

Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/8135,IPNs-exhibition-of-sculptures-by-Samuel-Willenberg-in-Chmielnik-officially-launc.html>

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IPN's exhibition of sculptures by Samuel Willenberg in Chmielnik officially launched

This the second year that the sculptures of Samuel Willenberg have been in Poland. They have toured a number of Polish cities such as Warsaw, Lublin and Cracow. The works were also presented at the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, the Częstochowa Museum, and the District Center of Culture in Opatów.









Currently, Willenberg's works are being exhibited in Chmielnik's old synagogue. The exhibition is the result of the a collective effort taken by the "Świętokrzyski Sztetl" Museum and the Institute of National Remembrance.

"The Image of Treblinka in the Eyes of Samuel Willenberg" exhibition was inaugurated at the Education Museum Centre "Świętokrzyski Sztetl" in Chmielnik last Sunday.

The sculptures are in a symbolic place. Just before the outbreak of the Second World War, Jews comprised about 80% of the population of Chmielnik. Soon, however, their number doubled from around 6,000 to almost 12,000 due to the influx of refugees. During the German

occupation, about 11,500 of them were killed and displaced by the Germans, while only about 500 survived the Holocaust.

Patrycja Zatorska-Milewska, Deputy Head of the IPN 's Kielce Branch Office, spoke on behalf of the Institute of National Remembrance during the vernissage, presenting the artist's profile and the impact of the traumatic experiences from the Treblinka extermination camp on his later work.

"With this exhibition, we would like to remind you that among the millions of victims of the Second World War, there were as many as 6,000,000 Jews, of which 3,000,000 were Polish Jews" – said Head of the Education Museum Centre "Świętokrzyski Sztetl" in Chmielnik Agnieszka Dziarmaga during the inauguration of the exhibition "The Image of Treblinka in the Eyes of Samuel Willenberg".

A. Dziarmaga also emphasized that the opening date of the exhibition was not accidental, as 8 May this year marked the 76th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe.



Vernissage of

Willenberg's
Exhibition in
Chmielnik3



Vernissage of
Willenberg's
Exhibition in
Chmielnik2



Vernissage of
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Exhibition in
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Before visiting the exhibition, the invited guests could enjoy the performance of Ewa Lubacz – an actress of the "Kubuś" Puppet Theatre in Kielce, who read fragments of Samuel Willenberg's camp memories

standing inside of the only glass bimah in the world. She was accompanied by nostalgic music performed by Antonina Lach, a talented young violinist. Both artists also interpreted the memoirs of Mary Berg and Dawid Rubinowicz.

Then, Justyna Staszewska, Ph.D., from the Mausoleum of the Martyrdom of Polish Villages in Michniów took the floor. She gave a presentation on the "Diaries of the Children of the Holocaust: Dawid Rubinowicz was not the only one". The lecture was organized in cooperation with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, as was the temporary exhibition "Let me be myself. The Story of Anne Frank's Life".

The final act of the vernissage was the screening of "Treblinka's Last Witness", a documentary by American television station WLRN, which tells the story of Samuel Willenberg.

The exhibition will be open to the public until June 30.

Next, Willenberg's sculptures will go on to Bełżec, Sobibór and Majdanek museums as part of the cooperation between the Institute of National Remembrance and the Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport.

For more information on Samuel Willenberg's sculptures:

<https://bit.ly/3bqln9d>

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