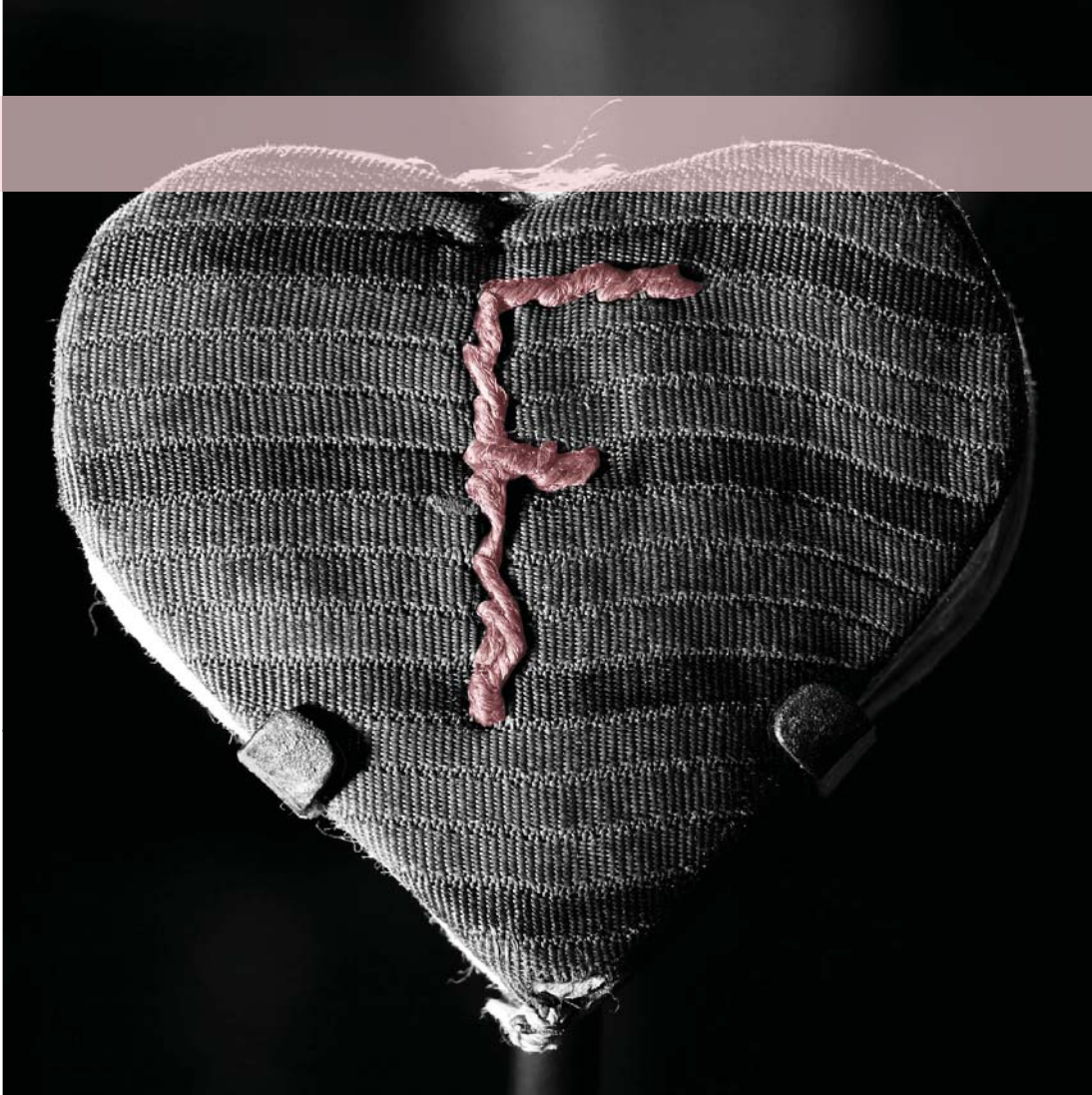


FOR THE FUTURE



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



**Montreal Holocaust
Memorial Centre**



INTRODUCTION

FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This has been a remarkable year for the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, and we are proud of the organisation's many accomplishments. Through major grants from the Government of Canada, the support of Federation CJA and generous private donors and a clear understanding of the needs and niches to be filled in the area of Holocaust education and remembrance, and sensitisation on human rights, we have been able to develop several major projects. Amongst them, we would like to highlight the new travelling exhibit: *United against Genocide*, which was launched at City Hall January 27th and which will be exhibited across Quebec and in Calgary in the next

1,250 new Canadian testimonies will now form part of this heritage.

year. A second exhibition, designed to reach audiences in towns across Canada which do not have a Holocaust education centre, will allow community centres, schools and museums to learn about the history of the Holocaust and the variety of human experiences. It was completed

in June, and is already confirmed to travel to the Quebec Côte-Nord and to Prince George, B.C.

In addition, the Centre's educational tools are increasingly used by educators around the world. In 2015-2016, they were downloaded 55,000 times! As part of our continuing efforts to assure that the voices of survivors are heard for generations to come, we have pursued our partnership with the USC Shoah Foundation (formerly the Spielberg Foundation) and the Toronto Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. **We will soon launch public access to 53,000 survivor video testimonies.** 1,250 new Canadian testimonies, fully catalogued and available around the world, will now form part of this heritage.

Finally, we are particularly delighted by the recent recognition of the Centre and its survivor volunteers as Honorary Laureate of the Peace Medal by the YM-CA's of Quebec. This is the most prestigious of awards presented on International Peace Day.

Alice Herscovitch
Executive Director



Daniel Rabinowicz
President



THE MUSEUM

OVER 14,000 VISITORS IN 2014-2015

Through testimonies and approximately 400 objects donated by Holocaust survivors who rebuilt their lives in Montreal, the Centre's permanent exhibition explores the history of the Holocaust from the perspective of those who experienced it. In addition, touch screens and a mobile application allow visitors to further discover this unique point of view. **The application has been used by 1,644 people on iPad tablets provided by the Museum,** and downloaded by 555 individuals in 2015-2016.

The Centre had another busy year welcoming **over 14,000 visitors to the permanent exhibition, 4,000 of whom participated in a guided tour lead by one of our volunteers.** The following message written in the Museum guestbook by Judith Poulet demonstrates visitors' appreciation of our permanent exhibition; "To never forget, to talk, share, testify and above all, to pass on the memory and educate future generations." The Museum also had the pleasure of hosting representatives from the Hungarian and

Chilean embassies and Montreal City Council.

Despite a strike in the public education sector, **over 8,000 students**

"To never forget, to talk, share, testify and above all, to pass on the memory and educate future generations"

visited the Museum in 2015-2016. We welcomed 1,990 elementary school students, which is a 38% increase from last year! The majority of visiting schools (57%) were from the Montreal area, while 20% were from elsewhere in Quebec, and another 20% were from Ontario. We also welcomed American school groups from Vermont, Massachusetts and New York.



EXHIBITIONS

FOUR NEW EXHIBITIONS THIS YEAR!

The Centre presented **1945: Discovering Reality**, from October 28 to November 24, an exhibition organized in partnership with Agence France-Press during the Holocaust Education

1948, I came to Canada” - The Holocaust in 6 Dates summarizes the history of the Holocaust and highlights Canada’s role during the genocide. Ten objects and testimonies will accompany the exhibition throughout Canada in 2017.

An exhibition based on photographs of the liberation of the camps

Series. It was based on images captured by French photographer, Eric Schwab following the liberation of the camps.

From December 10 to February 11, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the 1915 Armenian Genocide, and in partnership with the Government of Canada - Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, the Centre presented **The 40 Days of Musa Dagh, a story of resistance during the Armenian Genocide**. The exhibition allowed visitors to explore the historical novel, *Musa Dagh* by Austrian Jewish author, Franz Werfel.

The Centre created two new traveling exhibitions. Thanks to support from the Government of Canada, **“And in**

Created in partnership with the Rwandan, the Armenian and the Cambodian communities, **United against genocide: Understand, question, prevent** was converted into a traveling exhibition, and launched at Montreal City Hall in January 2016. The exhibition encourages visitors to consider genocide as a preventable crime. Institutions such as the Musée de la Mémoire vivante in St-Jean-Port-Joli have reserved the exhibition in 2016.

The virtual version of this exhibition was launched in May 2015, and dealt with the theme of the media. The next version will address resistance and is scheduled for release in the fall of 2016. Currently, the virtual exhibition and website have been viewed by 3,549 users.



THE COLLECTION

A COLLECTION OF 11,600 OBJECTS

New Acquisitions

The addition of 453 artefact donations enriched the Centre's collection. **Currently, the collection consists of 11,600 items**, including over 5,400 documents and 1,400 3D objects. These artefacts allow one to better understand the life of Jewish communities, the Holocaust and the survivors' arrival in Canada. The Centre organized a collection day on July 26, 2015, during which nine individuals donated artefacts.

Over 800 objects were catalogued this year, and 85% of the collection is currently digitized. The Centre benefits from work done by volunteers, interns as well as students hired through the Young Canada Works program.

Loans

The Centre organized five new loans to museums including the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (Winnipeg, MN), Musée de la mémoire vivante (Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, QC) and the Jewish Museum in Prague (Prague, Czech Republic). In total, 64

of our objects are currently on display in other museums.

Research and Public Access

Five hundred and forty-eight objects were uploaded to Canadian Jewish Heritage Network's online catalogue (www.cjhn.ca) and a total of 4,411 objects are now accessible online, representing 41% of our catalogued artefacts.

Objects of Memory

As part of a Museum Studies course at the Université du Québec à Montréal, 18 Masters students created videos that tell the story of an object from our Collection and the individuals to whom it once belonged. The moving videos drew public attention to the important role of artefacts in the development of historical knowledge about the Holocaust. They also highlighted the preservation of artefacts and encouraged viewers to donate objects to the Centre. The videos are available on our YouTube channel.

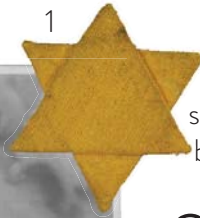


ARTEFACT DONATIONS

453 ARTEFACT DONATIONS IN 2015-2016

Listed below are some of the 453 artefacts donated to the Centre in 2015-2016:

1 **Yellow star** worn by Martha Blum while she lived in Chernivtsi, Romania. This star was made by her mother, Susi Guttman around 1941. Donated by Carol Arcus.



2 **Photo of Simon Markel** (second from left) and his brothers, Willy, David and Richard. Simon is the only member of his family who survived the Holocaust, thanks to the Kindertransport program. Donated by Miriam Markel.



3 **Prisoner's uniform** worn by Louis Miller, who arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944 at the age of 19. Donated by Cécile Miller.

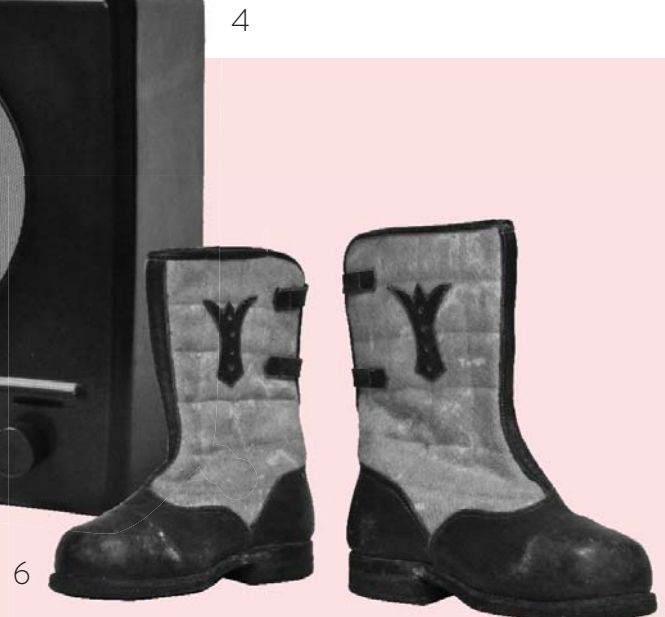
4 **DKE 38 Radio**, also known as a Goebbels-Schnauze (Goebbels' snout), which is a smaller version of the Volksempfänger (People's Receiver), was a tool used by the Nazis to control information and spread propaganda. These radios were widespread throughout Germany. Donated by André Fiset.



5 **Cosmetics for eyebrows and eyelashes** produced in Edouard Frederic Satz' Rendale factory. Satz fled to Cannes, France after Germany invaded Belgium, and opened a factory to produce cosmetics using a waxing process he developed in 1929. Donated by Michel Siritsky.



6 **Boots** made by Joseph Slawner in the Ebensee displaced persons camp for Saul Frenkiel, born in 1946. Donated by Saul Frenkiel.



5

6

EDUCATION

OVER 55,000 DOWNLOADS OF OUR PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS

Pedagogical Tools

The Centre's new tool, *Teaching about the Holocaust using Recorded Survivor Testimony - Anti-Jewish Measures and Life in Hiding: the Experience of Marcel Tenenbaum* is now available online and for loan.

Pedagogical tools previously developed by the Centre, including *Hana's Suitcase* and *Exploring the Evidence*, were once again, popular with educators. **Documents, activities and pedagogical projects were downloaded over 55,000 times** from our website, nearly a 45% increase from last year.

Positive feedback from teachers further demonstrates the relevance of our tools. For example, Laura Sellitto organized the *Heart of Auschwitz* activity with her Grade 6 students, who created their own heart full of messages of support for a young girl who had recently lost her father. Laura's students then asked to visit the Museum.

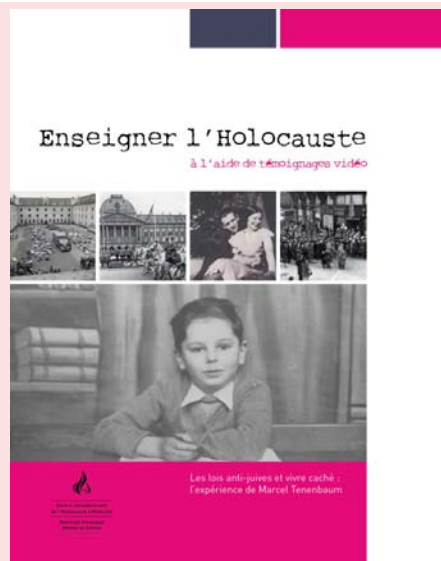
Teacher Training and Support

In October 2015, teachers throughout Quebec and Ontario attended the seminar organized by the Centre, *Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust and Other Genocides with Media-Based Resources*. **Through workshops and presentations, teachers were able to discover the best practices for using resources**, such as the Centre's tablet application and interactive timeline, to teach the history of the Holocaust and other genocides. Participants were also able to better understand the role of the media during genocide.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Ruth Grubner & Victor David Foundation,

Three teachers chosen by the Centre, and sponsored by donors, attended the International Seminar at Yad Vashem.

five teachers from Quebec participated in a training session at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.



EVENTS

49 EVENTS ATTENDED BY 5,826 PEOPLE

A few of our notable events:
On January 27, to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Museum welcomed 67 visitors to an open house event. In the evening, an additional 80 guests, including the Mayor of Montreal, Denis Coderre attended the **vernissage of the traveling version of the *United against genocide: Understand, question, prevent* exhibition** to commemorate genocide victims.

The *Holocaust Education Series*, focused on the theme of liberation, was attended by 2,343 people over the course of 14 events across Montreal. The kick-off event included the launch of an exhibition developed by the Centre in partnership with Agence France-Presse, based on photos of the liberation of the camps taken by Éric Schwab.

Approximately 400 people attended the screening of the film, *Run Boy Run*,

organized in partnership with the Jewish Public Library, at the Gelber Conference Center. A discussion between historian Mark Celinscak and Steven Hopman, a survivor liberated at Bergen Belsen, promoted reflection on the complexities of camp liberation after the war.

The Centre presented the film, *There Was Once...* in partnership with the Embassy of Hungary in Canada. The film tells the story of a woman who teaches about the forgotten history of the Jewish community in her town, as modern Hungary experiences an increase in intolerance and the return of Neo-Nazi groups. Sixty people attended the event and had the opportunity to speak with the film's director, Gabor Kalman.



COMMUNICATIONS

WEBSITE VISITED 80,683 TIMES

MEDIA RELATIONS

One year after the 70th anniversary of Liberation, media remained interested and attentive to the Centre's important role in remembrance and education. **Twenty-five articles were published citing the Centre**, its activities or stories of Holocaust survivors. Alice Herscovitch participated in a CBC radio debate about teaching Holocaust history, and Radio-Canada covered the Montreal Survivor Memoirs Book Fair. Broadcasters produced several interviews, articles and blog posts about our permanent exhibition. From April 2015 to March 2016, the Centre was featured 63 times in various media.

DIGITAL MEDIA

This year, the website was visited 80,683 times by 50,873 visitors, indicating an increase in website traffic (9% for visits and 5% for visitors). The Centre developed an online media strategy, as a complement to our social media plan. We experienced an increase in social media followers on Facebook (1,832 followers), Twitter (1,913 followers) and

YouTube (36,332 views). YouTube video views increased by 38%! **We participated in International Museum Week (#MuseumWeek) on Twitter, and were the third most influential museum of the week in**

YouTube video viewers increased by 38%!

Canada. Outreach through our digital platforms has spread awareness about the Centre, the history of the Holocaust and human rights issues at the international level.



REMEMBRANCE

11,000 PEOPLE LISTENED TO A TESTIMONY

Survivor Testimony

Over the past two years, several child Holocaust survivors have joined the Centre as speakers.

In 2015-2016, survivors shared stories

Over 5,000 people listened to a testimony outside of the Museum.

of the prewar period and their wartime experiences with 11,500 people. Over 5,000 individuals listened to a testimony outside the Museum, while others visited our permanent exhibition before or after hearing testimony. Survivors addressed many school groups, as well as adults in churches and synagogues, and visitors who participated in our open house events, which include free visits to the museum, guided tours and survivor testimony.

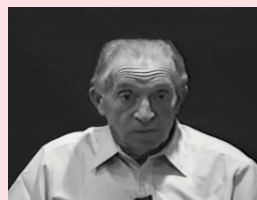
Each year, the Centre organises commemorations to pay tribute to the victims and honour survivors of the Holocaust. These events help Montrealers understand how hatred and racism can lead to genocide, while reminding us of

the importance of vigilance and action. Both levels of government have recognized Yom Hashoah, also known as Holocaust Remembrance Day. The theme of Yom Hashoah, May 4, 2016 at Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem, was survivors' efforts to rebuild their lives after the Holocaust. Six candle lighters spoke about the sorrow, joy and courage of survivors in the years following liberation.

The Centre also participated in the national Yom Hashoah commemoration organized by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, as well as the Christian commemoration of the Holocaust and a service held at Montreal City Hall.

During the Centre's Kristallnacht commemoration on November 9, 2015, **Dora Cohen described how she lived through the fateful days of the November 1938 pogroms in Vienna.** The ceremony included musical pieces performed by members of the Musica Camerata Montreal as well as Yiddish songs.

IN MEMORY OF...



ORAL HISTORY

18 INTERVIEWS WERE FILMED THIS YEAR

The Centre continues to record survivor testimony. Last year, 18 interviews were filmed in English and French, among them two survivors who were in Tunisia during the war. The cataloguing of the Montreal collection (over 780 testimonies) in the Centre's database advances with the help of several volunteers.

The Centre continued to produce short themed video clips for commemorations, as well as significant days in the history of the Holocaust. With over 50 new video clips in 2015-2016, **the Centre has produced 180 survivor video clips** that are used in our exhibitions, events, newsletters, educational tools and broadcast on our YouTube channel. Our YouTube video clips have been viewed 36,332 times in total.

Thanks to a second grant from the Government of Canada, and the generous support of the Azrieli Foundation, POWER Corporation and the Asper Foundation, the Centre has led a project to digitise, assure the long-term

preservation, catalogue and develop use and access to video testimonies recorded across Canada. **Over 1,250 testimonies now form part of the Canadian collection at the USC Shoah Foundation**, and here in Montreal! Pedagogical tools are

Soon, the general public and researcher will have access to these testimonies.

being developed, and researcher and public access to all Shoah Foundation testimonies will soon be a reality at the Jewish Public Library. From generation to generation, our pledge to assure Holocaust remembrance, remember the individuals and the history of Jewish communities, and combat denial will continue, thanks to these efforts. **We will speak out to prevent hate and prejudice**, tell the Canadian story, and build bridges with other communities through this remarkable collection.



On this page (from left to right): Nathan Wasser, Ursula Feist, Walter Absil, Louise Cale



Left-hand page (from left to right): Ben Younger, Eva Erban, Joseph Halmi, Michal Hornstein, Wolf Biberkraut, Agnes Foldes, Martin Seltzer, Harry Miller

In memory of the Oral History Project participants who passed away over the last year.

HUMAN RIGHTS

THE CENTRE'S WORK IN ACTION

Throughout 2015-2016, the Human Rights Committee organised numerous activities. On International Peace Day, a film about the First Nations' search for identity in Quebec was screened in collaboration with

The screening of a film about indigenous communities' search for identity in Quebec

Wapikoni Mobile and McGill University's Indigenous Awareness Week. A round table about the persecution of the Rohingyas in Myanmar was organized in partnership with the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism of McGill University's Faculty of Law. Finally, during the Action Week Against Racism, 30 people attended a round table discussion about the current refugee and migrant crisis with Special Rapporteur to the United Nations on the Human Rights of Migrants, Professor François Crépeau, and Jenny Jeanes from Action Réfugiés Montréal.

The Centre continues to speak out about the situation of refugees and promote Canada's openness on this question, highlighting our human and moral obligations. In November 2015, we addressed Canadians in an open letter arguing for an openness to refugees, contrasting with Canada's closed borders policy during the Holocaust.

We have sustained our involvement in the Alliance for Genocide Awareness and Remembrance. The Centre participated in the March for Genocide Prevention, which mobilized 10,000 people. We also were involved in promoting the adoption of the motion to recognize April as Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month by the House of Commons.



PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

160 VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES AND ORIGINS

Year after year, the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre relies on the generous dedication of volunteers. **These individuals contribute to the transmission of history and memory of the Holocaust** by guiding students in the Museum, offering their testimony, documenting our collections, being involved in contemporary human rights work and educating the public. Board and committee members contribute to the vision and development of the organization and its diverse programs. They plan, fundraise, organize events, act as ambassadors and help shape the Centre.

Our team of volunteers continues to grow and strengthen our cause. We are thankful for their contribution. Without these individuals, it would not be possible to

respect our mission to educate people of all ages and backgrounds about the Holocaust, as well as sensitize the public to the universal perils of antisemitism, racism, hate and indifference, while promoting respect for diversity.

Your continued involvement is indispensable, as together we ensure that Montrealers, Quebecers and individuals from around the world understand the relevance of the Holocaust. Thank you.

Our team of volunteers continues to grow and strengthen our cause.



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2015 HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

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