

ENGRAINED FOREVER HOLOCAUST



BIOGRAPHY

Mimi Schiff has devoted her entire life in developing her artistic talent. Born in Buffalo, New York in 1929 she has vivid memories of her father's impassioned response to the atrocities of the Holocaust. It wasn't until 1980, while studying with a rabbi, when Schiff began to fully understand the painful truth of the Holocaust and why it must never be forgotten.

Schiff embarked on this series of paintings after meeting Holocaust survivor Lucie Cripps, and listening to her describe her life in the concentration camps. The paintings would then go on to immortalize these horrors inflicted on millions of innocent people by the Nazis.

After seventeen years, a complete multi-media educational art exhibit entitled, *Engrained Forever Holocaust has been created*. She combines unfinished wood panels with collaged glass and acrylic paint. Sanded to expose the natural imperfections and grain of the wood after the application of the paint, these panels express the raw powerful emotions of Schiff's response to one of the greatest tragedies the world has ever known.

Mimi Schiff studied at the Tyler School of Fine Arts at Temple University in Philadelphia between 1948 and 1951. She also held apprenticeships with Abstract Expressionist painter Hans Hofmann and famed American Watercolorist Charles Burchfield. Her work has been exhibited at synagogues, galleries, and museums throughout the country including the Burchfield Art Center in her native Buffalo and the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio. She hopes that a new quality of life will evolve through artistic education.

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OVERVIEW

Engrained Forever is an exhibit of twenty compositions depicting the Holocaust. Each composition is painted in acrylic on 8' x 4' yellow fir plywood panels.

Since 1991, ten exhibitions have been on view across the country, eliciting exceptionally positive responses at every stop. A presentation of the exhibit can be found in the *Artists Registries and Archives* at the United States Memorial Holocaust Museum, as well as The National Museum Of Women In The Arts in Washington, D.C.

Attached are sample panels for your review. Important information regarding showing the exhibit is listed below. If interested in discussing further, please contact:
Mimi Schiff, 711 Mountain View Drive, Lewiston, NY 14092

Phone: 716.282.8192

GENERAL EXHIBIT INFORMATION

The exhibit, Engrained Forever Holocaust is available for showing at no charge. All that is asked is for the cost of transportation and insurance for the panels to be covered. However, if you would like to schedule Mrs. Schiff for a speaking engagement, personal expenses of airfare, hotel accommodations and local transportation are required.

The overall space that best shows this exhibit is 100 ft long by 50 ft wide. It can be designed for flexibility in accommodating various spaces. Panels may be installed by wire from the ceiling or brackets/nails in the wall. For best showing, spot lighting and black theatrical paper (behind panels) are requested.

Panels are packed in both fabric and plastic bags for transporting, with all bags and panels numbered for ease of re-packing. Title slides are included for reference when labeling displayed panels. Musical tapes to be played during exhibit are also included.

Transportation Information:

We ask that exhibit transport be estimated through Atlas Van Lines at least two months in advance of opening date. Please contact the Relocation Consultant at Lincoln Moving and Storage of Buffalo, c/o Atlas Van Lines at 1.800.344.3915, ext.126 or 716.874.1380, ext.126.

Insurance must include door-to-door coverage @ \$4,000 per panel.

Please be sure to notify Mimi Schiff for date of return.

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EXHIBIT HISTORY

Kleinhans Music Hall, Buffalo, NY	2008
Niagara University: African Educational Alliance of Western NY	2008
Temple Beth Am, Williamsville, NY	2006
The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL	2006
Castellani Art Museum/Empire State Partnership Program, Niagara Falls, NY	2004
Temple Adath B'nai Israel, Evansville, IN	1999
Temple Beth Zion, Buffalo, NY	1998
Jewish Community Center of Rochester, Rochester, NY	1997
Jewish Community Center of Akron, Akron, OH	1996
Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH	1996
Park Synagogue, Cleveland, OH	1995
Jewish Community Center of Wilmington, Wilmington, DE	1995
Canton Jewish Community Federation Center, Canton, OH	1994
Tampa Bay Holocaust Memorial Museum and Educational Center, Madeira Beach, FL	1992
Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University, Niagara Falls, NY	1991

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GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

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JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION OF GREATER ROCHESTER

May 23, 1997

Mrs. Mimi Schiff
711 Mt. View Drive
Lewiston, NY 14092

Dear Mimi:

It has been over a week since the Art Exhibit closed and I still miss those powerful panels that filled Auditorium A of the Jewish Community Center and that had such a dramatic impact on all of us who were privileged to view it. You should be most proud that in the two weeks that the Exhibit was in Rochester, close to 2000 people came to view it, some returning many times, bringing friends and relatives to see those moving, haunting images. The victims had such expressive eyes that spoke more than any words could say.

We are so grateful for the care and energy you brought to the exhibit, overseeing the installation in a very demanding time frame so that it could be ready for Yom Hashoah. If that weren't enough, we were delighted that you were able to stay with the exhibit for the entire two weeks.

What a gift we had in your presence, making yourself available to speak to the many student groups which came through each morning. Many of the teachers commented that being able to hear from the artist was a first for them. Out of all the art exhibits that they had attended, they never had been able to meet the artist. They felt so privileged.

Here are some comments of eighth graders: let them speak for themselves.

"Your panels moved me."

"I could see the pain in his eyes and I could feel how sad he must have felt."

"It gave me a visual approach for learning about the Holocaust"

"Your artwork was the most moving paintings I have even seen. You showed so much feeling and opened my eyes a little wider to see what happened. Thank you very much for telling us about your paintings and for painting them"

"The faces almost talked to us."

These comments speak volumes about the tremendous impact you and your incredible panels had on the students. We are so proud and pleased you were able to exhibit here. It was a highlight of our year.

With warmest regards,



Barbara Appelbaum, Director, Center for Holocaust Awareness and Information

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ENGRAINED FOREVER HOLOCAUST

ART

Horrors of the Holocaust are engrained forever in exhibit

By JANA EISENBERG

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

For artist Mimi Schiff, the awful events of the Holocaust aren't just sad memories.

Her visceral response to the genocide drives her to create unique paintings, and to compose texts to go along with each one.

It has taken 17 years for Schiff, 77, to complete the works, called "Engrained Forever Holocaust." Her commitment to sharing her message is what has carried her through the years, she said.

The collection has been shown in 11 cities around the country, and she is currently training docents to offer tours. "Engrained Forever Holocaust" will be open to the public Thursday through Nov. 16 at Temple Beth Am, 360 Sheridan Drive, Amherst.

The multimedia exhibit is being



Robert Kirkham/Buffalo News

Mimi Schiff talks about her painting "There Will Be a Day When We Will Be Remembered," part of an exhibit that opens Thursday.

billed as a community-wide event, with receptions, guest speeches from Holocaust survivors, guided tours and an interfaith observance at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 9 at Temple Beth Am. A number of school groups are scheduled to view "Engrained Forever Holocaust," with docents speaking with children and teachers about the works, the events they depict and their importance.

The collection encompasses more than 20 huge paintings in acrylic on yellow fir plywood boards, some as large as 4-by-16 feet. The idea to paint on this unconventional material arose, as she says the works did, organically. It was a conversation with a Holocaust survivor that sparked the idea.

"As I spoke with Holocaust survivor Lucie Cripps, a fiery rage grew within my being," said Schiff by phone from

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Education is key

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her Lewiston home. "I had to record this history somehow. But normal canvas would not be the proper background for my work; the subject is too tough and awesome. I was drawn to some plywood on the floor of my studio, which had stamping, red stains, knots and ink on it. After two years of debating, I picked up a piece of the wood and painted on it."

Schiff's works incorporate many historically important figures into the horrific and sorrowful scenes. This, she says, can help to put things in context. A large part of her impetus is educating people — including school-age children — about the dangers of "man's inhumanity to man."

"We must keep teaching and teaching," Schiff said.

In the full-page text that ac-

companies each painting, Schiff details each image and its representation. She references other texts, quotes from published historical sources, and guides the viewer with questions and descriptions.

She says young people are able to understand the subject, and that it is important. "Children can and do respond at all ages — sometimes even more than you or I," Schiff said. "They show me detail and are inspirational."

Sylvia Schwartz, executive director of the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo, said her organization's support of this event goes beyond the natural fit of the subject matter. "In keeping with our mission to teach, and support the teaching of the lessons of the Holocaust, the works of Mimi Schiff are an incredible artistic reminder of its horrors," Schwartz said. "Her use of plywood boards is most appropriate for her artwork. As she has pointed out, the material, with its knotholes and rough texture, sets the tone for the evil that existed during this horrific period."

Ending on a hopeful yet admonishing note, Schiff said, "Each day we have choices to make. I hope that after studying this tragedy, tolerance, justice and righteousness will be our guidelines in life."

The exhibit is open to the public from 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Nov. 16. Admission is free, and hours are from 1 to 5 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; 1 to 9 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays; and 2 to 5 p.m. Sundays.

For school and group tour reservations, e-mail engrained-forever@adelphia.net.

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Lewiston-Porter Central School District



TO LEARN, TO GROW, TO BE

March 24, 2003

Dear Mrs. Schiff:

Thank you for bringing part of your exhibit to our Middle School. From an artistic perspective, it is invaluable for our students to view original works of art. To meet the artist and have an historic perspective told by the artist herself is a truly unique opportunity. The narratives written by you provided insight to the inspiration behind the works.

Cross-curricular instruction has been found to be effective in promoting higher thinking skills. I can see educators using a display of this exhibit as a viable teaching tool to demonstrate the connection between all disciplines. The study of World War II and the Holocaust applies to social studies but through this exhibit, connections can be made to Language Arts and visual arts.

When we teach students about a particular artist, we tell them about the intellectual process that an artist goes through and the artist's desire to share ideas in a visual form. Many artists have produced a body of work because of the passion they have for what they believe. Our students have learned about the artist as a social critic. We teach them that one person can make a difference.

Mrs. Schiff, you have the qualities of the artists we read about in books. Students need to experience your art and the passion that is so evident. To have your work exhibited fully in a gallery setting would serve to educate and enlighten students and parents alike.

Again, thank you for your passion, your insights, and your expression. One person can make a difference. You have made a difference in the world of all the students you have touched with your life's work. I hope you are given the opportunity to exhibit your work in its entirety at a gallery so that the past is not forgotten.

Sincerely,



Cathy Burns

"Host to the World"