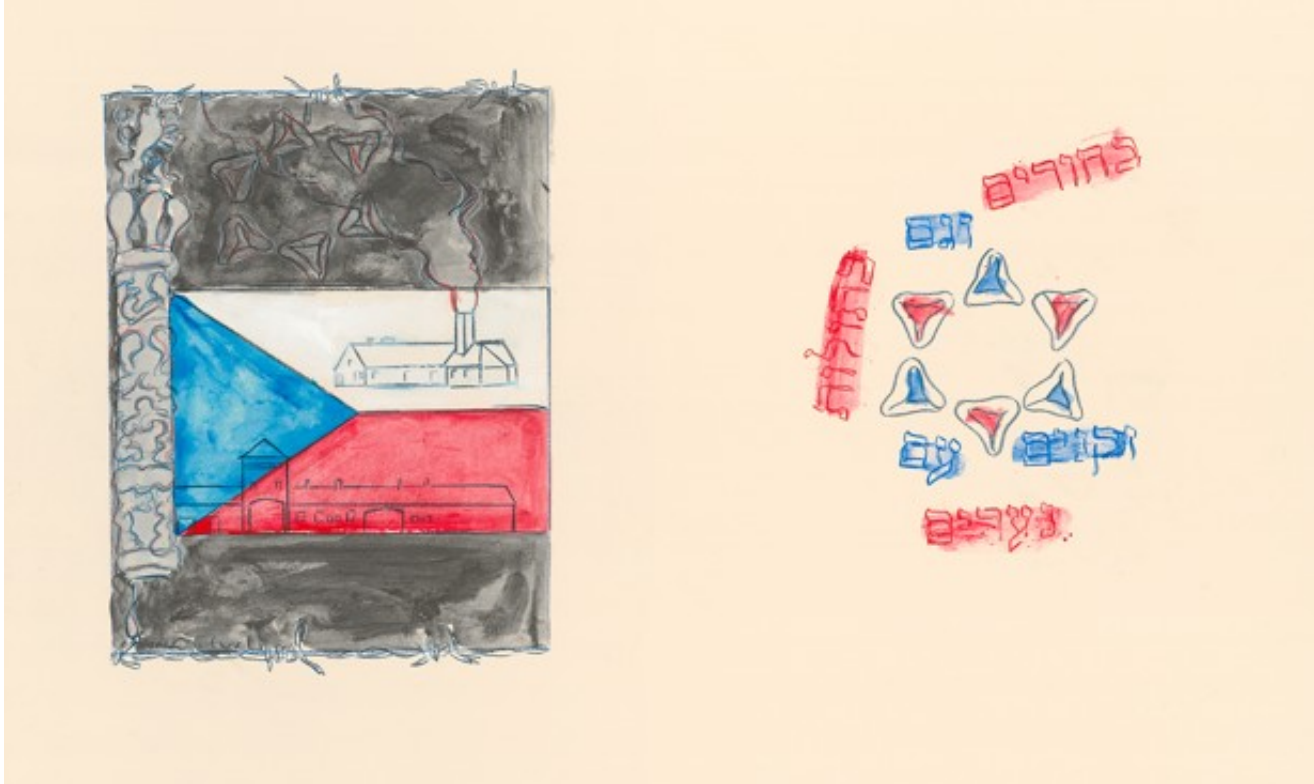


Illustrating a History of Inhumanity

A new collection of abstract ink prints depicts shameful incidents of European anti-Semitism that laid the groundwork for the Holocaust.



Mark Podwal

Last year, the Ghetto Museum at the Terezin Memorial, located on the site of a former Nazi concentration camp in the Czech Republic, mounted an exhibition tracing Europe's long history of anti-Semitism. [“All This Has Come Upon Us ...”](#) took viewers through incidents of prejudice that laid the groundwork for the Holocaust in 42 paintings, from Egyptian to modern times. With the recent upswing of anti-Semitic demonstrations throughout Eastern and Western Europe, the images resonate today and are now being reproduced in a [limited edition archival print portfolio](#).

The artist is Dr. Mark Podwal, a respected dermatologist by day who's also spent the past 40 years creating illustrations for magazines and newspapers, children's books, and the New York's Metropolitan Opera, among others. Jewish themes are his specialty, evidenced in the books [King Solomon and His Magic Ring](#), which was produced in collaboration with novelist and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, and [Fallen Angels](#), illustrated alongside the words of Jewish literary critic Harold Bloom.

PAMÁTNÍK
TEREZÍN
MEMORIAL

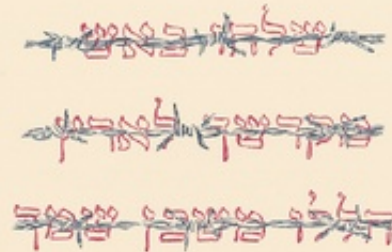
*To všechno nás postihlo...
All this has come upon us...*



כל זאת באתנו ולא שכחנוך ולא שקרנו בבריתך

MARK PODWAL

výstava
exhibition



MUZEUM GHETTA
TEREZÍN
GHETTO MUSEUM
10.04. - 10.07.2014

The Terezin Museum

Podwal's medical practice keeps him busy, yet these days he visits the Czech Republic around eight to ten times a year for his artistic endeavors. In 2009 his collaboration with Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker Allan Miller resulted in [House of Life: The Old Jewish Cemetery in Prague](#), a documentary broadcast on PBS that told the story of a Czech cemetery estimated to be the resting place of nearly 100,000 Jewish people. This year his work there has resulted in a new film directed by Jaroslav Hovorka. *All this has come upon us: Mark Podwal's Art for Terezin* will be broadcast on Czech TV on January 26, in time for International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The format of Podwal's archival pigment ink prints (known to design types as [giclée](#) prints) is designed to resemble the pages of a book in keeping with the longtime moniker of Jewish people, the "People of the Book." As the introductory spread states, Jews would read verses from the *Book of Psalms* both in times of great joy and of great suffering. All the tragedies and injustices that follow are pictured in a chronological sequence:

The pharaoh enslaves the Israelites in Egypt. “The Hebrew word for pharaoh can be broken up to *peh rah*, which means evil speech,” Podwal explains. (Mark Podwal)

The Judensau (Jew’s pig), a derogatory medieval depiction of Jews in obscene contact with a large sow. (Mark Podwal)

Czar Nicholas I's harshest ruling was the Cantonist law, which required Jewish boys from age 12 to serve in the Russian army 25 years with the goal that they would convert to the Russian Orthodox church. (Mark Podwal)

Wearing a yellow badge (originally a circle representing Jewish money lending), which was compulsory for Jews in some parts of Europe in the Middle Ages, was revived by the Nazi regime. (Mark Podwal)

The return of the Jewish people to their homeland from worldwide diaspora. (Mark Podwal)

Contrasted with the gruesome graphic scenes in such classic artistic attacks on inhumanity as Goya’s [*The Disasters of War*](#) and [*Otto Dix’s Der Krieg*](#), Podwal’s art is deceptively abstract and playfully colorful, yet it’s just as powerful in depicting the history of injustice. Podwal’s symbolically subtle, though accessible, visual language of oppression—the hints of subjugation and explanatory narrative, like his use of Psalm 35:16, “With malicious mocking they gnash their teeth at me”—land a one-two punch that cannot be experienced without feeling profoundly moved.

In the past nine months, about 40 of the 60 numbered portfolios have been acquired by major institutions including the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Library of Congress, the Institute for Advanced Study, the National Library of Israel, the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Princeton Universities, amongst others. The Jewish Museum in Miami will exhibit the prints next fall, while the Czech Embassy in London will exhibit the prints beginning January 29.

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