LOOMING IN THE SHADOWS OF LODZ

LESLIE STAROBIN, TAMAR SEGEV, AND ORI SEGEV

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HODGES GALLERY

TCVA.ORG
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Curatorial Statement

Martin Luther King famously said, “War is not the answer,” during his April 1967 speech, *Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break the Silence*. Marvin Gaye followed up in song by adding, “War is not the answer because only love can conquer hate.” Coercion, intimidation, and the use of force are ineffective, immoral, and unethical, not to mention destructive to all life forms as well as devastating to the global environment. *Looming in the Shadows of Lodz* asks viewers to understand the impacts of war on all beings, whether in Ukraine, Russian, Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan, Myanmar, or anywhere else that the Geneva Academy is currently monitoring the more than 110 armed conflicts across the planet.

Citizens become displaced refugees, water is polluted or scarce, economies collapse, and the infrastructure that supports lives—our homes, our places of worship and work are eviscerated in a matter of seconds to say nothing of the devastating impact on our next-to human kin and the natural ecosystems that support all life. On the brink of WWIII, why are we repeating the atrocities of genocide? Why haven’t we learned anything about human decency in the thousands of years humanoids have been on this planet? Why are we destroying the earth – the only home we have? Looming asks us to remember that we can weave a better future from the warp and weft of the past.

— Mary Anne Redding, Senior Curator
Exhibition Statement

On the seventy-fifth anniversary of their relatives’ deportation from the Lodz Ghetto to Auschwitz-Birkenau, a family of artists travels to Poland to uncover their roots. Through their respective mediums—photography, painting, and filmmaking, the three image-makers respond to the experiences of the first and second generation of Polish-Jewish and Israeli Holocaust survivors in their family. Employing narrative and visual storytelling, representation, and abstraction, still and mediated imagery, these American artists aspire to preserve their family’s multi-continental migration and wartime legacy across time and space. In today’s climate of rising xenophobia, the narratives of Holocaust survivors can serve as warnings about the perils of hatred unchecked.

In challenging periods, art can serve as an educational catalyst. Looming in the Shadows of Lodz underscores how artists interpret history through a personal lens, encouraging viewers to respond in part based on their lived experiences. Inviting meaningful dialogue and reflection, the artworks speak to those familiar and unfamiliar with this chapter in world history.

— The Starobin-Segev Family
Looming in the Shadows of Lodz features the work of three Americans inspired by a roots’ trip to Poland. Employing narrative and visual storytelling through representation and abstraction, the artists present their family’s migration and wartime legacy in this multi-media exhibition. This multi-generational family project has been inspired, in part, by writings on post memory and visual culture.

“Scholarly work on the Holocaust has looked to this moment when survivors and other contemporary witnesses are leaving our midst, with great trepidation,” writes Dr. Marianne Hirsch in The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust. “How will the story survive without their acts of witness? The second generation has acted as a gatekeeper, but we now have to realize that we are ourselves handing the story on to the third and making it available for others to connect their own very different histories.
Photographer Leslie Starobin captures familial habitats and sites of Nazi genocide as they appear in Poland today. She frames her pictures with stories she collected over decades from relatives who experienced these places firsthand.

Leslie Starobin
ARTIST STATEMENT
Artist Tamar Segev repeatedly paints the entryway to her grandmother’s apartment in the Lodz ghetto. Echoing the sentiments of third-generation survivors, she says, “We return to the actual and approximate sites of our grandparents’ pasts in an endeavor to ‘capture memory’—before we lose the chance. Yet, regardless of the number of return visits, we still find ourselves lost in the ‘fragments of memories.’ For me, this return occurs in each new canvas.”
Filmmaker Ori Segev tracks his Israeli father retracing his parents’ past in Lodz. Everywhere he goes, Segev’s father takes pictures to share with his aunt in Jerusalem—the only first-generation survivor alive to caption his photographs.
Artists' Biographies

Leslie Starobin
Tamar Segev
Ori Segev
Leslie Starobin (Second Generation) is a Professor Emerita of Art at Framingham State University in Framingham, MA. Throughout her career, unraveling the threads of human memory has been central to her creative process. Her photographs, photo-narratives, and still-life montages are inspired by people and places steeped in family history, enriched by cultural traditions, and central to world history and the environment.

Starobin’s artwork is in the permanent collection of many American museums, including the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; Jewish Museum, NY, NY; Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Museum of Modern Art, NY, NY; The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life at University of California at Berkeley, CA; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC; Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, Waltham, MA; Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA; and the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA.

Starobin’s photographs and photomontages have been exhibited at numerous museums, including at the Center for Jewish History in New York city. In 2015, she had a solo exhibit entitled Dear Dearest Mother at the Danforth Art Museum in Framingham, MA. In 2012-13, she had a solo exhibit entitled Inheritance: Stories of Memory and Discovery at the Holocaust Museum Houston, Houston, TX.

Starobin received support for Looming in the Shadows of Lodz from a Combined Jewish Philanthropies Arts and Culture Community Impact Grant (Boston chapter).
Tamar Segev (Third Generation) is a visual artist from Boston, MA, working in painting, printmaking, and drawing. She holds a BA in Studio Art from Carleton College and an MFA in Painting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She also received a Graduate Certificate in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies from Illinois. Segev has exhibited her work nationally and internationally, including in Brooklyn, NY, Cambridge, MA, and Ottawa, Canada. Since completing her MFA in 2021, she has shown her work in four solo exhibitions, including one at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Her artwork is in the public collection of I Hotel and Conference Center in Champaign, IL.

From 2021-22, Segev taught Drawing I and II at Millikin University in Decatur, IL and Experimental Drawing at Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, RI. Beginning fall semester 2022, she is a Visiting Lecturer at Framingham State University in Framingham, MA.

Segev is a recipient of the 2022 Naomi Anolic Early Career Jewish Artist Award. In 2023, she attended a three-month residency at GlogauAIR in Berlin. Her current series explores the connections between familial memory, historical narratives, and Jewish history as they are embedded in specific sites and surfaces of architecture in Poland and Germany.
Ori Segev (Third Generation) is an award-winning director and cinematographer based in Columbus, OH, where he co-founded Loose Films, a boutique production company, in 2014. Recognized for his “assured debut” by the New York Times, Segev’s first feature film, POSER, premiered at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and found theatrical distribution through Oscilloscope Laboratories. With Poser, Segev was also a 2020 Gotham Fiction Feature fellow. Co-directed with Segev’s long-time creative partner Noah Dixon, Poser screened at international film festivals in Germany, Poland South Korea, and England where the movie received an award for “Best Director” at the London Film Festival. Poser was also awarded the Grand Jury prize at the Florida Film Festival and the Nashville Film Festival.

Segev also served as the cinematographer and creative producer for Character, a documentary short that premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival. Character was released in 2021 through The New Yorker and received the accolade of Vimeo Staff Pick.

Segev loves working with musicians. Recently, Loose Films collaborated with comedian and musician Kyle Gordon on the viral sensation, Planet of the Bass. In 2017, Segev directed and filmed Down & Dirty, an indie documentary that follows busking culture in New Orleans. Segev’s strong eye for visual storytelling began with his childhood passion for film photography, which he still pursues. In 2014, Segev received a B.A. in Cinema from Denison University in Granville, OH.
Exhibition Goals

- The exhibition invites visitors to think critically and compassionately about our individual and collective roles in society as we work to prevent genocide in all countries and promote human dignity for all people.

- The exhibition shares the indelible generational impacts war can leave on all beings—according to the Geneva Academy, there are 110 armed conflicts taking place across the globe. Please consider if any of them are necessary.

- Dorka Berger, a Holocaust survivor and the leading inspiration for the Looming exhibit said “These things that happened, it is forbidden that the world will forget. So, it will never happen again. If we are not going to talk about the Shoah, according to the situation in the world today, it can return, heaven forbid.” One of the most important goals of this exhibition is to remind visitors that we can weave a better future from the warp and weft of the past.
Invitation
to Create

Looming in the Shadows of Lodz features the work of three Americans inspired by a family trip to Poland to research their family history. Employing narrative and visual storytelling through representation and abstraction, the artists present their family’s migration and wartime legacy in this multi-media exhibition.

In challenging times, art can serve as an educational catalyst. Looming in the Shadows of Lodz illustrated how artists interpret history through a personal lens. Have there been incidents in your family history that you would like to explore by creating a visual narrative? Think about the stories your family tells that make you who you are. Create an artwork that shares this memory.
Film screening
Ori Segev

*Looming in the Shadows of Lodz*
&
*Marching All Night*

TCVA Lecture Hall
5 PM

Gallery Walk through with Artists
Leslie Starobin and Tamar Segev

*Looming in the Shadows of Lodz*

Hodges Gallery
6:30 PM (following the film screening)
Selected works in the exhibition
May 1, 1940 began four horrible years in the ghetto. We had one room on the third floor. There was no running water. No toilets, only in the yard. There were no trees. No greenery.... 80 years.

Dorka

Leslie Starobin
A Tree Grows in Baluty, 2021, Hahnemühle Museum Etching Paper
Ori Segev

Film Stills from Looming in the Shadows of Lodz, 2024
Tamar Segev
Limanowskiego 48, Lodz, Poland, June 2, 2019, Number 2, 2020,
Charcoal, graphite, pastel, oil, thread, and canvas
Tamar Segev  
*Limanowskiego 48, Lodz, Poland, June 2, 2019, Number 5, 2021,*  
Oil, graphite, pastel, thread, and canvas
Resources

Leslie Starobin / Website

Leslie Starobin Instagram / @lesliestarobin

Jewish Boston / Local Artist Leslie Starobin
Explores Jewish Exile and Immigration

Tamar Segev / Website

Tamar Segev Instagram / @tssegev

Ori Segev / Website

Loose Films

Ori Segev Instagram / @shootinloose

App State / Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies

App State / 22nd Annual Martin and Doris Rosen Symposium

United States Institute of Peace

Council on Foreign Relations / Center for Preventative Action

Council on Foreign Relations

Council on Foreign Relations / Global Conflict Tracker

United Nations / Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet
Resources

United Nations / Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet

ACLU / American Civil Liberties Union

United Nations / Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect

International Crisis Group / Preventing War. Shaping Peace.

Save the Children

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

World Citizen Government / How do we stop war?

American Historical Association

allmep / Alliance for Middle East Peace

Jewish Voice for Peace: URGENT: Demand a ceasefire now

ICAN / 2017 Nobel Peace Prize

Institute for Economics & Peace

NTI / Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
Appalachian State University
Campus Resources

UNC Policy 1300.8

Appalachian’s Facility Use Policy

Academic Affairs

Office of Access and Equity: Equal Opportunity

Board of Trustees Resolution on the Affirmation of Freedom of Speech at Appalachian State University

Office of the Dean of Students

Office of Diversity

Intercultural Student Affairs

University Ombuds Office

App State Police Department
Free Speech Responsible Officers

Free speech and expression at App State

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Freedom of Speech Resolution
This Freedom of Speech Resolution was adopted and approved by the Board of Trustees on June 23, 2023.

The views expressed by the artists are not the views held by the Turchin Center or Appalachian State University.

The Board of Trustees at Appalachian State University is committed to institutional neutrality and academic freedom, and to freedom of expression as indicated in the University’s Free Speech and Expression statement.
The Turchin Center for the Visual Arts at Appalachian State University engages visitors from the university, community, nation and beyond in creating unique experiences through dynamic and accessible exhibition, education, outreach and collection programs. These programs inspire and support a lifelong engagement with the visual arts and create opportunities for participants to learn more about themselves and the world around them.

SHARE YOUR WORK WITH US AT #TCVAATHOME!