



AN ANCHOR IN THE DARKNESS

CREATING ART IN HIDING DURING THE HOLOCAUST

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Mortal danger sometimes awakens inner strength and inspires creativity. During the Holocaust, in the darkest days in the history of humanity, Jews in hiding – in forests, cellars, attics, bunkers and other refuges – created art. The pressing need to improvise materials and produce art in the midst of a life-threatening reality testifies to the immense power of the human spirit.

During the Holocaust, creating art provided an escape from reality, but simultaneously served as a means of documentation. This exhibition focuses on works created in the unique circumstances of living in hiding: an extended period of time in which individuals were hidden and enveloped in their own consciousness. In these circumstances, they turned inward, built themselves a survival mechanism to cope with an extreme and hostile reality, and chose to create art. The personal experiences of the individual artists woven into the historical chronicle of the events of the Holocaust express what was taking place in their inner world and are

reflected in their works. The artists whose works are displayed in the exhibition represent a variety of circumstances, ages and backgrounds. Some of them were murdered in the Holocaust, while others survived.

The works created by individuals in hiding, both well-known artists and those who were creating art for the first time, reflect a powerful urge to document the unfolding reality and to commemorate it – the hiding places and their surroundings, the helpers and rescuers, and the other individuals together with them in hiding. Sometimes the artists' imagination took them further afield, to their past, their loved ones, fairy tales and Bible stories. In each case, it is apparent that the act of creation met the need of the artists in hiding to hold on to the familiar and the stable like an anchor in dark, difficult days of uncertainty and perpetual existential threat. This need is the recurring motif in all the works presented in this exhibition.

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THE HOLOCAUST

The Holocaust (Shoah) was an unprecedented genocide, total and systematic, perpetrated by Nazi Germany and its collaborators with the aim of obliterating the Jewish people, culture and traditions from the face of the earth. The primary motivation for the Holocaust was the Nazis' antisemitic racist ideology. Between 1933 and 1941, Nazi Germany pursued a policy of increasing persecution that dispossessed the Jews of their rights and property, and later branded the Jewish populations under their rule and concentrated them into designated areas. These methods gained broad support in Germany and across much of occupied Europe, and resulted in the uprooting of the Jews from all areas of life – civilian, social and economic – in their countries of residence.

By the end of 1941, Nazi policy had developed into a comprehensive, systematic mass murder operation that the Nazis called "The Final Solution to the Jewish Question". Nazi Germany designated the Jews of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East for total extermination. In Europe, alongside the murder of approximately 2 million Jews by shooting, millions more were rounded up and sent in cattle cars to the extermination camps – industrial murder installations where Jews were annihilated in gas chambers.

The entire process was conducted with deliberate deception by the Germans as to the deportees' actual destination.

By the end of World War II in 1945, close to six million Jews had been murdered, including approximately 1.5 million children.

YAD VASHEM

Since its founding in 1953, Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, located on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, has been dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust. Through its collections, documentation, research and education about the horrors of the Holocaust, Yad Vashem aims to instill the significance of the Holocaust in the coming generations.

Curators: Museums Division

History Consultants: International Institute for Holocaust Research

Consultation and Production: Art Department, Traveling Exhibitions Department and Projects Section, Museums Division

Design: Graphics Studio, Information Technology Division



ANDRÉ BLONDEL

1909, POLAND – 1949, FRANCE

Born Shaye (Sasha) Blonder, in Czortkow, Eastern Galicia, to a traditional Jewish family of traders. After graduating high school, he traveled to Paris and studied architecture at the National School of Fine Arts from 1929-1931. He then returned to Poland, and in the period 1931-1934, he studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow. He was a member of the Polish Artists' and Writers' Union, and is considered to be one of the founders of the avant-garde "Krakow Group", another member of which was Berta (Blima) Grunberg, who later became his wife. The couple settled in Paris in 1937, and Shaye enlisted in the Polish Army in France when World War II broke out in 1939. With the German invasion and the surrender of France in 1940, the French Army was pushed back to the south and Shaye was discharged from the military in Toulouse. During this period, the couple separated.

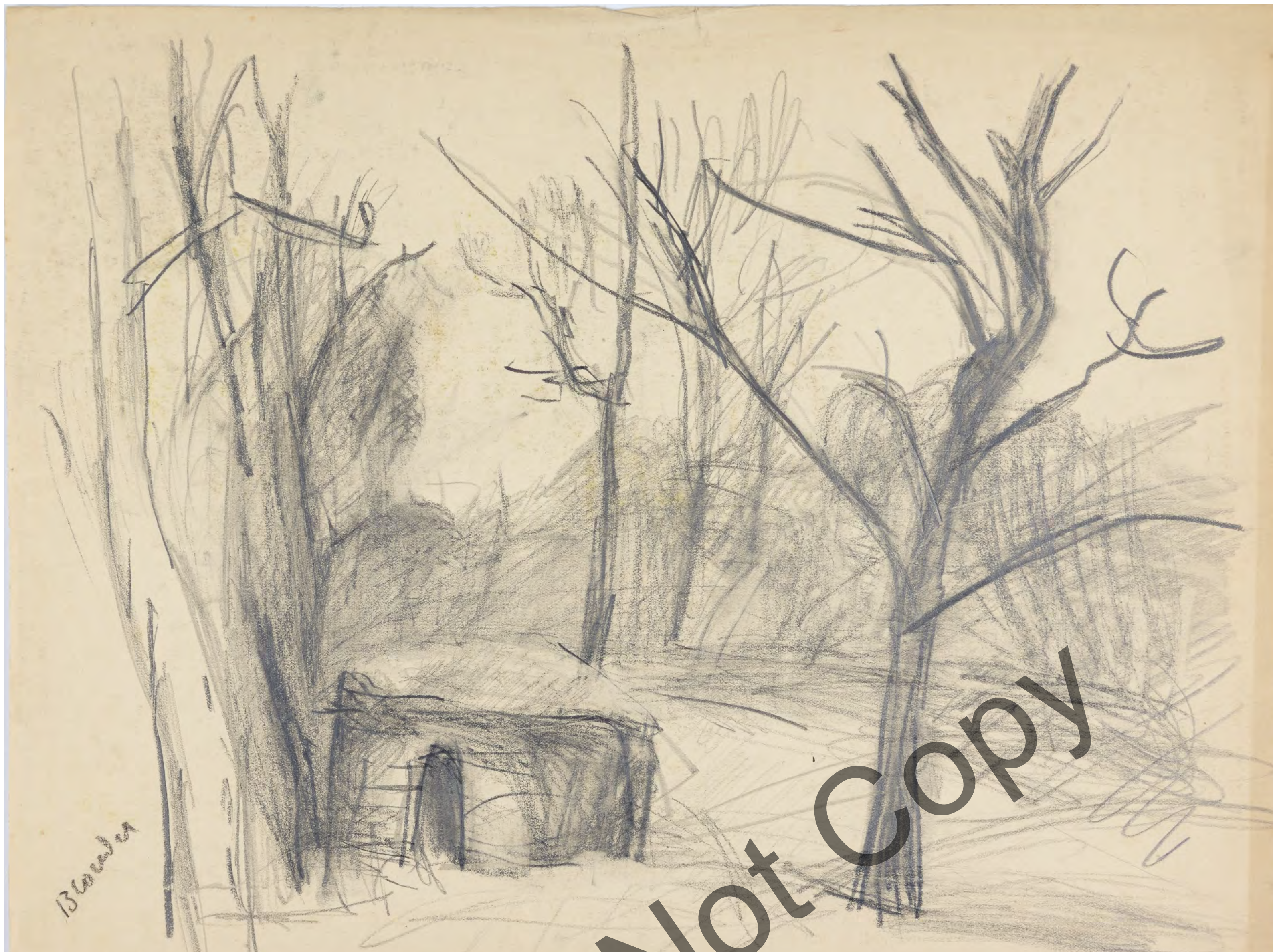
PERIOD IN HIDING

Shaye found refuge in Aix-en-Provence with the assistance of the French Resistance. From 1940-1942, he lived in hiding under conditions of isolation and deprivation, and was anxious and afraid. During this time, creating art gave his days meaning and imbued him with the will to live. As he wrote in his diary: "Every day brings with it its quota of new difficulties. If it were not for the ecstasy and spiritual elevation that fill me when I hold a paintbrush, I would be unable to do anything." While in hiding, Shaye met Louise (Lisou) Bonfils, a lecturer in physics and chemistry who would come to visit her aunts in the Resistance. Louise helped Shaye in multiple ways during this time: she brought him food and medication on her bicycle, she tended to his wounds when he was injured by an axe blow and took care of all his needs. Shaye painted her portrait in this period, and in the summer of 1943, when the situation in southern France deteriorated and the deportations began, she helped him to escape to Carcassonne, close to the Spanish border.

They got married in July 1943, after Shaye obtained false papers in the name of André Blondel, and the couple had a daughter and then a son. After France was liberated from German occupation, André threw himself back into his art. The family moved to Paris in 1949, but Blondel's creativity was tragically cut short when he was killed in an accident on 14 June 1949.

ANDRÉ BLONDEL

1909, POLAND – 1949, FRANCE



The Log Cabin, Aix-en-Provence, 1940
Pencil on paper
25x32 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of Hélène Feydy-Blondel, Paris, France



Bouquet of Flowers, Aix-en-Provence, 1942
Charcoal on paper
27x21 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of Hélène Feydy-Blondel, Paris, France




Lisou with a Pencil, Aix-en-Provence, 1942
Pencil on paper
26x18 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of Hélène Feydy-Blondel, Paris, France



Portrait of a Young Girl, Aix-en-Provence, 1942
Charcoal on paper
31x23.5 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of Hélène Feydy-Blondel, Paris, France

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JACOB BAROSIN

1906, LATVIA – 2001, USA

Born in Riga. He studied art and philosophy in Berlin and obtained a doctorate in Art History from the University of Freiburg. In 1933, he fled Germany and moved to Paris with his wife, Sonia, originally from Odessa. Sonia was a violinist who studied at the University of Berlin and the Stern Conservatory. In May 1940, he was arrested by the French authorities and imprisoned in camps in southern France. He was released in the summer of 1941, and in November 1942 the couple moved to the town of Florac. Jacob was arrested in February 1943 and sent to the Gurs camp. Some six weeks later he was transferred to the Gignac camp, and in April, he escaped and was reunited with his wife in Florac.

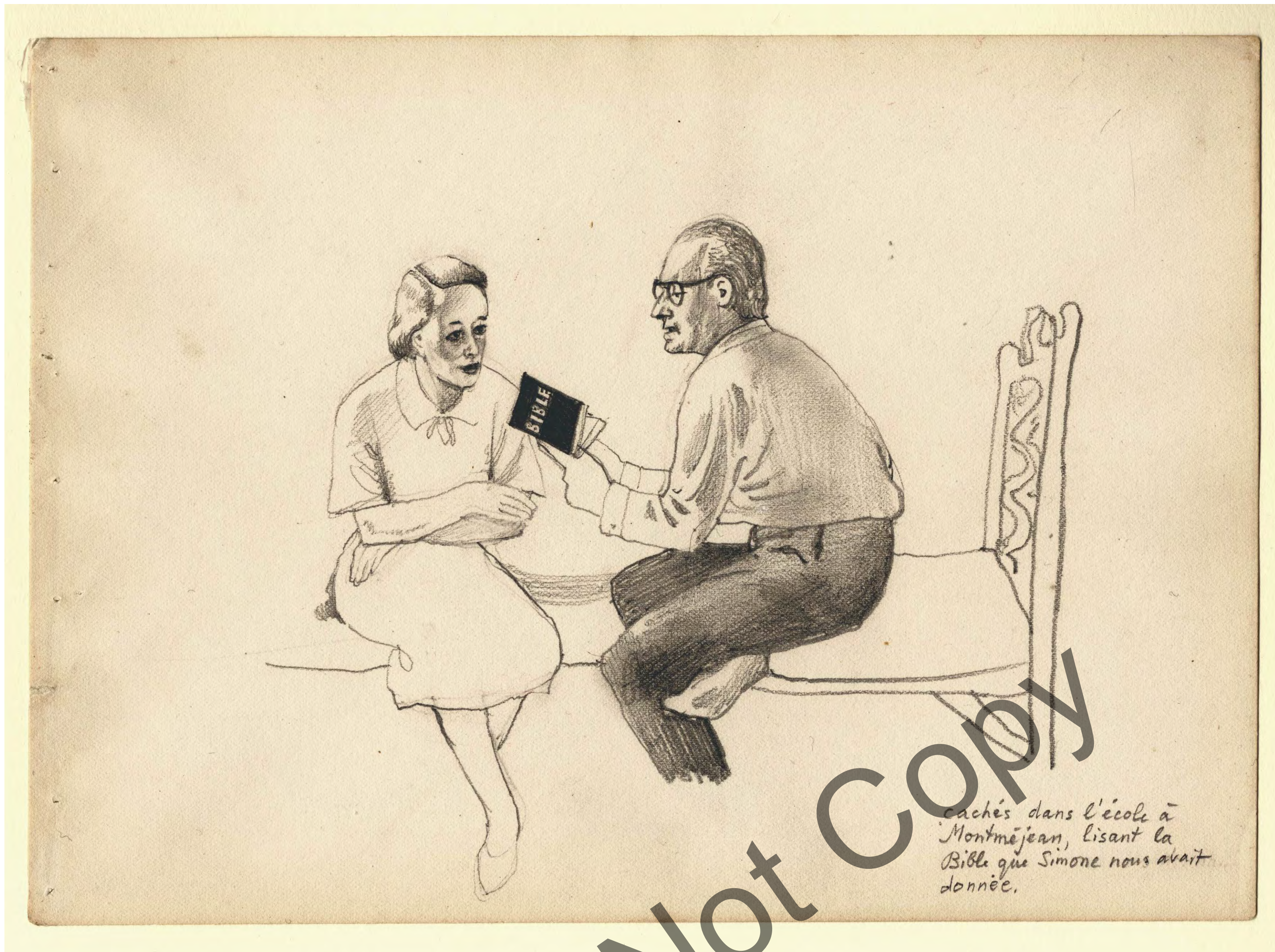
PERIOD IN HIDING

Fleur, the wife of the vicar of Florac, connected the couple with Simone Serrière, a Protestant teacher who found them a hiding place in the attic of a schoolhouse in the village of Montméjean. Simone herself lived in a small hamlet 13 km away. She gave them a Bible to read, and a drawing notebook, as well as providing them with a daily supply of food. She made a point of buying the food in the village where she lived, so as not to arouse suspicion. In one of Jacob's drawings, the Barosins are depicted sitting on the bed and reading the Bible. They were forced to whisper so that the school children studying on the floor below wouldn't hear them. Barosin later recalled that reading the Bible there had an enormous effect on him. While in hiding, he penned the primary sketches for the illustrated Bible he went on to create after the war.

In August 1943, their hiding place was discovered. They fled to Paris, and hid in a suburb of the city until they were liberated in August 1944. In 1947, the Barosins immigrated to the USA, but stayed in contact with their rescuer. Barosin continued his artistic endeavors and worked as an illustrator for the NBC television network. Some of his drawings depicting scenes from the life of Jesus were hung in Serrière's house, and the Bible she gave him was always on his desk. In 1969, Simone Serrière was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

JACOB BAROSIN

1906, LATVIA – 2001, USA



Reading the Bible in Hiding, Montmejean, 1943

Pencil on paper
17.8 x 24.8 cm

Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist



Spring, 1944

Watercolor on paper
34.7x27 cm

Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist




Hiding in Soisy, Soisy-sous-Montmorency, 1944

Watercolor on paper
30.5x24.6 cm

Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the Garik and Greenblatt families, USA

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GERARD (GERSHON) POLAK

1912, THE NETHERLANDS – 2004, ISRAEL

Born in Amsterdam. After graduating high school he studied law. In 1938, he started work at the “Committee for Special Jewish Affairs”, which assisted Jewish refugees from Germany. After the occupation of the Netherlands in May 1940 and the implementation of the racial laws, Polak was banned from working in his profession from September onwards. In the winter of 1942, he signed up for a drawing and painting course designated for Jews only, and there he made sketches for advertisements and theater brochures, and filled drawing notebooks. In 1942 he also married Johanna-Sarah née Hahn.

PERIOD IN HIDING

In the fall of 1943, following the confiscation of the Polaks’ apartment by the Germans, and after looking desperately for a hiding place in Amsterdam, the couple found refuge with their former neighbors who ran a boarding house. Polak’s mother had been hiding there for a while, in return for payment. The hideout was a cellar where boarders would store their belongings.

During their time in hiding, Polak made drawings, signing them with the pseudonym, “Dibbes”. One of the drawings depicts his mother helping with the kitchen chores. Beside her is a bucket full of potatoes, which they would receive each day from their hosts, so that they could pass the time peeling potatoes. The boarders’ belongings can be seen in the corner of the room, as can a chessboard hanging on the wall, which Polak made for his mother and his wife to while away the long hours in hiding. His maternal uncle, who was married to a non-Jewish woman and could therefore move about freely, supplied him with paints and paper. One sketch depicts his uncle arriving at the hideout, and the curtain that served as a door leading from the hideout to the first floor.

In spring 1944, after discovering that Johanna-Sarah was pregnant, the Dutch underground helped to move her to an ante-natal clinic for the wives of German soldiers in Rotterdam. Armed with forged papers, she posed as the partner of a German officer, and gave birth to her daughter Alicia (Tirza) in June. She registered them both at the Ministry of the Interior under assumed identities, which gave them relative freedom of movement, and she found them a place to live. Several months later, Polak and his mother joined them and finally met the baby. In April 1945, fearing betrayal, the family had to leave the apartment in great haste and move to a new hiding place provided by the underground, where they remained until the war’s end.

After liberation, they returned, penniless, to the apartment that had been confiscated during the war. In January 1970, Gerard and Johanna Polak and their five children immigrated to Israel.

GERARD (GERSHON) POLAK

1912, THE NETHERLANDS – 2004, ISRAEL



Els in the Kitchen of the Hiding Place, 1943-1945

Gouache on paper
39.8x48.8 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent Loan, Artist's Estate



Hiding Place II, 1943-1945

Gouache and pencil on paper
26.1x36.7 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the Garik and Greenblatt families, USA



Hiding Place I, 1943-1945

Gouache and pencil on paper
30.2x41.1 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the Garik and Greenblatt families, USA



Els, Baby Daughter of the Artist, 1944

Pencil on paper
23.2x27.6 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent Loan, Artist's Estate

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SOPHIE (FIEKE) LANGER-ASSCHER

1926, THE NETHERLANDS – 2002, ISRAEL

Born in Groningen, the youngest of six. Her father, Avraham Asscher, the Chief Rabbi of the city, died when she was a baby, and her mother, Clara, was a teacher and writer.

In 1941, after the German invasion of the Netherlands, she was expelled from school, aged 15. Sophie and her mother were forced to move to Amsterdam, where she continued her art studies at a school opened especially for Jews. Her mother wrote and illustrated short stories, which were published in the Jewish newspaper.

PERIOD IN HIDING

The deportation of Dutch Jews to the extermination camps began in the summer of 1942. With the assistance of the Dutch underground, in March 1943 Sophie was hidden under an assumed identity in a Christian home in the area of Friesland, northern Netherlands, and continued to draw.

“I felt as though I brought danger with me to every place I went, on account of being Jewish; that I was like an infectious disease wherever a door was opened for me. People who could theoretically have lived relatively normal lives chose otherwise and put themselves at risk.”

Sometimes, Sophie was forced to spend nights inside locked closets. On one occasion, underground members came to warn of an impending raid, and she had to flee to the forest immediately, spending the night alone there until the danger had passed.

Fairies and heroes from the stories of Hans Christian Anderson and the Brothers Grimm made recurring appearances in her artworks and provided refuge during this period of terror, loneliness and uncertainty about her family's welfare. Creating art also gave her the tools to document her everyday life, and she drew portraits of the people who sheltered her. On one of the only occasions when she was able to venture beyond the four walls of her hiding place, she made a drawing depicting a magical view, with a river and wild flowers. This dreamy piece portrays a reality diametrically opposed to the cold, hard truth of her actual circumstances.

In the course of approximately two years, she hid with eight different families in various cities. In 1988, all eight families were recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

After the war, Sophie immigrated to Israel, where she was reunited with her mother and her two brothers, Meir and Eliezer, who also survived the Holocaust, and her sister, Shoshana, who had immigrated before World War II. Two other brothers, Yitzhak and Menachem, were murdered at Auschwitz.

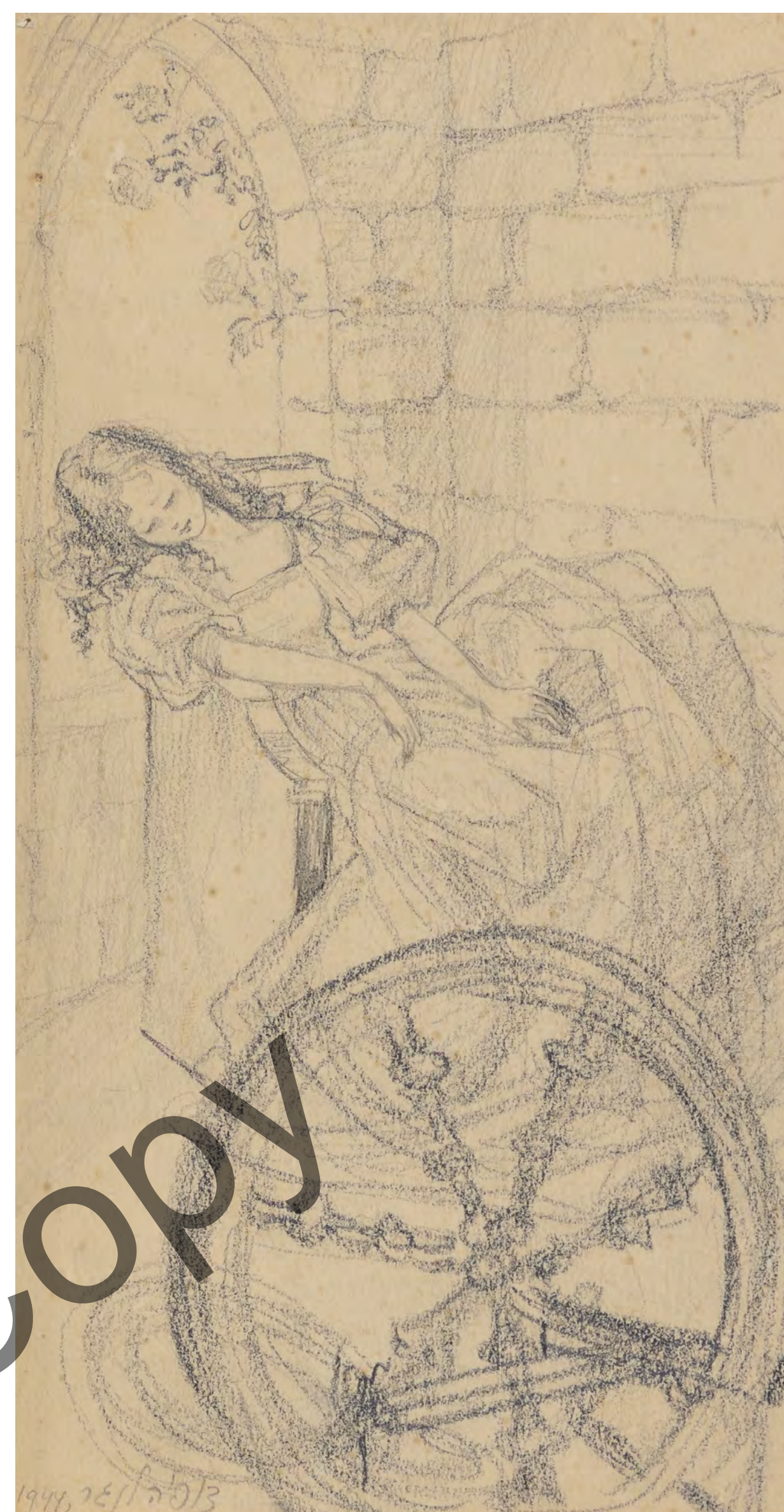
Langer-Asscher became a teacher, raised a family and went back to her art. Her Holocaust-period drawings were discovered by her daughters only after she passed away in 2002.

SOPHIE (FIEKE) LANGER-ASSCHER

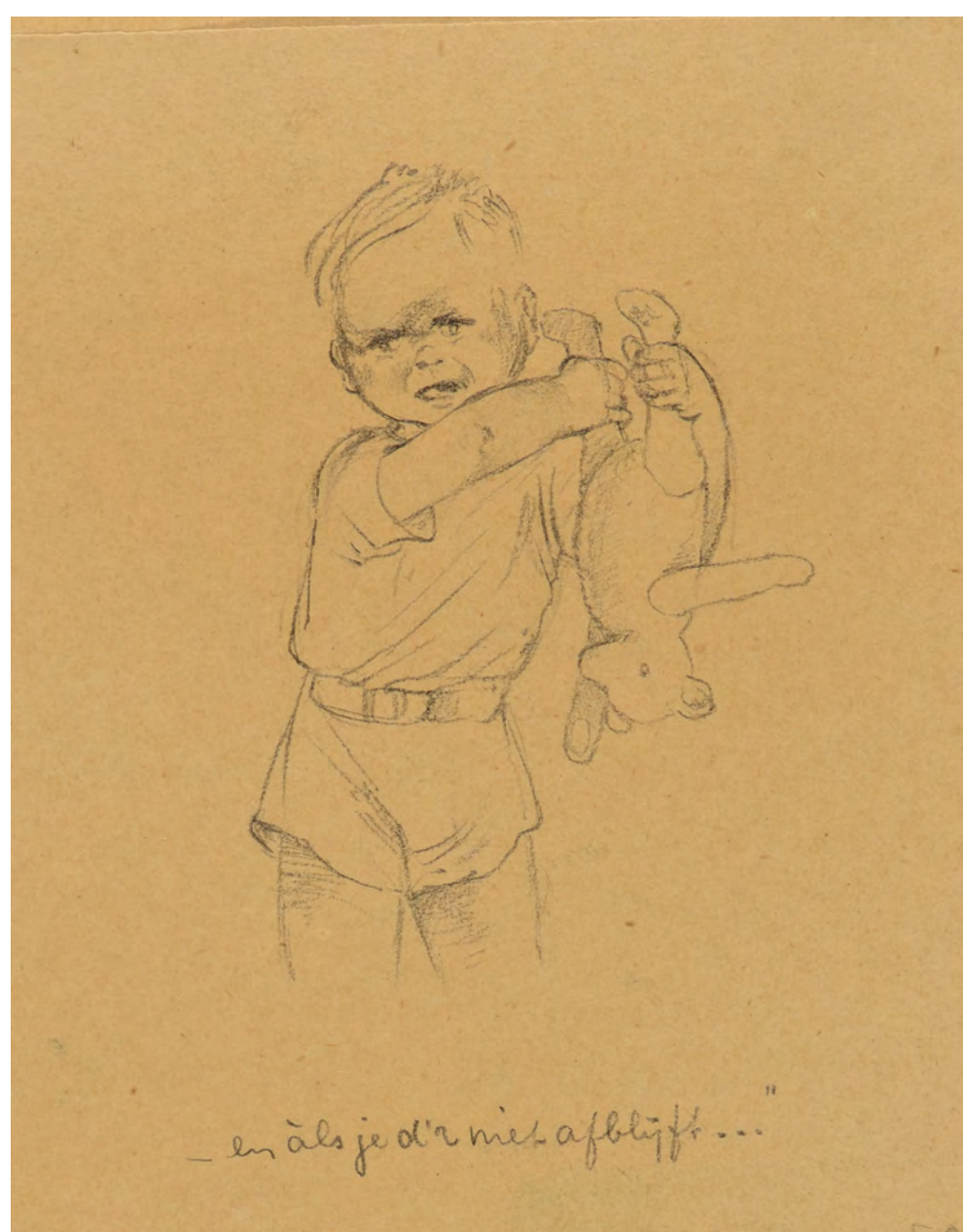
1926, THE NETHERLANDS – 2002, ISRAEL



Countryside Landscape, 1943
Pencil on paper
17.5x23.7 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent loan of Jacob Langer, Tel-Aviv



Sleeping Beauty, 1944
Pencil on paper
19x9.8 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent loan of Jacob Langer, Tel-Aviv



A Child with a Teddy Bear, 1944
Pencil on paper
15x13.4 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent loan of Jacob Langer, Tel-Aviv




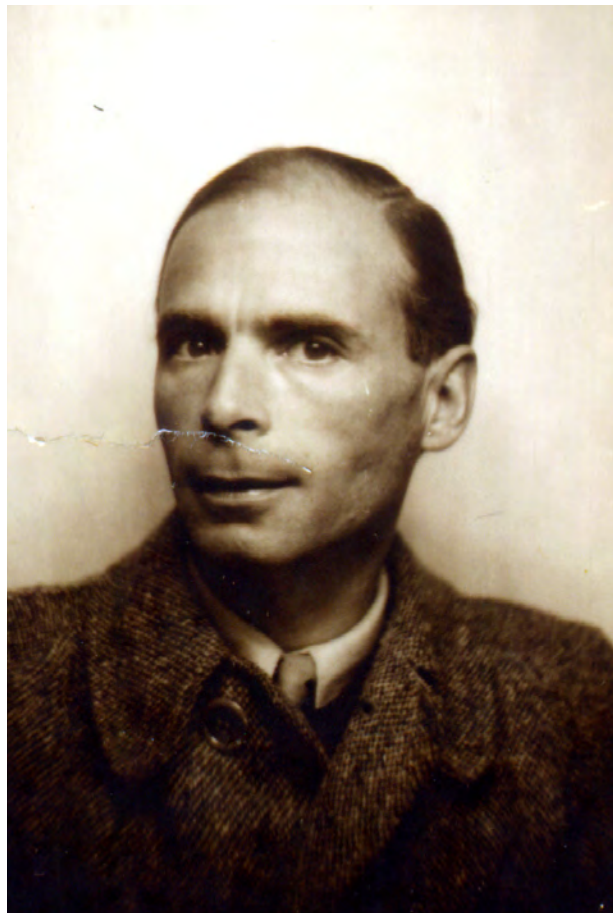
"The Grandparents from 'Kees de jongen (Kees the boy)' by Theo Thijssen", 1944
Pencil on paper
25x14.5 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent loan of Jacob Langer, Tel-Aviv



A Girl with Jewish Badge, 1944
Pencil on paper
19x15.8 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Permanent loan of Jacob Langer, Tel-Aviv

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FELIX NUSSBAUM

1904, OSNABRÜCK – 1944, AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

Born in Osnabrück, Lower Saxony. Started studying art in Hamburg in 1922, and a year later, continued his studies in Berlin. In the years 1924-1929, he attended the School of Fine Arts and Applied Art. He was awarded the Rome Prize in 1932, and received a scholarship to the Massimo Villa in Rome. In the wake of the Nazis' rise to power in Germany, he wandered the streets of Europe, and in 1935, he sought refuge in Belgium with his partner, artist Felka Platek. Initially, the couple lived in Ostend, moving to Brussels some two years later. In May 1940, following the German invasion of Belgium, Felix was arrested and deported to the Saint-Cyprien camp in southern France. After a few months he succeeded in escaping, and returned home to Brussels, where he lived until the fall of 1942. Until that point, he enjoyed relative freedom of movement and could buy his own art materials.

PERIOD IN HIDING

In the fall of 1942, when the Nussbaums realized that they were being followed by the Gestapo, they left their home and sought refuge in the home of sculptor Dolf Ledel. When the Ledels left for the Ardennes in March 1943, Felix and Felka were forced to return home, where they were hidden by their landlord, a member of the Belgian underground. He furnished the attic for them, leaving the apartment itself empty in order to wrongfoot the Germans when they came looking for them.

While in hiding in the attic in Brussels, the Nussbaums tried to overcome their terror, and occupied themselves by painting the objects and furniture around them. They couldn't paint with oils, as the pervasive smell of turpentine would have given them away. The still-life paintings Felix made are meticulously dated for the period 20-27 March 1943. The artworks created during this brief spell feature everyday objects drawn painstakingly in their three-dimensional space, including items positioned on stools. One of the paintings documents the tiny kitchen in the corner of the hideout, between the table and the sink. An agave plant and a watering can are positioned on a stool, a frying pan beneath it. On the floor, behind and alongside the table, we see a stove, bottles, a coffee grinder, pots, pottery, a coffee jug, an empty vase and a dustbin, while a chopping board, a ladle and a sieve hang on the wall. Another work portrays a hacked-off bough and a handsaw, evoking a sense of impending doom.

From June 1943, Felix painted in a cellar rented for him by a family he knew. All the oil paintings dated from this time onward were painted in that space, and he would alternate between working in the studio and living in the hideout. One of the members of the family assisting him would visit the cellar from time to time to watch him work, and he recalls that there were days when Nussbaum's hands shook with fear to the extent that he couldn't work at all. During that summer, he painted his "Self Portrait with Jewish Identity Card". This work features the Yellow Star and identity card - symbols of the branded Jew, representing the persecution and humiliation that Jews were subjected to. In the portrait, Nussbaum is turning his head towards the corner of a peeling, dirty wall, and raising the collar of his coat to reveal the Yellow Star concealed beneath it, while his left hand shows us his Jewish identity card. His gaze is direct and his expression is wary. In the identity card photograph he is wearing a hat, a hint not just that this document is not genuine, but also suggesting defiance. Beyond the wall, a dark cloud floats in lowering skies and crows circle. The tree jutting out on the other side of the wall is severed and limbless. In the midst of this dark scene, a blossoming branch is discernible, highlighted by a patch of clear, blue sky.

The couple was arrested in June 1944 after being betrayed, and deported to the Mechelen camp. From there, they were sent on the last transport to Auschwitz-Birkenau, which left Belgium on 31 July. Two days later, on 2 August 1944, they were both murdered.

FELIX NUSSBAUM

1904, OSNABRÜCK – 1944, AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU



The Kitchen in Hiding Unsigned, dated: 20.3.1943

Charcoal and black chalk on paper
48 x 64 cm

Felix Nussbaum Collection of the Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung in the Kulturegeschichtliches Museum Osnabrück



Self-Portrait with Jewish Identity Card

Signed, undated: Felix Nussbaum (on the card), after August 1943
Oil on canvas
56 x 49 cm

Felix Nussbaum Collection of the Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung in the Kulturegeschichtliches Museum Osnabrück



Still Life with Saw, 24.3.1943

Pastel and pencil on paper
32.5 x 23 cm

Felix Nussbaum Collection of the Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung in the Kulturegeschichtliches Museum Osnabrück

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DURING THE HOLOCAUST



REGINA WOLBROM ROTENBERG

1925, GERMANY – 2021, USA

Born in Gera, Germany, the eldest daughter of Max (Moszek) and Tena (Tony) Rotenberg. After her birth, the family moved to Berlin, where her two brothers were born. In October 1938, her father was expelled to Poland on account of his Polish citizenship. In February 1939, her mother succeeded in sending all three children to Brussels on a Kindertransport. Later on, her parents also escaped and the family was reunited in Brussels, where her sister, Sonia, was born in 1940.

PERIOD IN HIDING

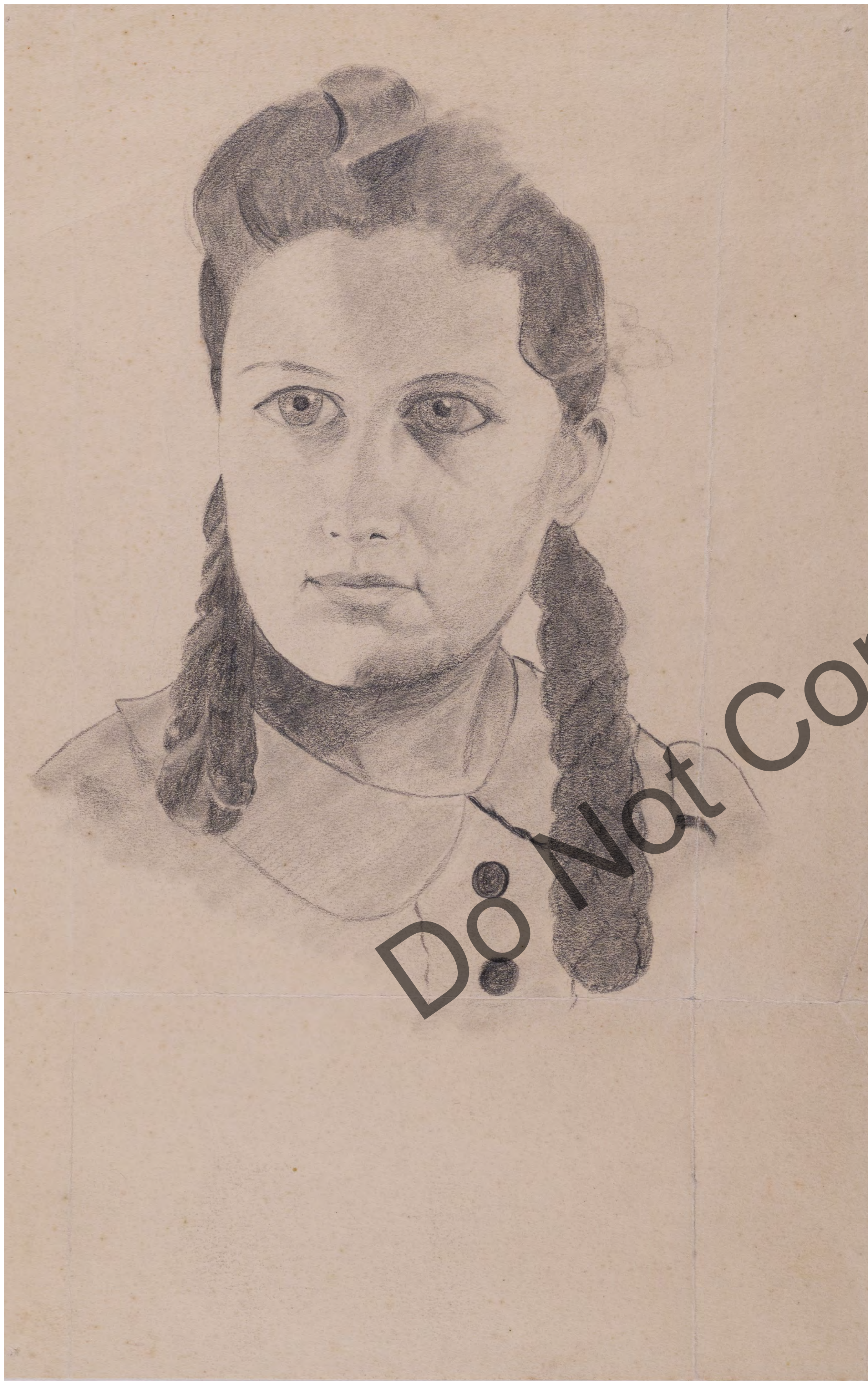
With the assistance of a local seamstress, her parents contacted Father Hubert Celis from the town of Halmael. He immediately offered to help, and the two boys, 13-year-old Wolfgang and 9-year-old Sigmund, were hidden at the home of his brother, Father Louis Celis. The two girls, 2-year-old Sonia and 16-year-old Regina, were sent to the house of 80-year-old Joseph Celis, the priests' father. Max and Tena stayed in a hideout close by but a short time later, on 29 October 1942 they were betrayed and deported to Auschwitz, where they were murdered. While living in hiding, Regina drew several portraits, including drawings of the two Celis brothers.

On 3 May 1944, Regina was caught and arrested in Joseph's home, after being informed on. The elderly priest insisted that she was a family member, and even tried to forcibly prevent her arrest, but to no avail. In her testimony, she recalls the moment she was caught: "The same German who had caught my parents said to the priest, 'There is someone here who does not belong,' while I sat there and painted. And then he turned to me: 'Let me see your papers.' I knew that if I would show him my forged papers, that would endanger him [Joseph] too, as he had made those papers for me." After two weeks in prison, Regina was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where she was forced to clear corpses. In January 1945, she was sent on a death march to Ravensbrück, and from there to Malchow and Leipzig. After her liberation by the Red Army, she was marched long distances over several days to the US soldiers' camps. Several months later, she returned to the Celis home, where she was reunited with her three siblings.

After the war, her two brothers immigrated to Eretz Israel (Mandatory Palestine), while Regina and Sonia stayed with the Celis family. Regina eventually married Holocaust survivor Yitzhak Wolbrom and they adopted Sonia. The family moved to Israel in 1949 and had two children. When they immigrated to the USA, Regina's siblings moved there too. On 25 March 1980, the Celis family was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

REGINA WOLBROM ROTENBERG

1925, GERMANY – 2021, USA



Self-portrait, 1943-1944

Pencil on paper
26.7x16.9 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist



Portrait of the Priest, Father Louis Celis, 1943-1944


Pencil on paper
17.1x13.4 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist



Portrait of the Priest, Father Hubert Celis, 1943-1944

Pencil on paper
17x10.1 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist

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JACK (KUBA) JAGET

1932, POLAND – 2019, ISRAEL

Born in Bobrka, near Lvov, to Leon and Sarah née Winter. He had a twin brother, Lipa, and an older sister, Celia. His father owned a restaurant located on the ground floor of the family home.


PERIOD IN HIDING

The Germans occupied the town in 1941 and started to carry out *Aktionen*. The family was forced to hide from time to time, when the Gestapo conducted house searches. Jack's mother decided to approach Josef Tkacz, a Polish farmer acquaintance. She promised him that in return for hiding them, he would receive the family home after the war. "My mother... was terrified about the Jews' situation... She had sharp instincts... She said straight away, almost from the beginning... that we had to look for something, a solution, in order to stay alive." Tkacz agreed to the arrangement and was persuaded to continue hiding the Jagets in his home, despite repeated searches of the area by the Gestapo. The hideout was a very small space underneath a pigpen, with no standing room. Tkacz's daughters would bring them food, and also provided them with a notebook and some pencils. Jack's mother encouraged him to draw, suggesting that he sketch the furniture inside the home they had left behind. He drew the objects from memory, with surprising precision for someone his age. Once a week, the family would open an air vent and light a candle in the hideout. During these short intervals, Jack and Lipa would draw, while their sister Celia wrote poems. On one occasion, Tkacz's daughter asked Jack for help with her anatomy homework. He crept out during the night in order to copy anatomical drawings from her textbook, adding handwritten comments.

After 22 months in hiding, the family heard Russian voices, and Leon emerged, to find a Jewish soviet officer. The officer gave the Jagets a plastic folder that had belonged to a German soldier and the family stored the children's drawings in it. Jack had only come out very occasionally during his period in hiding, and then only at night, such that he was extremely sun-deprived and initially could not stand up.

After their liberation in the summer of 1944, the Jagets returned to Bobrka to discover that they were only Jewish family in the community to have survived. In 1946, they moved to the US, where Jack studied graphic design at Cooper Union in New York. In 1971, Jack immigrated to Israel with his wife and children, working as a graphic designer, artist and typographer. In the course of his artistic career, he focused on working with wood. He also designed the cover for Ofra Haza's album, "The Song of Songs with Fun" (1979) and the English fonts, Doron (1968) and Rina (1968).

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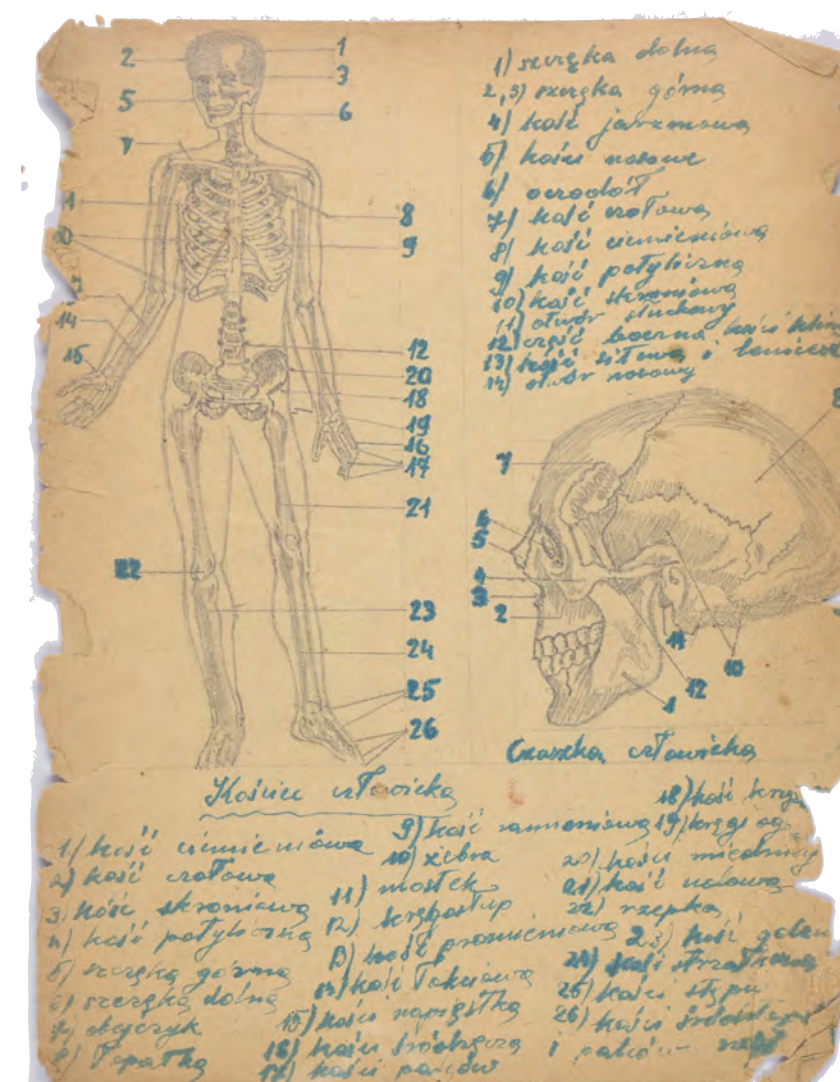
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DURING THE HOLOCAUST

JACK (KUBA) JAGET

1932, POLAND – 2019, ISRAEL



Furniture, 1941-1944
Pencil on paper
20.6x14.5 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist




Anatomy Drawing, 1941-1944
Pencil and ink on paper
18.9x14.5 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist



On the Way to School, 1941-1944
Pencil on paper
20.7x14.6 cm
Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist

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 CREATING ART IN HIDING
DURING THE HOLOCAUST



NELLY TOLL

1935, POLAND – 2021, USA

Born in Lvov, to the Mieses family. In October 1939, following the Soviet occupation, her father went into hiding in order to avoid being sent to Siberia. When Lvov was occupied by the Germans in 1941, the family was incarcerated in the ghetto. Her five-year-old brother was caught in an *Aktion* and murdered. Nelly and her mother, Rozia, joined a group that attempted unsuccessfully to cross the border into Hungary.

PERIOD IN HIDING

In 1943, her father organized a hiding place for eight-year-old Nelly and her mother with a Christian couple in the city, planning to join them there later on. They were hidden in a small room, and the woman hiding them bought watercolors, brushes and sheets of paper for Nelly - a risky act in itself, as she did not have children of her own, and this purchase could have raised suspicion.

Nelly painted dozens of artworks in hiding, recalling in her memoir: "Once I started to paint, a new world opened up for me. It was as if the little box of watercolors made a bright path straight through the apartment walls to the outdoors."

She sometimes wrote stories to accompany her paintings: "In my pictures there was no war, no danger, no police and no tears. Everyone liked each other in my make-believe land, and all the people were as free as kites in the sky or butterflies in the field. They were like newfound companions to me in my loneliness, and I couldn't wait to take my next walk on paper with my watercolor friends."

After the city was liberated in 1944, Nelly and her mother discovered that they were the sole survivors of their family. They remained in Europe for several years, during which time Nelly studied art. She eventually immigrated to the US, where she continued to paint. Nelly went on to author articles and books, and lectured on literature and art at different universities.

NELLY TOLL

1935, POLAND – 2021, USA



Children Leaving for School, 1943

Watercolor on paper
13.7x20.6 cm

Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist



Girls in the Field, 1943

Gouache and pencil on paper
19.7x27.5 cm

Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist




"Mother and Daughter", illustration to the story "A Lucky Incident", 1943

Gouache and pencil on paper
15x21.5 cm

Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
Gift of the artist

**AN
ANCHOR
IN THE
DARKNESS**

 CREATING ART IN HIDING
DURING THE HOLOCAUST