

UCSD's Holocaust Living History Workshop to Kick off Spring Quarter with Presentation by Doris Martin, Author of "Kiss Every Step"

Geisel Library events on April 6, May 4, and June 1 are free and open to the public

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The Holocaust Living History Workshop, sponsored by the UC San Diego Libraries and the Judaic Studies Program, will host three presentations during spring quarter by Holocaust survivors, who will share their stories of struggle and survival. The Holocaust Living History Workshop (HLHW) is an educational outreach program designed to preserve the memory of victims and survivors of the Holocaust. This year's series is called "Living With History," and is intended to broaden understanding of the past and to foster tolerance.

At these presentations, members of the campus community and the public will have the opportunity to meet the survivors and hear their stories, as well as learn about other survivors' testimony from the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, which includes the personal stories of more than 50,000 survivors of the Holocaust. All presentations are free and open to the public, and will take place from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Seuss Room on the main floor of the Geisel Library building on the UCSD campus.

Spring quarter events will begin on April 6, with **Doris Martin**, who will share her experiences of the Holocaust in Poland and Germany. Born in 1926, Dora Szpringer, as she was then known, witnessed the German invasion of her native Poland as a thirteen year-old girl. In late 1942 she was deported to Auschwitz, but only a few days after arriving, she was sent to the Ludwigsdorf slave labor camp, a sub-camp of Gross-Rosen in Lower Silesia. After the war, Martin was reunited with her family. Deeply traumatized, she could not talk about her horrifying experience for decades. With the help of her husband, she committed her unique story to paper, resulting in her book, "Kiss Every Step."

Martin, who has made it her mission to share the lessons of the past, will be introduced by UCSD History Professor Deborah Hertz who will frame her experience from an historian's perspective.

The May 4 event will feature **Robert Frimtzis**, whose talk will be based on his memoir "From Tajikistan to the Moon." Originally from Beltz in Bessarabia (now known as Moldova), Frimtzis was just ten years old when the Germans assaulted the Soviet Union. To flee persecution and almost certain death, his family journeyed eastward, to remote Tajikistan. While his father fought in the Red Army, Frimtzis had to provide for his family by working full-time. After the war, they ended up in a Displaced Persons camp in Cremona, Italy. Barely nineteen, he emigrated to the United States where he earned a masters degree in engineering and participated in NASA's path-breaking Apollo program. Frimtzis's story demonstrates the courage of perseverance in the face of adversity and the will to overcome the obstacles in one's path. Amelia Glaser, a UCSD professor of Russian and Yiddish literature, will provide essential historical background to his harrowing experience and the cathartic power of writing.

The Workshop's 2010/11 series of speakers will conclude on June 1 with the final event of the academic year, featuring **Dr. Edith Eger**, a native from Kosice, Czechoslovakia, who will give a talk called "The Spirit Never Dies." As a girl Edith loved to dance. Her training and proficiency came in handy when, at sixteen, she was

deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Asked to perform in front of the infamous camp physician Dr. Mengele, Edith closed her eyes and imagined that she was Juliet in Tchaikovsky's opera, dancing over the body of Romeo.

After marrying and moving to the United States, she studied to become a clinical psychologist and eventually established her own practice in La Jolla, California. A popular motivational speaker who has inspired many, Dr. Eger will be introduced by Armin Owzar, a visiting professor of history from Germany, who will open the talk with some reflections on the broader historical context of her ordeal.

The UC San Diego Libraries are one of only three university libraries on the West Coast to have access to the USC Shoah Foundation Institute Visual History Archive, founded by film maker Steven Spielberg to document the stories of Holocaust survivors for his movie, "Schindler's List." In 1994, Spielberg established the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, a non-profit organization, to collect and preserve more than 50,000 firsthand accounts of survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. The foundation became the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education in 2006.

The Holocaust Living History Workshop, launched in 2007, aims to teach the history of the Holocaust through two methods of face-to-face contact, both with Holocaust survivors and their children and through the Visual History Archive.

Student volunteers have received special training on how to search through the testimonies in the massive Archive, and then teach survivors and their families-from multiple generations-how to use the database. These families can then use the archive to conduct their own searches in order to learn about other people, and in some cases relatives, who had similar Holocaust experiences. Since its inception in 2007, more than 1000 people have attended Workshop presentations and events at UCSD.

The archive of 52,000 digital oral histories recorded by Holocaust survivors and other witnesses is the foundation for the Holocaust Living History Workshop, a program that has brought together UC San Diego students, San Diego Holocaust survivors, and their children. The Workshop, which was established to expand the usefulness and the impact of the Archive, has proven to be a powerful tool for discovering family history and preserving memories for survivors, their families, and members of the community.

The Visual History Archive, which includes the testimonies of Holocaust survivors from 40,000 specific geographic locations in languages ranging from Bulgarian and Greek to Japanese and Spanish, can be accessed by members of the campus community and the public from any computer on the UC San Diego campus.

For more information about UC San Diego's Holocaust Living History Workshop, contact Susanne Hillman at hlhw@ucsd.edu or go to: <http://libraries.ucsd.edu/hlhw>. Training in the use of the Visual History Archive is available for individuals and groups upon appointment.

The UC San Diego Libraries, ranked among the top 20 public academic research libraries in the nation, play an integral role in advancing and supporting the university's research, teaching, patient care, and public service missions. The nine libraries that make up the UCSD Library system provide access to more than 7 million digital and print volumes, journals, and multimedia materials to meet the knowledge demands of scholars, students, and members of the public. Each day, more than 7,300 people stream through one of the university's nine libraries. The Libraries' vast resources and services are accessed more than 87,500 times each day via the UCSD Libraries' Web site.

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