the Zionist Youth Movement, which went underground. In 1944, our family was sent to the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. My sister and I were sent to Germany for work in other concentration camps and survived. My parents did not return.

Shortly after returning to Bratislava, a few friends and I started to rescue hidden children. We brought them to a children's home which we founded. We tried to rehabilitate them by teaching them Hebrew and Jewish, (Yiddish) and Zionist history, and by and by managed to send them to Israel. At this time, I also met my husband, who came to Slovakia from Prague. We married in 1946 and finally went to Israel in 1949. We stayed first in a kibbutz, then left and went to Kiriat Tivon, a small townlet near Haifa. We have two daughters; both married with children. After my second daughter was born, I was looking for something to do at home and joined a course in ceramics. A short time later, my teacher fell ill and asked me to stand in for her. That is the reason that I am mostly self-taught. Since 1954, I have been teaching and working in ceramics and currently in sculptural ceramics. I have taken part in several group exhibitions. Naturally my work reflects my experiences.

~

In the years 1942 - 1944, I wrote a kind of diary which was saved by a friend of mine who was not in concentration camps - at least a few scraps. After my return from the camps, I added a short description of the time in the camps and also a few verses. The diary and the poems were translated later into Hebrew and English. Following is one of the poems from the diary.

Chavah Livni, *Prisoners I*, 1989,
earthenware clay, 12 1/2 inches

Chavah Livni, *Sorrow*, 1982,
earthenware clay, 101/2 inches

Chavah Livni, *Prisoners II*, 1989,
earthenware clay, 13 inches

CHAVAH LIVNI

AUSCHWITZ, OCTOBER 1944

I am!
I am!
Thousands of women,
Thousands of numbers,
A substance-less
Mass of misery, meanness and dirt ...
Are these human?
Are they animals?
No...

But I am!
My name died,
I am dead for the world,
My heart is a stone.
Prisoner fiftyfourthousand
and ten.
A number - a thing -
My hair shorn -
My tears dried up -
My life gone.

But...
The yearning is still in me...
It is so strong
And I am...
Not only a number
A tag on my rags!
Deep inside me
Where none of you can reach,
Is all that is dear to me.

No!
Your beatings,
Your pushing,
Your clubs,
Your curses,
(Bunch of Jews)
Cannot touch me.
I am for you
only one of the many miserables,
A number
A prisoner,
Fiftyfourthousandten…
But I am - I am!

Nurit Chana, *Untitled*,
2000, acrylic on canvas,
27 x 27 inches

NURIT CAHANA

I was born in Israel in 1949. My parents survived the Holocaust and emigrated to Israel after the war. I grew up near Haifa in the green and hilly part of northern Israel. At the age of 20, after military service, I joined a new kibbutz in the Negev, the dry southern region of the county.

As a child, I did not feel that my parents treated me in any special way - over-protective or obsessive with food, which was common among families of Holocaust survivors. My parents were open and talked freely about their childhood, the horrors of Auschwitz, and our lost family. It enabled me to grow up with the stories and make them part of who I am.

As a mature adult, I realized that I was brought up on the values of humanistic codes, anti-racism, and tolerance and had the will to transmit these values to my children. Living in a kibbutz, where I am a member, is a way of life one has to choose. It is a close community, family-like, that supports and restricts at the same time. The kibbutz enabled me to combine art studies and artistic activities with professional work as a head-colorist in the plastic industry of the kibbutz. I am married and a mother of three.

My works deal with “roots-places-time” and combines symbols from various layers of my personality. My deep attachment to the land and to my family gives me a personal outlook at my roots and feeds my artistic works. I am in a continuous search for the lost segments of my family roots and caring for the new ones that grow in the present era. I think the fact that the Holocaust is so meaningful to me affects my children and their attitudes.

JOHN BALAN

I was born in 1934 in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, now the Slovak Republic, to upper middle-class parents. My father, also born in Bratislava, was part-owner in a grocery chain and served with distinction under Kaiser Franz Joseph in World War I. My mother came from Budapest and spent many of her earlier years in London and Berlin.

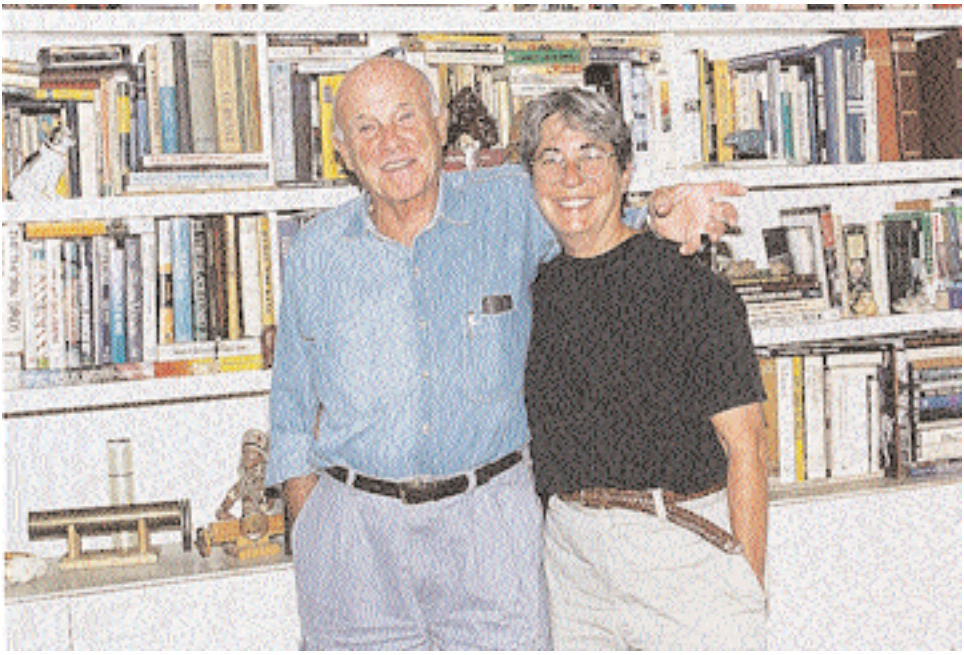
She returned from Berlin in the early 1930s and warned everyone about what was happening in Germany and about Hitler's rise to power and his policies. No one took her seriously. In 1933, she married my father, and then her predictions began to come true. Consequently, my father and I were baptized in 1938. My mother had been baptized previously.

In 1940, the puppet state of Slovakia, friendly to the Nazis, was created, and shortly thereafter, mostly in 1942, deportation transports began. Jews were classified into categories: baptized, not baptized, one Jewish grandparent, two Jewish grandparents, etc. - and the transports were organized on the basis of these categories. it was also possible to obtain "exceptions," depending on your profession.

My family survived this first series of transports. In 1943, we were moved to a ghetto - not walled in the strictest sense, rather a Jewish quarter. In August 1944, the Slovak partisans staged an uprising, which resulted in the German army entering Slovakia in force. From this point forward, all bets were off and no Jew was immune.

We made arrangements to spend a night in the apartment of my school teacher with her husband and small daughter. The major rounding up occurred in the early morning hours of September 29, my father's birthday and my parent's wedding anniversary. My grandparents, several uncles and aunts, and a number of cousins were taken to Auschwitz via Sered, a waypoint facility. We survived, miraculously, as the soldiers stopped one floor below ours and quit the search.

My family and I remained with my teacher in hiding. We had various drills for what to do if someone came to the door. Eventually, word leaked out, and we had to split up and seek other places to hide. My mother went to a sanatorium in the Tatra mountains, my father to a rural hiding place, and I returned to my teacher. We eventually left Bratislava, and the Soviet Army liberated us in the countryside in April 1945.



Chana Benjamin, *John and Annie*, 2000, C-print, 11 x 14 inches

From 1938 onward, I was raised as a gentile. This situation persisted through our emigration to the United States in 1948. My parents were so frightened by events that they gave up their past entirely in order not to be again exposed to a similar situation.

In 1969, I met Ann Radding, and we have been together since. Ann was born in 1947 in Springfield, Massachusetts, into a large Jewish family. She has three brothers and many cousins, uncles, and aunts. I enjoyed getting involved in this family's "Jewishness," and eventually "came out of the closet." This was not an easy thing to do after years of contrary training. But with frequent exposure to Ann's family and circle of friends and Jewish events and, importantly, the connection with my cousins who had survived and were living in Israel, I am managing to rediscover my root culture.

TOBY KNOBEL FLUEK

I was born and grew up in Eastern Poland in the farming village of Czernica. In 1942, the Nazis forced my family, together with all the Jews, into the Ghetto Brody. After six months my older sister and I escaped from the ghetto during a rumor of the ghetto liquidation, not knowing if we would see our family again. I was hiding in the village barns, pigsties, and in the woods, living in fear every moment of the day and night. This terror lasted for a whole year.

The Russian army liberated our region in March 1944. My mother and I were the only survivors from our family of fifty people. We spent four years in the displaced persons camp in Fohrenwald, Germany, where I met my husband.

In 1949, my husband's mother and I came to the United States. For the last thirty years, I have been recreating my childhood, which I remember so vividly. I paint my family, relatives, and neighbors and our life in the village. I also paint about my painful experiences during the Holocaust and the gentiles, some of whom helped save my life.

I feel that my drawings are a memorial to my family, the people in Czernica, and the millions who perished so tragically. I published two books: *Memories of My Life in a Polish Village 1930-1949* and *Passover As I Remember It.* I will be leaving a legacy for my children, grandchildren, and others of their generation to remember.

Surcie, Hiding in the Bushes

My sister Surcie and I escaped from the ghetto in the middle of the night. We walked for hours through fields in a miserable snowy winter storm trying to reach Czernica. We hid separately wherever we could, in attics, cellars, and in the woods. At night, I would go to a peasant to beg for a piece of bread.

I met my sister in the woods one day. She said to me that she couldn't bear it. "I will go back to the ghetto to get father to come to the village and build a hiding place in the woods so we can all hide together." Unfortunately, she couldn't leave the ghetto again because my middle sister was in the hospital with typhoid fever. Surcie and my mother cared for her.

Toby Knoebel Fluek, *Surcie, Hiding in the Bushes*, 1985, charcoal, 16 x 20 inches

Toby Knoebel Fluek, *Hiding in the Pigsty*, 1985, watercolor, 16 x 20 inches

Hiding in the Pigsty

It was May 1943 when the liquidation of the ghetto began. Mother and Surcie hid in the cellar of a ghetto building. They actually buried themselves there. With their bare hands, they dug into the ground and covered the shawls on their backs with earth and lay there motionless. They heard the Germans running around the cellars calling, *"Juden heraus!"* (Jews, come out!). But they were not discovered. My sister was very nervous and later decided to look for a better place to hide. We never heard from her again. The next night, Mother sneaked out of the ghetto cellar and came to the village. I met her at Karolczycha's house, where we hid separately. Karolczycha, the village healer, was a good friend of Mother's.

SYLVIA SHERR

My artwork has generally been about people within the continuum of time. The influence for the work in this exhibition was a recent trip to my birthplace, Poland. This trip was a traumatic one for me. I had not seen my original home since I was a young child. Our family was able to escape the Holocaust by emigrating to the United States just before Poland was invaded by Germany. When we left our city of Zamosc, my mother said to me, "Remember this place and these people."

The mixed media work is entitled *Family Album*. The "old photographs" are drawings on clay slabs, reflecting the conventions of studio photography of the time between the two wars. They are recessed into wood panels, graves with life and time moving all around them.

It seems to me that the people in a photo album remain frozen in time while others go on living and experiencing the passage of time. Still, the spirits of those in the photo album are very real. Here are the spirits of my aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents left behind in Zamosc, Poland. I am able to bring them with me in this work.

Sylvia Sherr, *Album 1*, 1999, mixed media clay in panel, 14 x 18 inches

Sylvia Sherr, *Album 2*, 1999, mixed media clay in panel, 14 x 18 inches

Sylvia Sherr, *Album 3*, 1999, mixed media clay in panel, 18 x 14 inches

Sylvia Sherr, *Album 4*, 1999, mixed media clay in panel, 18 x 14 inches

Sylvia Sherr, *Album 5*, 1999, mixed media clay in panel, 14 x 18 inches

ANN SHORE

I was born Hania Goldman in a small town, Zabno, Poland, a place I as a child loved. It was a paradise for me. The whole town was our playground and all the Jewish people our family. During hot summer days, we bathed in the sparkling river flowing through our town and played in the meadows filled with flowers. In winter, we skated on an icy pond and coasted down a steep hill on sleighs. We were always surrounded by love and laughter. One day, it all disappeared. On March 10, 1942, in the middle of the night, German soldiers smashed down the door of our house, screaming and looking for my father. They came to my bed, pressed a gun to my head, and asked me where he was. I was petrified and replied that I did not know. On the way out, they saw a door to the cellar where my father was hiding. They went down and shot him to death. I was only twelve years old that day. Shortly after, in the middle of the night, my mother, my sister, and myself fled from our town. We located a poor widow with four children who lived in a countryside farm. She did not want to let us in, but, in exchange for all of our money and belongings, she allowed us to hide in a dark hayloft, above the house, under the thatched roof.

After a few months, when we had nothing left to give her, she ordered us to leave. My mother refused, knowing that if we left our hiding place, we would be caught and killed. Without a choice, the farm woman let us stay. Had she revealed us, she herself would have been punished.

Still, she made our lives extremely difficult. She took away the ladder to our hayloft and severed all contact with us. Whenever she would catch one of us climbing down, she would scream and curse. We were totally alone, without food or water, infested with lice, constantly hungry. My sister was sick and unable to be of help. Life became increasingly difficult. Everywhere, Polish farmers were on the lookout for Jews, hoping to catch them and denounce them to the Germans. Jews were desperately looking for places to hide. Jewish children, all alone, roamed the villages and forests begging for food and shelter. No one cared. No one came to our rescue.

After the war, we returned to our town, waiting for others to come back, but only fifteen people returned from their hiding places. The entire town, 700 Jews, perished in the concentration camps. Our vibrant Jewish community disappeared as if it had never existed. My uncles, aunts, cousins, and the two grandmothers that I loved had been murdered.

In 1991, I and several others organized the first international conference of children who survived the Holocaust by hiding. I am now the president of The Hidden Child Foundation/ADL. Our goals are to teach young people the consequences of bigotry and hatred and to pass on our legacy to future generations.

Ann Shore, *Zabno Series, Reflections On My Childhood*, 1983, acrylic on canvas, 50 x 40 inches

ARIE LEOPOLDO HAAS

After fifty-one years, I returned to the little village of Castelmassa, Italy, where I was in hiding with my sister, Adina, and my brother, Baruch, from 1943 to 1945. It was an emotional visit. My childhood friend and neighbor, Nemo Cuoghi, recognized me at once. He escorted my wife and me around the village which I remembered vividly.

My family came to Castelmassa at the end of 1941.We arrived from Ferramonti, an interim camp for Jewish people in Calabria. Originally from Poland, we settled in Trieste, Italy, in 1937. When the war began, we were sent to Ferramonti. In Castelmassa, my father had to go to the police station every day to sign up. We felt safe.

In the summer of 1943, Mussolini's government collapsed. The Germans at this time occupied the northern part of Italy. This is when the deportation of Jews to Germany started. We were brought to a prison in Rovigo where my parents stayed. The children were taken back to Castelmassa to the Ospizio, a three-story building which served as a hospital and an old age home. It was presided over by Catholic nuns. The wonderful nuns were always very attentive to our needs, especially to my little sister, Adina, who cried a great deal because she wanted her mother.

Suddenly one morning, it became very still outside. Looking out the window, I saw a group of civilian men with guns. They shouted in Italian for everyone to come out. The Germans were gone. The Americans were on their way.

A couple of weeks later, an army truck with Jewish soldiers from Palestine took my brother, sister, and me out of the Ospizio. The nuns cried, and so did we. We headed to Mestre and then to Rome, where we stayed with other Jewish children before going to Palestine.

Arie Leopoldo Haas, *Castelmassa, Italy, 1943*, 1995,
pen and ink on paper, 15 x 20 inches

LORE BAER

I was born in Amsterdam, Holland, just before World War II. My parents fled to Holland from Germany to escape Hitler. At age five, my only grandparent, my Opa, was sent to Westerbrok - a transit camp in Holland, and I was separated from my parents and sent into hiding. First I lived with a young couple in Amsterdam, but when that became too dangerous for everyone, the Dutch underground placed me with righteous Catholic farmers in a tiny village fifty miles north of Amsterdam. I remained there for two years and was reunited with my mother and father at the end of the war. My grandfather was exterminated in Bergen Belsen. I was reunited with my hiding family in 1990 and have been close with them ever since. They were honored at Yad Vashem. Cornelia, my main caretaker during the war, died in August 2000.

I am the director of the Speakers Bureau of The Hidden Child Foundation/ADL. My main function is providing Holocaust survivors as speakers to educational, religious, and civic organizations in order to keep the memory of the Holocaust and all who perished alive. I also facilitate monthly social support groups for Holocaust survivors. I am a licensed, board-certified art therapist and have exhibited my work in numerous galleries, museums, and libraries throughout New York and New Jersey. My most recent work deals with the Holocaust.

Lore Baer, "*...and then you were gone"* for my grandfather who died in Bergen Belsen, 1997, mixed media, 30 x 23 inches

Zois Shuttie, *The Saved Hidden Children*, 1982, oil on wood, 20 x 24 inches

ZOIS SHUTTIE

As a toddler, Zois Shuttie was first introduced to Nazi bombardments of innocent civilians in Lushnaj, Albania, from which he was dug out next to his older brother. Both had been buried alive. He grew up later with the pain, the suffering, and the dying inherited by the Communist ideology, which he escaped from in 1964. His art is his own testimony of that Holocaust.

The only freedom this artist has enjoyed away from the bitter reality of slowly dying is his art.

When life and imagination were interwoven in his own tissue, Zois Shuttie found a new meaning to his innocence.

It was when he was dug out from under the rubble of the World War II bombardments of his birthtown, Lushnaj, wrapped in bandages, crying and sobbing, with stubs of burnt wood on his shaking hands, that he scribbled on the bare walls of the ruins his first drawings. He was only six years old.

JERZY BITTER

In April 1941, two years after the war began in Poland and the year Hitler's Final Solution for the "Jewish problem" commenced, Jerzy Bitter was born in Lvov, Poland. Shortly thereafter, his family was sent to the Warsaw Ghetto. However, they were able to escape and were hidden by non-Jews. Thus, he became one of only a handful of Jewish children to survive the Warsaw Ghetto. Although his parents survived, the Nazis killed his grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

As a child, he listened to people who survived - from the camps, from being in hiding - tell their stories. Between the ages of seven and nine, he immersed himself in reading his father's library of memoirs of the Holocaust and learning about what happened to his family, neighbors, and others at the hands of the Nazis.

In 1967, having already achieved an M.S. in chemistry, a motorcycle accident in Israel left Jerzy half paralyzed on his right side and in despair. Now in New York, a friend encouraged him to deal with his depression by drawing. Seizing upon the brutal memories of his youth and learning to use his left hand, he studied at The Art Students League and achieved a Master of Fine Arts at New York University by 1975.

His feelings of loss, isolation, and despair, internalized as a child, are in strong evidence through the use of stark portrayals of figures in his artwork.

Jerzy Bitter, *Alienation*, 2000, oil on canvas, 40 x 50 inches

RUTH MALLISON

Ruth Mallison, born in Breslau, Germany (now Poland), fled with her immediate family after her father, a physician, had been warned by one of his patients that the Nazis were to pick him up for deportation. Their visa to come to America, which had been difficult to obtain, was not until late fall of 1938, but they were fortunate to fly out of Germany, from Hamburg, on the last plane on which Jews were not removed to scrub the airport.

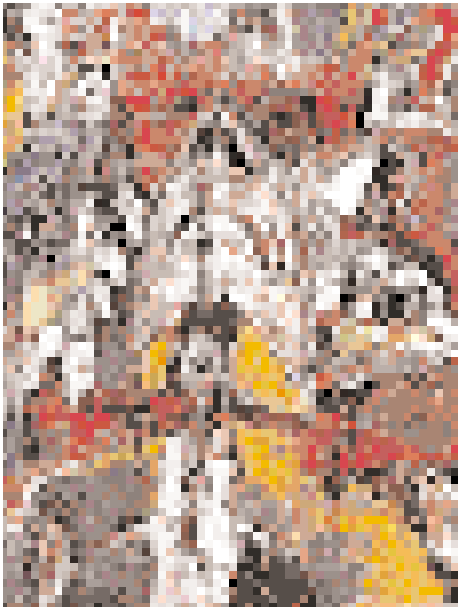
After a short time in Holland, staying with friends or family members, they crossed over to England and took the "Queen Mary" to New York City. Ruth turned thirteen during this week-long boat trip.

Ruth Mallison, *Sleepwalker*, 1989, mixed media, 14 1/2 x 14 1/2 inches

Ruth Mallison, *Pause*, 1986, mixed media, 13 1/4 x 17 1/2 inches

The family was without any money, so her mother scrubbed floors and night-nursed while her father studied English in order to repeat his medical examinations. Ruth went to high school, graduated with honors at fifteen, and, soon after, became self-supporting when her father opened his practice in New Jersey. She attended Hunter College for two years. Too young to work legally, she worked as governess and housekeeper in return for a place to stay. There was no time to reflect on the difficulties of such a life; one was too busy trying to survive.

ANNEKE PRINS SIMONS



Anneke Prins Simons, *The Wounded Woundings*, 1999, acrylic on paper, 14 x 11 inches

It was in an old house, with Rembrandtesque lighting, in the center of Amsterdam, that I was born. Food was good, education thorough, and everyone's religion respected. At age eight, I felt a certain sense of dread, magnified by the high pitched guillotine voice of Hitler heard over the radio. In 1939, Poland was invaded. My parents, who had traveled for a number of years to the United States, took their children with them for safekeeping to friends on Long Island. They planned to return to Holland in May 1940, but they received a telegram warning them that they should not return. Ten days later, Holland was occupied. My family moved to New York, and we lived there together during the war years.

My parents having to go back to Holland, they found a devastated Europe and a decimated family. Grandmother, uncle, cousin, and numerous others perished in the camps. The children remained in the United States by choice. At fifteen, away from family and country of origin, I often felt alone, an outsider.

My work incorporates some of these experiences - death, destruction, injustice, and the sense of being an outsider. Nevertheless, I feel a tremendous gratitude for my life - which was saved - and for the freedom to express visually and verbally my deepest concerns derived from these experiences. These concerns of injustice, death, and displacement also relate to the present - to the suffering of so many throughout the world.

Ephraim Peleg, *Wings of Freedom # 1*, 1998, painted steel, 16 x 30 x 26 inches

EPHRAIM PELEG

Ephraim Peleg was born Ferdynand Verderber in Krakow, Poland, to upper middle-class parents. When he was only four years old, his family was forced to move to a tiny apartment in the Krakow Ghetto, which they shared with an aunt, uncle, and their two daughters. When life in the ghetto further deteriorated, Ephraim and his brother were hidden at his gentile housekeeper's home where they were instructed not to reveal their Jewish identity. Until the war ended, they were constantly moved to different hiding places.

Following the war, Ephraim and his brother were sent to live on a kibbutz in Israel. They arrived as orphans, since both parents were killed in the concentration camps.

Ephraim came to the United Stated in 1978 when he was commissioned by a well-known art collector to create a large sculpture. A tragedy occurred in 1982 when Ephraim's twenty-year-old son, Avihu, was killed during Israel's war with Lebanon. This traumatic event caused Ephraim to refocus his feelings about the Holocaust and to create sculptures that symbolized the survival and continuity of the Jewish people. Most of his work now centers on the replication of six figures, with each representing one million souls. The continuing struggle for freedom for all people continues to be his inspiration for new works.

Helen Belle, *The Holocaust*, 1990,
black soapstone, 20 x 12 inches

HATE

Hate, the vision of you puts me in despair
Hate, your reflection casts shadows in the air.

I feel your massive wings
Like a heavy pendulum it swings and swings,
With visible dimension, it was clear of your intention.

Hate, who sent you here, your current pulls and pulls
and causes fear.

Your voyage in movement, brings heaven down,
The sound of broken glass, flames smoke and gas.

I feel your massive wings,
Like a heavy pendulum it swings and swings.

With visible dimension it was clear of your intention.

Hate, it is still not too late, this earth is ours to keep.

Your absence means peace on earth
A perfect place to live.

Our children must not cry,
The echoes of their laughter should reach the sky,
Like butterflies, they want to fly, not die, not die.

JUDITH GOLDSTEIN

ANNA WALINSKA

Most of Anna Walinska's work on the theme of the Holocaust was produced before the world was ready to build museums and memorials where people might come to view it.

The painting she considered her greatest achievement - *Survivors*, 1953 - made its public debut in 1957 at a one-woman show at the Jewish Museum in New York, but the Holocaust works were not displayed as a group until 1979. This exhibition of 122 painting and drawings, sponsored by the Museum of Religious Art at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, while praised by art critics and visitors, led some to wonder: how could someone who had not experienced the Holocaust firsthand create such art?

"I can only say that for me this theme has exercised an inescapable compulsion," Walinska explained at the time. "The paintings and drawings of images in flight, embracing, parting, being herded together for deportation, the bodies in the pits, are all metaphors for the Jewish community disappearing in the Holocaust. With each image, I have attempted time and again to renew, to deepen, and to strengthen the statement… In a sense, we are all survivors. We all share the burden and the memory."

For Walinska, depicting the Holocaust was an inevitable outgrowth of a strong Jewish family heritage. Born in London in 1906 to Russian immigrants, she was the daughter of labor leader Ossip Walinsky and sculptor-poet-activist Rosa Newman Walinska. In 1914, the family relocated to New York and became a magnet for the intelligentsia. They were active in the union movement, the founding of the State of Israel, and the Yiddish theatre, where Walinska appeared for a season under the name Vera Stanova.

In the last two decades, many of Walinska's Holocaust works have become part of prestigious collections in the United States and Israel. Since her death in 1997, her nieces Rosina and Lisa Rubin have organized major exhibitions of her Holocaust works worldwide.

SILENCE

All are lying still, enveloped
With a white, white still-
ness.
Only Death moves about
On tip toes, with quiet steps.
In the silence one hears a
groan
Oh, Let me be!
Oh, Let me be!

Anna Walinska, *Mother and Child*, 1960,
oil on shan paper, 24 x 22 1/4 inches

Anna Walinska, *Victims: In the Camps*,
1978, oil on paper, 44 x 31 1/2 inches

THE SOUL

Your greatest possession
Is your soul

Take it -- can no one.

Though you be covered
With dust
You still remain
Mankind -- innocent.

Silence and *The Soul*, from *Ink & Clay: Poems & Sculpture* by Rosa Newman Walinska, 1942
(Yiddish-English translation by Emily Walinksy Rubin and Anna Walinska, 1993)

Estelle Yarinsky, *Kristallnacht*, 1995, quilted wall hanging, 40 x 28 inches

ESTELLE YARINSKY

On November 8-9, 1938, the Nazis stormed through German cities, pillaging, terrorizing, and killing Jewish citizens. Prior to this event, Hitler had decreed that Germans were forbidden to shop at Jewish-owned stores. The "Night of Broken Glass" went one step further to doom this portion of the population. The wallhanging depicts a Jewish milliner's shop from the inside, looking out at the damage. Government-sanctioned hoodlums painted the word "Jew" on many shop windows.

Estelle Yarinsky, *I Love Paris in the Summer When It Sizzles*, 1995, quilted wall hanging, 33 x 43 inches

Complicity by local police poisoned Nazi-occupied northern France, including Paris. Secret operation "Vint Printainer" (spring wind) was carried out on July 16-17, 1942, in Paris. Twelve thousand Jewish citizens were dragged from their homes and brought to the Velodrome d'Hiver, an enclosed sports stadium. They were kept there without the basic necessities of life before transfer to the Gare D'Austerlitz train station and into concentration camps. Most died in Auschwitz in occupied Poland.

I hope viewers feel the terrible irony in the title of this piece, from the playful movie, "Can-Can."

Estelle Yarinsky, *Not All Fabrics Are Created Equal*, 1995, quilted wall hanging, 32 x 27 inches

Freight trains, packed with suffering humanity, transported Jews to Auschwitz. Edvard Munch's evocative painting, "The Scream," speaks to me of individual and group agony. The heat of the concentration camp ovens, the dispersed smoke, the silence of Europe and the United States even when the evil action was known, will forever after give us cause to scream.

Estelle Yarinsky, *Deportation*, 1995, quilted wall hanging, 29 x 27 inches

I got the title from a friend's postcard message from Israel. She had visited Yad Vashem, the memorial to those who perished in World War II. The postcard showed "yellow stars or marks thrust upon Jews all over occupied Europe." Yellow patches, concentration camp uniforms, jagged dark shapes, a crematorium smoke stack, appear in this work. The fabric patches cannot be forgotten.

Estelle Yarinsky, *The A Train*, 1995, quilted wall hanging, 38 x 30 inches

Different colored patches were used by the Nazis to identify each captured "undesirable" (e.g., yellow for Jew, pink for homosexual). In this piece, a large swastika is the background over which the triangles are sewn. Harsh metallic braid and sharp, pointed edges anticipate the hell which awaited the victims.

Daniel Paley Ellison, *Seamless Monument #8*, 1999,
gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

Daniel Paley Ellison, *Seamless Monument #13*, 1999,
gelatin silver print , 8 x 10 inches

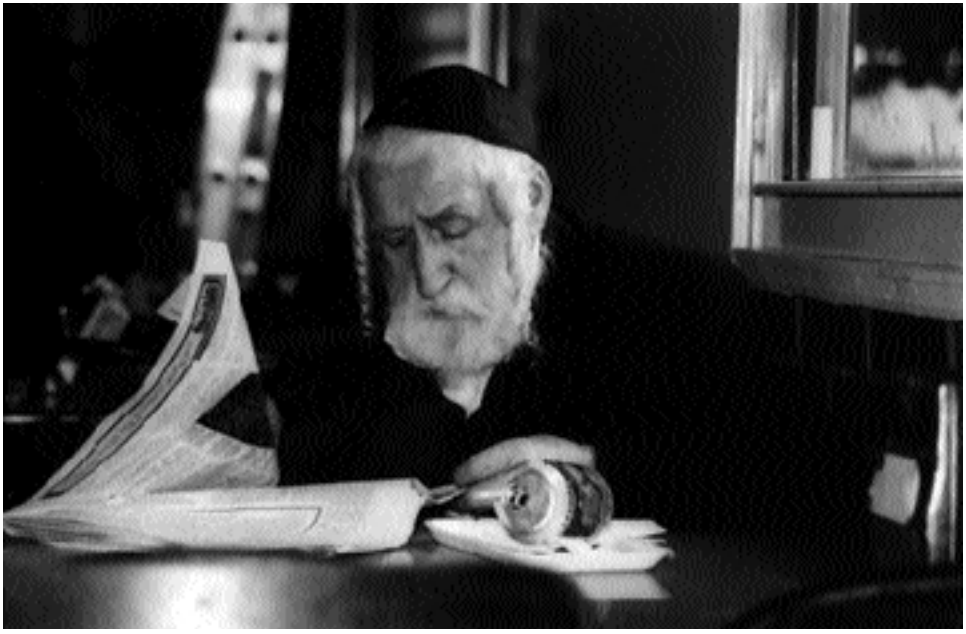
Daniel Paley Ellison, *Seamless Monument #12*, 1999,
gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

DANIEL PALEY ELLISON

In the pond,
someone left apples
to bob
on the surface,
where countless
bodies of ash -
spurned.
They're red.

Barking, of dogs,
echoes
chimney to chimney
rail to rail,

the barking,
the sounding of a shofar,
and the apples float
in their redness.



Kitty Katz, *Jakob Hollander, Williamsburg, Brooklyn*, 2000, gelatin silver print, 11 x 14 inches

Like many of the elderly living in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York, Jakob Hollander is a religious Jew and concentration camp survivor, originally from Romania. Other Holocaust survivors who settled there are Satmars, members of a Hasidic sect from Hungary. In fact, Williamsburg saw its largest influx of ultra-Orthodox and Hasidic groups in the postwar years when its population swelled with survivors of the Holocaust. They replaced the earlier Eastern European immigrants who were moving to the suburbs. Their presence transformed a neighborhood in decline into a burgeoning and vital "strictly kosher" community pulsing with old-world charm and new Jewish life.

Mr. Hollander allowed me to photograph him having lunch at the "Golden Ring" restaurant on Keap Street.

KITTY KATZ

Janet Glazer, *Terezin Series 1*, 1998,
gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

Janet Glazer, *Terezin Series 2*, 1998,
gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

Janet Glazer, *Terezin Series 3*, 1998,
gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

JANET GLAZER

My trip to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in August 1998 began a new cycle in my life. For the first time, I would return from a vacation to an empty house. My father had passed away the previous autumn and my mother two-and-a-half years before that. My family now consisted of only my brother, who lives out in Minneapolis, and me. I chose a trip to Prague because of its music, art, and architecture. What I had not come to see were the concentration camps. But, once there, feeling the emptiness of this once vibrant Jewish community, I knew I had to go. So, I went - to three camps. To say it was surreal doesn't quite describe the experience, but it is close. I was lucky because my camera saved me by separating me from the reality of the horrors experienced in these places. My armor protected me, and somehow I managed to get through it, but I wasn't prepared for what happened when I returned home. With my guard down once back in New York, I was flooded with the emotions that I had bottled up inside of me. I could only thank God for sending my grandparents over here at the turn of the century, though I'm sure some other people in my family perished. My father's mother came from Galicia. I was in Krakow when I found out where Galicia was, just south of Krakow. In the continuing cycles of life, it seems appropriate that, following my father's death, I should be near the place where his family once lived.

Marcia Annenberg, *Resistance*, 1992, acrylic on canvas, 32 x 44 inches

Resistance is based both on a painting by Goya, *The Execution of the Third of May, 1812,* and a photo taken in the Warsaw Ghetto. In the photo, a group of rabbis is surrounded by Nazi soldiers. There is no escape. It was only a short time from the burning of books in Nazi Germany to the burning of bodies. Goya's depiction of cruelty in war provided an apt compositional device for this subject. In the foreground, I have placed Nazi helmets instead of the backs of Napoleon's army. The background mirrors that of Goya's to illustrate the continuity of man's suffering.

MARCIA ANNENBERG

Paula Goldfader, *In The Lord's House*, 2000, multimedia photography, 9.6 x 12 inches

While I was learning to jump rope and play hide and seek, 1.9 million Jewish children were killed by the Germans and their collaborators.

The children in my picture lived in the town of Usciluga, Poland, and were relatives of a dear friend of mine, Toby Paleschuk. They never finished learning or playing their childhood games. They were murdered by the Germans right in their hometown.

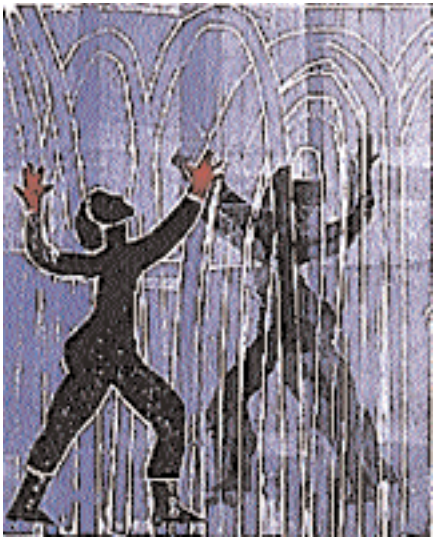
PAULA GOLDFADER

~

The little ones leaped, shouted and laugh'd
and all the hills echoed.....
And then they were stilled.

William Blake

Linda Dujack, *We're Still Women,* 2000,
monoprint, 14 1/2 x 11 inches



Linda Dujack, *Trapped*, 2000,
monoprint, 7 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches

THE SURVIVOR

I Did Not Know That Death I Feared
Until It Knocked Upon My Door.
It Ripped My Hair And Took My Strength
And Scarred My Body And Robbed My Soul.
It Took Away My Confidence.
But Then Against The Wind And Snow
I Fought Like Hell
To Capture Back My Confidence
And Reclaim My Soul.

LINDA DUJACK

RICHARD A. BYRNES

When my twenty-seven-year-old son Douglas died on July 9, 1999, I was forced to consider the one reality we so casually dismiss - the sudden end of life.

Over the years, I have always collected images from newspapers which attracted my attention because of some graphic quality or content. Among the recent ones were shots of a morgue in Bosnia. The casual disposition of dead in Russia and Africa. Neat rows of dead young soldiers lined up on a floor. Mass graves uncovered.

The living figures among the dead were captured in poses that reminded me of the Greek bronzes found in the sea, of ideal forms we artists draw in figure sessions. The ideal contrasted with the reality became a theme in a series of collage lithographs and etchings.

This lithograph, *Drawn From Life - Holocaust*, presents that theme within the context of the Nazi years, recreated from memories of my own youth when, as a thirteen-year-old, I first saw those horrific images in newsreels and the press.

A scene of death combined with, but separated from, an image of a nude studio model contrasts not simply life and death but also human idealism and the hard reality of human indifference, waste, and war.

Richard A. Brynes, *Drawn from Life - Holocaust*, 2000, lithograph, 22 x 30 inches

Jerzy Bitter, *Finality*, 2000, oil on canvas, 50 x 40 inches

In memory of my brave cousin, Shana Lent, who at age seventeen, fought and fell in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, April 1943.

This painting was sponsored by Puffin Foundation Ltd.

BELA TARASEISKEY

Illustrating both the fear and the unspoken compassion stirred by the Holocaust, *In Hiding* tells the tale of Rosa Lurie, the artist's mother, and her cousin, Sara Furmansky, both of whom hid in a Lithuanian woman's potato storage hole under a field during part of the Holocaust. Born in the small town of Kedynia, Lithuania, Rosa and Sara were taken to the Rasain Ghetto in 1941. When their families were informed that the entire ghetto was to be deported to a concentration camp, Sara's mother told the two that their blonde hair and "non-Semitic" features gave them a chance for survival. Sara and Rosa escaped to the forests, where they met a Lithuanian neighbor who agreed to hide them in her field. For nearly a year, the two cousins could only come out of the hole at night to get food from the woman. The hole was eventually evacuated in the winter when the freezing temperatures made it unbearable to stay. Though Rosa and Sara survived and were able to return to thank the woman, their families did not. Rosa's first husband was killed in the war. She later remarried and moved to Israel, passing away in 1973. Sara Furmansky Gurvich, mother and grandmother, still lives in Israel.

This artwork is a tribute to both the fortitude of the artist's mother and cousin, and the heroic deeds of people like this Lithuanian angel who risked their own lives to save those persecuted.

Bela Taraseiskey, *In Hiding*, 2000, mixed media, 11 x 8 inches

Sheila Archer, *Everlasting*, 2000, gelatin silver print, 11 x 14 inches

Hedy Sontag Girasche, Survivor, Artist, Actress, Teacher, Wife, and Mother

We had to be quiet. We could not speak. We could not make a sound. I learned to hold everything inside. I was three-and-a-half years old.

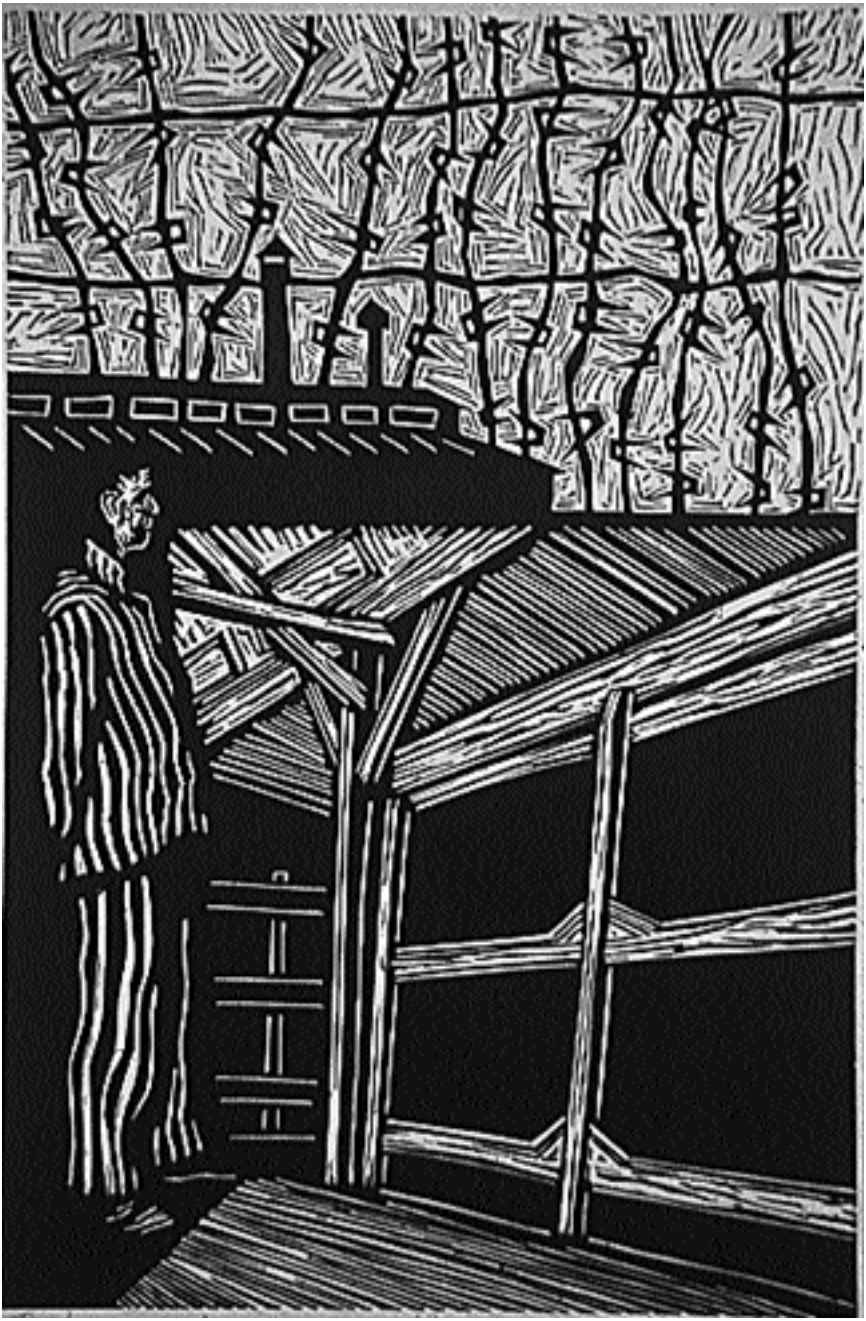
To escape from Poland, we hid in the forests of the Carpathian Mountains. The terrifying woods became a haven. Huge, dark fir trees reaching to heaven offered shelter, protection.

But, always, there were war planes overhead. The sound of destruction. I still react.

We were not allowed to need anything - because there was nothing. Always, we were hungry. I remember when we came to America how I was impressed with all the food in the walls in the Horn and Hardart Cafeteria. You could eat anything you wanted, and the Gestapo did not come in.

Later on, I had so much anger. Why didn't we fight back? Later on, there was an unrelenting search in all the arts so I could let everything out. My search, my art is everlasting.

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOGRAPH BY SHEILA ARCHER



Stanley Kaplan, *Survivor*, 1996, linocut, 18 x 12 inches

STANLEY KAPLAN

In May 1945 we were stationed in Germany. The war in Europe was over. While we were sitting in our tent, an officer asked if any of us wanted to see the Buchenwald concentration camp in Weimar, fifty miles southwest of Leipzig and about twenty minutes from where we were. I had seen photographs and read reports of liberated camps in the army newspaper. Buchenwald had been cleaned up, and a few former prisoners were there to show us around.

In our group of ten, we had a smattering of French, German, Yiddish, and Polish. This knowledge made our understanding of what the survivors told and showed us painfully vivid - how prisoners had been constantly tortured every day. The camp held 40,000 survivors when liberated. They were confined to unbelievably overcrowded barracks. It wasn't hard to imagine the stench from urine and feces. Beds were wooden compartments with twelve people squeezed into a space meant for six. During the winter, many froze to death or suffered frostbite. There was only one latrine for the whole camp. The hospital was a barracks, with compartments for different diseases. There was hardly any food, and few had blankets. They wore thin prison uniforms. The sick lay untended until they died. The dead were stacked in three-foot high piles in a nearby stable where they were found by the U.S. Army.

From the barracks, we were taken to the crematorium. The dead were put on steel stretchers and shoved into furnaces. When fuel was hard to get, bodies were burned to keep the German soldiers' barracks warm. Typhus spread throughout the camp because of the filth. Political prisoners were kept alive to be tortured. Many were thrown into a fifteen-foot pit and beaten by German soldiers waiting there for them. Despite an attempted whitewashing of the walls, blood and scars were still visible. One Jewish survivor told me that regularly, at three in the morning, Jews, including children, were summoned out of the barracks and beaten until unconscious.

Polish prisoners told us how they were piled into a truck that would ride all day. Suffocation and starvation killed hundreds, and some, frenzied from hunger, resorted to cannibalism. Buchenwald was, for me, human cruelty and suffering beyond anything I had seen during combat.

Fran Brill, *Temple Beth Israel*, 2000, C-print, 8 x 10 inches

Fran Brill, *Anniversary Celebration*, 2000, C-print, 8 x 10 inches

Temple Beth Israel, a synagogue located in a small town in Connecticut, became the home to a primarily survivor farming community. One survivor brought another and then another, and the community grew. The synagogue was the center of our religious, spiritual, educational, and social life. The congregation built it, and we went back to celebrate its Fiftieth Anniversary on September 16, 2000.

We each became one another's family and support network, and my brother, sister, and I grew up with other children of survivors. We were all going through the same issues with our parents, and there was a great feeling of camaraderie and acceptance.

FRAN BRILL

Sharon Muenzer-Katz, *Taberteens*, 1999, gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches

The Taberteens

We were all friends from the beginning - the beginning, when our parents came to New York to escape Nazi-occupied Europe and all settled in Washington Heights. We're all children of Holocaust survivors - friends from infancy, friends as toddlers, friends as teenagers, friends as young adults, and still friends today. The common bond of our background cemented our friendship.

We are now each other's families, as we have no other family. We feel bound to each other.

SHARON MUENZER-KATZ

Peter Cunningham, *Sufi Service,* 1997, digital laser print, 10 x 15 inches

Peter Cunningham, *The List*, 1998, digital laser print, 10 x 15 inches

KADDISH

May the Great Name whose Desire gave birth
to the universe Resound through the Creation.
Now,
May this Great Presence rule your life and
your day and all lives of our world.
And say, Yes, Amen.

Throughout all Space, Bless, Bless this Great Name.
Throughout all Time.

Though we bless, and praise, and beautify and offer up your name,
Name That is Holy, Blessed One,
still you remain beyond the reach of our praise, our song,
beyond the reach of all consolation, Beyond! Beyond!
And say, Yes. Amen.

Let God's Name give birth to Great Peace and Life
for us and all people.
And say, Yes. Amen.

The One who has given a universe of Peace
gives peace to us, to all that is Israel.

And say, Yes. Amen.

English Translation by Rabbi Don Singer

Anna Walinska, *Survivors: Three Musicians*, 1956, oil on canvas, 47 x 37 inches

The world burns-
I put out the flames
With my tears.
I cry aloud from the window
So that all may hear,
A new world will come
A new world is coming…

The World Burns, from *Ink & Clay: Poems & Sculpture* by Rosa Newman Walinska, 1942 (Yiddish-English translation by Emily Walinksy Rubin and Anna Walinska, 1993)