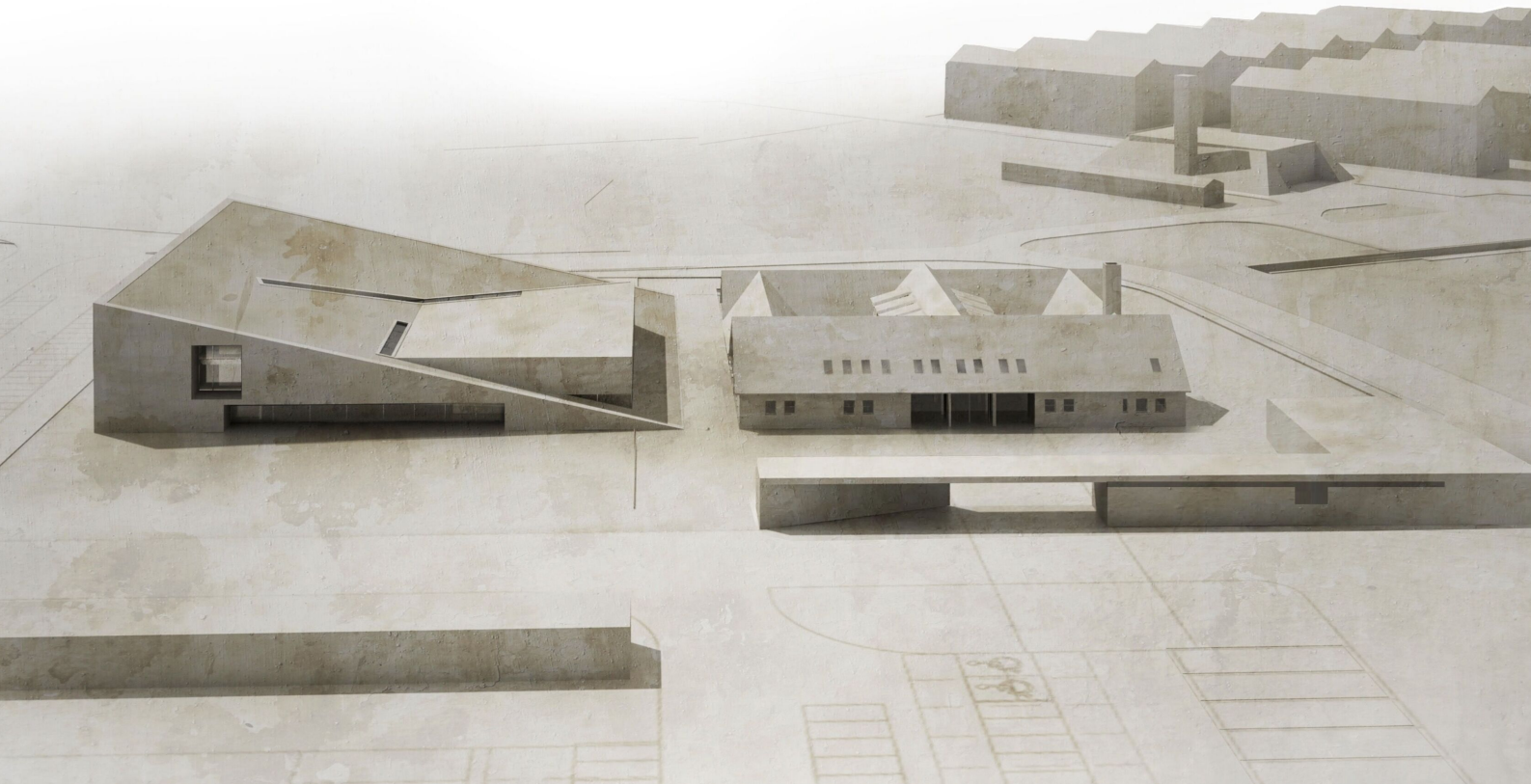


68 (05/2023)



MEMORIA

MEMORY • HISTORY • EDUCATION



NEW VISITOR SERVICES CENTER AT THE AUSCHWITZ MEMORIAL

"THE ZONE OF
INTEREST"
THE GRAND PRIX
AT CANNES

BLUM /
CIEŚNIEWSKI.
LIFE, AFTER ALL

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80TH
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We invite all of you to work closely with us. We would be grateful to receive information about events, projects, publications, exhibitions, conferences or research that we should share with our readers. We also accept proposals for articles.

Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-Chief

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Please do share information about this magazine with others, particularly via social media.

All editions: memoria.auschwitz.org

“THE ZONE OF INTEREST”

THE GRAND PRIX AT CANNES

The film “The Zone of Interest”, directed and written by Jonathan Glazer, depicting the family life of an Auschwitz camp commandant, has received the Grand Prix as well as the FIPRESCI award at the 76th Cannes Film Festival. The production was created in cooperation with the Auschwitz Museum.

“The Zone of Interest” is based on the acclaimed 2014 novel “The Zone of Interest” by Martin Amis, which explores a love affair between an SS officer and the commandant's wife in a concentration camp.

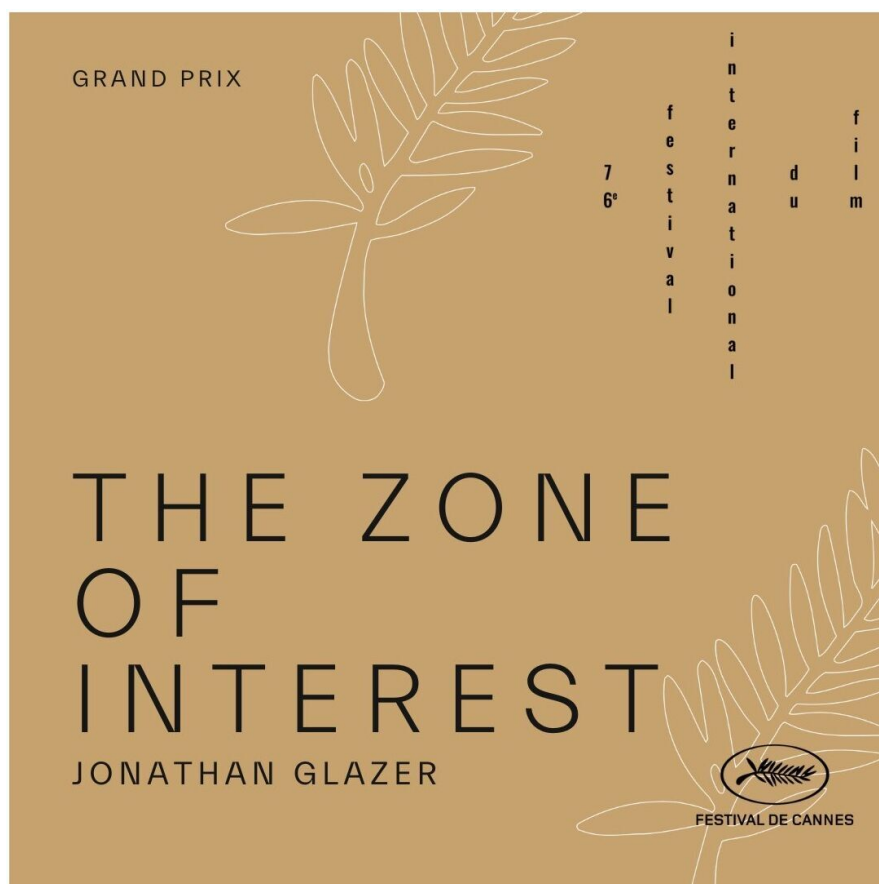
The “Interessengebiet” (Zone of Interest) referred to an area around Auschwitz camp administered by the SS. To prevent prisoners from having contact with the outside world and eliminate witnesses to their crimes, the Germans forcibly expelled approximately 9,000 residents from that area.

During a press conference linked with the film's world premiere, Glazer mentioned

that he had long wanted to create a story set during World War II. In two years, he read numerous books, but the turning point came during his visit to the Auschwitz Memorial.

“At that time, I was still unsure about what I wanted to talk about. I remember director Piotr Cywiński asked me what kind of film I intended to make. I replied that I didn't know, and that's precisely why I came there. After that visit, my thoughts about this film began to evolve,” he recalled.

The film was made in cooperation with the Auschwitz Museum. It involved consultations not only on the script and set design but also on the overall message conveyed by the





NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EDUCATORS

Designed to support accurate, meaningful teaching about the Holocaust, the Belfer National Conference for Educators is the US Holocaust Memorial Museum's flagship event for secondary school educators across the country. It will take place on June 26-28.

The conference invites participants to engage with current historical research and instructional best practices. Educators discover and learn how to use various classroom resources, find inspiration in new ideas, and connect with peers engaged in similar work across the United States and worldwide.

This year's conference addresses two key themes critical to teaching about the Holocaust:

Teaching with Evidence

In 50 countries across six continents, the Museum is urgently collecting evidence of the Holocaust before it is too late—before fragile documents and artifacts disintegrate and while those who can bear witness are still able to do so.

This year's conference takes you behind the

scenes of the Museum's vast collections, places not open to the public, sharing lessons and classroom strategies.

The Role of Antisemitism during the Holocaust

There is a documented dramatic increase in antisemitic incidents in the United States: whether from politicians, athletes, entertainers, the media, or other people of influence; or online; or in public spaces such as a bridge in Los Angeles or a college football game in Florida—antisemitic rhetoric is increasing in frequency, visibility, and intensity.

Teachers are on the front lines of educating about antisemitism, and this conference provides valuable resources and support. Holocaust survivor Susan (Hilsenrath) Warsinger will discuss the importance of first-person testimony and the unique





NEW VISITOR SERVICES CENTER AT THE AUSCHWITZ MEMORIAL

CHANGE OF THE PLACE OF ARRIVAL AND ENTRANCE FROM 15 JUNE

From 15 June, visitors to the Auschwitz Museum are to use the new Visitor Services Center, which will be located at 55 Więźniów Oświęcimia Street. The visit to the Museum will begin at this point. Visitors will walk through the grounds of the Memorial and return to the building after their visit via separate, underground walkways.

'The new Services Centre has been created in historic buildings related to the camp's history, thus becoming accessible to visitors. The entire infrastructure is fully adapted to the needs of people with disabilities. Some rooms have been allocated for the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust. A point has also been created for information about the victims of the German Nazi camp Auschwitz,' said Andrzej Kacorzak, director of ICEAH.

Following the creation of the centre, the access road to the Museum will change. We suggest accessing Więźniów Oświęcimia Street from Legionów Street (from DW 933) after 15 June.

See the location on the online map

GPS Coordinates:
50°01'47.2"N 19°12'17.3"E
50.029763, 19.204816

The entire project includes the entrance

building that houses a bookshop and a restaurant as well as car park for coaches and cars, luggage storage facility and lavatories. The cinema hall, where visitors can watch an introductory film, has also been modernised.

A modern, three-storey hostel is being built next to the center. In the future, this accommodation facility will be available for volunteers, trainees, and those participating in extended study visits, conferences, and seminars.

These investments are implemented with funds from the European Regional Development Fund of the Polish state budget under the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment 2014 - 2020, the support of Ronald S. Lauder and Joel and Ulrika Citron, a specific grant from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the Museum's funds.

The project has successfully prevented the destruction of the historic building that



here
tutaj jesteś
אתה כאן



entry passes
karty wstępu
כרטיסי כניסה



toilets
toalety
שירותים



entrance to the Museum
wejście do Muzeum
כניסה למוזיאון



entry passes
- self-service machine
karty wstępu - automat
מכונת כרטיסי כניסה



ATM
bankomat
כספומט



exit from the Museum
wyjście z Muzeum
יציאה מהמוזיאון



security check
kontrola bezpieczeństwa
בקרת אבטחה



luggage storage
przechowalnia bagażu
אחסון כבודה



bus stop
przystanek autobusu
תחנת אוטובוס



restaurant
restauracja
מסעדה



bookshop
księgarnia
חנות ספרים



hostel
אכסניה



city tourist information
miejska informacja
turystyczna
מידע לתייר עירוני



BLUM / CIEŚNIEWSKI.

LIFE, AFTER ALL

The exhibition of works by Israeli painter and graphic artist Aviva Blum and by Polish painter Wojciech Cieśniewski will be available for viewing at the Museum of Mazovian Jews in Płock from 28 April until 23 August 2023.

Aviva Blum creates paintings and prints in Jerusalem while Wojciech Cieśniewski makes paintings in Warsaw. Separated by such physical distance and the distance of belonging to different generations, they were brought together by an unusual coincidence. It made possible the current exhibition, which is about the strength of the life force and the power of art.

The paths of these two artists crossed last year as a result of an exhibition of Wojciech Cieśniewski's paintings organised in Otwock as part of the remembrance events for the 80th anniversary of the annihilation of the Otwock ghetto. The artist showed paintings from his "Life, After All" series, in which he draws on prewar and postwar snapshots of former Jewish residents of Otwock. One of the works in the show was "The Spring of the Nation 1948," inspired by a photo of three teenage girls living in the Dawid Guzik Children's Home in Otwock, a home for Jewish child survivors. One of these girls was Aviva Blum, whose mother, Luba Bielicka-Blum, was the director of the home. Blum found out about Cieśniewski's exhibition and the painting inspired by her immediately postwar photo, from information about the show published online. After that, a meeting of the two artists gave rise to the idea of a joint exhibition.

Blum and Cieśniewski belong to different generations. Juxtaposing their work clearly demonstrates the difference in artistic approach between witnesses of the Holocaust and the postwar generation. After the war, Aviva Blum cut herself off from the

past and devoted herself to studying the landscape of her new country, transposing it into abstract compositions of colour and form. Such a turn to abstraction characterised many artists who had survived the Holocaust and faced the difficulty of finding a language to express their traumatic experiences. Cieśniewski, on the other hand, belongs to the next generation, which grapples with remembrance, reaching in the process for any surviving clues, any traces of the physical – sometimes captured in photographs, sometimes remaining only in the aura of a place. In his dreamlike pictures past merges with present, dream with reality. He calls up past events and makes 'attempts' to touch experiences he can neither imagine nor understand.

Although they employ different painting languages – Blum closer to abstraction, Cieśniewski closer to figuration – above all they both paint what they feel. Creating her landscapes Aviva Blum drafts her own feelings onto them. These landscapes are not idyllic: there is drama, tension and conflict lurking in them. Likewise Cieśniewski, when he looks at nature, humans or history, is seeking an expressive form for his feelings about the world. In his quest for an unobstructed emotional flow, he sometimes paints with the lights off, in the dark. His practice is to return many times to the same theme, with the aim of achieving better artistic expression.

Cieśniewski and Blum are also linked by a similar attitude to art. Aviva Blum emphasises that art became a way for her to escape her terrible memories, and a space

CIEŚNIEWSKI – A jednak życie

Wystawa
malarstwa
w 80. rocznicę
zagłady
otwockich
Żydów

19.08–
–16.09
2022

DOM PARAFII ŚW. WINCENTEGO À PAULO
OTWOCK | ul. Mikołaja Kopernika 1



DIGITAL TOUR OF THE TOWN KNOWN AS AUSCHWITZ

The Jewish Museum in Oświęcim, part of the Auschwitz Jewish Center Foundation, has created a project for a virtual tour of the town, the synagogue and the Jewish Museum. The project features 25 videos that allow visitors to go on a journey through the centuries-old and multicultural history of Oświęcim. The digital tour of Oshpitzin (as the town was called by the Jewish community, which made up half of its population before the war) is now available in four language versions: Polish, English, German and Ukrainian.

– We bring the history of Oświęcim closer to everyone who wants to learn more about the rich past of the town, which has become a symbol of Auschwitz and the Holocaust. That is why we created the project. It includes almost two hours of recordings on the most interesting places, monuments and memorabilia related to the history of Oshpitzin. The videos have been prepared in an interesting and engaging way, thanks to which they can also be a starting point for further exploration of the history of the town or educational work with students, including in preparation for a visit to the Auschwitz Memorial Site or a history lesson," says Tomasz Kuncewicz, director of the Jewish Museum in Oświęcim, and encourages everyone interested to make use of the prepared videos. They are already available on the museum's YouTube channel and will also be published in the coming months on the Jewish Museum's social media platforms. The videos feature historians and educators

connected with the Jewish Museum in Oświęcim. Thanks to them, you can learn interesting facts about the town's architecture, but also biographies of people important to Poland and Oświęcim. Among the presented characters is, for example, the unique story of the friendship between Marta Świdorska and Olga Pressler (pre-war students of an Oświęcim high school) or the still widely unknown biography of Berek Joselewicz. He was a colonel in the Polish army, a Polish Jew and a patriot, fighting for example in the Kościuszko Uprising, along with a regiment of Jewish volunteers that he created, and an officer in the Polish Legions in Italy. Joselewicz is also the patron of a street in Oświęcim, which before World War II was known as Jewish Street and was the center of the community's life.

The films also provide a better understanding of the contemporary image of the town. Bartosz Haduch, an architect from Kraków,





80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF SZMUL ZYGIELBOJM

The anniversary of the death of Szmul Zygielbojm was commemorated in Warsaw. He was a member of the National Council of Poland in London who at the night of May 11th/12th 1943 committed suicide as a sign of protest against the world's indifference towards the Shoah.

Szmul Zygielbojm was a political activist, member of the Central Committee of the Bund – Jewish socialist party. In 1940 he left for Brussels and then – through France – travelled to the United States. In 1942 he was appointed a member of the National Council of the Republic of Poland in London. He tried to attract the attention of key western politicians to the tragedy of Polish Jews in the country occupied by Nazi Germany. After the defeat of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, convinced that his mission had been a failure, he committed suicide. Before dying he wrote farewell letters – to his brother Fajwet, a Bund representative in the United States as well as to emigration authorities of Poland. In the latter he said:

"I cannot remain silent or alive when last representatives of the Jewish people are perishing in Poland, and I am one of them. My comrades in the Warsaw Ghetto died with weapons in their hands, in their last heroic effort. I did not have the chance to perish like them, together with them. But I belong to them, to their mass graves [...]. I intend my death to become a sign of my deepest protest against the passivity with which the world is looking at us and allows the eradication of the Jewish people".

Events commemorating the death of Szmul Zygielbojm took place in Warsaw at Lewartowskiego Street, at the monument by Marek Modarau. Among those who paid homage to the Jewish politician there were: Monika Krawczyk, Director of the Jewish Historical Institute, representatives of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum, Elena Lagutin, Head of Public Diplomacy of the Embassy

of Israel in Poland, Michael Schudrich, Chief Rabbi of Poland, as well as the representatives of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN).

During the commemorative events Monika Krawczyk read the letter by Artur Zigelbaum, Szmul Zygielbojm's grandson:

"90 percent of Polish Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. I am a descendant of two persons out of those 10 percent who survived.

My grandfather had been a socialist leader representing the Bund party in pre-war Poland. He had formed part of Łódź and Warsaw city councils. Then he was appointed a member of Warsaw Judenrat. He was publicly opposing the establishment of the ghetto in Warsaw, thus exposing himself to the risk of being arrested. Bund leaders tried to get him out of Poland. In January 1940, using falsified documents, he travelled by train through Nazi Germany to the Netherlands, where he was denied the entry. The Germans beat him at the border and ordered to come back. Only thanks to the intervention of his friend, Paul Spaak, the minister of foreign affairs, was he finally able to reach Belgium. He arrived in Brussels. Then, through France and Portugal, he travelled to the United States.

From October until December 1940, he travelled through USA delivering presentations concerning the tragic fate of Jews under German occupation. People would not believe him and would claim that



TEACHERS AND THE FUTURE OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Carrying forward the truth of the Holocaust and events surrounding the Second World War amidst a background of rising antisemitic, racist, and extremist discourse across and beyond Europe means having difficult conversations about the past that transcend national boundaries.

The need to protect the facts has intensified and a conscientious education of the truth is one of the most effective ways of countering Holocaust distortion. Teachers are central to this effort.

The Croatian IHRA Presidency has continued international cooperation on the regional level by initiating educational dialogue between countries with diverse and challenging memories, bringing teachers to the forefront in the effort to counter Holocaust distortion. Since 2015, the program *Holocaust as a Starting Point*, developed by French memorial museum Memorial de la Shoah, has conducted regional-level seminars for primary and secondary school teachers from such countries. The program has cooperated with various civil society organizations and education authorities like the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) to host recent seminars in Trieste, Italy and Belgrade, Serbia. The seminars prioritized creative ways to teach and learn true Holocaust histories, which is imperative to strengthening the values of today's youth. The 6th regional dialogue within the framework of the *Holocaust as a Starting Point*, focused on ways to teach and learn about the historical complexity of the Holocaust. It was organized by the Mémorial de la Shoah, the Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Italian Ministry of Education, and the Slovenian Institute of Education. From 29-31 March 2023, lecturers and workshop facilitators joined the dialogue from participating and other various countries alongside international

experts and practitioners in Holocaust education, research, and remembrance. Around 40 primary and secondary school teachers of various disciplines from the three participating countries took part in the seminar.

Discussions did not shy away from exploring complex histories. Topics ranged from political violence to artistic expressions around the Holocaust. Professor Raoul Pupo from the University of Trieste held a lecture titled "From the Season of Flames to the Season of Massacres," on the forms of violence in North Adriatic regions from the Great War to the capitulation of Italy in 1943. Valerija Turk-Presečki, a teacher from Croatia, facilitated the workshop "Eva Fisher: Holocaust in Colors." Another Croatian teacher, Margareta Đorđić, conducted a workshop on the use of film in Holocaust education using "Il Giardino Dei Finzi-Contini," a movie based on the 1962 novel of the same name.

Participants could also visit the Risiera Di San Sabba concentration camp in Trieste where Jews, Croats, and Slovenes had been tortured and killed during the Nazi era. A few weeks prior, another seminar was held, this time in Belgrade. As the 9th regional dialogue, the seminar's workshops enabled participants to gain insight into the "big picture" of events surrounding the Second World War in South-East Europe. Jointly organized by the Mémorial de la Shoah, the Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, and EUROCLIO from



Holocaust. Based on IHRA recommendations, a workshop on Holocaust education was facilitated by Loranda Miletić from the ETTA (Education and Teacher Training Agency).

Another workshop, facilitated by Biljana Ristić and Snežana Vuković from Serbian Ministry of Education, used Cadik Danon's biography in its session under the Council of Europe Reference framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in teaching History.

The seminar also highlighted new educational themes, including

topics like gender-based violence as a weapon of war, as well as the Holocaust in literary histories and fiction, drawing on Bife Titanik, a short story by Ivo Andrić. The Holocaust in fiction workshop was facilitated by Marijo Kosović, a teacher from Zagreb. Finally, the seminar hosted by Dejan Ristić, Director of the Genocide Museum in Belgrade, and Tomislav Dulić from Uppsala University, both experts on the Jasenovac concentration camp, gave an eye-opening presentation on the camp's history and recent research around it.

The seminar also concluded







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