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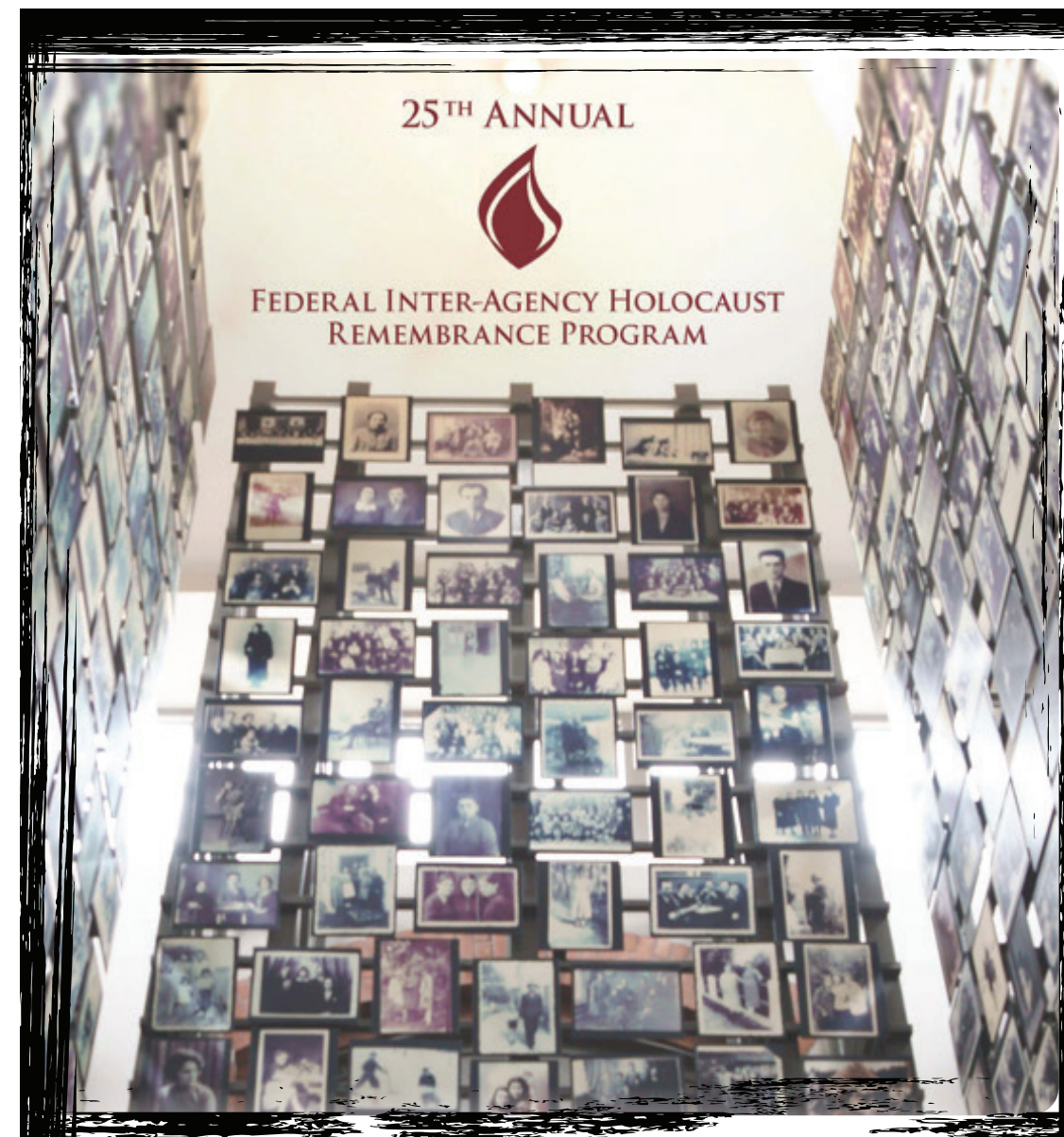
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BEARING WITNESS

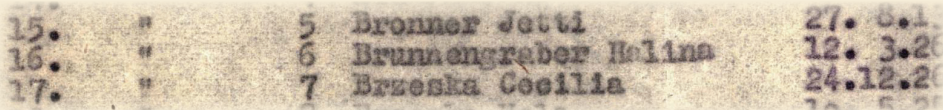
Halina Silber, A Holocaust Survivor on Schindler's List

April 12, 2018 • LINCOLN THEATRE, 1215 U St. NW, Washington, D.C. • 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Halina Silber



Mrs. Halina Silber, born Halina Brunnengraber, survived the Holocaust because of Oskar Schindler. She was number 16 on his list. She was born in Krakow, Poland to a family of seven. After the German invasion in 1939, Silber's family moved to small villages in the hopes that they might be saved from the concentration camps. As hope diminished, her mother arranged for Halina to enter a forced-labor camp just outside of Krakow, believing that the job would save her life. Soon after Silber departed, her parents and two siblings were taken to the Belzec Extermination Camp, where they were murdered. While at the forced-labor camp, Silber learned that she was selected to work in Oskar Schindler's factory. She worked there from 1943 until liberation. She is the widow of David Silber, a survivor of Auschwitz.



Photos, counter-clockwise from top left:

Portion of Schindler's List image with Halina's name, No. 16.

Halina with nephew in Germany, around 1950.

Front row: Halina, mother (Gina), brother (Leizer), father (Abraham); back row: brother (Mates), sister (Sabina), sister (Helen). (Gina, Abraham, Sabina, and Leizer did not survive the Holocaust).

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Allgenerations

U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

Yad Vashem

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Barbara Julius, U.S. Department of Education

The image of the portion of Schindler's List, which is included in this program, is reproduced with the permission of the Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust museum.

The photo of the three walls of photographs that appears on the cover for this program is of a portion of the "Tower of Faces" in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. That room contains a three-story tower that displays photographs compiled by Dr. Yaffa Eliach, who survived the massacre as a 4-yea-old. Taken between 1890 and 1941 in Eisiskes, a small town in what is now Lithuania, the photographs depict a vibrant Jewish community that existed for 900 years. In 1941, German troops entered the village and within two days massacred the Jewish population. (Photo by Ernest J. Powell, Jr., GAO)



Members of the string ensemble:
Gemma Kuijpers, violinist,
Jacqueline Mendels Birn, cellist,
Jeanne Rosenthal, violist, Carl
Tretter, violinist. (Not pictured:
Jonathan Gershfeld, cellist)

The four pieces in The Terezín Collection were composed and originally performed in the concentration camp in Terezín (Theresienstadt), in occupied Czechoslovakia. Terezín, which served as a transit camp to Auschwitz and Treblinka extermination camps, was “home” to many of Czechoslovakia’s great Jewish musicians and composers. Our string quartet will play three of the four pieces. Viktor Kohn composed “Praeludium.” He was about 45 years old when he perished in Auschwitz. The melody to “Uv’tzeil K’nofecho” was written by an author whose last name was Grunfeld. A young composer from Kassel, Germany, Zikmund Schul, arranged the tune for string quartet. He died at the age of 28 in Terezín. Among these composers, Frantisek Domazlicky was the sole survivor of the Nazi atrocities. He wrote “Song without Words,” which was premiered by the Ledec String Quartet in Terezín.

“The Serenade” by Robert Dauber, only 23 years old when killed at Terezín in 1945, was recently arranged for quartet for our use by Charles Small. It was composed by Dauber for violin and piano.

“Eyli, Eyli” (My God, My God). In English, the song is translated, “My G-d, why has thou forsaken me? In fire and flames they burned us. Everywhere they shamed and mocked us. But no one could turn us away from You, my G-d, nor from Your Holy Torah, from Your Commandment.”

“Ani Ma’amin” (I Believe), written in the 12th century, was sung by many Jews as they entered the gas chambers.

The exit music, “Partisan Hymn,” was hummed or sung on the transports and is a traditional folk tune.

2018 FEDERAL INTER-AGENCY HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE PROGRAM

Musical Prelude

String Ensemble – Jonathan Gershfeld, Gemma Kuijpers,
Jeanne Rosenthal, Carl Tretter

Welcome

Jeff Knishkow, Chair, Federal Inter-Agency Holocaust Remembrance Committee

Color Guard / National Anthem

United States Armed Forces Color Guard /
Sergeant First Class Tracy Labrecque-Pearson (vocals)

Introduction of Speaker

Lynn Williams
Director, Leadership Programs, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Remarks by Halina Silber

Holocaust Survivor

Discussion With Halina Silber

Moderated by Lynn Williams

Introduction of Candle Lighting Ceremony

Thomas K. Yazdgerdi, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, U.S. Department of State

Candle Lighting

Matthew Gever

Avi Bender

Wendy Doernberg

Joe Schubart

Gabrielle Geroe

Halina Silber

Jacqueline Mendels Birn

Music by String Ensemble, with cellist and Holocaust Survivor, Jacqueline Mendels Birn

Closing Remarks

Jeff Knishkow

Musical Postlude

String Ensemble



Jacqueline Mendels Birn (Holocaust Survivor) was born on April 23, 1935 in Paris, France. Her father, Frits, ran a food import-export business and her mother, Ellen, took care of Jacqueline and her older sister, Manuela, and later gave birth to a son. The family moved around France in the early 1940s, Frits was forced to sell his business, and the family was in danger and in hiding until the liberation of Paris. They later learned that around 20 close family members had been deported and killed in Sobibor and Auschwitz. Jacqueline moved to the United States in 1958, where she married and had two children. She retired from the U.S. Foreign Service Institute in 2007 and began volunteering at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (Source: www.ushmm.org)



Lynn Williams directs the Museum's programs for professionals and student leaders. After joining the Museum's staff in 1994, she launched the Bringing the Lessons Home Program to introduce local high school students and their communities to Holocaust history. In 1999, she directed the development and launch of the Museum's Law Enforcement and Society Program, which has provided leadership training to more than 130,000 law enforcement officers nationally. The recipient of the Janusz Korczak Teacher of the Year Award for Holocaust Education, she has presented at conferences throughout the United States and in China, Croatia, Germany, Israel, Senegal, the Netherlands, and Sweden.



Thomas K. Yazdgerdi is a member of the Senior Foreign Service. He entered the U.S. Foreign Service in 1991, and is currently Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues at the Department of State. Before that, he served as Director of the Office of South Central European Affairs (2014-2016). Among his other roles, he was Political Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul (2013-2014), head of the U.S. Consulate in Kirkuk, Iraq (2011-2012), Deputy Political Counselor for Iran Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad (2010-2011), and Deputy Chief of Mission and Political-Economic Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Pristina, Kosovo (2006-2009) in the run-up to and aftermath of Kosovo independence. Tom is the recipient of three Superior Honor Awards, a Meritorious Honor Award, the Sinclair Award for Excellence in Language Study (Greek), four Group Superior Honor Awards, and the Secretary of State's Award for Volunteerism Abroad.