FSU Holocaust Institute for Educators

Drawing Strength:
The Art of the Holocaust

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What is art therapy?

- Art therapy is the therapeutic use of art making, within a professional relationship, by people who experience illness, challenges in living, trauma, and by people who seek personal development. Through creating art and reflecting on the art products and processes, people can increase awareness of self and others; cope with symptoms, stress, and traumatic experiences; enhance cognitive abilities, and enjoy the life-affirming pleasures of making art (American Art Therapy Association, 1997, 2003).
Art As Product

• Margaret Naumburg--pioneer
  - uses final product to spark insights in the clients

  • related to psychoanalytic perspective of dream analysis
  • clients were generally adults
  • had client complete art piece at home, then bring it in for discussion
  • believed to have coined the phrase “dynamically oriented art psychotherapy”
Art As Process

• Edith Kramer--pioneer
  – observed the process to steer a therapeutic course --no final insight necessary
  • also psychoanalytically based--
  • mostly concerned with such notions as --
    – transference
    – and sublimation
  • clients were generally children with needs
• had client complete art piece in session
The Synthesis

• Elinor Ulman--pioneer
  – believed that the synthesis between process and product was important; a good therapist needed knowledge of both
Therefore…Art Therapy is really based on a series of continua...to start with....

Product  Process
The materials themselves and how they are used have several continua. Known as the:

**Multi-Dimensional Variables**

- rigid <-> fluid
- simple <-> complex
- structured <-> Non-structured
Art of the Holocaust...
When Viewing The Following Images, Consider the Following Questions…

• Why did the victims create this art?
  – What did it accomplish?
  – Why the risk?

• Why is it important to see this art?
  – How do we talk about this art?
  – What does it show us?
“...painting is designed as a mediator between us and the world around it and it is not necessarily an aesthetic operation, but a way of acquiring power and giving concrete form to our fears, hopes, and wishes.” -- Picasso
The following images have been borrowed from various public domain internet sites that focus on the art of the Holocaust as well as several publications. These images will be used to provide background and discussion points for the program session. These sites will be listed in the last several slides.
Many of these artists started at Terezin but were subsequently deported to Auschwitz.

Most well-known artists were from the situation known as the “Painter’s Incident of Theresienstadt”

The artists incident:

Otto Ungar
Karel Fleishmann
Bedrich Fritta
Leo Haas
Many other artists are represented here as well.

..and of course, the children.
Acceptable Art

Anti-Semitic cartoon by Seppla (Josef Plank)

Circa 1938
Adolf Hitler

*Ruins of a Cloister in Messines*

1914

Oil on canvas
Adolf Hitler

*The Courtyard of the Old Residency in Munich*

1914

Oil on canvas
Adolf Hitler

_Shelter in Fournes_

1914

Oil on canvas
Art in the camps and ghettos…

Degenerative Art
Many times the artists were called to create pieces to be posted around the camp to promote sanitation and health, like these two; a joke, as the camp itself was extremely unhealthy…

Caution! Mumps is Contagious!

One Louse Means Death
Other times, the art was commissioned merely to inform…

Such as this chart from Dachau meant to illustrate the meaning of the various color triangles and the proper presentation of these designations
Art as Evidence and Resistance
Many of these images are either in the Terezin Ghetto Museum, the Auschwitz Museum or are in private collections

(By no means is this an exhaustive collection—there are many more art pieces that have been discovered...)
Waldemar Nowakowski

Confession, 1940-1944

Watercolor on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Waldemar Nowakowski

Dinner

1940-1944

Watercolor on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Waldemar Nowakowski

_Unsuccessful Escape of a Czech_

1940-1944

Watercolor on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Waldemar Nowakowski

Sport

1940-1944

Watercolor on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
The caption reads: The newcomers to the camp were placed in so-called quarantine, actually locked up for four weeks in a stifling block, ten persons to a bunk two meters long.
Zofia Rozenstrauch

Death Camp Auschwitz, leaf 06, Second Helping of Soup

Ca. 1945

Ink on paper

Caption Reads: “You didn’t get enough soup? This evening you will get more”
Otto Ungar

Polish children escorted into Theresienstadt

1943

Gouache on Paper

Theresienstadt
Otto Ungar

The Cafe

1943

Gouache on Paper

Theresienstadt
Otto Ungar

Ghetto Walls

1942-44

Watercolor on Paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Otto Ungar

*Terezin in Winter*

1942-44

Watercolor on Paper

*Auschwitz-Birkenau*
Bedrich Fritta

*Barrack’s Entrance*

1942-44

Charcoal, wash and ink on paper

*Auschwitz-Birkenau*
Bedrick Fritta

Performance in the Ghetto—
Theresienstadt
Ca. 1944
Wash and ink on paper
Theresienstadt(?)
Karel Fleishmann

*In the Showers*
1943

wash and ink on paper

Theresienstadt
Karel Fleishmann

Living Quarters in the Ghetto
1942

Watercolor and ink on paper

Theresienstadt
Leo Haas

Ghetto Transportation

Wash and ink on paper

1942-44

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Leo Haas

Washing the Corpses
Wash and ink on paper
1944 (?)
Auschwitz-Birkenau
Leo Haas

*The Safe Journey*

Wash and ink on paper

1944 (?)

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Aldo Carpi

*Jews in the Hospital*

Ink on paper
1945

*Auschwitz-Birkenau*
Mieczyslaw Koscielniak

*Friends*
1944

etching

*Auschwitz-Birkenau*
Mieczysław Koscielniak

*A Friendly Favor*
1943

Crayon on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Mieczyslaw Koscielniak

Muselman
1944

Pen and ink on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Mieczyslaw Koscielniak

Roll Call at Auschwitz
1944

Ink on paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Bozo Pengov

*Report Leader Hoffman tramples a prisoner*

1945

Pencil on paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau (?)
Felix Nussbaum

Prisoner
1940

Oil on canvas

Brussels
Felix Nussbaum

_Fear (Self-portrait with his niece Marianne)_

1941

Oil on canvas

Brussels
Felix Nussbaum

Self-portrait with Jewish identity card
1943

Oil on canvas

Brussels
Felix Nussbaum *The Damned* 1943/44
Oil on Canvas  Brussels
Felix Nussbaum  *Death Triumphant (Dance of the Skeletons)* 1944
Oil on Canvas  Brussels
Humor (?)
Peter Edel

*Cabaret Recitation*

1944

Pencil on cardboard

Auschwitz
Jacques Ochs

The SS Guard ‘Ferdekopf’

1944

Mechelen Camp

Pencil on Paper
(An unflattering caricature that would have resulted in dangerous repercussions)
Jacques Ochs

The SS Guard ‘Ferdekopf’

1944

Mechelen Camp

Pencil on Paper
Anonymous

*Birthday Card, from the Gardening Kommando*

1944
ink and watercolor on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau

23.9.1944. Auschwitz.
Pavel Fantl

*A Transport of Rich Jews*

1942

ink and watercolor on paper

Theresienstadt

Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, Art Museum, Jerusalem
Hans Quech

*Caricature of Herman Tausig*

1941

ink on paper

Dachau
Some time after he drew this cartoon, depicting the wasting away of a ghetto resident, Pavel was sent to Auschwitz where he was subsequently killed.
Tadeusz Mysczkowski

Birthday Card
1944

ink and watercolor on paper

Theresienstadt

Inscription: “The greatest pleasure in the world is riding a horse”
Portraiture:
Keeping Them Alive
Franciszek Jazwiecki

Portait of Langendam

pencil and crayon

on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Franciszek Jazwiecki

Portrait of Putylin

pencil and crayon
on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Franciszek Jazwiecki

*Portrait of an Unknown Prisoner, 1942-43*

pencil and crayon on cardboard

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Michel Fink

*Portrait of a woman*

1943

Watercolor on paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Wincenty Gawron

*Portrait of a Woman*

1941-42
crayon on paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Gela Seksztajn

*Self-Portrait*

Charcoal on paper

This self-portrait was completed in the Warsaw Ghetto. The year when this piece was completed was unknown. However, Gela was deported to Treblinka and was killed in 1942 at the age of 35.
Max van Dam

A Jewish Woman In Hiding

Year-Unknown

Charcoal on paper

Blaricum, Holland

(Max died in 1943 --image completed while in hiding)
Dinah Gottliebova

*Portrait of a gypsy*

1944

Watercolor on paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Wincenty Gawron

Musing About Freedom

1942

Pencil on Paper

Auschwitz-Birkenau
Aizik-Adolphe Féder

*Boy with a Yellow Star Holding a Tin Can*,

1942-43

charcoal and pastel on gray cardboard

Art Collection - Beit Lohamei
Haghetaot (Ghetto Fighters' House Museum), Israel
Felix Nussbaum

*Portrait of Felka Platek*

c. 1940
charcoal, red chalk and india ink
Brussels

* Felka Platek was Nussbaum’s wife and a fine artist in her own right
Yehuda Bacon

Self Portrait

1945

watercolor on paper

Auschwitz
Art of the Children
Friedl Dicker-Brandeis (1898-1944)
• If I may bring everything full circle, Edith Kramer, one of the pioneers of the field, was a student of Dicker-Brandeis
The following illustrations were all done by children; some were students of Brandeis—others were not…
"The special care children received in the Theresienstadt ghetto included drawing classes. In spite of the shortage of basic supplies, the teachers improvised in order to keep the children busy."—excerpt from the Wiesenthal Online Multimedia Learning Center
Ema Taubová

*Untitled*
1943
(Born in 1930-died 1943)

Theresienstadt
Charlotte Buresova

*Child Prisoner at a Window*
1942-1944

Monotype—ink

Theresienstadt

(survived until 1983)
Kurt Korálek

*Untitled*

1941

Crayon on paper

Theresienstadt

Killed in 1944
Artist: Unknown

*A Child’s Impression of the Deportation of Jews*

Year: Unknown
Richard Nussbaum
14 years old

Witness to camps and mass killings while in France

Year--unknown
Alfred Weisskopf
10 years old

*Untitled*

1942

Completed in the Theresienstadt

(Later Alfred was deported to Auschwitz, where he died in 1944)
František Petr Jellinek

Untitled

1941

Theresienstadt

(Petr was 10 years old when he did this drawing; died 3 years later in Auschwitz)
Josef Novak
*Untitled*
Year--unknown
Age--unknown
Theresienstadt
Sonja Waldsteinová

*Untitled*

Year-unknown

Age-unknown

Theresienstadt

(Sonja was 17 years old when she died in 1943)
Helga Weissová (Hošková)
*Untitled*
(Dr. looking for lice on a woman)

1941

Helga was 12 years old when she drew this image

From her series “Draw What You See…”
Helga Weissová (Hošková)

Untitled

1941

Pen and ink drawing w/ watercolors

From her series “Draw What You See…”
Helga Weissová (Hošková)

A Parcel Arrived

1943

Pen and ink drawing w/ watercolors

From her series “Draw What You See...”
Helga Weissová (Hošková)

*In the Barracks at Auschwitz*

1945/6
Pen and ink drawing

From her series “Draw What You See…”
Helga Weissová (Hošková)

*Suicide in Barbed Wire*
1945/6

Pen and ink drawing

From her series “Draw What You See...”
Anonymous

Year-unknown

Age-unknown

Theresienstadt
Yehuda Bacon

The Escape—
1945

Theresienstadt

(Later Yehuda was deported to Auschwitz, where he survived, and later went on to become a well known artist)
Yehuda Bacon

*In the Soup Line at Mauthausen*

1945

Pencil on paper

Art Collection—Beit Lohamei Haghetaot, Israel
Yehuda Bacon

Memories from Auschwitz (Figure and Wire Fences)

Pencil on paper

Completed while in Czechoslovakia, 1946—after he was liberated
Yehuda Bacon

*In Memory of the Czech Transport to the Gas Chambers*

1945

charcoal on paper

Yad Veshem, Jerusalem
Sources
Various available Internet Sites featuring the Art of the Holocaust

Holocaustforgotten.com
  • http://www.holocaustforgotten.com/holocaustpictures.htm

Holocaust Education Through Art
  • http://www.connectexpress.com/~holocaustart/
Learning About the Holocaust Through Art
• http://art.holocaust-education.net/

Last Expression-Art from Auschwitz
• http://lastexpression.northwestern.edu/

A Teacher’s Guide To The Holocaust: The Art
• http://lastexpression.northwestern.edu/
Simon Wiesenthal Center—Multimedia Learning Center


Felix Nussbaum Catalogue Raisonne

http://www.felix-nussbaum.de/werkverzeichnis/archiv.php
“HOPE”