

# Not the End

## Artists interpret the Holocaust

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Crochet works, paintings and sculptures. Romany, Sami and Jewish. Different generations and different countries. The Holocaust has been portrayed in art ever since it took place, and it is still something to which artists return. But how does the legacy of the Holocaust affect art and how are we affected by art about the Holocaust?

The Living History Forum is based on learning from the Holocaust. We usually start in historical research. But what happens when we instead listen to the artist's voice and to artistic expression? In the exhibition *Not the End*, 16 artists interpret their relationship to the Holocaust through painting, drawing, photography, video, sculpture, and installations in foam rubber or in fabric.

The artists belong to different generations. Ceija Stojka and Jadwiga Simon-Pietkiewicz experienced the horrors of the concentration

camps and were fortunate enough to survive them. Like Willy Gordon and Dick Bengtsson, they grew up during the time the Holocaust took place. Others have parents or grandparents who were affected by the Nazi regime, as survivors or as perpetrators.

The exhibition shows the work of artists born in Latvia, Poland, Austria, Israel and Sweden. All of them have been affected by the Holocaust. They remember it in different ways, relate to it in different ways, and have different experiences of it.

The exhibition shows the complexity and diversity of artistic expression, and the experience of bearing a story, which can be both one's own and that of the whole world. Our hope is that you, as a visitor, will find new ways of understanding and reflecting on the Holocaust and how it continues to affect us today.

# Eduard Freudmann

born 1979 in Vienna, Austria where he lives and works

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

The work was first created for an exhibition called *To One's Name* at Kunsthalle Exnergasse in Vienna, curated by Suzana Milevska. It deals with the aesthetics of commemoration, and also its institutionalization, and the relationship between them. The two-sided poster was presented in the gallery in two piles on the floor and was available to take away. One side depicted 12 figures and had a commemoration plaque that could be cut out. The plaque inscription indicated that the group represented the "1st general assembly of the committee for the commemoration of the word that designates the genocide of Roma and Sinti." The figures' images were taken from several Austrian monuments dedicated to anti-Fascist resistance fighters, to the allied forces that liberated Austria from Nazism, and to victims of the Shoah. Many of these monuments had been extensively debated and disputed; some had been physically attacked; some had even been destroyed and had to be re-erected. Their presence is the result of political struggles over the public acknowledgement of victimization and resistance. And their presence in public space, their mass, and the solidity of their materials indicate the successes of those struggles.

## **How did you come to choose the title of the work?**

*The 1st general assembly of the committee for the commemoration of the word that designates the genocide of Roma and Sinti* deals with the struggle for acknowledgement of the Nazi genocide of Roma and Sinti. The committee in the work is commemorating a term that actually does not exist.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

The longstanding struggle for the acknowledgement of the Nazi genocide of Roma and Sinti has had comparatively little effect. One consequence is the nearly total lack of representation of the genocide in Austrian public spaces, a fact that the filigree in the poster refers to. Certainly, this lack is a symptom of a more general neglect, i.e., of public discourse about the genocide (indicated in the work by the committee commemorating a term that does not exist). The poster's elements can be cut out and, by using the attached stand, erected at any place and in any arrangement. The spatial settings to commemorate a "neglected genocide" can be created. The poster shows one such setting: the background to Vienna's Judenplatz Holocaust Memorial (In German: Mahnmal für die 65,000 ermordeten österreichischen Juden und Jüdinnen der Shoah) by Rachel Whiteread. The memorial was opened in 2000 and is the result of a decade-long struggle for a monument dedicated to the victims of the Shoah in Austria.

# Vardi Kahana

born 1959 in Tel Aviv, Israel where she lives and works

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

My mother, Rivka, with her two sisters, Leah and Esther, with consecutive numbers tattooed on their forearms: A-7760. A-7761. A-7762.

In May 18 1944, my mother was taken to Auschwitz with her parents and five siblings. They were one family among the 12,000 Hungarian Jews transported on one train. Upon arrival, the men were separated from the women, that was the last time my mother saw her father. Then, the mothers and small children were separated from the young women; and, without understanding why, her mother and her younger siblings Wolf and Sera were gone.

Few days later, my mother, Rivka (right), who was 18 years-old, her sisters Leah (center), then 20, and Esther, then 15, stood in line for a number to be branded onto them. It was already clear to them that their parents and two youngest siblings had been murdered. They were alone.

## **How did you come to choose the title of the work?**

*Three Sisters* is a self-explanatory title, but it is obvious that it is not a borrowed literary reference. On the one hand, the image of the three vital sisters represents the countless other sisters/women who did not have the good luck to survive the Holocaust. On the other, the image conveys unequivocal avoidance to the systematic practices of the Nazi regime to dehumanise the Jews they kept alive, to rob them of their identity, to brand their arms with numbers as if they were horses, and to turn them into work units for the German Reich.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

In 1944, in Auschwitz, the three sisters were

teenagers who did not know if they would ever see the next morning. They survived against all the odds, and a few years later built a home of their own in Israel. The three sisters had lived long enough to see their grand-children and great-grand-children grow up. They now have more than 150 descendants.

This photograph was the starting point for my large-scale documentary, *One Family*. Over the years I have photographed my extended family: uncles, aunts, cousins, and their offspring. Four generations. Family cohesion was a sacred value to my parents and their siblings: a superior value, transcending disputed world views, ideologies, and religions. To my parents' generation, the family was more important than anything else, a matter of life and death. More than once I heard my mother talk about how her sisters had saved her life, and my cousins heard how my mother had saved their mothers. There was an affinity that stemmed from the pledges that members of that generation had made to one another – to meet after the war and set up home once again, close to each other. They arrived in Israel penniless, and everyone helped everyone. The ones who immigrated were the first to absorb those who followed. This created a kind of eternal bond, a weaker version of which my own generation absorbed, but the third and fourth generations can barely identify the members of our tribe.

The photograph *Three Sisters* is the cornerstone of my *One Family* project. It represents the rebirth of the family after the Holocaust in an Israeli context. Through the project, I have investigated the ways in which different family branches grow away from each other over time. Ultimately, therefore, the spread of my family across the entire spectrum comes to represent Israel in its current, multifaceted reality. Four generations of leftists and rightists, ultra-orthodox and secular, kibbutz members and settlers, farmers and high-tech engineers. To the big question of Jewish-Israeli identity, the photographs of my family provide a kaleidoscope of answers.

# Miroslaw Bałka

born 1958 in Warsaw, Poland  
lives and works in Otwock and Warsaw

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**Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition. How did you come to choose the title of the work?**

*Audi HBE F144* consists of snapshots from the television transmission of Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Auschwitz in 2006. The car with registration HBE F144 moves through the former concentration camp, surrounded by security guards.

**What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

I welcome any possible interpretation.

# Dina Shenhav

born 1968 in Jerusalem, Israel  
lives and works in Tel Aviv

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

The work is about violence and the cruelty of the human being. It's about killing for nothing, killing just because you can, just because you are the strong one. It's about getting distracted from moral value. What I do in a soft material, I feel I can handle. It's a way of living and dealing with a hard situation in a soft way.

## **How did you come to choose the title of your work?**

*D.O.A.* means "Dead On Arrival", and is borrowed from the police jargon used in the description of some murders (common in many TV shows and movies).

I chose it to evoke the feeling that something horrible has happened, but you can't do anything about it. It has happened, and you have to live with it. You can think and ask questions about it, and try to

understand, but it's too late to do anything about it.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

I want to have a dialogue with the viewer about how the human being can be soft, gentle and merciful, but at the same time being so cruel, aggressive, brutal and merciless. I want to communicate the feeling that, at any moment, you can be removed from your regular life and have to start to run to save yourself, suddenly you become a victim, not a victim because you did something, but a victim because of what you are. In my work, the victims are the animals; the hunter kills them just because he wants to, just because he can; they haven't done anything wrong. All my life I think about my father, one morning, being only thirteen years old, suddenly he had to run for his life. Since his stories are so powerful, they are deep inside me since I was a child, I live with the feeling that I can become a victim any moment, and I always have to be ready to escape.

# Gil Yefman

born 1979 in Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, Israel  
lives and works in Tel Aviv

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

Here, I show two installations from 2015: *The Gift Shop* and *Human Tapestry*. Both dwell on the gap between history and memory in relation to collective trauma.

*Human Tapestry* was fabricated by the Etun factory in Israel. The factory was first established in 1850 at Fulda in Germany. When the Nazis took over Germany, people had to sell everything they had to flee the country. They managed to send one weaving machine to Palestine, where they served the British army before creating a successful weaving factory.

## **How did you come to choose the titles of the works?**

I created *The Gift Shop* project, which is an ongoing pop-up store while attending an "Artist in Residence" program in Hannover. It incorporates trauma into consumerism and tourism. The word "gift" in German means "poison", but is "a present" in English. This Dada-like play on words gave birth to the project, which contemplates patterns of human behaviors in relation to consumerism, memory, authenticity, and representation.

During this period in Hannover my studio and residence was situated in a former morgue, which used to be part of a Jewish hospital. During WW2, the Jewish population of Hannover was gathered there before being deported. When the city transformed the hospital into upmarket residential apartments, they had to preserve some of the original building, and chose the Totenhaus (morgue) since it was detached from the main building and easy to turn into a holocaust memorial. The residency program invited Israeli artists to stay for a period of three

months each, and lasted for about a year.

*Human Tapestry* refers to a Jacquard woven fabric, comprising duplicated fragments, captured from a pile of corpses in Buchenwald concentration camp. I deliberately focused on heads and feet, the beginnings and ends of a human body. Although the private identity of each figure is expropriated by the act of duplication, a more global identity is created, emphasizing our social interdependency. *Human Tapestry* is the name of an Israeli song associated with the Holocaust and national memorial days.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

The *Human Tapestry* fragments, taken from duplicated images of the mass graves, were woven into a Jacquard fabric of the kind used for upholstery, thereby associating them with domestic practices and familial softness. The roll of fabric conveys a sense of concealment while, at the same time, representing endless continuity. In this work, I try to incorporate the traumatic and incomprehensible into mundane day-to-day reality, thereby achieving greater consciousness and balance in relation to private and collective traumata.

Both works aim to raise ethical and aesthetic questions without necessarily resolving them, while defying the dichotomies and dogmas of commemoration. The realms of the mythical and the mundane are constantly shuffled and re-examined. Being able to look beyond just the "one-or-the-other" aspect of reality seems ever more essential. It might pave the way to a controversy that will demand a greater sense of responsibility on the parts of both the creator and the viewer.

# Dana Yoeli

born 1979 in Seattle, Washington  
lives and works in Tel Aviv

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

Memory stands at the heart of this personal yet universal work of mine that is called *Fichte/Ashuchit*.

In Bayreuth, Germany, I documented a personal journey, in the footsteps of memoirs left by my cartographer grandfather. After transcribing dozens of audio files, I composed a list of the places my grandfather mentioned in the town of his birth. It is a mundane, everyday list that contains locations such as the milk depot, the high school that he and his brothers attended, the button factory that made his family bankrupt, the swimming pool.

Throughout the journey I collected flowers in specific locations. I recorded the exact coordinates of each location, documented the surrounding urban and natural landscapes in still photographs, and then blurred a map of the city up to the point that the context vanished. The flowers, having been meticulously collected, were then photographed, printed, and cut out of the photo paper. The two-dimensional flowers were then arranged into a series of wreaths, which in turn were documented photographically again and again in a sterile studio.

## **How did you come to choose the title of the work?**

The title *Fichte/Ashuchit* was born when I started planning the work. I knew that I wanted it to reflect a sense of longing, a gap between the familiar and the unknown or the imagined, which sort of echoed the

experiences I had had with my grandfather's stories of the place he left. I was looking for a title that in Hebrew would be unfamiliar, almost fairytale-like, but in German would be commonplace and mundane. Since the Fichte (spruce) tree doesn't grow in Israel, the Hebrew word for it (pronounced "Ashuchit") is not in use. It was unknown to me before envisaging the project.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

When I first conceived the project, I was still in the process of realizing my personal loss, and acknowledging that the unique and singular being that was my grandfather had ceased to exist. One motivation was, and still is, to tell a story. But, when I read my grandfather's memoirs, I was astonished to find that, after more than seventy years since his last day in his hometown, they were still vivid and fresh, and so were his longings to the place that was home but was lost. This was the true motivation of this work: To try and explore what makes a memory significant, what is the line between memory and commemoration, and what is the gap between memory and nostalgia. I am hoping that, with empathy, a viewer will be able to think of an abundance of personal stories. In my work, I try to elevate the specific case, and object to the communal story, instead of participating in the ethos of collective memory, which is often abused in my country as well as in other countries and educational systems. The aim is to rebel against the dominating narrative of a national ethos and tell the singular story.

# Hadas Tapouchi

born 1981 in Moshav Beit Nehemya, Israel  
lives and works in Berlin

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

These portraits are part of an ongoing series called *The Third Generation*. This term denotes the people who are now three generations removed from WW2. Although I began the project back in 2009, I have spent a lot of time thinking about the post-war years, even as a child. Maybe because it was a topic that people did not like to discuss. Maybe because the past is always there, whether we talk about it or not, weaving its way into the sons, daughters and grandchildren of all generations.

Or perhaps as a child, I couldn't avoid feeling the intergenerational trauma and my curiosity reflected a desire to get close to what was forbidden.

*The Third Generation* is a collage of dozens of portraits that try to put the impossible into comprehensible images. The project speaks of a generation that is far removed from the actual trauma but lives from the expectations and symptoms of others in the past. Its effects become visible much later, scattered throughout space and time.

*The Third Generation* represents the descendants of the Shoah, Nazis, and the Palestinian Nakba. It is not an attempt to compare the traumas, but rather to report on the fusion between three extremes. It also suggests the possibility of hope.

## **How did you come to choose the title of the work?**

*The Third Generation* refers to something with which you were born, like a gender or a religion (unlike the others, your birth cannot be altered or removed). The term both betrays and explains the existence of the subject. I chose it as a title to describe the generation that was born and raised in the state of Israel and that had to bear the responsibility of nurturing history. Only in recent years has the term increasingly being used for other ethnic groups.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

That the post-traumatic society of the third generation (the generation born after WW2) "normalizes" the war trauma. The "third generation" is the generation that represents the daily recovery and struggle of the parties involved, so that it actually maintains the dilemmas and daily struggles. As a Jewish Israeli who emigrated to Berlin six years ago, I have an opportunity to deal with the trauma, even by learning and speaking the German language. Despite this, I see it as a healing. From Huguenots in the 16th century, East German escapees in from the 50s to 80s, or the current groups fleeing war in the Middle East, Berlin is and has always been a city of refugees. I have very interesting conversations with refugees here, including many Palestinians. What is most bizarre is that our lingua franca in these conversations is German.



# Erez Israeli

born 1974 in Beer Sheva, Israel  
lives and works in Berlin since 2015

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

*Ami and Tami*. The work is my version of *Hänsel und Gretel*, the famous children's story by the Grimm Brothers. In my first solo exhibition in Berlin (2015), I created a wall installation with interpretations of Holocaust jokes. One of them was: "When the witch plans to burn Hansel and Gretel it was not the last time Germans burned people". I found it very interesting that someone made this connection between the fairy tale and the Holocaust. In my story, the kids are Jewish with big noses; both are male, Gretel is transgender. They are naked, lost in the forest. Nudity is part of my collective memory of the Shoa, but it also gives the story a sexually gay interpretation, even a pornographic one. The "Candy House" is Auschwitz. For me, that is not far from what Auschwitz really was. Starting with the sign "Arbeit Macht Frei" at the entrance, an attempt to show to the world that it was actually a working camp and not a death camp; continuing with the classical music (by Jewish players) when the people got out of the train (as if they were arriving at a scene of culture); and ending by giving them a bar of soap in front of the gas chambers, creating an illusion of a safe place like the "Candy House" in the story, making the children feel safe enough to come closer, and hiding the burning oven behind the wall.

There is a connection to the idea of "Degenerate Art", from the Nazi exhibition of 1937. When I worked on the drawings, they became "expressionist", "degenerate". The gold tries to hide the perverse lines, making them softer, putting them in order, and framing the craziness in a beautiful golden frame line-by-line. In this way, I try to address the tension between the symbolisation and representation of traumatic events in our history, and use the collectively fixed structures in the story of those very events ultimately to take them apart in terms of their meaning and signification.

The mobile installation is made of objects I bought on the website eBay. The seller claimed they belonged to a Nazi soldier and called it Wehrmacht "stuff". For many years now, I have created works based on items from eBay. Every time, I'm amazed by people who sell things on eBay as Holocaust or WW2 items just for money: the commercialisation of the Holocaust. What gives the items their value is just their name. We can't

really know if they are authentic. It is not important. In this work I take the objects and hang them up. The mobile device, which connects me to something childish and innocent, creates a strong dissonance with the objects. The movement disturbs the quiet, creative aesthetic that destroyed the evil.

The series of works *Mensch und Sonne* I based on the book *Der Mensch und die Sonne (Human and Sun)* by Hans Surén, from 1936. The book was similar to a best-seller book published already in Germany at 1924.

In the introduction to the 1936 edition, Surén call the "Aryans" to go out into nature and show their great bodys to the world! The book promoted that "sunshine, nudity and health are the path to happiness" a massage that the Nazi party happily adopted (In other books that Surén publish after this book, he already show himself with Nazi uniform). In this book Surén suggested different exercises for improving the German body. He show photos of himself and other young men, women and children (sometimes in disturbing ways) naked in nature or assemblage nature (picture that was taken in the studio and assembled in "nature"). In my work I put images of myself, the "degenerate Jew", in these fake nature settings. I try to do my best making the identical poses as the original image set next to those in the book of the perfect Aryan body.

## **How did you come to choose the title of your work?**

The title is based on the Hebrew translation of Hansel and Gretel. In my version, the story takes on a Jewish historical direction, so it was right to give it the Hebrew name. Of course, Judaization of the original German name is more dramatic and complex in relation to the past in Germany than it would be in Israel.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

I always say that, for me, good art is revealed when I'm not the same person before and after my direct encounter with it. Something changes in me, for good or bad, which makes me think and reflect, see things differently, get excited. That is what I always try to achieve with my work.

# Ceija Stojka

born 1933 in Kraubath an der Mur, Austria  
dies 2013

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Ceija Stojka was born in Austria and deported, as a 10 year-old with her Roma family, to the first of the three concentration camps she went on to survive. It wasn't until forty years later, in 1988, at the age of 55, that Ceija Stojka began to report on the experiences she had had in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Ravensbrück and Bergen-Belsen, in both writing and painting. Thereby, she became the first Roma woman to have survived the extermination camps and tell of her experiences, so that they would not be forgotten or denied.

Ceija Stojka's art includes over a thousand drawings and paintings, which she created over a period of

more than 20 years. Her work falls into four different categories; before the war: *When we travelled*, *The Hunt*, *The time in the camps*; and after the war: *Back to life*.

The *Not the End* exhibition shows works belonging to two of these groups: *The Hunt*, the time before the family came to the camps; and *The time in the camps*, when the family were in captivity.

"I reached for the pen because I had to open myself, to scream" - Ceija Stojka

# Naomi Tereza Salmon

born 1965 in Jerusalem, Israel  
lives and works in Switzerland

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

In 1989 I was commissioned to photograph relics preserved at the central holocaust memorial site of the State of Israel in Jerusalem. The assignment was neither to make art nor directly aimed at remembrance, as I was supposed to produce documentation for the archive. The objects themselves were mostly veiled in silence, rarely was there any indication as to whom they may have belonged to, rather, of who held them in safety or had handed them over. The one sure thing was that they had once been owned, and that they meant something to the person who had preserved them as a last sign, a relic, or evidence of crime. Despite the technical nature of the assignment, I have become aware that these objects stood for the stories of persons who had been deprived of humanity. Some even stood for people who were either among the perpetrators or who did nothing to stop them. The more I became aware, the more I realized how powerful they would become when displayed and went further on my own account to visit other archives and make photos that would talk in their name to the viewer.

## **How did you come to choose the title of the work?**

The title is *Asservate/Exhibits*. After finishing the work for Yad Vashem, I had a long stay in Germany. When I arrived in the former East Germany (GDR), shortly after unification, I was shown the archives of the Buchenwald Memorial, and asked for permission to photograph the objects in it, this time as my own project. The same occurred when traveling to the Auschwitz Memorial, and during that visit I realized I was inspired by Yad Vashem to do something with the material. Since then, I have shown my work to several curators explaining the different ways in which the venues handled their objects: as relics in Yad Vashem, as archaeological findings in Buchenwald, and as evidence to be laid before a court in Auschwitz. In the course of my work, I realized that I was using preliminary police forensic, photographic

methods. It became clear that not all information about the objects is reliable or available. The muted objects become two-dimensional exhibits, speaking for themselves without any additional words. Thus, *Exhibits* became the title of the catalogue and the exhibition.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

In its 25 years of existence, the work has been convoluted for me. Some of the things I wanted to communicate have altered, and I have learned a lot about its impact through the observations of other people. At the beginning I looked for evidence in my quest to understand the history of the holocaust. In my youth I saw *Nacht und Nebel*, a film by Alain Resnais, which was made in 1956 and shown annually on educational television on Holocaust memorial day. We used to watch it in school, year after year, depicting piles of objects: hair, glasses, suitcases, etc. I felt it was my mission to take apart heaps of entangled spectacles. I wanted to find the individual in the cluster, to make a portrait of each bodily attached property. Early on, it became clear to me that this is impossible; thus, the self-portrait I made for the catalogue depicts me holding a photo of a suitcase (made of holy writings) and standing barefoot. It lead me to recall the idiom "The shoemaker's children run barefoot". It was enough for me if an observer of the work could identify with even one object, either having one as such, or remembering a family member who had one as such. My idea was to mediate and create empathy through recognition. I wanted to have the Objects identifiable without the Aura, the smell, their relative actual size. Another thing I wanted to express is that the objects are all the same in rank or status, that there was no difference between the persons who owned them, be they victims or perpetrators. Therefore, no choices were made, no selection parameters taken; all the objects available of each kind were in the same relation. Last but not least, I do believe that a picture has a thousand words worth. This was my first attempt to prove it, and it was followed by many others, right up to this very day.

# Maria Sundström

born 1961 in Ödeborg, Dalsland  
lives and works in Hörenfors, Umeå

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

*The Wiedergutmachung Project - Reconstructing the Past. A pilgrimage through family heritage.*

In the ongoing *Wiedergutmachung (Reparation)* project, which I conduct in collaboration with journalist Elisabet Blomberg, the content revolves around the consequences of the Third Reich's influence on issues of debt and responsibility, on the basis of the experience of being a third-generation German in Sweden today. I have approached the Third Reich through my own German family history. My grandfather was a member of the Nazi Party.

Together with Blomberg, whose grandparents were murdered in Auschwitz, I have been working on the *Wiedergutmachung* project for twenty years.

You will never be the same again after visiting Auschwitz; everything becomes so manifestly obvious. It is not possible to resist the impression. The memory of what has happened must be told and live on. Our stories are intertwined.

I have a memory that left its mark, from a trip to Berlin with my grandmother. I was eleven years-old. We visited Aunt Ruth, who suddenly started talking about a meeting with Hitler. The atmosphere in the room became compact, electric. You could cut the air with a knife. She said what could not be said, that what could not be.

## **How did you come to choose the title of your work?**

My works in *Wiedergutmachung* usually have German titles. In the installation where *der Blick (The View)* gets you, as a visitor, to stand behind the grid gates during the cynical and almost ironic text "Arbeit Macht Frei" (Work gives freedom). It was during a trip to Israel that I opened a daily newspaper, where the gate was turned round, mirrored, that is, seen from the inside. Not from the outside as I have seen it before. A gate that over the years has become almost synonymous with the Holocaust.

*Der Stuhl (The Chair)* is a piece of furniture, any piece of furniture, but this one is dressed with a fabric woven from human hair. The dark element is mine, and Blomberg's and the bright element are our children's hair.

*Varför/Nie Wieder (Why/Never Again)* is a wallpaper, a wall-covering, decorative and screening in the home. The scissors form a swastika. They were not Nazis, but as the symbols creep, evidence of the atrocity emerges. - Why?

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

You should and must not forget what happened during the Third Reich. What happened, we must continue to talk and tell about. We all have a responsibility. How much civil courage do we have? Do you meet the beggar's gaze outside the food store or do you just walk by? Would you close your eyes if your neighbours were being abducted? It is through our actions in everyday life that we show who we are. Working with *Wiedergutmachung* means for me to encounter and counteract the Nazi ideology.

# Dick Bengtsson

born 1936 in Stockholm  
dies 1989

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Dick Bengtsson was an artist who refused to explain his paintings himself. In a newspaper interview in 1983, he expressed the following: my pictures are very much about counterfeiting reality, about the idyll that is not what it seems to be.

On Moderna museet in Stockholms website, exhibition commissioner Cecilia Widenheim writes that Dick Bengtsson is an artist who does not close his eyes to the discomfiting and complex, and, who, in practice, showed us that colour, form and composition are always bear some form of meaning.

One thing is certain: Nazism's soiled symbols effectively break the silence of the paintings and underline the dark currents that are constantly threatening our democratic society.

Mårten Carstenfors, Head of Liljevalchs, writes in a text about Dick Bengtsson: "Why does his art disturb us even today? Is it because he does not clearly explain his intentions, or is it because he forces the viewer to take a stand?"

# Willy Gordon

born 1918 in Ringen in the Russian gubernia Courland (present day Rēnga, Latvia)  
moved to Sweden at seven years of age, dies 2003

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The work is born out of Willy Gordon's sorrow and sense of loss after losing his grandfather, relatives and friends, and also his own strong ties to the entire religious and cultural heritage that was eradicated during World War II.

The title is *Escape with the Torah* and describes a story Willy Gordon heard about a man who tried in vain to save a Torah from the Gogol Synagogue in Riga. The man was a well-known and revered Jew, who, with the sacred text in his arms, was driven up to the synagogue's attic by Latvians before they left the building on fire.

Willy Gordon was initially a French-inspired sculptor student with ideals like beauty, harmony and balance for the sculpture.

When, one day in 1944, he learned that his entire family had been wiped out, something happened to him. The dream of creating beautiful and harmonious works disappeared. Now, he wanted to express emotions of all kinds, touching others as he himself was touched through to the marrow.

The work has a Jewish theme but also a general human content that reaches all, regardless of the boundaries of time, religion or culture.

# Britta Marakatt-Labba

born 1951 in Idivuoma, outside of Kiruna  
lives and works in Övre Soppero

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## **Tell us a bit about your work's contribution to the exhibition.**

The work is about the occupation of northern Norway during the Second World War and the consequences it had for reindeer-herding Sami families. The herding trails were cut off, which meant, purely politically, that there was a large accumulation of Sámi in one and the same place. This, in turn, meant that the Swedish state introduced forced displacement of some Sami families from the Karesuando area down to Västerbotten and Jokkmokk.

## **How did you come to choose the title of your work?**

The title *Rahkka* (*Crackleware*) came to me when I thought about the circumstances surrounding my

family's move to the summer pastureland in northern Norway. It was dangerous to cross the Swedish-Norwegian border because of all the mines that lay in the fields, but my father was defiant and continued to move along his old herding trails. Many Sami families chose to leave the lands they had been accustomed to moving to.

## **What do you want to communicate to the viewer with your work?**

The work will make the viewer think about what happened during the Second World War, the dangers that existed and the important things you had to think about as a reindeer herder. If you are interested in history, after studying the work, you may start to dig deeper and want to know even more.

# Jadwiga Simon-Pietkiewicz

born 1909 in Warsaw, Poland  
dies 1955

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Jadwiga Simon-Pietkiewicz studied staffli and monumental painting at the Warsaw Academy of Arts, but came to work mostly with tempera and fresco. She herself saw her technique as sketchy and worked with landscape sketches, studies of flowering trees in the spring, and autumn leaves.

She had a successful career and exhibited at the World Expo in Paris in 1936 and New York in 1939.

When the war broke out, she dropped her career, which she thought was easy; then, in February 1941, she was arrested for having hidden material from the Polish underground movement in her home. In September 1941, she was taken to the Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany. In the prison and camp, she always drew and not only succeeded in sending drawings to her brother, but also getting fellow inmates to smuggle out material. Jadwiga Simon-Pietkiewicz came to Sweden after the war under the care of the Swedish Red Cross.

When she was exhibited at a monastery (Svart brödraklostret) in Lund in 1945, the organizer, Greta Åkerlund, wrote about her portraits of fellow prisoners from the concentration camp in Ravensbrück:

"The work does not convey any sensations of horror, which one could have expected, though tragedy and seriousness obviously characterize many of the artworks. The artist has admirably succeeded in maintaining her mental balance and her ambition to extract the artistic values in the motifs. With delicate sensitivity and fine psychological empathy, she shows herself able to depict her comrades with simplicity, directly and alive, a property that gives the collection a value beyond the artistic, namely that of a documentary."

Greta Åkerlund also believed that the drawings point to man's inherent strength: "The exhibition testifies that art can live even in the most hopeless and humiliating of environments"



# Oded Balilty

born 1979 in Jerusalem, Israel  
lives and works in Tel Aviv

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In this project I decided to photograph the survivors with smiles on their faces. This is how I want them to be remembered. When I met and photographed them, and listened to their amazing stories, they became real heroes for me and many others.

**1.** Holocaust survivor Uri Chanoch and his granddaughter pose for a portrait at his house in Kfar Shemaryahu, Israel in September 2007. Uri was born in 1928 in Lithuania. In 1944, he and his family were transferred to Auschwitz where, despite his deteriorating health, he managed to survive by making a series of deals with the camp's German officers. He came to Israel illegally by ship in 1946, and fought in the 1948 War of Independence.

**2.** Holocaust survivor Michal Beer poses for a portrait at her house in Tel Aviv, Israel in September 2007. Beer, who was born in Czechoslovakia in 1929, was a prisoner in the Theresienstadt ghetto between

1942 and 1945. After surviving the Holocaust, she moved to Israel in 1949. She goes to the beach daily as a way of remembering friends lost during the war.

**3.** Berthe Badehi, left, at her house in Jerusalem in September 2007. She was born in Lyon, France in 1932. In 1941, Badehi was given to a non-Jewish French farming family and hidden in the Alps. Both her parents were Partisans, and she was reunited with them at the end of the war. She got married in 1956, and came to Israel.

**4.** Holocaust survivor Tzvi Kretz holds his granddaughter at his house in Jerusalem in September, 2007. Kretz was born in 1924 in what was then Czechoslovakia, where he survived the Chust Ghetto. In 1944 he was transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau where he was separated from his mother and three siblings. He never saw them again.