



Dorit Weiserová was one of 15,000 Jewish children the Nazis imprisoned in Terezin. The story of her teacher, artist Friedl Dicker-Brandeis illustrates a powerful form of resistance to Nazi dehumanization. Along with other adult prisoners, Friedl taught clandestine classes so that in an increasingly dark and dangerous world, the children were given hope. Sadly, neither Dorit or Friedl survived. The art stands as a memorial to them.

"Flowering meadow with butterflies" by Dorit Weiserová (1932-1944).
Copyright: The Jewish Museum in Prague

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Recognizing the Extraordinary Courage of Victims and Survivors of the Holocaust

Programme

FRIDAY, 26 JANUARY 2024

GENERAL ASSEMBLY HALL
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

HOST

Ms. Melissa Fleming

Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications

SPEAKERS

H.E. Mr. António Guterres

United Nations Secretary-General

H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis

President of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly

H.E. Mr. Gilad Erdan

Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations

H.E. Dr. Deborah E. Lipstadt

United States Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism

Mr. Christian Pfeil

Dr. Petra Gelbart

Mr. Patrik Gelbart

Aušvicate (In Auschwitz)

Dr. Edith Tennenbaum Shapiro

Ms. Selma Tennenbaum Rossen

Mr. Doori Na

Belz, Mayn Shtetele Belz

Composed by Alexander Olshanetsky (1892-1946)

Wieczorne Dzwony (Evening Bells)

Composed by Alexander Alyabyev (1787-1851)

Cantor Daniel Singer

El Maleh Rachamim



Mr. Christian Pfeil was born in the Lublin ghetto in 1944. His family was deported from their hometown of Trier to a forced labour camp in Lublin. Mr. Pfeil, his parents and older siblings survived the Holocaust, but many of his relatives who were taken to Auschwitz, did not survive. After 1945, the family tried to make a new start in Trier, carrying with them the physical and mental scars of years of torture, malnutrition and daily fear of death. The prejudice against Roma and Sinti did not end after the Holocaust. Mr. Pfeil became a successful restauranter, and singer, but was forced to close after attacks by Neo-Nazis in response to a song critical of National Socialism. It is only recently that Mr. Pfeil has decided to speak in public again – including the 2022 commemoration at Auschwitz of the Sinti and Roma Holocaust Memorial Day



Dr. Edith Tennenbaum Shapiro was born in Zlaczow, Poland in 1933. She survived the Holocaust, and, along with her sister Selma, parents Samuel and Elizabeth, and grandmother Bessie, immigrated to New York in 1946. After Barnard College, Edith graduated from NYU School of Medicine, interned at Hackensack Hospital, and completed a residency in psychiatry at New York Medical College. The remainder of her career was divided between private practice, teaching, and administration. Edith was married twice: to the late Harris Shapiro, an engineer and corporate founder an executive, and to the late Sol Stein, a writer, editor and publisher. She has two children from her first marriage, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.



Ms. Selma Tennenbaum Rossen was born in 1935 in Zlaczow, Poland. Together with her older sister, Edith, and their parents, she survived the Holocaust and then immigrated to New York. She earned a B.S.E.E. and M.S.E.E. from Fairleigh Dickinson University and Stevens Institute of Technology – the only woman engineer in her classes. She developed the microwave tracking transponder for the Apollo Lunar Landing modules. Ms. Rossen also served as President of Temple Sinai in Summit, New Jersey. Selma married the late Jack Rossen, a chemical engineer and food scientist. Selma and Jack have three children and six grandchildren.



Dr. Petra Gelbart is a Romani educator, scholar, and musician. She is the granddaughter of Romani survivors of the Holocaust. Dr. Gelbart’s family introduced her to Romani music and language while growing up in the former Czechoslovakia. Dr. Gelbart has a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from Harvard University and is a board-certified music therapist. In addition to serving on the board of Voice of Roma, Dr. Gelbart is the vice-chair of the Czechoslovak Romani Union. She is currently an adjunct professor at Fordham University.



Mr. Patrik Gelbart is a performer and composer with a strong background in both music and theater. He recently guest-conducted the Greenwich Village Orchestra in the premiere of his own piece, “The Victorious Overture.” Having been trained in the Actionplay theater programme, he now serves as its assistant music director. Patrik’s main instruments are clarinet and piano, and he is a first-year music education student at Borough of Manhattan Community College.



© Arthur Moeller

Mr. Doori Na began playing the violin at the age of four at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. In 2018, he debuted with the San Francisco Symphony, performing Bach’s Double Violin Concerto alongside Itzhak Perlman, Michael Tilson Thomas, and the San Francisco Symphony. He now collaborates with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and with members of esteemed groups such as the Juilliard String Quartet, Orion String Quartet. Mr. Na has toured with Itzhak Perlman and the Perlman Music Program.



© Chris Herder

Cantor Daniel Singer has served Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in Manhattan since July 2006. He majored in music and mass communication at the University of Wisconsin in Superior and holds master’s degrees in vocal performance from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and in sacred music from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion School of Sacred Music in Jerusalem and Manhattan. He participates in the American Conference of Cantors and Cantor’s Assembly, and in numerous cantorial concerts, oratorio, and recitals throughout the country and abroad.

REMEMBER AND REFLECT

If This is a Man

You who live safe
In your warm houses,
You who find on returning in the evening,
Hot food and friendly faces:
Consider if this is a man
Who works in the mud
Who does not know peace
Who fights for a scrap of bread
Who dies because of a yes or a no.
Consider if this is a woman,
Without hair and without name
With no more strength to remember,
Her eyes empty and her womb cold
Like a frog in winter.
Meditate that this came about:
I commend these words to you.
Carve them in your hearts
At home, in the street,
Going to bed, rising;
Repeat them to your children,
Or may your house fall apart,
May illness impede you,
May your children turn their faces from you.

— Primo Levi

Translated by Stuart Woolf

Primo Levi (1919-1987) was an Italian-Jewish writer, chemist, and Holocaust survivor. At the outbreak of the Second World War, Levi was arrested and deported to the Fossoli di Carpi concentration camp in Italy and then to Auschwitz, where he endured eleven months as a forced labourer. In 1946, Levi wrote about his experiences. His poem, "If This is a Man" appears in the introduction to his book of the same name. His unsparing poem captures his anguish and anger that the history might be forgotten.

Member states established The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme through United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/7 to mobilize civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide. The Programme leads the annual observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust on 27 January.
