



NO CHILD'S PLAY



*Children in the Holocaust:
creativity and play*

American Society for Yad Vashem

DAILY FLIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

The exhibition "*No Child's Play*", which is a part of the Yad Vashem Art Museum in Jerusalem, derives its name from an excerpt from Janusz Korczak's "*Rules of Life*", *A Childhood of Dignity*.

Approximately one and a half million of the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust were children. The number of children who survived is estimated in the mere thousands.

This exhibition opens a window into the world of children during the *Shoah*. Unlike other Holocaust exhibitions, it does not focus on history, statistics or descriptions of physical violence. Instead, images of the toys, games, artwork, diaries, and poems displayed here highlight some of the personal stories of the children, providing a glimpse into their lives during the Holocaust.



Janusz Korczak with the orchestra of the children's home in Warsaw.

Dolls and teddy bears became integral parts of the lives of the children they belonged to during the war. In many cases, they accompanied them throughout the war and were a primary source of comfort and companionship. For some children, the teddy bears and dolls were the most significant possessions left with them at the end of the war. Even today, as adults, their attachment is so great that they have difficulty separating from them – more than 60 years after the war has ended.

The travelling exhibition is comprised of 15 panels with posters depicting various games, toys, pictures and other artifacts. The exhibition tells the story of survival – the struggle of these children to hold on to life. It describes their attempts to maintain their childhood and youth by creating for themselves a different reality from that which surrounded them. In many cases, it was the children who gave their parents the encouragement and hope to continue their desperate daily fight for survival.

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The title of the exhibit "*No Child's Play*" is taken from a quote by the renowned pediatrician Janusz Korczak, director of Warsaw's very progressive Jewish orphanage. Korczak recognized the social, psychological and spiritual forces that imagination and creativity unleash. "It is not proper to be ashamed of any game," he said. "This is no Child's play... what matters is not what one plays with, but rather how and what one thinks and feels while playing." He loved, respected and cared for hundreds of children in Warsaw before accompanying them to their deaths in 1942.

Yad Vashem began collecting the toys and games in April 1997, asking survivors and museums to contribute to the exhibit.

The American Society for Yad Vashem is proud to present the "*No Child's Play*" exhibit which describes the Jewish child's life during World War II.

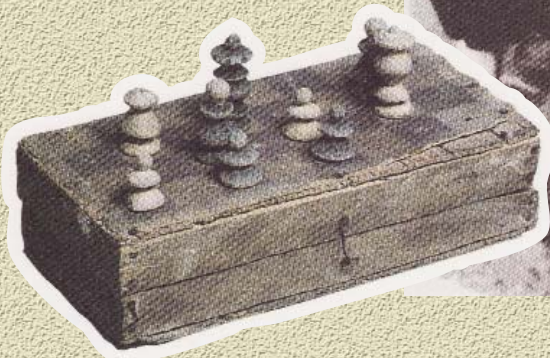


Teddy bear belonging to Kati Berger, who fled with her parents from Transylvania to Siberia.



New Year greeting card sent by Vleschhouwer children to their parents, Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, 1944.

Children in hiding playing chess in the children's home in the Chabannes chateau, France.



Chessboard and pieces carved from hazel wood by Jullus Druckman, Transnistria, 1943.



Jewish policeman doll from the Theresienstadt ghetto.



Color drawing of a Dutch policeman by Martin Weyl.



Dvora Kurlandchik and one of the clay busts she sculpted in the Leibnitz-Graz labor camp.



Doll found in the Buchenwald concentration camp.



Marionette made by 14-year-old Jan Klein and his teacher Walter Freund, Theresienstadt ghetto.



Embroidered cloth heart inscribed: "A souvenir for Agi."



Playing cards made in the Majdanek death camp.



Red felt rectangular pouch filled with Torah scroll fragments, possibly used as an amulet.



Zosia Zajczyk and her doll Zusia with which she was in hiding in the Warsaw ghetto.



Heart and shoe shaped pendants.



Nurse doll, Theresienstadt ghetto.



Glazed clay doll of Maria Eisen-Leshtinska, Warsaw Ghetto.



Doily embroidered by Roza Hertz for her mother in Budapest, June 1944.

The doll Colette, which also served as a family "safe", which Claudine Schwarz took with her when fleeing from Paris.



Blanket cover for the doll Colette's bed.



Children playing with a cart in the Coordinating Committee orphanage, 1946.

Toy wagon brought to Israel by Holocaust survivors from Germany.



Doll made by Pauline Hirsch-Klauber in the Theresienstadt ghetto.

Notebook made by Roza Hertz for her father.

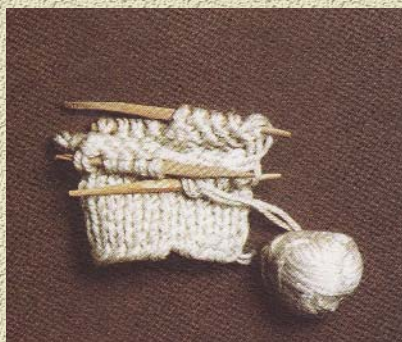




Girls learning to knit in the Lodz ghetto, 1944.



Doll brought by children in a transport to the Majdanek death camp.



Miniature crocheted work.



Celine Laufgas and the doll that she took with her when she and her family fled from Paris.



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THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM

Founded in 1981 by a group of Holocaust survivors, and spearheaded by Eli Zborowski, the American Society for Yad Vashem works in partnership with Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem to support their efforts in the areas of commemoration, education, research, capital improvements and special projects.

The Society draws support from more than 150,000 individuals nationwide. Their contributions range from a few crumpled dollar bills, to donations from major philanthropists, to a whole cadre of volunteers who give us the gift of time.

Yad Vashem was established in 1953 by the Israeli Parliament (*Knesset*), and was entrusted with the task of commemorating the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators. It mandates Holocaust remembrance, commemoration, and education, to ensure the lessons of the Holocaust are secured for posterity.

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