

News Release
Public Information
Department

February 2003

Movies@the Museum in April to Coincide with the Special Exhibition
The Last Expression: Art and Auschwitz

Full Listings

On consecutive Sundays, April 20, and 27, the Brooklyn Museum of Art's *Movies @ the Museum* will present "Art, Memory, Survival," a series of films about musicians, actors, painters, sculptors, and other artists whose lives and careers were disrupted or ended by the Holocaust, as well as reflections on this theme by contemporary filmmakers.

The film series is being presented in conjunction with the special exhibition *The Last Expression: Art and Auschwitz*, on view March 7 through June 15, 2003, which will feature artworks made by prisoners of the concentration camps, as well as those living in the ghettos and transit camps of the Holocaust. The films are free with Museum admission.

The films to be screened on Sunday, April 20 are:

1–2 p.m. *The Fuhrer Gives the Jews a City* (Ministry of Propaganda of the Third Reich, 1944, 25 min, in German with English subtitles). This film consists of clips from a notorious Nazi propaganda film created to "prove" to the International Red Cross that Jews were being well treated in the camps. Filmed in Theresienstadt, the "model" ghetto established by the Germans in Czechoslovakia, this production was an elaborately staged hoax presenting a completely false picture of camp life. Upon its completion, the director and most of the cast of prisoners were sent to Auschwitz. The film will be followed by a discussion, led by artist Frederick Terna, a Theresienstadt survivor.

Auschwitz Movies

page 2

2–3 p.m. *The Journey of Butterfly* (Robert E. Frye, 1992, 60 min.) In October 1991, 50 years after the Theresienstadt ghetto was established by the Nazis, the American Boy's Choir of Princeton, N.J. traveled to the site to perform a concert in memory of 15,000 children imprisoned there. The documentary includes poems by the children, set to music by Charles Davidson, paintings and drawings by prisoners, and interviews with survivors.

3–5 p.m. *The Last Butterfly* (Karel Kachyna, 1991, 106 min., not rated but contains nudity and adult themes). In this drama, stage mime Antoine Moreau (Tom Courtenay) is forced by the Gestapo to organize a sham performance in Theresienstadt to convince Red Cross observers that the camp is actually a “model” ghetto. With great courage, Moreau and his cast of Terezin inmates stage a show to end all shows. “The Last Butterfly is virtually a metaphor for the value of the artistic imagination in the face of horror,” said critic David Mills of The Washington Post.

5–6 p.m. *Kurt Geron's Karussell* (Ilona Ziok, 1999, 65 minutes, in German, French, and Czech with English subtitles). German cabaret singer Kurt Geron became an overnight sensation after performing “Mack the Knife” in Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *Threepenny Opera*. He worked 70 films, including *The Blue Angel* with Marlene Dietrich. When the Nazis came to power, Geron, a Jew, fled to Paris and then Holland. He was arrested in Amsterdam and deported to Theresienstadt, where he directed his own cabaret, *The Karussell*, featuring many of Europe's best performers. Under orders, he also directed the notorious propaganda film *The Fuhrer Gives the Jews a City* (see 1–2 p.m.). Using rare archival footage and performances by today's young German cabaret stars, the Austrian Jewish documentary filmmaker Ilona Ziok creates a portrait of an artist for whom performance was life itself.

The films to be screened on Sunday, April 27 are as follows:

1–2 p.m. *From Bitter Earth: Artists of the Holocaust* (Paul Morrison, 1989, 50 min.). Artists who survived the camps discuss the risks they took to obtain materials and to hide finished work from their Nazi captors. The film is a tribute to artists who survived as well as to those who perished.

Auschwitz Movies

page 3

2–3 p.m. *Tibor Jankay: The Art of Survival* (Harlan Steinberger, 1995, 40 min.). This film is a profile of artist Tibor Jankay, who was born in Hungary in 1899. Jankay studied art in Budapest and Paris until World War II, when he was sent to a work camp. Escaping from a train bound for Auschwitz, Jankay became a fugitive, trading his drawings for food. Despite terrible trials, he survived the war and was miraculously reunited with his beloved wife. The couple resettled in Venice, California, where Jankay painted works celebrating life and hope, and mentored countless emerging and established artists in his community, inspiring them with his story of survival.

3–5 p.m. *Bach in Auschwitz* (Michel Daeron, 2000, 105 min.). This documentary reunites eleven women who performed in the infamous all-female Auschwitz Orchestra under the direction of Alma Rose, niece of Gustav Mahler. The women performed for fellow inmates, their Nazi captors, and, most chillingly, those marching to crematoriums. The survivors are filmed in and around the homes they have made throughout the world, recounting the atrocities they suffered and witnessed, and discussing the power of music to help them maintain their sanity, and to survive.

5–5:30 p.m. *Art and Remembrance: The Legacy of Felix Nussbaum* (Barbara Pfeffer, 1993, 29 min.). While in hiding in Brussels, the artist Felix Nussbaum painted brilliant and disturbing works about the Holocaust. Shortly before the liberation of Brussels, he was captured and put on the last transport to Auschwitz, where he was killed.

5:30–6 p.m. *Silent Song, The Walnut Tree, and Zyklon Portrait*. Three short films by the acclaimed director Elida Schogt. *Silent Song* (2002, 6 min.) is a meditation on a photograph of a Jewish boy playing the accordion amid the chaos of the liberation of the Dachau camp. *The Walnut Tree* (2000, 11 min.) explores memory, history, and survival through family photographs and a narration by the director's mother, who describes her memories of her mother and father in Amsterdam, before the couple was deported to Auschwitz and killed. *Zyklon Portrait* (1999, 13 min.) begins as a meticulous description of the gas used to kill millions in concentration camps and ends as an artist's personal reflection on unspeakable horror and the courage of those who struggled to survive.

Auschwitz Movies

page 4

The Last Expression: Art and Auschwitz has been organized by the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University. Support for the exhibition and its tour has been provided, in part, by the Federal Republic of Germany, Ellen Phillips Katz and Howard C. Katz, Northwestern University's John R. Lindgren Fund, the President and Provost of Northwestern University, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution \$6; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$3. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. **Bus:** B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.