



## SINTI AND ROMA GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY. 81<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIQUIDATION OF THE ROMA CAMP IN AUSCHWITZ

82<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRISONERS' REVOLT AT TREBLINKA II EXTERMINATION CAMP "40 YEARS AFTER
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THE HOLOCAUST
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IN JOURNALISTIC MEMORY

AT YAD VASHEM

"JOURNEY IN THE WAKE OF CATASTROPHE"

PANEL DISCUSSION:

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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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# SINTI AND ROMA GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY. 81<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIQUIDATION OF THE ROMA CAMP IN AUSCHWITZ

Eighty-one years ago, on the night of 2 to 3 August 1944, the Germans liquidated the so-called "family camp for Gypsies" (Zigeunerfamilienlager) in Auschwitz II-Birkenau.

Approximately 4,300 individuals, including children, women, and men, who were the last Roma prisoners of the camp, were murdered in gas chambers.

2 August is observed in Poland as the Day of Remembrance for the Genocide of the Sinti and Roma. The ceremony was attended by representatives of state authorities, ambassadors, local authorities, as well as cultural institutions and museums.

Several hundred individuals assembled at the memorial, which commemorates the extermination of the Roma and Sinti, situated at the location of the former German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz II-Birkenau, to pay tribute to the victims and lay wreaths.

During the ceremony, two survivors spoke: Edward Debicki and Dieter Flack.

'I stand before you today as a Romani man,

a musician, an artist, and a witness to the history of our nation. I am a survivor of the extermination, and at the age of 91, I am here to share my experience,' said Edward Dębicki, a poet, accordionist, and curator of Romani culture. 'Today, I want to address young people in particular. I am passing on the burden of the dark memories I carry within me to you, the younger generation. You must remain vigilant and respond to even the slightest signs of racism so that it does not lead to another tragedy,' emphasised Dębicki.

Survivor Dieter Flack, whose family managed to escape while his relatives were deported to Auschwitz and murdered in May 1943, addressed young people in his speech: 'After the Second World War, I often lamented that, as a Sinto, I faced greater challenges in accessing education compared to members of the majority society. I wished I could have studied longer and more deeply. This is why

I urge young people to seize every opportunity for further education, learn new languages, and immerse themselves in different countries and cultures. This helps to dispel prejudices and foster a climate of tolerance and acceptance,' he said.

Roman Kwiatkowski, President of the Association of Roma in Poland, made an important appeal in a similar vein in his speech: 'Learn from this history. It is your shield. A world without memory is easily swayed by ideologies of contempt. We are not only passing on knowledge about what happened to the younger generation, but more importantly, we are teaching them to recognise the signs of hatred and to have the courage to oppose it.'

'Memory is our duty and our right. In places like Auschwitz, Lety, Hodonín, Buchenwald, Majdanek, Treblinka, and many others, Roma died simply for being who they were. We must ensure that these sites of remembrance are neither forgotten nor neglected,' he stated.



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death on this document is fraudulent. The documentation states that the cause of death was attributed to severe exhaustion. This is more likely to occur in an octogenarian than in a seven-year-old. However, our knowledge of his actual life is limited, and the available information is derived solely from this fabricated document,' he stated.

'Every year, we revisit this place, fully aware that our world is not perfect. People are increasingly judged based on their origin, religion, or the colour of their passport. In our Europe, equality under the law tends to decrease as one approaches national borders. This is a well-known fact. And we are creating various institutional, cultural, and social ghettos,' said Piotr Cywiński.

'What were the ideological causes of Harry Schmidt's death? That information is not present in this document. The events unfolding today are wrong and pose a significant danger. Public spaces are no longer safe. Hate and xenophobia-motivated attacks are becoming more frequent. If we do not wake up, I fear we will again create only false testimonies of death instead of true testimonies of life,' he emphasized.

'Auschwitz-Birkenau remains a stark lesson for all of humanity: we must always remain vigilant against persecution and discrimination. Today, as the memories of this crime become



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# 82<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRISONERS' REVOLT AT TREBLINKA II EXTERMINATION CAMP

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During the celebrations organised in cooperation with the Treblinka Museum, we commemorated the victims of the Treblinka II extermination camp on the 82nd anniversary of the uprising of its prisoners. The ceremony was attended by top state officials, local government representatives, cultural organisations, members of the diplomatic corps, and Ada Willenberg, the widow of camp survivor Samuel Willenberg, who expressed her gratitude to the attendees. She highlighted the significance of Treblinka as her family's burial site. Her loved ones were murdered at this location. Samuel, her husband, also spent 10 months in this place.

Marek Zając, the secretary of the International Auschwitz Council, conducted the ceremony. Michał Trębacz, PhD, director of the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, stated:

"We meet here, as we do every year, to pay our respects to the victims of the Treblinka extermination camp- the nearly one million people murdered here—people whose memories, analogous to this place, were meant to be forgotten. Our presence and, most importantly, the enduring work of institutions and organisations dedicated to Holocaust history, serve as the strongest testament to the fact that this has not transpired.

Nevertheless, memory only exists if it is passed on. It is a process that must be sustained. During the 80 years that separate us from the events we commemorate today, this transmission of memory has encountered various obstacles. Overcoming them has often required sacrifices and concessions. [...]

Memory has endured, and the history of Treblinka continues to be rediscovered and documented. Evidence that it has not been forgotten can be seen in the various commemorations held, as well as during the monthly meetings of the Treblinka Remembrance Foundation, where testimonies from victims are read aloud. Additionally, the construction of the new museum building, featuring a Wall of Remembrance engraved with the names of some of the Jews murdered here, serves as a poignant reminder of this tragic history.

Our memory is alive. This obvious statement goes hand in hand with the need to nurture it. The very idea behind the monument, designed by Adam Haupt, Franciszek Duszeńko, and Franciszek Strynkiewicz, which we see around us, is a prime example of this. Nearly 10 years passed between the conception of the idea and its realisation in 1964. However, despite the passage of time, this solution still resonates – it evokes emotions, forces us to reflect, and confront emptiness. It is our duty to protect the memory it expresses. We must oppose attempts to relativise this history, not to prevent history from repeating itself, but out of respect for the families who were murdered here, out of respect for the witnesses and their stories. We must also understand that the Holocaust, and with it Treblinka, are part of our history – the history of Poland. They represent a shared experience and an



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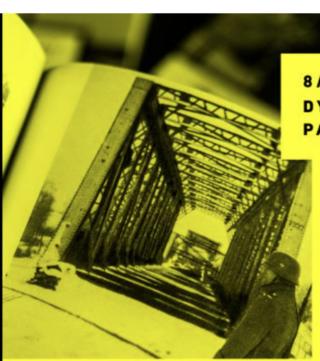
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# PANEL DISCUSSION. "40 YEARS AFTER THE SHOAH. THE HOLOCAUST IN THE LIGHT OF CLAUDE LANZMANN'S DOCUMENTARY"

We encourage you to follow our livestreamed debate entitled "40 Years after the Shoah. The Holocaust in the Light of Claude Lanzmann's Documentary." The discussion will launch our international conference "Trains of Death – Railways Transports to the German Death Camps. State of Knowledge and Research Proposals" hosted by the State Museum at Majdanek and the Museum and Memorial in Sobibór on 8-10 September 2025.

The documentary of the French director premiered in Paris in 1985. That over-nine-hour long visual tale through the former German extermination camps was quickly proclaimed by the public as an iconic movie, one of the most important accounts of the Holocaust, and by some as even a cinematic masterpiece. Such was also the opinion of the author himself. It was not free of criticism though, especially in Poland, where Shoah was received as a biased, partial, and insulting to the Polish nation. It is worth noting that the movie's full version was not screened by the Polish television until 1997.

The discussion will focus on the artistic significance of this deeply moving and innovative film, its multidimensional global influence on the European Holocaust remembrance, and in case of Poland on the perception of the Polish-Jewish relations during World War II. The debate will take place on



8/09/2025 Dyskusja Panelowa

> 40 LAT PO "SHOAH". ZAGŁADA W ŚWIETLE DOKUMENTU CLAUDE'A LANZMANNA

TRANSMISJA ON-LIN



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The discussion will focus on the artistic significance of this deeply moving and innovative film, its multidimensional global influence on the European Holocaust remembrance, and in case of Poland on the perception of the Polish-Jewish relations during World War II. The debate will take place on the former grounds of the extermination camp in Sobibór – one of the vital filming locations for the Shoah.

<u>The debate will be livestreamed</u> on the Facebook profiles of the State Museum at Majdanek and the Museum and Memorial in Sobibór, as well as on the Majdanek Museum YouTube channel.

Save the date: 8 September 2025 (Monday) at 4:00-5:30 p.m.

### Speakers:

### Bartosz Kwieciński PhD

(Jagiellonian University) – film historian, media expert, researcher of anti-Semitic propaganda, assistant professor at the Jagiellonian University Holocaust Research Centre, author of the 2012 monograph entitled Obrazy i klisze. Między biegunami wizualnej pamięci Zagłady (Images and clichés. Between the Poles of the visual memory of the Holocaust), co-author of the 2023 book (Dez)informacja w czasach (post)prawdy [(Dis)information in the age of (post)truth].

### Katarzyna Person PhD

(Warsaw Ghetto Museum) – historian, director of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum, former head of the research department at the Jewish Historical Institute, project leader for the full edition of the Ringelblum Archive, the author of Assimilated Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, 1940–1943 (2014), Policjanci. Wizerunek Żydowskiej Służby Porządkowej w getcie warszawskim (Policemen: the Image of the Jewish Ghetto Police in the Warsaw Ghetto) (2018), Dipisi. Żydzi polscy w amerykańskiej i brytyjskiej strefach okupacyjnych Niemiec 1945–1948 (Displaced Persons: Polish Jews in the American and British Occupation zones of Germany, 1945-1948) (2019), and Przemysłowa Concentration Camp: the Camp, the Children, the Trials (2023).

#### **Piotr Witek PhD**

(Maria Curie-Skłodowska University) – methodologist and historian, director of the e-Humanities Research and Development Centre, employed

## 'EXPANSION AND REDESIGN OF THE GUSEN MEMORIAL'

On 16 and 17 June 2025, a jury met to rank the submissions in the EU-wide competition for the expansion and redesign of the Gusen Memorial, which has been running since September 2024. The two-stage, open, anonymous competition was organised by the Burghauptmannschaft Österreich in cooperation with the Mauthausen Memorial.

The submissions provide designs for the overall landscape planning, architectural design and urban development of several plots of land on the site of the former camp, based on a previously developed master plan. This master plan was drawn up over the course of an eighteen-month participatory process involving a wide range of stakeholder groups. This project will significantly expand the existing Gusen Memorial, creating a place of remembrance and education for the future.

At the end of January, the jury met to select eight design proposals from all submissions during the first stage of the competition. In the second stage, these shortlisted concepts were revised and further developed to address additional tasks, then evaluated and ranked by the jury. In the next phase, the Burghauptmannschaft Österreich and the Mauthausen Memorial will enter into negotiations with the first placed team.

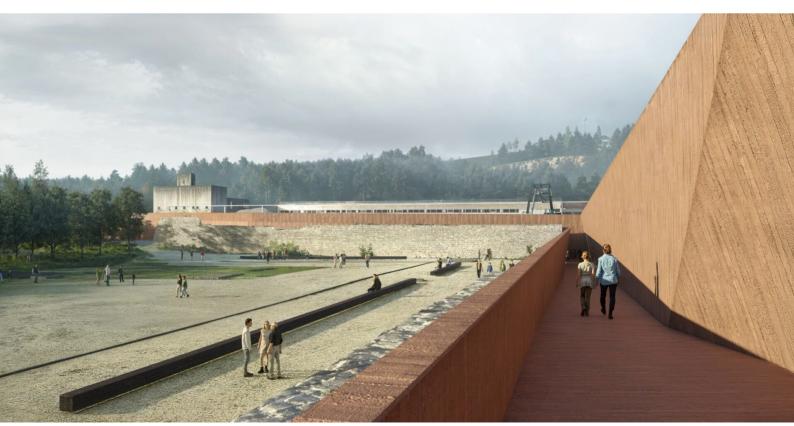
All submissions for the second stage of the competition can now be viewed at gusen-memorial.org.

The first place was awarded to querkraft Architekten ZT GmbH in collaboration with Kieran Fraser Landscape Design e.U. from Vienna. The jury stated that "the project addresses the key aspects of the master plan for the redesign of the Gusen Memorial and offers appropriate architectural, urban planning and landscape design solutions. These include the layout of paths, attention to vantage points and visual axes, and the functionality of the new arrival building and the 'Room of Silence'.

A presentation of the appointed planning team and its design is scheduled for the autumn in the Gusen / St. Georgen region, following the successful completion of the negotiation procedure.

The team at the Mauthausen Memorial, the Burghauptmannschaft Österreich and the jury extend their sincere thanks to all competition participants in the first and second stages for their valuable contributions to shaping a vision for the future memorial site.





# DIGNITY AND BRUTALITY IN JOURNALISTIC MEMORY

Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics (FASPE) promotes ethical leadership for today's professionals through annual fellowships, ethical leadership trainings, and symposia, among other means. Each year, FASPE awards 80 to 90 fellowships to graduate students and early-career professionals in six fields: Business, Clergy & Religious Leaders, Design & Technology, Journalism, Law, and Medicine. Fellowships begin with immersive, site-specific study in Germany and Poland, including at Auschwitz and other historically significant sites associated with Nazi-era professionals. While there, fellows study Nazi-era professionals' surprisingly mundane and familiar motivations and decision-making as a reflection-based framework to apply to ethical pitfalls in their own lives. We find that the power of place translates history into the present, creating urgency in ethical reflection.

Each month one of our fellows publishes a piece in Memoria. Their work reflects FASPE's unique approach to professional ethics and highlights the need for thoughtful ethical reflection today.

Akiba Drumer wanted his memory to be sacred. Once the Nazis had marked him for death in a drawn-out "selection," according to Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel's memoir Night, Drumer's last words to his fellow Jewish prisoners at Auschwitz formed a single request: "In three days I'll be gone [...] Say Kaddish for me."

Drumer knew that the Nazis would burn him to ash, in violation of traditional Jewish laws mandating the burial of intact bodies. They had already forcibly shaved and branded him, in opposition to Jewish tradition. These procedures at Auschwitz were the Nazis' attempt to anonymize all prisoners, to make their powerlessness visible. To observant Jewish prisoners, the practices were also desecrations of their bodies.

So Drumer asked for those who would outlive him to recite Kaddish, a traditional Jewish mourning prayer—his last hope of holy remembrance as he prepared for a death that would be both brutal and sacrilegious.

In Night, Wiesel wrote that he promised Drumer he would recite Kaddish upon seeing "the smoke rising from the chimney" of the crematorium in three days' time.<sup>2</sup> But in Auschwitz, memory rituals were a luxury that prisoners could not often afford. Wiesel confessed that he "forgot" to honor Drumer's last request amidst the daily beatings, hunger, and crushing workload that governed his life in the concentration camp.<sup>3</sup>

What would it mean to honor the spirit of Drumer's request eighty years later? I came to Auschwitz in the summer of 2024with

a variety of goals as both a journalist and

a Jew. I was there to learn about journalistic failures during the Holocaust through FASPE. I secretly hoped that my presence would cause some Nazis to roll over in their carefully marked graves, living proof that their "final solution" had failed. Most of all, I envisioned my visit to the camp as a perverse kind of pilgrimage, a way to honor the memory of the millions murdered there.

Lie Wiesel, Night (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>. Wiesel, 77.

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Then I saw the remains of unknowable victims now on display behind glass at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum: locks of their hair, clumps of ashes that were once suffocated corpses, now on permanent view in a tourist-filled room. I wondered how many people had been reduced to those traces of violated bodies. How many would have wanted to be buried? Standing there, I felt like a participant in the victims' ongoing humiliation.

I was stunned to later learn that some of the most ardent advocates of displaying the remains are or were themselves Holocaust survivors. One staunch defender of the decision was the late Ernest Michel, a Jewish survivor of Auschwitz, a steward of the museum's preservation efforts, and

a journalist who reported on the Nuremberg Trials. Referring to the shaved hair on display, Michel told The New Yorker in 1993, "No matter how painful it may be to look at, it is all part of the story that I believe has to be told."

Michel might have seen my anger at the ashes and hair at Auschwitz as necessary for an honest reckoning with the Holocaust. He might have seen the public's shock as a small bit of justice for the Nazis' victims.

a posthumous recognition of their horrific torture and deaths.

<sup>4.</sup> Timothy Ryback, "Evidence of Evil," The New Yorker, 7 listopada 1993, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1993/11/15/evidence-of-evil.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>. Mamie Till-Mobley, Death of Innocence (New York: Random House, 2003), 133.



Throughout the summer of 2020, echoes of Till's murder filled the news as journalists published and republished numerous videos of police murders of Black Americans. These videos ignited mass protests and raised awareness about police brutality. On rare occasions, they led to disciplinary action or criminal convictions of the violent officers.

But the endless stream of police brutality videos in 2020 revealed some of the pitfalls of publicly showcasing graphic acts of violence. News outlets rarely reported on the victims outside of those moments of pain and death. The public primarily remembered them as helpless and passive. Again and again, their vulnerable experiences became fodder for public consumption.

In a 2020 issue of the Richmond Journal of Law and Technology, Danielle Taylor argued that the public's appetite for watching these deaths echoed the way lynchings of Black men drew crowds of white onlookers who treated these murders as a form of entertainment.<sup>7</sup> It isn't hard to imagine a white supremacist watching George Floyd's last breaths with twisted

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>. Danielle Taylor, "From Lynching to Livestreams: Trauma Porn and the Historic Trivializing of Black Death," Richmond Journal of Law and Technology, październik 2020, https://jolt.richmond.edu/2020/10/14/the-revolution-should-be-cautiously-televised/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>. Emma Ockerman, "Cops Keep Getting Accused of Sharing Racist George Floyd Memes," Vice, 25 lutego 2021, https://www.vice.com/en/article/cops-keep-getting-accused-of-sharing-racist-george-floyd-memes/.

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Critics have voiced dual concerns about the cumulative psychological impact of so much footage of police brutality. First, the videos can cause second-hand trauma, especially for Black Americans who worry that they or their loved ones might be the next victim to go viral. Second, the videos may also desensitize viewers to violence, making police killings of Black people feel normal and even acceptable to much of the public. 10

I don't believe that the answer is to hide away the most gruesome consequences of violence. Neither does Danielle Taylor, who refrained from calling for body camera footage to be censored. Rather, she suggested instead that it's possible to find a middle ground between the competing demands for sacred remembrance and honest truth-telling. "I make a plea," she wrote, "that we offer these videos more reverence." 12

Witnessing the remains of Auschwitz victims has reminded me of the need for care and intention when considering whether to publish shocking material. When weighing the benefits and drawbacks of putting corpses on display, journalists should consult family members and fellow survivors when possible. We should also consider the cultural context of victims, factoring in widely held beliefs about death and nudity within their communities.

Additionally, we should evaluate the likelihood that viewing the corpses will actually inform a public conversation. While footage of a police killing can bring attention to tactics like chokeholds used widely by law-enforcement officials, I am not convinced that displaying a pile of ashes contributes much to the public's understanding of the Holocaust.

Perhaps most importantly, we should make our best effort to depict people as more than just dead bodies. We can pay close attention to the details that made victims of terror and tragedy —who they were. After all, their humanity is a critical part of the truth we are obligated to tell. Emmett Till's first word was "Jell-O" according to Till-Mobley's memoir. He once tried and

<sup>9.</sup> Kenya Downs, "When black death goes viral, it can trigger PTSD-like trauma," PBS News, 22 lipca 2016, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/black-pain-gone-viral-racism-graphic-videos-can-create-ptsd-like-trauma.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>. Jamil Smith, "Videos of Police Killings Are Numbing Us to the Spectacle of Black Death," The New Republic, 13 kwietnia 2015, https://newrepublic.com/article/121527/what-does-seeing-black-men-die-do-you and Brad Bushman and Craig Anderson, "Comfortably Numb: Desensitizing Effects of Violent Media on Helping Others," Psychological Science 20, nr 3 (2009): 273-277.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>. Zachary Rothschild and Lucas Keefer, "A Cleansing Fire: Moral outrage alleviates guilt and buffers threats to one's moral identity," Motivation and Emotion 41, nr 2 (2017): 209-229, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-017-9601-2. 12. Taylor.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>. Till-Mobley, 26 i 64-68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>. Wiesel, 45.

<sup>15. &</sup>quot;Shmirah and Taharah," Kavod v'Nichum, https://kavodvnichum.org/taharah-shmirah/.

# "JOURNEY IN THE WAKE OF CATASTROPHE" AT YAD VASHEM

Eleven original works by acclaimed Israeli artist Tal Mazliach draw a visceral, visual line between two seismic ruptures in Jewish memory: The Holocaust and the atrocities of October 7th.

In each one of her works in the exhibition, Mazliach commemorates a personal story from the Holocaust and integrates texts from the period. The combination of the creative process, the personal perspective and the fragments of memory at Yad Vashem create a moving and thought-provoking invocation that raises philosophical questions about the connection between past and present, about Jewish identity in the face of existential threats, and about the manner in which one can transform personal pain and collective memory into a visual creation.

Tal Mazliach, a resident of Kibbutz Kfar Aza on the Gaza border, survived the brutal Hamas attack on October 7th, spending over 20 harrowing hours barricaded inside her home. This event has shaped her artistic journey, culminating in emotionally charged exhibits around the country, and now, in this deeply personal yet universally resonant body of work at Yad Vashem.

Recognizing a rare and powerful voice, Tal Mazliach was selected as the second artist for Yad Vashem's 'Residency' Project. This 'Residency' invites artists from various disciplines to encounter and explore on the Mount of Remembrance, encouraging them to draw inspiration for their creations from the site's invaluable collections, archival material, evocative landscapes, and dedicated experts. "Journey in the Wake of Catastrophe" is not simply a reflection on grief — it is an exploration of memory, identity, and the haunting echoes that connect past and present. With her signature fusion of tribal motifs, bold color palettes, and layered text, Mazliach constructs a visual dialogue between anguish and tragedy. Each canvas serves as both personal testimony and collective lamentation — a reminder of how history manifests in the body, the psyche, and the national soul.

"I was searching for love, for a kiss, for something intimate. And then you realize — there was intimacy. There was humanity." explains Mazliah. "Even in the midst of all this horror, someone was falling in love with someone else. It's almost hard to believe, but there was

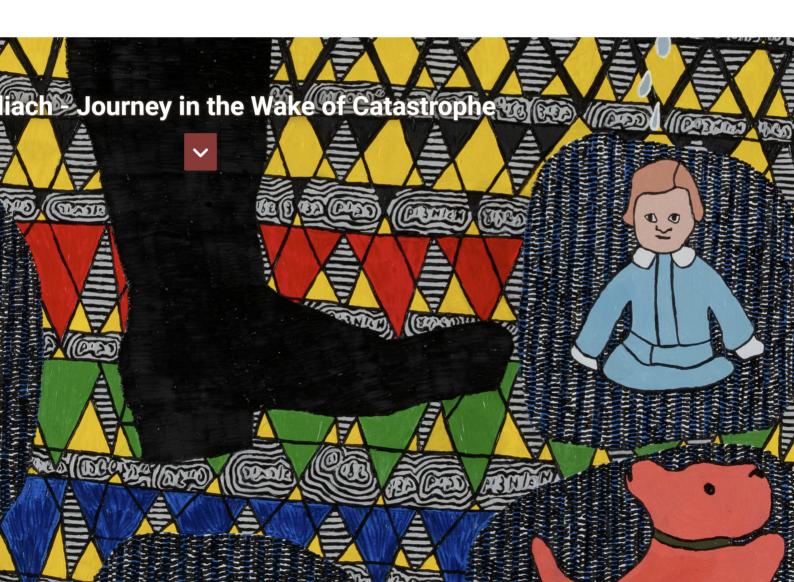
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## AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU AS SEEN BY RAYMOND DEPARDON

In 1979, over the course of two weeks, photographer and filmmaker Raymond Depardon created a series of black-and-white photographs at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial site. These images, commissioned by the magazine Paris Match, were published shortly after they were taken in several international magazines. Until November you can see them in an exhibition at Memorial de la Shoah in Paris.

What Raymond Depardon discovered was a snow-covered Auschwitz-Birkenau. The pristine whiteness of the landscape contrasts starkly with the darkness of the former camp's buildings and fences, and the scattered vegetation emerging here and there. A feeling of solitude and geometric vastness emerges, punctuated by elements evoking human presence:

a prisoner's dress, a blade of grass, a tree. Not a soul in sight. Covered in powdered white, the camp—and what we know of it—is still there, and Raymond Depardon captured its most significant elements.

Twenty years later, he returned with Claudine Nougaret and their two sons for a personal visit, a step they considered essential.

On the occasion of the 80th commemoration of the end of World War II and the Holocaust, Raymond Depardon agreed to publish the photographic series depicting the site, which has been

a museum since 1947. These photographs had never before been the subject of an exhibition or a dedicated publication.

The photographs will be preserved at the Shoah Memorial and made available for consultation through the online catalog of the photo archive.

Excerpt from the interview with Raymond Depardon, published for the exhibition in the art book Auschwitz-Birkenau as Seen by Raymond Depardon:

Paris Match sent you in the winter of 1979 to the site of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau camp for a photo report. How do you approach such a place as a documentarian, filmmaker, and photographer? Did you research before going, or had you seen images by other photographers?

Raymond Depardon: No, I didn't really do any research. In 1979, I had just moved from the Gamma agency to Magnum, which was a big moment for me. I had just returned from several difficult reporting assignments and was still feeling the loss of Gilles Caron, who had disappeared ten years earlier in Cambodia, captured by the Khmer Rouge. Like many other photographers, we were all deeply marked by Vietnam.

As often happens in journalism—almost like a cliché—they asked me: "Raymond, could you do a report at Auschwitz for Paris Match?" So I said yes, and one morning I found myself there. It was one of the greatest shocks of my life. I asked myself: "What is this? A movie set?

A horror film?"

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU vu par RAYMOND DEPARDON



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