



"BLEU / NUIT. ART AFTER THE CAMPS. AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY SHELOMO SELINGER"

32ND MARCH OF THE LIVING "ORDINARY –
EXTRAORDINARY"
IN THE WORLD
WAR TWO
MUSEUM IN
GDAŃSK

BEHIND EVERY
NAME IS A
PERSON: PIECING
TOGETHER THE
STORIES OF
BABYN YAR

THE WORK MUST GO ON: 25 YEARS OF THE STOCKHOLM DECLARATION

TABLE OF CONTENT

32ND MARCH OF THE LIVING

USHMM ACQUIRES ITS FIRST COLLECTION FROM A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR OF PERSIAN DESCENT

"BLEU / NUIT. ART AFTER THE CAMPS.
AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY SHELOMO SELINGER"

"ORDINARY – EXTRAORDINARY" AT THE WORLD WAR II MUSEUM IN GDAŃSK

BEHIND EVERY NAME IS A PERSON: PIECING TOGETHER THE STORIES OF BABYN YAR

THE WORK MUST GO ON: 25 YEARS OF THE STOCKHOLM DECLARATION

CALL FOR PAPERS: WOMEN IN THE HOLOCAUST

We invite all of you to work closely with us. We would be grateful to receive information about events, projects, publications, exhibitions, conferences or research that we should share with our readers. We also accept proposals for articles.

Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-Chief

Our e-mail: memoria@auschwitz.org

Please do share information about this magazine with others, particularly via social media.

All editions: memoria.auschwitz.org

32ND MARCH OF THE LIVING

On 24 April 2025, the 32nd March of the Living took place on the grounds of the former German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz. Leading the approximately 8,000 participants was a group of around 80 Survivors of Auschwitz and the Holocaust, as well as the Presidents of Poland and Israel:

Andrzej Duda and Isaac Herzog.

Before the march, the Presidents laid wreaths at the Death Wall in the former Auschwitz I camp to commemorate all the victims of the camp, visited the "Shoah" exhibition in Block 27, and participated in a meeting with Polish and Israeli youth.

President Andrzej Duda described the march as a special demonstration: "Firstly of life, secondly of remembrance, but also a dramatic call of 'never again': never again hatred, never again chauvinism, never again antisemitism."

"It is unacceptable to remain silent in the face of any manifestations of hatred between nations, or any manifestations of racial or ethnic hatred. Because if hatred is met with silence, the ultimate effect can be what happened here, what was done by the Germans here during World War II when, driven by ethnic hatred and a wild lust for destruction, they attempted to erase the Jewish nation from humanity," emphasized Andrzej Duda.

"Of the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, three million were Polish citizens. This is an incomprehensible number. Within six years, practically the entire Jewish community on the territory of Nazi-occupied Poland, one of the greatest Jewish communities in the world, was destroyed. Both my wife and I are descendants of this community," said Israeli President Isaac Herzog.

"I believe that our presence in this sacred place reflects our commitment to walk together into the future, drawing strength from the memory of the past. The resumption of youth delegations from Israel traveling to Poland is a very important step that highlights how deeply we wish to jointly teach future generations the significance of unity and fraternity between nations," he added.

This year's march was dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the German Nazi camps, including Auschwitz.

It also coincided with the 10th anniversary of the death of Professor Władysław Bartoszewski, a Survivor of Auschwitz, who as Chairman of the International Auschwitz Council was one of the main architects of the international consensus on the preservation and future of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial. In 2009, he became a Founding Donor of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation, aimed at preserving the authenticity of the site and its remains.

Among the approximately 8,000 participants — mainly young Jews from nearly 50 countries, along with a several hundred-strong group of Polish students — was Merrill Eisenhower, great-grandson of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, U.S. President and Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces who oversaw the liberation of many concentration camps.



President Andrzej Duda described the march as a special demonstration: "Firstly of life, secondly of remembrance, but also a dramatic call of 'never again': never again hatred, never again chauvinism, never again antisemitism."

USHMM ACQUIRES ITS FIRST COLLECTION FROM A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR OF PERSIAN DESCENT

The family of a Jewish Iranian Holocaust survivor donated his detailed diary of survival from incarceration camps in Vichy France to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum today. The diary of Menashe Ezrapour is a rare addition to the Museum – the first and only artifact so far in its collection of more than 27,000 objects that is associated with a Holocaust survivor of Persian descent.

"My father's diary is more than his words on a page—it is a testament to resilience, a voice that refuses to be silenced, and

a bridge between the past and the future," says Caroline Yona, of Los Angeles, who donated her father's diary to the Museum on April 2. "By donating it to the Museum, I honor his story and ensure that his voice will echo through history so that generations to come will remember, learn and never forget."

"The importance of this diary to the Museum's collection and to the historical record is extraordinary," said Tad Stahnke, the William and Sheila Konar director of international education outreach for the Museum. "Ezrapour's writing will begin to fill in the gaps about an underrepresented group of Holocaust victims and survivors."

Since 2020, the Museum's Sardari Project with IranWire.com has engaged young Iranians about the history and the relevance of the Holocaust to them. Stahnke says, "Ezrapour's diary provides a direct link to Iran, the Second World War and the Holocaust through a primary source for an audience the Museum has worked to reach for several years – young people living in Iran – who have been exposed to the regime's incessant Holocaust denial and censorship of accurate information about the Holocaust for as long as they have been alive."

As the survivor generation diminishes in number, the Museum is in a race against time to rescue the evidence of the Holocaust. The Museum's collection of the Holocaust documents the fate of Holocaust victims, survivors, rescuers, liberators, and others through artifacts, documents, photos, films, books, personal stories, and more.

With the window of opportunity in collecting these fragile materials closing, the Museum has intensified its efforts, actively collecting in 50 countries on six continents, in order to build the authoritative collection of records on the Holocaust and making it fully accessible and preserved for future education, research, and scholarship. To date, the Museum holds about 300 diaries in its collection.

"The history of Iran and the Holocaust has been an underrepresented subject in our collection," says James Gilmore,

a collections curator for the Museum. "So, we are thrilled to have Menashe Ezrapour's



"My father's diary is more than his words on a page—it is a testament to resilience, a voice that refuses to be silenced, and

a bridge between the past and the future," says Caroline Yona, of Los Angeles, who donated her father's diary to the Museum on April 2. "By donating it to the Museum, I honor his story and ensure that his voice will echo through history so that generations to come will remember, learn and never forget."

"The importance of this diary to the Museum's collection and to the historical record is extraordinary," said Tad Stahnke, the William and Sheila Konar director of international education outreach for the Museum. "Ezrapour's writing will begin to fill in the gaps about an underrepresented group of Holocaust victims and survivors."

Since 2020, the Museum's Sardari Project with IranWire.com has engaged young Iranians about the history and the relevance of the Holocaust to them. Stahnke says, "Ezrapour's diary provides a direct link to Iran, the Second World War and the Holocaust through a primary source for an audience the Museum has worked to reach for several years – young people living in Iran – who have been exposed to the

"BLEU / NUIT. ART AFTER THE CAMPS. AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY SHELOMO SELINGER"

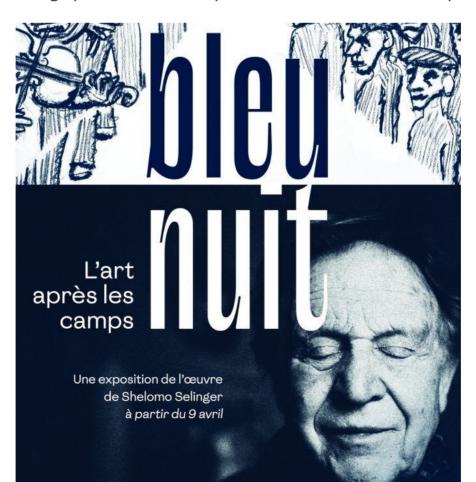
"Bleu / Nuit. Art after the camps. The exhibition of works by Shelomo Selinger" showcases a selection of artworks that reflect the artistic journey of this Holocaust survivor. The exhibition highlights his artistic themes – celebrating life while honouring the memory of the deceased – and his favourite techniques, including stone sculpture (using the direct method), bas-reliefs, drawings, and woodcuts.

Opening on April 9, this exhibition pays tribute to the extraordinary life and creative path of Shelomo Selinger, both as an artist and

a witness. It takes place at the Drancy Holocaust Memorial, a building inaugurated in 2012, situated opposite the Monument to the Deportees, which Selinger himself designed in 1976 in remembrance of the former internment camp located in Drancy. Comprising around 60 works, many of which are being displayed or published for the first time, this exhibition invites visitors to explore the richness and diversity of Shelomo Selinger's art, revealing its profound humanistic dimension.

"Those who have experienced concentration camps will never truly escape their memories. They linger every night, and with them, every morning, are the souls of those who were murdered beside me—testaments to the overwhelming, formless darkness from which I carve out hope." (Shelomo Selinger)

The exhibition charts Shelomo Selinger's personal and artistic journey, featuring a curated collection of graphic works and sculptures. The Monument to the Deportees, erected by



Opening on April 9, this exhibition pays tribute to the extraordinary life and creative path of Shelomo Selinger, both as an artist and

a witness. It takes place at the Drancy Holocaust Memorial, a building inaugurated in 2012, situated opposite the Monument to the Deportees, which Selinger himself designed in 1976 in remembrance of the former internment camp located in Drancy. Comprising around 60 works, many of which are being displayed or published for the first time, this exhibition invites visitors to explore the richness and diversity of Shelomo Selinger's art, revealing its profound humanistic dimension.

"Those who have experienced concentration camps will never truly escape their memories. They linger every night, and with them, every morning, are the souls of those who were murdered beside me—testaments to the overwhelming, formless darkness from which I carve out hope." (Shelomo Selinger)

The exhibition charts Shelomo Selinger's personal and artistic journey, featuring a curated collection of graphic works and sculptures. The Monument to the Deportees, erected by the artist in 1976 in front of the La Muette housing estate, signifies a pivotal moment in his artistic journey. A model of this monument can be found on the third level of the permanent exhibition, conveniently located near the glass windows overlooking La Muette and beside three sculptures depicting the Shoah's heroines.

The project in Drancy opened new avenues for the artist to delve into the theme of memory, which, while always a part of his work, had never been expressed so directly as in the large-format charcoal drawings showcased here. In contrast, other drawings highlight themes of dance and music, both of which hold significant importance in his oeuvre. Additionally, the exhibition features selected reliefs and illustrations created by the artist for his close friend, poet Bruno Durocher (1919–1996). Like Selinger, Durocher was born in Poland and survived the German camps. The interplay between poetry and drawing reflects their shared determination to create amid the shadows of their past.

In 1972, Selinger emerged as the unanimous winner of an international competition to design the Monument to the Deportees in front of the La Muette housing estate in Drancy. This project was initiated in 1963 by then-mayor Maurice Nilès. After four years of dedicated work, during which he spent two years living in a caravan at a pink granite quarry near Perros-Guirec, Selinger completed the monument's three parts, which were unveiled in 1976 atop a small hill that serves as a pedestal. Together, these three sculptures form the Hebrew letter shin ().

This motif symbolises unity, even amidst the differences between the two side blocks, which the artist likens to the gates of hell. His wife, Ruth, contributed by designing the initials of the texts engraved on the stone for these blocks. The central element features human figures entwined in an embrace—a gesture that conveys both the embrace of death and the embrace of love. This duality captures the essence of Selinger's work, as it honours the dead while simultaneously celebrating life.

Unlike many of his contemporaries who survived the camps, Selinger did not create art during his imprisonment. It wasn't until the war ended in 1951 and he moved to Israel, where he met Ruth, that he became engaged with art. Since then, his primary focus has been on sculpture. However, while working on the Drancy monument, Selinger also began

a significant series of large-format drawings dedicated to the Shoah, whose extreme brutality draws on various biblical themes. Selinger composes his drawings as if he were sculpting basreliefs – condensing and juxtaposing figures on a single plane. The saturation of space may be evidence of the powerful violence of which he was one of the numerous victims.

The artist creates as a witness. The artistic dimension of his works does not diminish their impact – on the contrary, it intricately weaves the traumas into the very fabric of the pieces, manifesting as

"ORDINARY - EXTRAORDINARY"

Eight years after its opening, with over 3 million visitors having explored the core exhibition of World War II, today, we once again affirm that our museum is filled with extraordinary stories.

The Museum of the Second World War is dedicated to narrating the tale of the most significant armed conflict of the XX century. Central to this narrative are the people: the victims of atrocities, those who perished on the frontlines, the fighters in the resistance, and the survivors who bravely share their experiences. In our exhibition—conceived within the shadows of the underground—we have given them a voice. They speak for the dead, the lost, and those who vanished without a trace. The stories of some are only remembered through trinkets and mementoes left behind, which serve as silent witnesses of the war and embody the powerful message of the museum.

We invite you to embark on a mutual journey exploring the lives of some heroes we regard as icons at our Museum. These are not figures placed upon pedestals; they are individuals often perceived as "the greatest, the most famous, or the bravest." We want to illuminate their stories, drawing them from obscurity without diminishing the significance of renowned heroes. We aim to ensure that these "ordinary – extraordinary" heroes are recognised and remembered by their contemporaries. We strive to preserve their memory because these 'ordinary heroes' help shape our understanding of the war.

The first "ordinary hero" we wish to highlight is Zdzisław Wysocki, who was murdered during the German atrocities in Poland in September 1939. He was one among many victims of assaults on columns of civilian refugees. Zdzislaw sustained injuries while being evacuated from Warsaw. He passed away at the age of 13 in a hospital in Łuków. We also share the poignant story of Janina Lewandowska—a victim of the Katyn massacre. An



The Museum of the Second World War is dedicated to narrating the tale of the most significant armed conflict of the XX century. Central to this narrative are the people: the victims of atrocities, those who perished on the frontlines, the fighters in the resistance, and the survivors who bravely share their experiences. In our exhibition—conceived within the shadows of the underground—we have given them a voice. They speak for the dead, the lost, and those who vanished without a trace. The stories of some are only remembered through trinkets and mementoes left behind, which serve as silent witnesses of the war and embody the powerful message of the museum.

We invite you to embark on a mutual journey exploring the lives of some heroes we regard as icons at our Museum. These are not figures placed upon pedestals; they are individuals often perceived as "the greatest, the most famous, or the bravest." We want to illuminate their stories, drawing them from obscurity without diminishing the significance of renowned heroes. We aim to ensure that these "ordinary – extraordinary" heroes are recognised and remembered by their contemporaries. We strive to preserve their memory because these 'ordinary heroes' help shape our understanding of the war.

The first "ordinary hero" we wish to highlight is Zdzisław Wysocki, who was murdered during the German atrocities in Poland in September 1939. He was one among many victims of assaults on columns of civilian refugees. Zdzislaw sustained injuries while being evacuated from Warsaw. He passed away at the age of 13 in a hospital in Łuków.

We also share the poignant story of Janina Lewandowska—a victim of the Katyn massacre. An aviator and parachutist, she, along with a group of military pilots, was captured by the Soviets in September 1939. Janina endured the harsh conditions of both the Ostashkov and Kozelsk camps before tragically meeting her end on April 21 or 22, 1940, when officers of the Soviet NKVD political police in Katyn executed her.

Another significant figure we want to remember is Tania Savicheva, whose story was deeply intertwined with the siege of Leningrad, showcasing the torment endured by its residents. The girl lived with her family in the city, and when the German siege began, she started documenting the harrowing losses of her loved ones in a small diary. As the siege continued, the girl eventually found herself alone, ending up in an orphanage from which she was evacuated. Sadly, she succumbed to exhaustion on 1 July 1944.

The group we refer to as "ordinary heroes" also includes countless victims of wartime atrocities against prisoners of war. Throughout World War II, millions of soldiers from all sides were captured, with many being stripped of their rights under POW status. The most tragic fate befell Soviet prisoners in German captivity. More than 3 million of the 5.7 million soldiers lost their lives due to starvation, disease, exhaustion, inhuman living conditions and systemic extermination.

Some Polish prisoners of war also faced severe repression from the Germans. One of these individuals was Captain Antoni Kasztelan, an officer in the Polish military counterintelligence who participated in the defense of Hel in 1939. He was stripped of his prisoner-of-war status and arrested by the Gestapo. He was imprisoned and tortured in violation of international law and ultimately sentenced to death. He was guillotined in Königsberg on 14 December 1942. Another notable figure was Dutch professor Rudolf Cleveringa, whose words became a symbol of defiance and resistance against the occupying forces. On November 26, 1940, he delivered a speech at Leiden University in protest of the removal of Jewish professors by the German authorities. For his outspoken stance and involvement in the Dutch resistance, Cleveringa was imprisoned but freed by Allied troops in 1944.

During the war, the Third Reich relied on millions of forced labourers to fuel its war economy. Due to stringent racial laws, personal interactions between these labourers and Germans were generally discouraged and frequently prohibited. However, the presence of so many forced labourers within German society inevitably led to complex feelings between the so-called

BEHIND EVERY NAME IS A PERSON: PIECING TOGETHER THE STORIES OF BABYN YAR

Through careful archival work and family testimony, researchers in Ukraine are uncovering the stories of those killed at Babyn Yar. Viktor Zinkevych didn't know that his mother had died at Babyn Yar, or even that he was Jewish, until he was 12 years old. When the Nazis invaded Kyiv, he was only a baby. His mother, Yevheniia Leibovna Pechenyk, was taken away after being identified as Jewish by their neighbors. Luckily, Viktor's grandmother was able to hide him, and he survived.

His father remarried after the war, and he grew up not knowing about his real mother. It was only when he joined a new school, which required his family to share his birth certificate with his mother's name on it, that other children teased him for being Jewish. He asked his father to explain, and finally, the truth came out. Yevheniia was one of approximately 33, 771 people who were murdered in and around the ravine known as Babyn Yar over two days in September 1941. Virtually the entire Jewish population of Kyiv was killed, and their remains left in a mass grave just around the corner from where they had lived.

In contrast to the Nazi's typical record-keeping, many of the victims were not even registered first. This is one reason many of the victims are not known. But as a site of massacre, there are layers obscuring the stories of the people who were murdered there: layers of history, of geography, and of bureaucracy.

Sometimes, as in Viktor's story, the truth is so hidden that the families of the victims themselves struggle to find out what happened.

Restoring memory through archives and testimony

The "Names" project by the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center in Ukraine is trying to change this. An IHRA grant recipient, they are seeking Holocaust survivors and their descendants to restore the stories of people who were killed in the largest single massacre perpetrated by Nazi Germany and its collaborators in Eastern Europe.

Last year, they uncovered 200 new names of individuals who were victims of mass executions at Babyn Yar, previously unlisted in any records of the deceased, and added over 100 of their photographs. The Memorial Center has compiled the most comprehensive database to date, containing 29,551 victim names.

Digitizing the past amid conflict

Working with original documents during a war is far from simple. Inna Kalenska, project curator, tells us about some of the challenges faced by the project team: "For the first year of the full-scale invasion, it was the darkest time and the most difficult time for us, for our organization, but we try to stay committed to our mission."

One of their most crucial efforts is digitizing documents, especially those in high-conflict zones. 60% of the state archives of Kharkiv were destroyed by Russian troops, she says, and



As part of the IHRA Grant, the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center also held a two-day workshop on archival research, including techniques for analyzing historical documents, digitizing archival materials, and effectively documenting findings. The workshop was attended by students, fellows, Ph.D. candidates, and researchers interested in Holocaust studies.

full-scale invasion began. Today, the online archive contains more than 7 million documents from 18 archival institutions, and continues to expand.

"Time is also our enemy," says Inna. Even in times of peace, these physical documents are fragile and vulnerable, and each human touch represents a risk of damage. But these objects are all that we have left of the victims and survivors when the last of the eyewitnesses leave us.

This is why digitizing goes hand-in-hand with restoring the names of the victims — by safeguarding the documents, we are safeguarding the stories.

This work is painstaking and slow-going. Sometimes it involves conducting new interviews and gathering original testimony, like the interview with Viktor Zinkevych conducted earlier in 2025. More often, it is a careful process of checking and cross-referencing documents from a disparate range of sources to put together a fuller picture of the victims.

It's not only about new names. Every tiny piece of information can contribute to the story of a person's life.

Inna says one of the stories that sticks with her is a couple with a 4-year-old daughter, Tanya, who upon hearing that they were being sent to Babyn Yar, decided to take poison rather than obey the orders. "I can't forget it and get it out of my head," she says. "Just the impossible position this family found themselves in, this heartbreaking choice they had to make. And in the end to say 'No, I would rather kill myself than some stranger does that."

"Just the impossible position this family found themselves in, this heartbreaking choice they had to make."

The people behind the names

Other stories are poignant in different ways. David Khayimovich Krupnik, a carpenter who had fought and lost two fingers in World War I, had survived several pogroms in his life. Once, he had been saved by the intervention of a German officer who lived in his building. When the Nazis captured Kyiv in 1941, he did not believe that they were capable of mass killings.

David refused to leave his home when evacuation orders were declared. He was killed at Babyn Yar.

Some of the stories that have become clearer through the work of the Names project are people like Rivka Babushkina. She lived with her husband Issac and his orphaned niece, Khaya, who they were raising as their own. Issac's sisters, Liza and Tsilya, had come to Kyiv from Belarus with their brother. Tsilya was evacuated when the Nazis occupied Kyiv, leaving her 14-year-old daughter Ilya with her sister Liza.

On the morning that Jews were marched to Babyn Yar, Ilya insisted that she was Austrian (since her father was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and refused to go. Aunt Liza, deeply upset, threw the house keys to Ilya and said, "Do whatever you want." Ilya returned home alone.

After the war, she was reunited with her mother Tsilya, who also survived. Rivka and the rest of the family were murdered at Babyn Yar.



full-scale invasion began. Today, the online archive contains more than 7 million documents from 18 archival institutions, and continues to expand.

"Time is also our enemy," says Inna. Even in times of peace, these physical documents are fragile and vulnerable, and each human touch represents a risk of damage. But these objects are all that we have left of the victims and survivors when the last of the eyewitnesses leave us.

This is why digitizing goes hand-in-hand with restoring the names of the victims — by safeguarding the documents, we are safeguarding the stories.

THE WORK MUST GO ON: 25 YEARS OF THE STOCKHOLM DECLARATION

This reflection looks back at the 2000 Stockholm Declaration, whose principles have shaped Holocaust education, research, and remembrance globally. While IHRA's work has since grown to include new focus areas and tools, the Declaration remains a foundational document in building international commitment.

On 26 January 2000, representatives from nearly 50 governments gathered in Stockholm for a defining moment in international Holocaust remembrance. Survivors sat alongside scholars, and heads of state and government – witnesses to history and those entrusted with its preservation.

The Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust was the first major international conference of the new millennium – and among the first to bridge the gap between academic expertise and political decision–making. It also marked the first time that governments – regardless of their past – collectively recognized their shared responsibility in ensuring that Holocaust remembrance remained both a political and a moral priority.

The leaders who gathered there understood that memory is not self-sustaining; it must be actively propagated. Twenty-five years on, we look back at the Forum to understand not just what was achieved, but what remains at stake. The commitments made in Stockholm were never meant to be the final word – they marked the beginning of a long-term effort.

The work had only just begun.

The Call to Action

For former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, the Forum was the culmination of a personal reckoning. His call to action had come years earlier. A visit to the former Neuengamme concentration camp, near Hamburg, left Persson deeply unsettled. Walking through the site of forced labor, mass suffering, and systematic brutality, Persson was confronted with the scale of Nazi crimes – and the responsibility of remembering them. Around the same time, far-right extremism was on the rise – young men marching in brown shirts, their chants disturbingly reminiscent of the Nazi era. But the final wake-up call arrived closer to home in 1997, when a survey in Sweden revealed that many schoolchildren doubted the Holocaust had even happened.

Determined to act, Persson launched Living History (Levande Historia), an educational campaign that distributed over 1.3 million copies of the book Tell Ye Your Children to Swedish households. But he quickly realized that education alone was not enough – Holocaust remembrance had to be an international, political commitment.

In April 1998, Persson wrote to US President Bill Clinton and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair,



Participants at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust in Sweden, January 27–29, 2000

On 26 January 2000, representatives from nearly 50 governments gathered in Stockholm for a defining moment in international Holocaust remembrance. Survivors sat alongside scholars, and heads of state and government – witnesses to history and those entrusted with its preservation.

The Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust was the first major international conference of the new millennium – and among the first to bridge the gap between academic expertise and political decision–making. It also marked the first time that governments – regardless of their past – collectively recognized their shared responsibility in ensuring that Holocaust remembrance remained both a political and a moral priority.

The leaders who gathered there understood that memory is not self-sustaining; it must be actively propagated. Twenty-five years on, we look back at the Forum to understand not just what was achieved, but what remains at stake. The commitments made in Stockholm were never meant to be the final word – they marked the beginning of a long-term effort.

The work had only just begun.

The Call to Action

For former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, the Forum was the culmination of a personal reckoning. His call to action had come years earlier. A visit to the former Neuengamme concentration camp, near Hamburg, left Persson deeply unsettled. Walking through the site of forced labor, mass suffering, and systematic brutality, Persson was confronted with the scale of Nazi crimes – and the responsibility of remembering them. Around the same time, far-right extremism was on the rise – young men marching in brown shirts, their chants disturbingly reminiscent of the Nazi era. But the final wake-up call arrived closer to home in 1997, when a survey in Sweden revealed that many schoolchildren doubted the Holocaust had even happened.



Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate, at the Stockholm Forum

"I learned so much from survivors," Lessing, who now serves on IHRA's Executive Board reflected. "They don't want revenge – they want dignity. They want their stories to be heard, and their suffering acknowledged. And that is what the Stockholm Declaration ultimately did: it made governments take responsibility for this memory."

They [survivors] don't want revenge – they want dignity. They want their stories to be heard, and their suffering acknowledged.

For many delegates, the Stockholm Forum was not only about plenary speeches — it was about the connections forged in quieter moments. Richelle Budd Caplan, a member of the Israeli delegation to the Forum and later Chair of the IHRA's Education Working Group in 2001, remembers the Forum's informal spaces just as vividly as its official sessions.

"The Forum's marketplace granted me with a unique opportunity to meet Holocaust-related experts and diplomats from more than 40 countries. I recall side discussions about how countries planned to legislate annual Holocaust memorial days and how the ITF sought to develop liaison projects, particularly with Czechia. In addition, a first-ever international directory of organizations in Holocaust education, remembrance and research was disseminated by Wesley Fisher. Energized, I delved into networking and developing projects."

The directory Richelle refers to — distributed in printed form at the Forum — became one of the ITF's earliest shared resources, symbolizing the Forum's spirit of exchange and collaboration in a pre-digital age.

Hope and Political Reality

The Stockholm Declaration was uncontested when presented, but its implementation in the years that followed was not wholly without challenges. IHRA's unique structure – bringing together Holocaust scholars, educators, and political representatives – became its greatest strength. Yet, it also introduced complexities.

Consensus-building – where political priorities and historical expertise had to align – often meant slow progress. Some governments initially also resisted acknowledging aspects of their Holocaust history, particularly around collaboration, and negotiations could be difficult. Yet, it was precisely this structure – where experts challenged policymakers with historical evidence,

"I learned so much from survivors," Lessing, who now serves on IHRA's Executive Board reflected. "They don't want revenge – they want dignity. They want their stories to be heard, and their suffering acknowledged. And that is what the Stockholm Declaration ultimately did: it made governments take responsibility for this memory."

They [survivors] don't want revenge – they want dignity. They want their stories to be heard, and their suffering acknowledged.

For many delegates, the Stockholm Forum was not only about plenary speeches — it was about the connections forged in quieter moments. Richelle Budd Caplan, a member of the Israeli delegation to the Forum and later Chair of the IHRA's Education Working Group in 2001, remembers the Forum's informal spaces just as vividly as its official sessions.

"The Forum's marketplace granted me with a unique opportunity to meet Holocaust-related experts and diplomats from more than 40 countries. I recall side discussions about how countries planned to legislate annual Holocaust memorial days and how the ITF sought to develop liaison projects, particularly with Czechia. In addition, a first-ever international directory of organizations in Holocaust education, remembrance and research was disseminated by Wesley Fisher. Energized, I delved into networking and developing projects."

The directory Richelle refers to — distributed in printed form at the Forum — became one of the ITF's earliest shared resources, symbolizing the Forum's spirit of exchange and collaboration in a pre-digital age.

Hope and Political Reality

The Stockholm Declaration was uncontested when presented, but its implementation in the years that followed was not wholly without challenges. IHRA's unique structure – bringing together Holocaust scholars, educators, and political representatives – became its greatest strength. Yet, it also introduced complexities.

Consensus-building – where political priorities and historical expertise had to align – often meant slow progress. Some governments initially also resisted acknowledging aspects of their



Professor Yehuda Bauer, former Honorary Chairman of the IHRA, at the Forum (front left)

Members of the IHRA at the IHRA 2024 Glasgow Plenary

The Stockholm Declaration was meant to guard against this – but that work is far from finished."

Michaela Küchler, IHRA's Secretary General, highlighted the increasing politicization of memory: "We always knew remembrance was important. But today, we have to fight for it in ways we never expected. When you see Holocaust commemorations being questioned, or survivors being told it is 'too political' to have them speak, you realize how fragile this memory really is."

Michaela was no stranger to the IHRA's mission when she stepped into the position of Secretary General this year. As Chair of the German IHRA Presidency in 2020, she led the alliance through an unprecedented year – one in which all collaboration had to take place online for the first time. During her time as Chair, IHRA not only adapted but advanced its work, securing the adoption of the working definition of antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination and establishing the Global Task Force Against Holocaust Distortion.



The Stockholm Declaration was meant to guard against this – but that work is far from finished."

Michaela Küchler, IHRA's Secretary General, highlighted the increasing politicization of memory: "We always knew remembrance was important. But today, we have to fight for it in ways we never expected. When you see Holocaust commemorations being questioned, or survivors being told it is 'too political' to have them speak, you realize how fragile this memory really is."

Michaela was no stranger to the IHRA's mission when she stepped into the position of Secretary General this year. As Chair of the German IHRA Presidency in 2020, she led the alliance through an unprecedented year – one in which all collaboration had to take place online for the first time. During her time as Chair, IHRA not only adapted but advanced its work, securing the adoption of the working definition of antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination and establishing the Global Task Force Against Holocaust Distortion.

CALL FOR PAPERS: WOMEN IN THE HOLOCAUST

Women in the Holocaust International Study Center at the Moreshet Mordechai Anielevich Memorial, Givat Haviva, Israel, and the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory of the University of Belgrade are pleased to announce a Call for Papers for its Third International Conference on Women in the Holocaust. This year's conference, titled Lives Worth Living: The Untold Stories, is dedicated to exploring women's lives, deeds, and legacies during and after the Holocaust.

The conference will be held from October 20 to 22, 2025, in Belgrade, Serbia, at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade (address: Kraljice Natalije 45, 11000 Beograd). The working language of the conference will be English.

The Third Annual International WHISC Conference on Women in the Holocaust, Lives Worth Living, will once again be held in East-Central European region. This region was a key site where German Nazi occupation and racial policies intersected with complex realities of competing nationalisms, shifting borders, and contested national sovereignties. The history of Nazi persecution, expulsion, flight, deportation, and murder of Jewish and Roma women – as well as women of other ethnicities – unfolded within a broader landscape of ethnic tensions, conflicts, and shifting power structures in East-Central Europe and beyond.

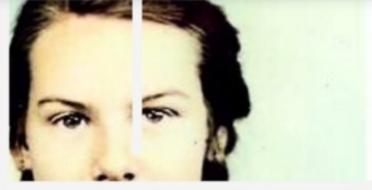
This conference seeks to explore how to responsibly and productively integrate the histories of occupation, antisemitism, and ethnic racism, while maintaining a research-based commitment to uncovering women's gendered experiences during the Holocaust. Additionally, the conference encourages further research on the complexities of competing victimhood in various East-Central European countries during the Holocaust. The interwoven nature of these historical contexts, events, and processes remains challenging for researchers and a point of contention in public and scholarly debates.

Additionally, studying the intersectionality of religious, ethnic, and gender identities – and the resulting impacts, tensions, and traumas – continues to present significant scholarly challenges. This year, we particularly encourage research on the lives and experiences of women in Yugoslavia during the Holocaust, as this aspect of Holocaust history remains underrepresented in international academic discourse.

The Lives Worth Living conference seeks to promote scholarly discussion and debate on the various divides, connections, and intersections within Holocaust and Gender Studies while uncovering the lives of women in the Holocaust, lives that were indeed worth living. The Lives Worth Living conference aims to challenge disciplinary boundaries to advance multidisciplinary,

interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches to studying women's experiences during the Holocaust. The suggested conference streams invite methodological approaches and connections that explore but are not limited to, placing the Holocaust









Women in the Holocaust International Study Center















The conference will be held from October 20 to 22, 2025, in Belgrade, Serbia, at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade (address: Kraljice Natalije 45, 11000 Beograd). The working language of the conference will be English.

The Third Annual International WHISC Conference on Women in the Holocaust, Lives Worth Living, will once again be held in East-Central European region. This region was a key site where German Nazi occupation and racial policies intersected with complex realities of competing nationalisms, shifting borders, and contested national sovereignties. The history of Nazi persecution, expulsion, flight, deportation, and murder of Jewish and Roma women – as well as women of other ethnicities – unfolded within a broader landscape of ethnic tensions, conflicts, and shifting power structures in East-Central Europe and beyond.

This conference seeks to explore how to responsibly and productively integrate the histories of occupation, antisemitism, and ethnic racism, while maintaining a research-based commitment to uncovering women's gendered experiences during the Holocaust. Additionally, the conference encourages further research on the complexities of competing victimhood in various East-Central European countries during the Holocaust.



memoria.auschwitz.org

PUBLISHER

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Paweł Sawicki

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Agnieszka Juskowiak-Sawicka

EDITED BY

Bartosz Bartyzel Marek Lach Łukasz Lipiński

CONTACT

memoria@auschwitz.org





