

My Knees Were Jumping: Remembering the Kindertransports

USA, 1996, 90 minutes, color/B&W (16mm/video)

Director: Melissa Hacker

Narrated by: Joanne Woodward

Selected for the 1996 Sundance Film Festival; Certificate of Merit Award, 1996 San Francisco International Film Festival

With tremendous courage and ingenuity, a group of British Jews and Quakers conceived of a rescue mission that saved the lives of thousands of children from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland between December 1938 and August 1939. Most of the children never saw their parents again. In recording the story of her Viennese-born mother, Ruth Morley, filmmaker Melissa Hacker reveals the isolation of the rescued and the way memories and fears were transmitted to the next generation. The story of the Kindertransport is an extraordinary piece of history- untold for too long. The Jewish children who lived the trauma and terror of being uprooted and severed from secure homes tell amazing stories. Into the darkness of the Holocaust, it is important to add true tales that are life-affirming.

"A stunning account of the campaign to evacuate Jewish children to Great Britain before the outbreak of World War II. As Hacker makes painfully clear through interviews with several survivors only a few thousand children could be saved. If you have a tear left to shed, this film will wring it from you." - Joe Leydon, Houston Press

"Surviving participants vividly recall the excitement and the downside of this 'adventure'... Editing weaves together interviews, newsreel footage, old photos and other material to sketch far-reaching psychological and historical reverberations." - Dennis Harvey, Variety Selected for the 1996 Sundance Film Festival; Certificate of Merit Award, 1996 San Francisco International Film Festival

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The Port of Last Resort: Zuflucht in Shanghai

Austria/USA 1998, 79 minutes, 16mm (color) and video

Directors: Joan Grossman and Paul Rosdy

Music by John Zorn

Best Documentary - Centaur Prize - Message to Man Film Festival, St

Petersburg Russia, June 1999
Best Documentary - Cinemania Film Festival, Philippines, July 1999
Best Picture - Framing the Other Documentary Film Fest, NY 1999

"The Port of Last Resort" presents the little-known story of nearly 20,000 European Jewish refugees who fled to Shanghai in the years 1938-41. Shanghai was a free port that did not require papers for entry, and became the "last resort" to find a safe haven from the Nazis. This lost world is revealed through the memories of four survivors, and through a collage of rare and remarkable film footage. Extraordinary images of refugees and uncommon views of Chinese life create a compelling vantage point for understanding and experiencing this story of survival.

"...The film wisely never veers from its tight focus on intriguing stories of escape and survival" - The Wall Street Journal, Apr 9, 1999

Weapons of the Spirit

USA, 1989, 120 minutes, color (35mm, 16mm and video)
English and French with English subtitles
Director: Pierre Sauvage

Le Chambon-sur-Lignon was a tiny Protestant farming village in the mountains of south-central France. Defying the Nazis and the French government that was collaborating with the Nazis, the villagers of the area of Le Chambon provided a safe haven throughout the war for whoever knocked on their door.

Most of the villagers were proud descendants of the Huguenots, first Protestants in Catholic France. They remembered their own history of persecution, and it mattered to them. They also read the Bible, and tried to heed the admonition to love your neighbor as yourself.

"The responsibility of Christians," their pastor, André Trocmé, had reminded them the day after France surrendered to Nazi Germany, "is to resist the violence that will be brought to bear on their consciences through the weapons of the spirit."

There were many other uncelebrated individual and collective acts of goodwill and righteousness throughout the dark war years. But nowhere else did a persistent and successful moral consensus develop on a scale approaching what happened in the area of Le Chambon.

Released theatrically in 1989 in over 50 major markets, selected for over 20 film festivals, the highly acclaimed feature documentary was the recipient of many awards, including the prestigious DuPont-Columbia University Award in Broadcast Journalism.

"...I cannot get your film out of my mind. It stirred me as few experiences have in a long time."...Bill Moyers, PBS

"An inquiry into the nature of goodness and a personal odyssey. Moving and provocative Enormously uplifting" -David Ansen, Newsweek

The White Rose

Germany, 1983, 108 minutes, color (35mm/video)

Director: Michael Verhoeven

Lena Stolze (The Nasty Girl) stars in this acclaimed feature based on the true story of five German students and their professor who formed a secret society dedicated to protesting the Nazi regime. Known collectively as the "White Rose", the Munich-based group distributed anti-Hitler literature in a resistance effort which cost them their lives. Initially, the German government refused to allow the film to be shown abroad due to an epilogue which pointedly observed that the legal judgment condemning the White Rose society had never been rescinded. Ultimately, the political controversy surrounding Verhoeven's film directly caused the German government to officially invalidate the Nazi "People's Court" system that sentenced the group to death.

"An extraordinary film! Quite simply the finest German movie since 'Das Boot'." - Newhouse Newspapers

"The White Rose is a great story and an important one." - The Village Voice

Zegota - A Time to Remember

USA, 1992, 52 minutes, color (video)

Producers: Sy Rotter and Andrzej Sikora

Filmed in Poland, Israel and London, Zegota - A Time to Remember documents the clandestine efforts of diverse Polish groups—Catholics, socialists, independents and others—to save Jewish lives despite great personal risks. The London-based Polish Government-in-Exile was probably the first allied government to realize Hitler's intention to annihilate the Jews of Europe. They urged the leaders of the United States and Great Britain to aid the Jews. Frustrated by the Allied Governments' rejection of active intervention, the exiled Polish leaders encouraged an effort to save Jewish lives by utilizing elements of the Polish Underground Home Army and civilian participation. They formed an organization called "Council to Aid the Jews," code-named "Zegota." This was the only government-sponsored social welfare agency established to rescue Jews in German-occupied Europe. This documentary's positive reference to Polish assistance to Jews makes it an ideal supplement to high school and college-level Holocaust studies, and adult interfaith discussion groups.

All Jews Out (Alle Juden Raus!)

Germany, 1990, 82 minutes, color/B&W (16mm/video)

German with English subtitles

Director: Emanuel Rund

This captivating film traces the story of the German-Jewish Auerbacher family of Goppingen, Germany from 1933 through 1945. The film begins with home movies of the family in the 1930s and follows Inge Auerbacher from her home town to her deportation to Theresienstadt, where she suffered for 3 1/2 years and was among the 100 children who survived. The rare footage is accompanied by on-camera interviews of Inge and her mother on a return visit to their town, and to Theresienstadt, where an amazing amount of photographs and documents were saved. All of the movie's interviews, including those of former Party members, the former commander of the Goppingen fire brigade, and a switchboard operator from Theresienstadt are conducted by German high school students.

"Do not take this film to be just one more work about Nazis and Jews. It is in a class by itself.... because of its wealth of extraordinary, previously-unknown archival materials, its unflinching revelation of evil and callousness, and most of all, the moral fervor of the filmmaker." - Amos Vogel, founder, New York Film Festival

".a compelling documentary... No frame of film is wasted; every camera angle has been precisely planned... astounding." -

Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising According to Marek Edelman

Poland, 1994, 70 minutes, B&W (video)

Polish with English subtitles

Director: Jolanta Dylewska

In this documentary, Marek Edelman, a member of the Jewish Labor Bund and leading participant in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, gives a daily account of events from April 19 through May 10, 1942. Edelman's amazingly thorough, vivid and distinct memories are augmented by Dylewska's mesmerizing, poetic use of slow-motion and freeze-frame techniques applied to documentary material (including Nazi footage of Jews about to be deported to Treblinka.) This important personal memoir of the Holocaust was featured at the 1993 Human Rights Watch Film Festival and has been widely acclaimed for its artful, often understated portrait of heroism.

"Through leisurely timing and skillful use of archival material, Jolanta Dylewska infuses the film with an almost hypnotic power, as we follow Edelman's tale of death and survival... a testament to bravery as well as an indictment of man's inhumanity to man." - Variety

"... a tale of Jewish resistance and heroism as stirring as it is astonishing and revelatory... riveting." - NY Press

"A passionate, eloquent reminder that there can never be enough productions on the Holocaust, at least when they contain as much heart, soul, and insight as Edelman's 'Chronicle'." - New York Post
