



Life: Survivor Portraits



BY KELLY WEBECK

Life: Survivor Portraits

In 2014, Holocaust Museum Houston celebrated its 18th anniversary. In the Hebrew language, the number 18 is expressed as “chai,” meaning life, and multiples of 18 have significance.

“Life: Survivor Portraits” is a photographic exploration of the lives that several Houston-area Survivors of the Holocaust have created in the years after the Holocaust. The exhibit includes 37 framed images: 18 portraits of Survivors, 18 images documenting the home space each Survivor created, and one self portrait of the artist.



Introduction

Kelly Webeck has worked with Holocaust Museum Houston since 2007, when she began photographically documenting the Warren Fellowship. Since then she has become close to the Survivor community. In 2010, she envisioned a project and wrote to several Survivors, asking if anyone would be willing to participate in this portrait photography project.

Kelly states, “In many cases, I had listened to Survivors talk about their experiences during the Holocaust; often I heard their stories numerous times. I wondered what their lives were like when not in the Holocaust museum setting. I yearned to see where they lived, what life was like when they were at home. As part of the project, I went to their homes and asked to see the spaces they had created for themselves.”

Kelly is interested in the objects people choose to surround themselves with and how the spaces people create become a part of their identity. She explains,

“The time I spend with Survivors, making images, is not about testimony or war. It is about the lives they have created for themselves since the war; it is about who and how they are in their home space. I think portraits could be equivalent to a visual testimony, and for me, these images, made on film, offer moments of quiet reflection. In my subjects’ homes I find spaces and moments that speak of identity, memory, and passion. There are stories that can be learned through reading the lines in their faces and observing the objects they surround themselves with, the things that are special to them, mostly acquired in the years after the war.”

Artist's Statement



Kelly Webeck was born in West Lafayette, Indiana on August 26, 1988. After graduating from The University of Texas at Austin with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Visual Art Studies she completed **Texas 4000** for Cancer, the longest annual charity bike ride from Austin, Texas to Anchorage, Alaska. She is now a teaching artist for **Houston Center for Photography** and **Fotofest**. She has worked as a photographer for Holocaust Museum Houston since 2007. Follow her on Instagram **@RocketFacedWeeb** and see images made during the creation of this exhibit by searching **#SurvivorPortraits**.

Conceptualizing the “Life: Survivor Portraits” project over the past three years has been an exploration of self, photography and others. The project originally grew out of my curiosity to get to know local Houston Holocaust Survivors on a more intimate level after hearing their oral testimonies. Making the photographs, both the shooting and the printing aspects, has transformed the experiences of my early twenties. These people, who I have come to care about deeply as I have come to know them better, have changed how I see my place in the world, as well as how I view and respond to humanity and the challenges we face in today’s complex world.

As a photographer, I am drawn to the histories of my subjects. Throughout this process I have questioned the stages of my own development, recognizing that many of my sitters were my age during the war. I wonder how I would have reacted? What would I have become? These Survivors are more than living remnants of a dark history. To me they are creative, multidimensional, articulate, caring and generous people. They have lived through a history of life experiences that defy the imagination. They have flourished, and in many cases, bettered the world around them.

Respectfully,

Kelly Lee Webeck, 2014

GALLERY 1.1 Self Portraits from Survivor Portraits



Self Portrait in Edith Minceberg's Home



Dr. Ann Millin



Ann Millin, Ph.D., is Historian in the Leadership Programs division of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's National Institute for Holocaust Education, Washington, D.C. Before joining the Institute staff, Dr. Millin was the Special Assistant to the Director of the Museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies and the Program Coordinator of the Miles Lerman Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance. Prior to her work in the Center, she was the Historian in the Museum's Photo Archives. From 1999 to 2005, she also served as Historian in the Museum's Law Enforcement and Society Program for the FBI Academy-Quantico New Agent, Analyst, and National Academy programs.

Dr. Millin received a B.A. in Speech and Theatre from Macalester College, an M.A. in Religious Studies from Vanderbilt University, and a Ph.D. in Jewish History from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Dr. Millin has been a research fellow at the University of Göttingen and an Inter-University Fellow at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She has taught Jewish History, Judaic Studies, World Religions, and Holocaust studies at HUC-JIR, the University of Cincinnati, and the University of Kentucky at Lexington. Her scholarly research focuses on the history of Jewish social welfare work in Germany and Austria and Jewish forced emigration from Vienna. She is the co-curator of the websites for two of the Museum's special exhibitions, *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda* (2009) and *Some Were Neighbors: Collaboration & Complicity in the Holocaust* (2013).

Stefi Altman



Stefi Altman was born Szyfra Fiszbaum in Lublin, Poland on May 15, 1926. She survived the Jastkov labor camp, two extermination camps, and eventually escaped from the Dorohucza labor camp into hiding under a farmer's barn. In 1949, she moved to Houston. She has one son, Moses David (Mickey), and two grandchildren.



Rosine Chappell



Rosine Chappell was born Rosine Joseph in Bucharest, Romania on November 1, 1928. She and her father were American citizens, which allowed them to flee Europe in 1941 through the Middle East to India, where they sailed to the U.S. She settled in Houston in 1967 with her husband, Cliff. She has three children, Glen, Andrea and Richard and two living grandchildren.



Helen Colin



Helen Colin was born Helen Goldstein in Tuszyn, Poland on April 15, 1923. She married Kopel Colin while living in the Łódź Ghetto, but was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau shortly after. She was liberated from Bergen-Belsen on her 22nd birthday. She was reunited with her husband after the war, and together they settled in Houston in 1950. She has two daughters, three grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.



GALLERY 4.1



Edith Hamer



Edith Hamer was born Edith Finkelstein in Klaipeda, **Lithuania**, on May 14, 1937. She survived the Holocaust through intervention by **Chiune Sugihara**, the Japanese consul in Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania, who helped Jewish refugees by granting visas to escape through Japan. Edith married Paul Hamer in 1957. She later moved to Houston to be closer to her twin sons, Louis and David. Edith and Paul have three granddaughters.



GALLERY 5.1



Walter Kase



Walter Kase was born Wladyslaw Kasrylewicz in Łódź, Poland on August 17, 1929. His family was confined in the Łódź Ghetto before he and his father were deported to the Pionki Labor camp, followed by Auschwitz, Sonsnowiec and Mauthausen, before finally being liberated from the camp at Gunskirchen. He immigrated to the United States in 1947, and currently lives in Houston with his wife, Chris.



Louise Joskowitz



Louise Joskowitz was born in Krakow, Poland on April 14, 1925. In 1941, Louise's family was confined in the Krakow Ghetto, and then sent to the labor camp, Plaszow. Louise was later sent to Auschwitz and labored in an ammunitions factory near Dresden. From there, Louise was transported to Theresienstadt, where she was liberated. After May 1945, Louise learned her brother, Sol, had also survived. Louise married fellow survivor Rubin Joskowitz in 1947. In 1949, they came to Houston. Louise has two daughters, Pepi and Genia, two grandsons, and four great-grandsons.



GALLERY 7.1



Louise with her brother Sol

Hania Lewkowitz



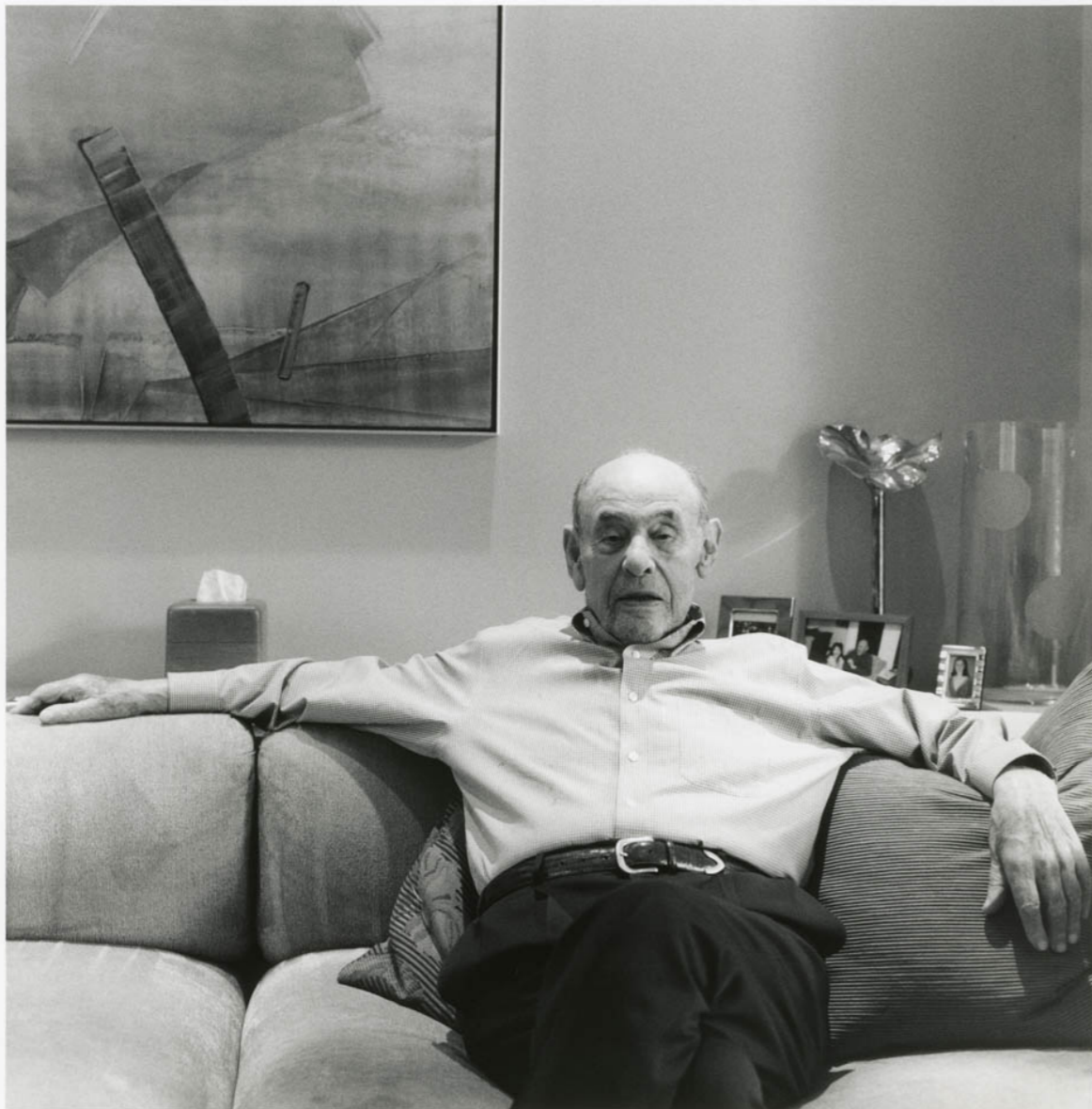
Hania Lewkowitz was born Anna Rozenblat on March 15, 1935 in Minsk Mazowiecki, Poland. Her family lived in Warsaw when the war began in 1939. When they were moved into the Warsaw Ghetto in 1941, Hania was sent into hiding with a Christian woman. She remained in hiding throughout the war, often changing locations and families. Hania, her mother and her mother's sister survived the war, while the rest of her family perished. Hania and her husband Gregory have a daughter named Cindy.



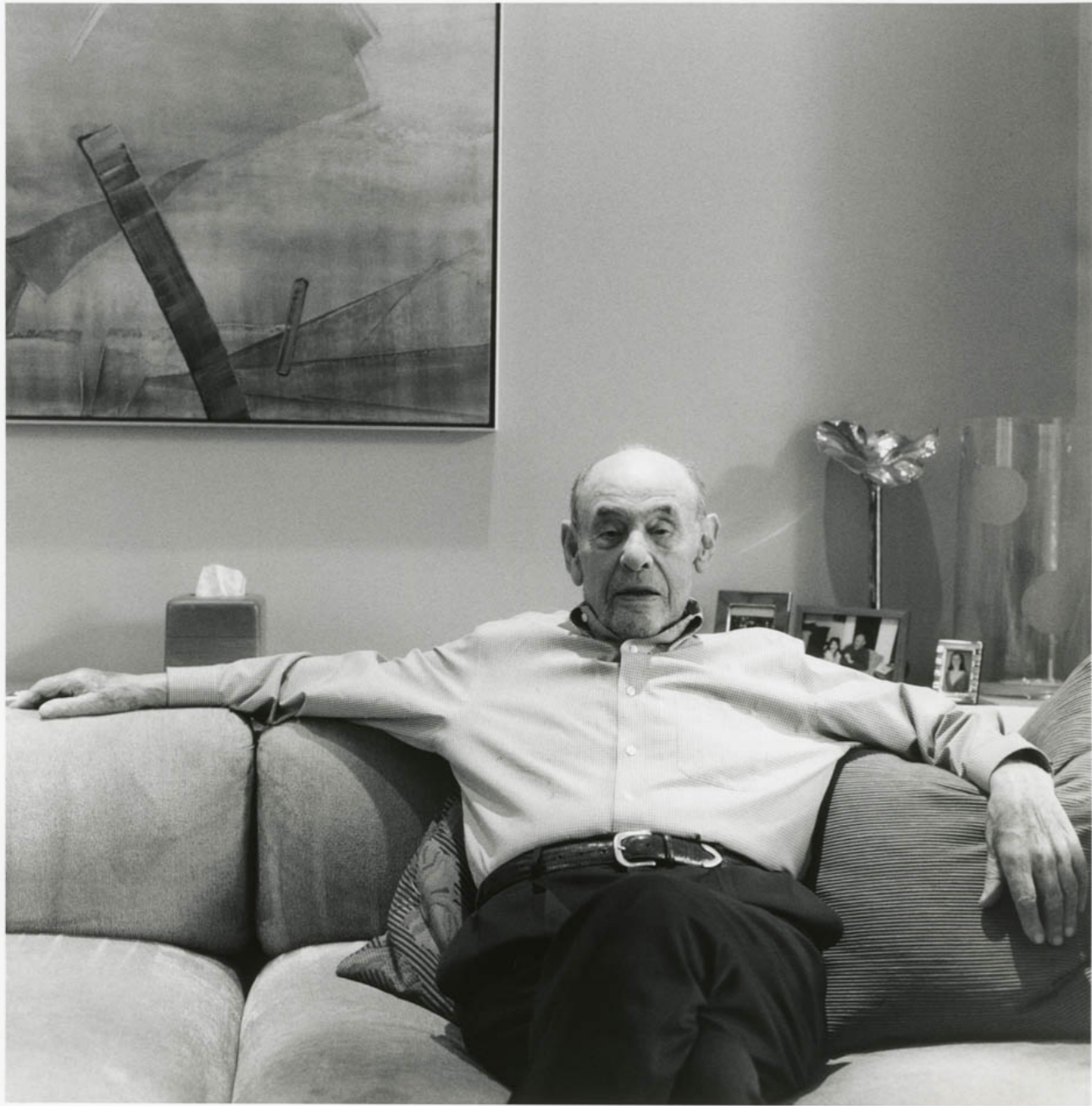
GALLERY 8.1



Bill Morgan



Bill Morgan was born Yossl Margulies in Ceranów, **Poland** on May 18, 1925. Bill spent the war posing as a Polish farm worker constantly moving from town to town. In 1949, Bill came to the U.S. and he settled in Houston in the early 1950s. He and his wife, Shirley, have five children and fourteen grandchildren.



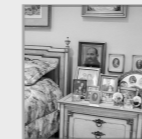
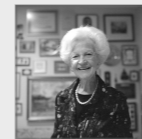
Edith Mincberg



Edith Mincberg was born Edyta-Dita Sternlicht in Chybie, Poland on September 30, 1924. She survived the Holocaust as a slave laborer in a Soviet government farm in Siberia, then as a refugee in Dzhambul, Kazakhstan. She met her husband, Josef, in the **American Zone** of Germany after the war and together they moved to Houston in 1949. She has two children, David and Pearl, eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.



GALLERY 10.1



Bill Orlin



Bill Orlin was born Velvel Orlinski in Brok, Poland on May 28, 1932. He survived the Holocaust by fleeing east through Soviet-occupied territory to **Uzbekistan**. He settled in Houston in 1951, and proudly served his new country in the Korean War. He is married to Edie Saunders, and they have three daughters, Julie, Cindy, and Michelle and one son, Mark. They have seven grandchildren.



Riki Roussos



Riki Roussos was born Rivka Atias in Sarajevo, **Yugoslavia** on July 20, 1927. She survived in hiding, before fleeing to the Italian-occupied zone, where she was imprisoned in the Rab Island camp. She escaped and lived with **partisans** in Banja Luka until the war's end. Riki then emigrated to Israel. She came to the U.S. in 1962 with her husband Mordechai, and settled in Houston in 1977 to be near her two children, Eli and Sarah. Riki has seven grandchildren.

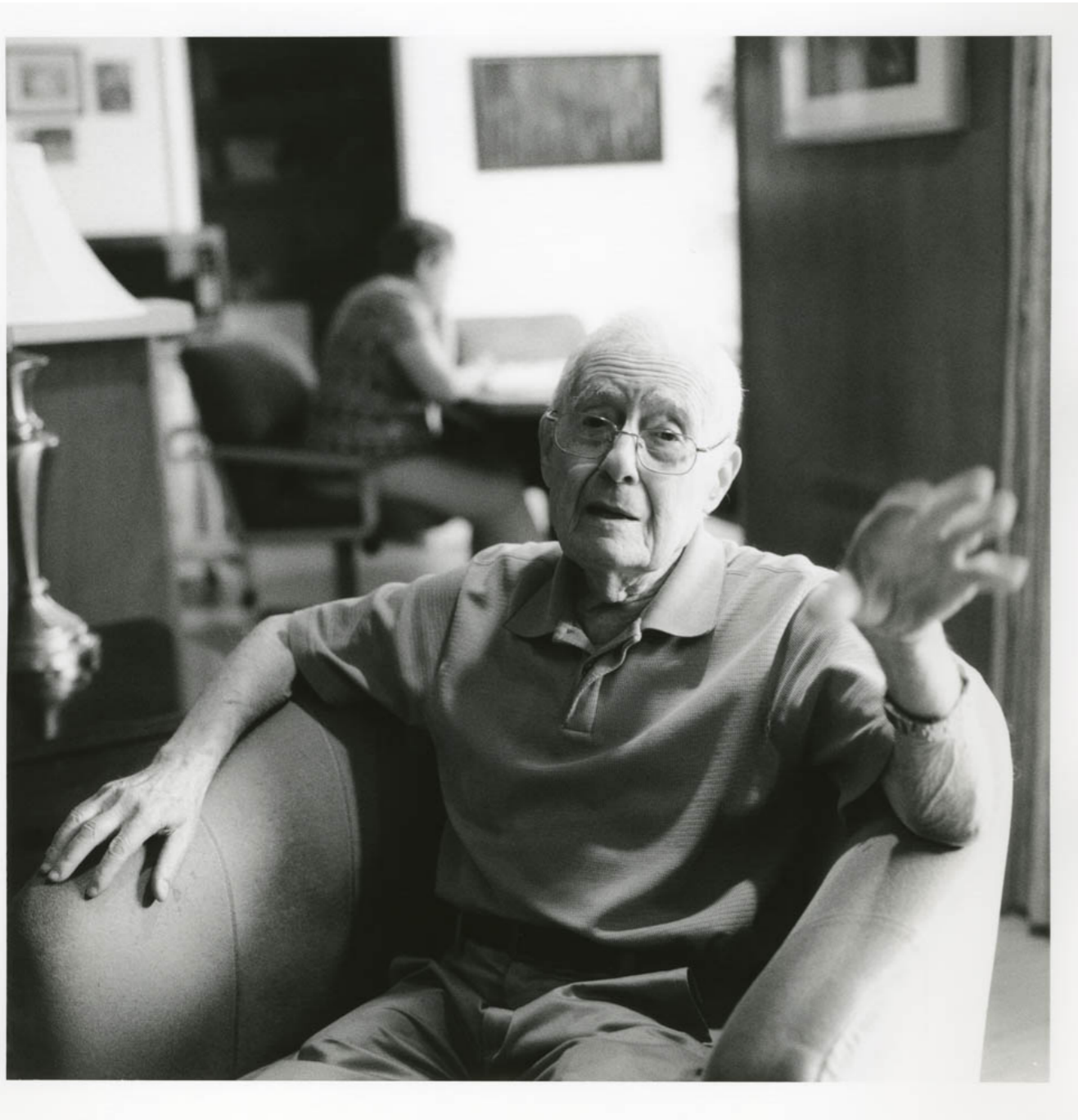


Samuel Rubin



Samuel Rubin was born in Charleroi, **Belgium** on October 7, 1928. He survived the Holocaust in hiding with a Belgian family. He emigrated to the U.S. in 1948 and proudly served his new country in the Korean War. [Pauline Cramarz](#) and Sam married in 1956 and moved to Houston in 1958. They have two children, Allan and Rhonda.

Samuel passed away October 11, 2014.



Pauline Rubin



Pauline Rubin was born Pauline Cramarz in Brussels, Belgium on June 30, 1936. She survived the war hiding with different Belgian families. She moved to the U.S. in 1950. Pauline and [Sam Rubin](#) married in 1956 and moved to Houston in 1958. They have two children, Allan and Rhonda.



GALLERY 14.1 Pauline Rubin



Anna Steinberger



Anna Steinberger was born Anna Schneider in Radom, Poland on January 1, 1928. She survived the war as a “resettled worker” on a collective farm in the Soviet Union, before relocating to Alma Ata, **Kazakhstan**. She arrived in the U.S. in 1949, and married Emil, a family friend, a year later. In 1971, they settled in Houston. She has two daughters, Pauline and Inette, and one grandson. Dr. Steinberger is an active member of the **Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission**.



Ruth Steinfeld



Ruth Steinfeld was born Ruth Krell in Mannheim, **Germany** on July 8, 1933. She survived with her sister, Lea under the care of the Jewish organization **Oeuvres de Secours aux Enfants** (OSE), first in a group home, then posing as Catholic children with a foster family, and finally in a French orphanage. They emigrated together to the U.S. in 1946, and moved together to Houston soon after. Ruth and Lea chose Houston because there were cowboys in Texas. Ruth married Larry Steinfeld; they have three daughters, seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.



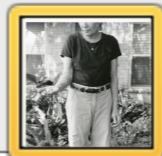
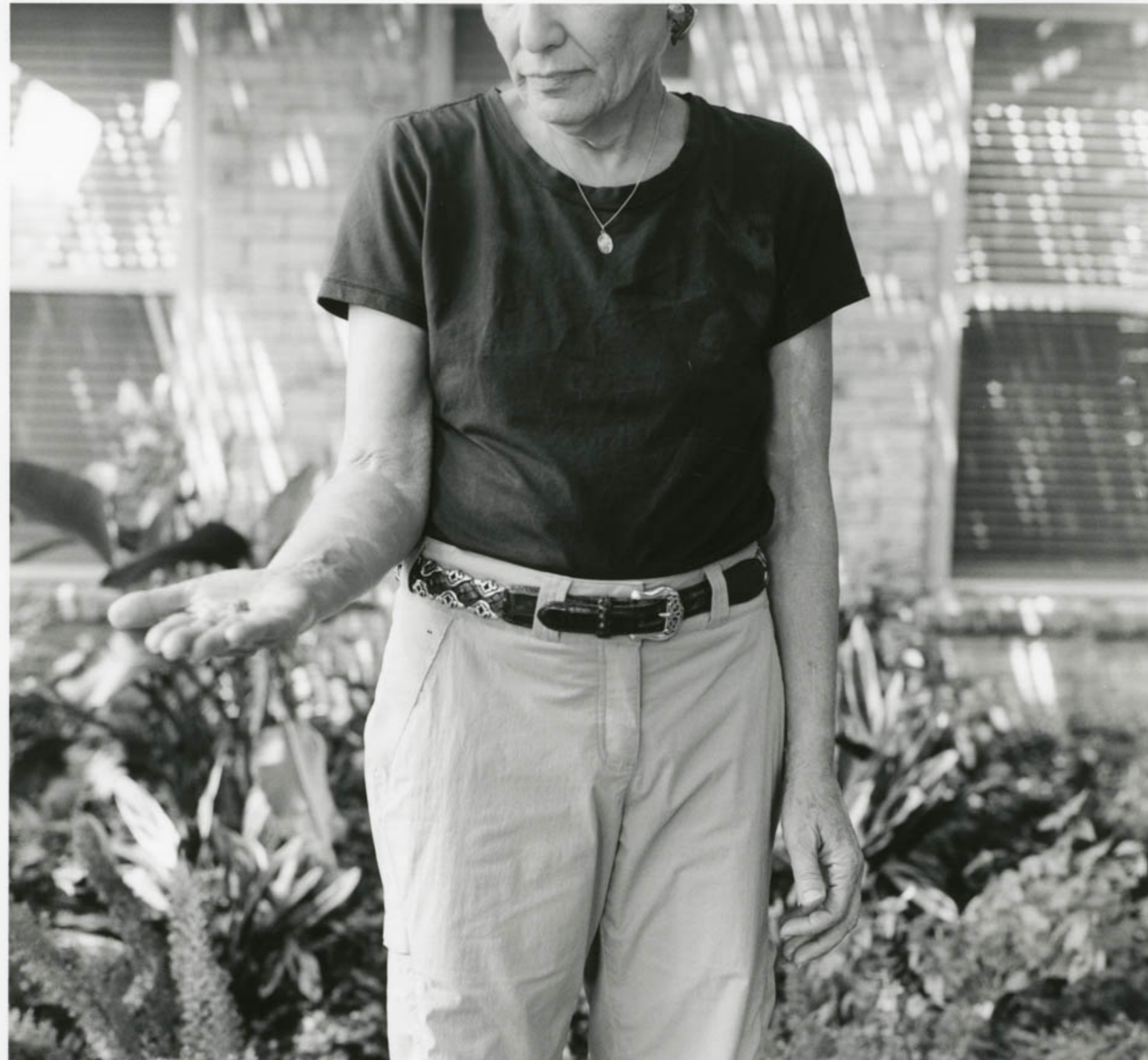


Chaja Verveer



Chaja Verveer was born in Maarsbergen, **Holland** on September 24, 1941. She survived the war under the name Carla van den Berg with a Dutch family active in the **resistance**, before she was deported as an orphan to Westerbork and Bergen-Belsen, where she survived with a group of 51 other ‘unknown children’. She was liberated from Theresienstadt, in Czechoslovakia, and reunited with her mother. She settled in Houston in the 1970s and is an active member of the **Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission**.





Naomi Warren



Naomi Warren was born Naomi Kaplan in Wołkowysk, Poland on September 1, 1920. She survived a labor detail at Auschwitz-Birkenau, before being moved to Ravensbrück. She was liberated from Bergen-Belsen. She joined her sister, Helen, who came to the U.S. before the war, in Houston in 1946. Naomi and her second husband, Martin Warren, had three children, Helen, Geri, and Benjamin. Naomi has eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Naomi considers the over 400 Fellows educated through the **Warren Fellowship for Future Teachers** an extension of her family.



Laure Wittner



Laure Wittner was born Hannelore Greiffenhagen in Berlin, Germany on March 28, 1926. She survived the Holocaust by fleeing to Belgium, before being imprisoned in several transit camps in France. She escaped to Nice, France, from which she moved to Monte Carlo, Monaco to join the Resistance. She married an American in Brussels after the war and settled in Houston in 1955.

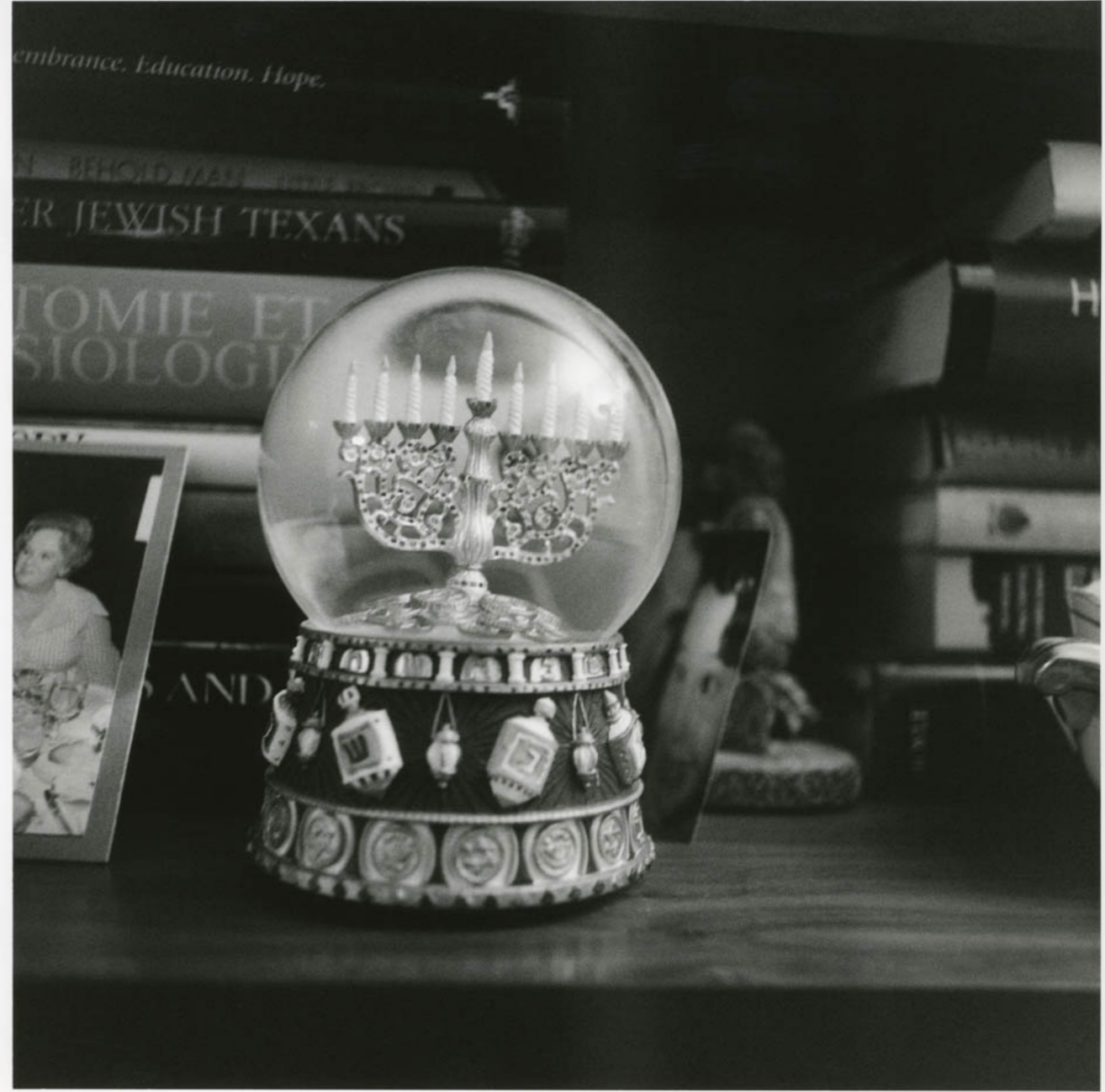




Zoly Zamir



Zoly Zamir was born Zoltan Schulzinger in Sieu Magherus, **Romania** on July 22, 1922. He remained in Romania under the **Iron Guard** until 1941 when he fled to Palestine, where he joined the **Haganah** and fought in the 1948 War of Independence. He moved to the U.S. in 1962 with his wife Shoshana, settling in Houston in 1982. He has two daughters, Yardena and Varda, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.



American Zone

Directly after World War II, the four Allied powers (France, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, and USA) divided Germany into four controlled occupation zones. The American Zone, or American Sector, included Bavaria and Hesse in southwestern Germany, the northern portions of the present-day German state of Baden-Württemberg, as well as the southern most section of Berlin.



Related Glossary Terms

Germany

Index

Chapter 10 - Edith Minberg

Belgium

On May 10, 1940, Nazi Germany invaded neutral Belgium. After only 18 days of fighting, the Belgian army surrendered to German forces. Belgium was liberated by Allied forces in late 1944.



Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 13 - Samuel Rubin

Chapter 14 - Pauline Rubin

Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara

A Japanese diplomat who served as Vice-Consul for the Empire of Japan in Lithuania. During World War II, he issued travel visas that facilitated the escape of more than 6,000 Jewish refugees to Japanese territory. In 1985, Israel honored him as “Righteous Among the Nations” for his actions.



Related Glossary Terms

Lithuania

Index

Chapter 5 - Edith Hamer

Germany

After the rise of Hitler and the Nazis in 1933, Germany was viewed as an aggressive fascist state. Upon surrendering to the Allied powers in 1945, Germany was divided into four zones. In 1949, the United Kingdom, France and USA returned control of their zones to the German people, beginning the division between East and West Germany. In 1990 the two countries reunited.



Related Glossary Terms

American Zone

Index

Chapter 16 - Ruth Steinfeld

Chapter 19 - Laure Wittner

Haganah

An underground paramilitary organization in what was then the British Mandate of Palestine, active from 1920 to 1948, which later became the core of the Israel Defense Forces.

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 20 - Zoly Zamir

Holland

Holland is a region on the west coast of the Netherlands. The name Holland is also frequently used to refer to the whole of the country of the Netherlands. This usage is generally accepted, but is factually incorrect.



Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 17 - Chaja Verveer

Iron Guard

A far-right movement and political party in Romania in power from 1927 into World War II. The Iron Guard was ultra-nationalist, fascist, anti-communist, and antisemitic.



Related Glossary Terms

Romania

Index

Chapter 20 - Zoly Zamir

Kazakhstan

Part of Russia, and then the Soviet Union, in the steppe region. Gained independence in 1991.



Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 10 - Edith Mincborg

Chapter 15 - Anna Steinberger

Lithuania

Baltic state that was occupied by Russia before the war, Germany during the war, and then the Soviet Union after World War II. Gained independence in 1991.



Related Glossary Terms

Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara

Index

Find Term

Chapter 5 - Edith Hamer

Oeuvres de Secours aux Enfants

A French Jewish humanitarian organization, which aided and hid hundreds of Jewish refugee children, from both France and from other Western European countries during the Holocaust. Translated as "Organization to Save the Children," and commonly abbreviated as OSE.

Related Glossary Terms

Resistance

Index

Chapter 16 - Ruth Steinfeld

Partisans

The 20,000 to 30,000 Jews who managed to escape from ghettos and camps and form their own fighting units, usually concentrated in densely wooded areas.

In some places, partisans received assistance from local villagers, but more often they could not count on help, partly because of widespread antisemitism, partly because of people's fears of being severely punished for helping. The partisans lived in constant danger of local informers revealing their whereabouts to the Germans.

Many Jews participated in the partisan units formed in France and Italy to help regular Allied forces defeat German forces. They forged documents and identity cards, printed anti-Nazi leaflets, and assassinated collaborators.

Related Glossary Terms

Resistance

Index

Find Term

Chapter 12 - Riki Roussos

Poland

World War II officially began on September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. In accordance with the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement, Poland was divided between the Soviet Union and Germany when Poland fell just 28 days later.

Before the outbreak of World War II, more than 3.3 million Jews lived in Poland, the largest Jewish population of Europe and second largest Jewish community in the world. Hundreds of ghettos, concentration camps, and labor camps were built in Poland during the war, including all five killing centers.

Barely 11% of Poland's Jews - 369,000 people - survived the war. Today, approximately 3,200 Jews remain in Poland.



Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Chapter 2 - Stefi Altman

Chapter 4 - Helen Colin

Chapter 6 - Walter Kase

Chapter 7 - Louise Joskowitz

Chapter 8 - Hania Lewkowitz

Chapter 9 - Bill Morgan

Chapter 10 - Edith Minberg

Chapter 11 - Bill Orlin

Chapter 15 - Anna Steinberger

Chapter 18 - Naomi Warren

Resistance

Jewish Resistance

Jewish civilians offered armed resistance in over 100 ghettos in occupied Poland and the Soviet Union. Most famously, Jews in the Warsaw ghetto rose in armed revolt in April 1943. Thousands of young Jews resisted by escaping from the ghettos into the forests. There they joined partisan units.

Jews in the ghettos and camps also responded to Nazi oppression with various forms of spiritual resistance. These efforts included: creating Jewish cultural institutions, continuing to observe religious holidays and rituals, providing clandestine education, publishing underground newspapers, and collecting and hiding documentation.

Jewish prisoners rose against their guards at three killing centers. At Treblinka in August 1943 and Sobibor in October 1943, prisoners armed with stolen weapons attacked the SS staff. In October 1944, at Auschwitz-Birkenau, members of the Jewish Special Detachment (*Sonderkommando*) mutinied against the SS guards.

In many countries occupied by or allied with the Germans, Jewish resistance often took the form of aid and rescue, such as the French Jewish organization *Oeuvres de Secours aux Enfants*.

Non-Jewish Resistance

In addition to resistance by Jews, members of other victimized groups and occupied territories resisted the Nazis. In France, resistors killed informers, raided German military facilities, and sabotaged rail lines. In February 1941 the Dutch population mounted a general strike in protest against arrests and brutal treatment of Jews. In countries across Europe, underground resistance movements supplied forged documents to those in danger, engaged in anti-Nazi sabotage or arranged for safe hiding places or escape routes.

In May 1944, Roma (Gypsies) men, armed with knives and axes, refused to leave their barracks at the Auschwitz Gypsy family camp. The SS men retreated.

In a show of spiritual resistance, many Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany and elsewhere resisted Nazism through defiance. Some of them refused to serve in the German army and, as concentration camp prisoners, organized illegal religious study groups.

Other forms of non-violent resistance included sheltering Jews (sometimes at risk of death), listening to forbidden Allied radio broadcasts, and producing clandestine anti-Nazi newspapers. In the face of Nazi repression and violence, acts of resistance at times significantly impeded German actions, saved lives, or simply boosted morale of the persecuted.

Related Glossary Terms

Oeuvres de Secours aux Enfants, Partisans

Index

Chapter 17 - Chaja Verveer

Chapter 19 - Laure Wittner

Romania

After originally declaring neutrality, Romania joined the Axis Powers November 23, 1940. After invasion by the Soviet Union in 1944, King Michael led a coup d'état, which deposed the Iron Guard regime, and switched Romania to the side of the Allies for the remainder of the war.



Related Glossary Terms

Iron Guard

Index

Chapter 3 - Rosine Chappell

Chapter 20 - Zoly Zamir

Uzbekistan

Formerly part of the Soviet Union, in the steppe region. Gained independence in 1991.



Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

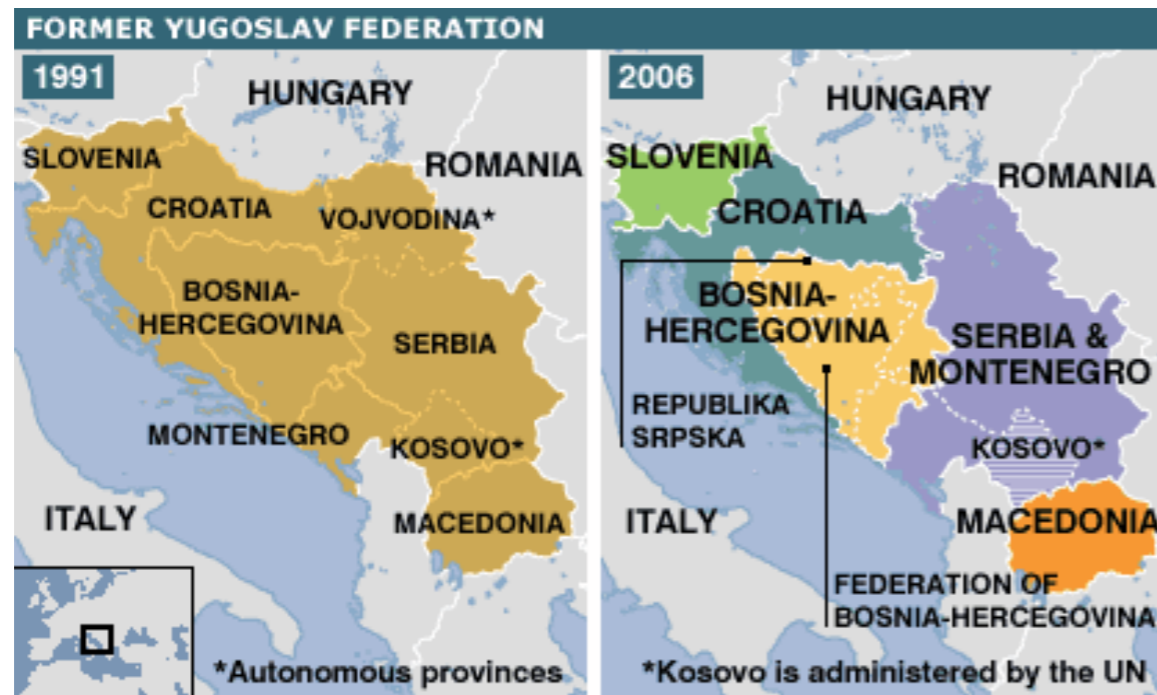
Find Term

Chapter 11 - Bill Orlin

Yugoslavia

A merged state created in 1922. During World War II, the state surrendered to Germany in 1941 after just 11 days of fighting, and was broken up between Axis forces for control. After the war, it emerged as a unified communist state.

In the 1990s, Yugoslavia broke in the nations of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia & Montenegro, Macedonia and the still-disputed region of Kosovo through civil war and genocide.



Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Find Term

Chapter 12 - Riki Roussos