

Integrating Art and History: A Model for the Middle School Classroom

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One of the major challenges facing middle level social studies teachers is to help young adolescents understand the relevance of the past in the present day. As middle level learners are primed to develop their cognitive abilities and to view people and events from the past from multiple perspectives, it is imperative that teachers go beyond the traditional methods of teaching history and assist students to personalize the impersonal. This article presents a model that incorporates the National Core Arts Standards to the teaching of history through the use of sculpture created by a child survivor of the Holocaust. The integration of the visual arts and history presents an opportunity for the middle level learner to examine the lives of their counterparts from past eras, as they begin to build their own relationship with the historical past.

Today's middle school students are growing up in a world of tremendous uncertainty--politically, socially, economically and environmentally. They are also experiencing their own personal uncertainties as they struggle with the daily changes that adolescence brings. Making the subject of history relevant to students who are so fully immersed in the present is one of the many challenges middle level teachers encounter.

Although middle level students may be caught up in their immediate world, they possess both the cognitive abilities and the desire to expand their horizons. They are ready to contemplate the ways in which they think and process information, and they are primed to learn to view people and events from multiple perspectives. Traditional methods of teaching history, which are teacher-and textbook-centered, rarely provide the kind of classroom experience students need to find their own personal avenues of learning. Drawing from *The 16 Characteristics of Successful Schools*, the student-centered activities I offer in this article exemplify the nature of active and purposeful learning, coupled with a curriculum that is "challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant" (Association for Middle Level Education [AMLE], 2010a, para. 8). Thus, it is imperative that middle level teacher candidates develop and enhance those skills necessary to present learning activities that are not only developmentally appropriate but that integrate a variety of subject matter (AMLE, 2012).

One way to go beyond the traditional teaching of historical facts, to personalize the impersonal, and to help students connect their own lives with the lives of those who came before, is through the shared experience of memory. As Holocaust survivor, author, and scholar Wiesel wrote, "Without memory, there is no culture. Without memory, there would be no civilization, no society, no future." (Wiesel, 2008, para. 7). By examining the lives

of their counterparts from different eras, young adolescents can understand memory as a guidepost by which people navigated through their own uncertain times.

The history learning activities offered in this article focus on the story of Agnes Majtinszky Pal, a child survivor who later in life shared her memories through her sculpture. Through the stories of people like Agnes, middle level students can begin to build a relationship with the historical past; in doing so, they can learn to take more control over their own learning. When given opportunities to make their own personal connections to the past, these students can also begin to understand the relevance of historical events in our present world. In the long term, my hope is that they will also come to recognize themselves as players rather than observers in the making of history.

As a former middle level social studies teacher and current professor of middle level education, I believe it is essential to create and deliver pedagogically sound Holocaust curriculum that incorporates the stories and memories of children and adolescents like Agnes who experienced the Holocaust. In this way, the students are better able to comprehend that which is often described as incomprehensible. How could people justify treating fellow human beings in this way? Why did the rest of the world allow these events to continue over the course of a decade? In what ways did children my age deal with these events and how did it impact them throughout their lives? In what ways do they express these memories, and how do these expressions invite us in so that we may learn from their experiences?

One of my goals in my outreach work and in this article is to help middle school teachers develop history curriculum designed for middle level learners, one that addresses their individual learning styles while encouraging them to grow cognitively. One

means of achieving this goal, presented in this article, is through an interdisciplinary model connecting the visual arts with the study of history.

The Argument for Arts Integration

In *Art as Experience*, Dewey (1934) made the case for the integration of the arts in a child-centered curriculum, suggesting the then progressive notion that the aesthetic experience should play a large role in the education of the whole child. Influenced by the spirit of educational innovation of the 1960's, Broudy (1972) advocated for greater attention to aesthetic education as a means to develop the imagination. In response to the threat of diminishing funding for the arts, the argument for art integration in the nation's classrooms reemerged in the 1990's, resulting in the 1994 National Standards for Arts Education (Bresler, 1995). More recently, the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards developed the voluntary National Core Arts Standards (2014). While not associated with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), these standards follow the basic structure of the CCSS in an effort to make them more useful and applicable across the curriculum and all grade levels.

Research findings suggest that participating in the arts strengthens student achievement in other academic areas (Sloan, 2009). Statistics point to the motivating power of arts integration programs, also known as arts infusion, resulting in greater academic achievement from children at all points on the economic spectrum, elevated levels of community service, and even improved school attendance (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012). Similarly, Stevenson & Deasy (2005) suggest that the infusion of the arts can empower disenfranchised children.

At the middle school level AMLE suggests that arts-infused learning is integrative and exploratory, and assists the students to better relate the curriculum to their own experiences while reinforcing essential middle level constructs including creativity, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and construction of knowledge (AMLE, 2010b). A number of researchers have argued that experiential learning in the form of arts-infused experiences at the middle level fosters resiliency, enhances reasoning and engagement, and provides students with culturally relevant, real-world connections (Bernard, 2004; Diket, 2003; Gay, 2000). As an example, local middle school students who had recently completed a Holocaust unit visited an exhibition of Agnes Majtinszky Pal's work. The students interacted with the artist and the actual sculptures; they were mesmerized by the beauty of her work and the fact that she was present to share her experiences and answer their questions. This was history in real time, and exploratory and experiential curriculum at its best.

When teaching the Holocaust to my eighth grade students, I often used artwork created by survivors to discuss how memories can be represented in a variety of forms. In my lesson, art serves as one point of entry to a time past, and, at the same time, an opportunity to better understand the nature of artistic expression.

In this way, the work can challenge the middle level learner to make the connections between the arts and the discipline of history. Likewise, it provides the teacher of middle level learners an opportunity to create meaningful learning activities that integrate the arts with the core content areas.

Meet the Artist

The context for this series of activities is a unit addressing the issues and events of the Holocaust, 1939-1945. There are numerous guidelines for creating pedagogically sound Holocaust units; in particular, curriculum experts suggest inclusion of survivor stories and the opportunity to reflect upon and present new knowledge gained during the unit. These activities fit well near the end of the unit, as students read and possibly hear the words of actual survivors. While the historical facts are important, it is often the stories and memories of those actually involved that have the greatest impact on students.

The main historical player in this series of lessons is child survivor and artist, Agnes Majtinszky Pal; the primary sources are her sculptures. Her work is the product of her memories. I met Agnes in early 2000, and she spoke to my students that next summer and shared her work and memories:

At some point we discovered the thistles that the wind blew in through the barbed fence – they were covered with their tiny hooks, making them stick to everything, our clothes, our hair, and even to each other. Disregarding their sharp and ugly stickers, we gathered these tiny gifts of the wind. We made sculptures from thistles by sticking them together and sticking them to ourselves. Weeks had passed...I missed everything we left that spelled home. This is where my eighth birthday found me...it was a dark period for us (Majtinszky Pal, 2000, pp. 1).

Teachers and students will have access to Agnes's complete survivor testimony, (See Appendix A) as well as a selection of photographs of her sculptures along with the title, dimensions, date of completion, and description by the artist, in her own words (See Appendix B). For the purposes of this article the following represents a brief overview of her survivor testimony:

Agnes Majtinszky grew up in Makó Hungary in the early 1940's with her father, mother, and brother. As a young child, Agnes recalls the life they had in Makó, growing up Jewish but assimilated into the daily activities of the community. What she describes as an enchanted life was soon to become a distant memory. In 1942 the Hungarian government, on direct orders from Germany, began issuing decrees that limited employment preventing Jews from serving in prominent positions. One year later, Agnes's father lost his job and the family had to depend upon her mothers' cottage industry of raising and selling geese. She recalls the day the Nazis marched into Hungary, forcing Jews to sew yellow stars on their clothing, confiscating their homes, and by May of that year, moving all Jews of Makó into a temporary ghetto. The next move would be to a series of slave labor camps.

Agnes survived the labor camps, largely due to the actions of her mother. She lived through the Hungarian revolution of 1956, and by the close of 1957, Agnes had fled to Austria and secured passage to the United States. Meeting her brother in Brooklyn, she soon moved to Michigan where she completed her degree in art and met her husband-to-be, Alex Pal. They moved to Edwardsville, Illinois where they raised their son, George. In 2004, Agnes earned her Masters of Arts degree from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where she perfected her technique as a metalsmith. As a child survivor of the Holocaust, Agnes's memories are the primary inspiration for her artwork. As suggested in the quote above, her recollection of playing with thistles figures prominently in both her imagination and her art. Her sculptures, whether rusted iron, copper, or silver, are a testament to the human spirit and speak to a point in history that is slowly fading from our collective memory (Majtinsky Pal, 2005).

Let's Start with the Arts

This model of integrating the arts and history is based, in part, on the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts work with teachers and visual literacy, which is defined as "the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image. Visual literacy is based on the idea that pictures can be read and meaning communicated through a process of reading" (Hattwig, 2010, para. 1). It is therefore essential that students enhance their familiarity with the basic elements or building blocks of art, including color, line, form, shape, texture, and focal point (National Gallery of Art, 2016). Students can learn these elements of the artist's toolbox through teacher demonstration as well as more participatory activities that require them to demonstrate their understanding of the terms.

Since the primary sources involved here are sculptures, teachers can ask students to apply the elements of art as they examine several examples of sculpture, perhaps even those present in the school or classroom. As students observe the sculpture, guide them to review and apply the elements of art, including color, line, shape, form, texture, and focal point (KCPA, 2014). This can be accomplished in a whole class discussion or through pairs, by using photographs/online images of sculpture and/or actual small-scale sculptures. Have students list and describe the elements on a graphic organizer or similar note-taking document (KCPA, 2014).

One possible extension of this activity would involve students bringing examples of sculpture from home, or an object they created themselves at home or in school art classes. Students could be asked to compare different sculptures created by different people, and/or compare and contrast two different sculptures by the same artist (KCPA, 2014). These activities work best when they are student-centered, such a small group or pair-share. In this way, students practice using the terminology (color, line, shape, form, texture) and also hear the perspective of others, perhaps

expressed in a different way. Questions and ideas for large or small group discussion might include (KCPA, 2014):

- Discuss how we see and use sculpture in our daily lives.
- In what ways might a sculpture be decorative and useful at the same time? Students can identify sculptures they might be familiar with from their homes or communities and explain why they think these works are important.
- What purpose do these sculptures serve? For what purpose might it have been created?
- What can people gain through the viewing and use of sculpture? In what ways does it play a role in our daily lives?

One of the overarching goals is for students to begin to think of sculpture as a form of biography. In other words, we can read a sculpture as we might a story in order to better understand the artist and some of his/her life experiences (KCPA, 2014). As students become familiar with the skills of observation and interpretation (comparing, contrasting, inferencing), they activate and build background knowledge about the artist and his/her life. They learn the skill of inquiry by applying their knowledge to create thoughtful questions for further study, and also assessment, by relating the artist's choices to the event, person, place, etc. that is being represented (KCPA, 2014). In this way the sculpture becomes a message from the artist, inviting viewers to reflect on the meaning of the work.

A second goal is for students to realize that sculpture is often symbolic of some aspect of the artist's life, although this symbolic meaning may not be the same for the artist and the viewer. As they examine a particular sculpture in class, encourage the students to comment on and discuss the symbolic information present. For example, consider having them answer the question, "what meaning was the artist suggesting?". In addition, promote discussion about biographical or artistic information of a particular sculpture. For example, consider having the students answer questions such as, "what does the sculpture tell us about the artist's life and times?" and "what materials or techniques does the artist use to communicate meaning?" (KCPA, 2014).

Integrating Art with History:

Arts Standards and the C3 Framework

In designing an interdisciplinary unit, teachers face the challenge of addressing multiple sets of standards. The arts-infused unit presented here draws on three specific anchor standards from the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS, 2014):

- Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding (pp. 3-4)

Next, the *C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards* (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013) helps to make the connec-

tion between art and the study of history. The organizing structure for the framework is known as the Inquiry Arc, around which the four dimensions of informed inquiry take place. These dimensions include:

- Dimension 1: Development questions and planning inquiries.
- Dimension 2: Applying disciplinary tools and concepts.
- Dimension 3: Evaluation sources and using evidence.
- Dimension 4: Communicating conclusions and taking informed action (p.17)

The focus here is primarily on Dimensions 2 and 3, within the discipline of history. Table 1 presents the C3 benchmarks in Dimension 2 (perspectives and historical sources/evidence) and Dimension 3 (gathering/evaluating sources and developing claims/using evidence) for grades 6 through 8 (NCSS, 2013).

Beginning with anchor standard 7 from the NCAS (2014), for example, teachers can guide students to apply the arts standard of ‘perceiving and analyzing artistic work’ by examining and making observations of a work of art, either physically or through projected images. They can then provide the forum for class discussion and/or small group inquiry, during which time students interpret meaning from the work (NCAS, 2014) while attempting to uncover the intent of the artist. Whole class discussion or pair-

share inquiry will help students make the connections to the historical era being studied (NCAS, 2014).

At the same time as they are addressing the arts standards, students also will have connected these skills to the C3 Framework of “applying disciplinary tools and concepts” such as analyzing events that impacted people’s perspectives (NCAS, 2013, p. 47) and “developing claims and using evidence,” such as gathering information about these events (NCAS, 2013, p. 54). While teacher-led, this student-centered activity is true to middle level best practices, in which the learner practices content-based skills while creating meaning out of the historical events that previously had little or no significance to them. Teachers can draw students into the process by asking them to share a family photograph from their past, a relic that has become part of the family story, or a personal item belonging to a grandparent; these varied forms of representation have the power to promote visual and abstract thinking so often required for the middle level learner to make sense of long distant times (Albert, 1995).

As students consider the perspective or stories of those who lived in the past, they are actually working toward understanding the distinction between historical thinking-- being familiar with the changes that have occurred over time or within a particular

Table 1

National Council for the Social Studies C3 Framework Dimensions 2 and 3

<p>C3 Framework: Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts – HISTORY</p> <p>Perspectives D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras. D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time. D2.His.6.6-8. Analyze how people’s perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.</p> <p>Historical Sources & Analysis D2.His.9.6-8. Classify the kinds of historical sources used in a secondary interpretation. D2.His.10.6-8. Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources. D2.His.11.6-8. Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified. D2.His.12.6-8. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources. D2.His.13.6-8. Evaluate the relevancy and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.</p>
<p>C3 Framework: Dimension 3: Developing Claims and Using Evidence - HISTORY</p> <p>Gathering & Evaluating Sources D3.1.6-8. Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection. D3.2.6-8. Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.</p> <p>Developing Claims and Using Evidence D3.3.6-8. Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations. D3.4.6-8. Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.</p>

Source. National Council for the Social Studies (2013)

time period--and historical inquiry—which is using historical evidence or documents to explain how and why these events occurred. Understanding this distinction—between the history they read on the page, and the history they recreate by asking questions—enables the middle level learner to approach history as the ongoing construction of knowledge in which they can take part.

The Interdisciplinary Unit:

Examining History through the Art of Agnes Majtinszky

Students will first become familiar with Agnes’ life by reading her survivor testimony. In these 13 pages, Agnes depicts life before, during, and after the years of the Holocaust. Graphic organizers and other note-taking strategies can help students organize events presented in her story. Students might even create an illustrated timeline detailing major events in her life. This can be accomplished through small group or paired reading activities and posted on the room bulletin board.

Now is the time for students to interact visually with several of Agnes’s sculptures. In this stage, they will compare and contrast their observations of her sculptures. Because it is not possible for the actual sculptures to be present, teachers will rely on

digital photography to present these works to the students (see Appendix B). Table 2 provides guiding questions as students proceed to observe, interpret, infer, and inquire and can be used throughout the remainder of the activities.

Remind, or introduce to students, the cognitive skills of observation, inferencing and interpreting, and inquiring. Explain that artists make a number of choices as they create and that these choices can often tell us some things about the artist not gained from the autobiography. Using one sculpture projected on the large screen, the teacher might conduct a whole class discussion in which the teacher models the process for the students. The questions posed in the chart above will guide the discussion. When responding, ask students to support their inference by visual evidence and/or textual evidence. Students will refer back to Agnes’ story, her own statements concerning her work, and images of her work as they respond to the guiding questions.

Provide the students with another example of Agnes’s art projected on the screen. This time, students will write out their responses to the questions (based on small group or paired discussion). Graphic organizers and other note-taking instruments

Table 2

Guiding Questions: Observe/Interpret & Infer/Inquire

Observe (practice observation skills and the language of art)	Interpret & Infer (practice drawing conclusions based on observations)	Inquire (practice creating questions based on what they see that can lead to further discovery)
In terms of the elements of art, what do you see going on with this sculpture? (color, line, shape, form, texture, focal point) What do you think this sculpture is all about? What do you think the artist is trying to tell you about the historical period in question? What is the artist trying to tell you about herself as a person or an artist?	What events in Agnes’ life may have impacted her perspectives of the historical era? In what ways do you think Agnes’ perspective change over time? Why do you think the artist chose to use these specific materials and design? What do you think is important about the size, color, dimensions of the sculpture? What symbolism was the artist trying to convey?	What more would you like to know about the artist? What more would you like to know about the historical era or time period? How have other survivors who are artists depicted their experiences?

Source: Rick (2015).

should be used to encourage and bolster the discussion that will follow this step, and to help solidify student understanding of any given concept. Depending on the ability and experiential level of the students, it may prove beneficial to complete one column at a time on the chart above, (moving from left to right), followed by group sharing and comparing of responses. Have the students complete the remaining columns in a similar fashion. Students can compare and contrast responses across groups or pairs as a debriefing activity.

Now that the students have interpreted several pieces of Agnes' work, the next step is for them to read what the artist had to say about her own work. The document with thumbnail sketches and descriptions will allow students to compare their interpretations to those of Agnes. This process accentuates the skills of historical thinking and inquiry, as students examine the perspective of the artist at different times in her life and the symbolism she intended to project through various pieces of her work. At the same time it also reinforces the skills of observing and describing art forms. This process can be repeated with many of Agnes' creations. Some of the sculptures may lend themselves better for analysis and discussion, depending on the available image and depth of Agnes's descriptions of her work.

As the activities move to a close, the teacher will ask students to consider how this activity can lead them to make further inquiries. Based on the background knowledge gained through observation and interpretation, first model and then have students generate meaningful questions about Agnes' life and the historical period in which she grew up. In this "I wonder..." stage, ask students to reflect on possible issues raised by way of the activity. Some of the reflection and/or discussion prompts might include:

- The artist made the following choices because...
- The artist was trying to communicate...
- This sculpture helped me better understand...
- After reading and interacting with Agnes' story and sculptures, I now know that the artist...

To personalize the learning to a greater degree, work with students to consider and create questions they might like to ask Agnes were she to be present in the classroom, such as:

- In what ways do you still think about those events from your childhood?
- Which of your sculptures is your favorite (or has the most meaning to you) and why?
- Have you met other survivors who created sculpture or seen their work? What were your impressions?

This can be accomplished through a whole class discussion, listing the questions on the board or through a version of the gallery walk, in which students write questions on post-it notes and then place them next to an image of one of the sculptures posted on the wall. A complete list of student generated questions can then be compiled for the entire class. Based on the Kennedy Center's program (KCPA, 2014), this part of the learning experi-

ence requires students to observe carefully, draw conclusions based on their observations, and consider what else they might want to learn about this piece or the artist. A subsequent activity might require students to research and locate other sources of Holocaust art and to guide them through a similar process. In this way, students can compare the experiences of Holocaust survivors and the choices they made in representing their memories.

Discussion

I have been fortunate to know Agnes Pal as a colleague and friend, and to learn firsthand about her memories and her art. But it is becoming increasingly difficult, and will someday soon be impossible, for students to meet and talk with a Holocaust survivor. Fortunately, there are a vast number of primary sources, from autobiography and poetry to painting and sculpture that preserve the memories of Jews and other persecuted populations who lived during this horrific time in human history. Of course the model of arts integration spelled out in this article can be used with any number of historical periods and events. In my own practice, however, I have found that middle level learners respond enthusiastically to the study of the Holocaust. At this particular age, students have a knack for empathizing, especially when the subjects are children and adolescents. I have known many students over the years who never expressed much interest in the subject of history until their Holocaust unit; some of them have even gone on to design Holocaust units for their own students. Like me, they have found that survivor stories and primary sources continue to make history alive and relevant for generations to come.

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In Mako, Hungary, where as a child before the age of five, my family and I lived a comfortable life. My father was the director of a large Budapest bank. My mother, Aranka, was a housewife and she had a couple of servants who took care of the house. My brother, Steven, nicknamed Pista, attended the local high school and I was in a Montessori pre-school. We lived in a neighborhood where Christians and Jews lived harmoniously, side by side, and as a child, I was often welcomed by my neighbors.

Our rented home was surrounded by trellises of grapes, a veranda was attached to the front of the home where we ate meals on summer days. A large table with a slab of crushed stone terrazzo, set over heavy cast iron legs, was often set with a traditional Hungarian fare, such as, cabbage and noodles, *goulash* or *paprikash*. I remember my last birthday dinner there, which consisted of fried chicken, fried potatoes, eggplant, and *palacsinta*, crepes rolled up with fresh farmers' cheese and apricot jam.

In addition to the functional stove in the kitchen, every other room had a wood burning ceramic stove, which provided cozy warmth. The interior had high ceilings and gleaming parquet floors. The handmade blonde and ebony inlaid furniture was a special source of pride for Jenó, my father, who selected each piece with care through craftsmen exhibitions in Budapest. Sleeping quarters consisted of the spacious master bedroom, a "front" room with a convertible daybed for my brother. My bedroom, where I dreamed in my iron bed painted with the seven dwarfs, mesmerized by the interplay of light shadow patterns on the walls cast from sunshine emanating through holes of hand embroidered eyelet curtains. Even the basement, which was used as a root cellar, offered opportunity for play – at times when the low-lying cellar flooded, my brother and I went boating on vats that were used to hold laundry.

Across from our home was a park with a pond filled with goldfish and frogs that were fun to watch and hear. Their nightly serenade would lull me to sleep. There was also an enormous sandbox that I played in. Because the park was so close to our garden villa, when my father came home he would whistle to me signaling me to return for our midday meal. Father observed Jewish religious customs and we did not eat pork. However, after my father lost his job, because we could no longer afford to practice Jewish food customs, father permitted us to eat pork.

We were very assimilated. I felt loved and safe with my non-Jewish neighbors; my mother and I were always welcome in their homes. When I was four and battling whooping cough, I hid in my gentile neighbor's garden to escape Dr. Rottenstein's injections. I was shocked when my neighbors bribed me with candy, and then gave me up to my mother! We had a live-in maid, 25 years of age, who came from a nearby country village. She loved to play with me, and would take me shopping to the open market, stopping at the church to pray. Once I asked her, "Who is that in the picture?" "That's Maria," she replied, "She is the mother of Christ." I was a little conflicted but I accepted it.

An enchanted life soon transgressed into a vacant memory. In 1942 the Hungarian government, on direct orders from Germany, began issuing decrees that limited employment preventing Jews from serving in prominent positions. Thus in 1943, my father lost his job. On his last day of work he came home with many presents for each of us. He gave me and my brother Swiss chocolate. We were surprised we were getting Christmas early. I also got Delft dolls and other gifts. Later in the evening he confessed that he had lost his job and spent his last pay check on all these gifts. He was bawled out by my mother for spending his entire check on such frivolous items.

My father tried to find different lines of occupation. He joined my uncle in business in Budapest. They manufactured jars for my uncle's cosmetic line, but that was unsuccessful. So, when that joint venture failed, he came home. That is when his attention turned to raising chickens, of a certain Hungarian breed, "Parlagy", that was about to go extinct. The baby chicks arrived in the mail and were only a few days old, so to keep them warm and to caress the chicks, father placed them into wooden crates equipped with artificial hens he fashioned of various pieces of fabric. He constructed a chicken coop in our attic and then moved them outside later. They became his pets and he resisted selling them and would not allow us to eat them. So, this venture was also unsuccessful as a business. But he succeeded in one respect: by making the special breed of chicks available for other breeders he helped maintain the health of the breed.

To help support the family, my mother developed a cottage industry by raising geese. She fattened them by force feeding. Although this method is a well-known practice in the production of the pricey French delicacy, goose liver pate, seeing mother stuffing the geese horrified me. My brother would fill his violin case with jars of pate to be sold, and took the train to Szeged, the next town over. The violin case allowed him to smuggle the pate in and to avoid undue suspicion. Here he was able to deliver the pate to relatives who would buy it from him. And that is how my mother and my brother had a business arrangement and we had money to buy food. She also had angora rabbits and she spun angora wool. From this angora yarn she knitted sweaters and weaved cloth for sale.

Still later, in the spring of 1944, our whole world had changed. I still recall the misty Sunday afternoon when the German troops marched into my country. The news on the radio blared that the German troops entered Hungary. My parents hurried to our neighbors, Dr. Szusz Ferenc and his wife Magda, so the adults could listen to the radio together. There the friends huddled around the radio, in grim silence. They spoke German, a language I didn't understand, because they didn't want to worry me. From the tone of their voices and their facial expressions, I picked up that this was horrifying news.

At this time the Hungarian Jewish population was ordered to sew a yellow star of David on their clothes to identify them as Jews. To wear the identifying star on my clothes, I thought was a stigma and at the age of seven thought it unfair that my “gentile” friends did not have to wear a catholic symbol on their clothes. Our neighbors were the Sziranyi family. The four children were my play pals. We played endlessly; chasing each other, hunting and catching critters and the butterflies that invaded our garden. There was an offending brick fence between our houses. To create a wider path for us, for the chase, we kept shifting the bricks ultimately destroying the fence. In time, we were asked to take responsibility, but we all stood together. It never occurred to us children that there was a religious difference between us. This is to point out how prejudices can be artificially created. Children seldom think about differences among people.

After the Germans marched in to occupy Hungary, the laws about what Jews could or should not do changed every single day. As a second grader, I noted the change by practicing reading the headlines in the newspaper. We could not own gold, silver or precious metals. Each day there was a new decree of another thing we could not do. There were many curfews, making it unsafe for us on the streets. To avoid the discriminating laws, and in hopes to save their lives, several families and neighbors we knew changed their religious affiliation from Judaism to Christianity, but this did them no good and they were eventually deported.

On an otherwise bright and beautiful spring day, quickly alarming news spread. Many men, who were prominent in the community, were snatched off the street and taken away. They just disappeared, leaving the families in the dark, without further news, charge or notice from the authorities. Two uncles of my best friend, Katie, with the name of Bauer, disappeared that day without a trace along with the husband of her aunt, Zsuzsa. There was not one word about their whereabouts. It was no longer safe for men to walk the streets.

One night, when I was already asleep, I awoke to the sudden sound of breaking glass. We heard noisy banging and yelling in the, otherwise, quiet neighborhood. Across the street, voices in German were shouting, “Aufmachen” (open up), “du Juden” (Jews), and “Sweinehund” (pigs). The Ovary family lived there. They were not Jewish. A few years before, members of the family left the faith, but they were of Jewish descent. The noise was accompanied by the barking of their alarmed dog. I recognized the bark of Teddy, whose floppy soft ears I so loved to stroke and rub between my fingers. I heard a strange, loud noise, a popping sound. Only in the morning did I hear about his act of heroism. In trying to defend the house he leaped into the window causing it to break. So, although the Ovary family was able to escape on this night, the dog was not and he had been shot.

My parents and brother spied two commandant officers in SS uniforms, who were creating all the commotion. Mother, quickly, came up with a plan. She told me to go to sleep and to ignore everything no matter what might come. Shaken and with chattering teeth, I obliged. It was not long after that I heard banging on our front door.

From what I understood the plan was to hide my father. The notion that the dreaded and despised German SS would be in my house and my father was in such danger that he had to hide terrified me. I was so scared and afraid my uncontrollable shaking in bed might create an alarming noise. Soon the intruders entered the room next to mine. As quietly as I could, I tiptoed to hide behind the closed bedroom door and peek through the keyhole. I could see two or three German Officers in SS uniforms, and one more person, who I believed to be their translator, as he spoke Hungarian. He acted as the local informant. Mother spoke German with them. They demanded something in German, one of them pointing the pistol at my brother’s temple. They assumed he was my mother’s husband, to which she defended him by saying in German, “He is my son; he is only a child.”

At this point my mother acted hospitable, being a good Hungarian housewife, she offered the intruders liqueurs and asked my brother to pour. This appeared to be a good tactic, but also a potentially dangerous one. They accepted the hospitality, but after a few drinks the pistol came out of the holster. At one point I nearly squealed in horror when I saw it aimed at my brother. Again the officer demanded that my mother produce my father. Mother and Pista insisted that he was not at home. Under the current laws of occupation in 1944, one had to be home by dark and Jews could not get a permit to travel. To be away from home and be a Jew, there was no possible explanation for him not being home. In desperation, mother fabricated the following story. She denied we were Jews and said that my father was away on night watch for the air raids. My German knowledge was no longer helpful at this point. The conversation became too complex for me to follow. I was scared and on the verge of fainting.

Through the keyhole, I could see the company heading towards me, in my parent’s bedroom. Shivering under my covers, I held my breath. The dreaded SS officer went to the hanging wardrobe which my mother opened. Suddenly I went rigid thinking my father was hiding in there. I silently gave thanks when I saw that my father was not in there. Mother said something about the child being asleep, but I did not understand the rest. I felt a stranger’s cold hand groping around my feet. At this point I could smell his breadth, an unusual smell of liqueur, but then, to my relief, they left.

Much later, I heard from Pista that in the wardrobe hung my father’s regal uniform and sword. Years earlier my father had served as an officer in the Hungarian armed forces. The uniform served him well after all; it may have saved his life. Long before 1944, Jews were allowed to serve as ranked officers in the Hungarian military. My father must have been the last of the very few to do so. My smart mother used the uniform to confuse the German SS officers into thinking they were misled by the Hungarian informer and were in the wrong house. Years later, Pista told me that father was hiding on top the pig sty, where straw was stored, next to our house.

Because German was an important language to learn, like English today, my mother had Pista learn German through private language lessons. During his lessons I could overhear and pick up a few German words.

Finally, we lost the right to live in our house. By the end of May, the Jewish population was ordered to move into the ghetto, an old, crowded part of town. We were forced to move into the “servants’ quarters” of a friend, a veterinarian, who lived on the outskirts of the ghetto. We had to leave behind most of our furniture and other personal belongings. We did bring with us mattresses, blankets and carpets.

Only days after our move, my brother Pista was ordered to join the Hungarian Labor Service System, “Munkaszolgálat”, a branch of the military for Jews, assigned typically to perform the more dangerous tasks. Pista was smart enough to know what to take, but my father made sure that he packed a warm blanket to sleep under, also some food to eat. There were men shouting that it was time for the young draftees to leave. We came outside with him. He was wearing his rucksack on his back, and whatever else he could carry. All the young men were ordered to get into the wagon. We ran along with the wagon to the edge of the ghetto until we could no longer follow. It was really like the end for me to see him go. I was crying, wishing he would come back. My parents were also crying, saying, “Take care of yourself.”

Soon after my brother’s departure, my parents and I, together with the whole population of the ghetto in Mako were told that we would be transported to another town. In preparation for the move we were instructed to bring with us only the essentials: food, clothing and blankets. I gave my doll her last bath, getting ready for leaving the ghetto. Martha, my doll, had a gorgeous porcelain head, beautiful hair, and a very lovely body, but I didn’t realize that the limbs were made of paper mache. I was stunned when they began to melt away in the water. Everything around me was tied to loss; everything I knew was sliding away from underneath us.

Our former life continued to be torn away. I numbly watched my parents gather up two precious piles of photos in the backyard and set them afire. This action suggested to me that they believed they would never return. But at the same time, it shows evidence of a strong resolve to disallow the Nazis to claim the family’s last vestiges.

In addition, the night before we were to be transported, I remember my father wielding an ax and beheading all of his precious chickens. He shouted at me that I should not go near, but I wanted to see what was going on, and once I saw, I ran and hid. I remember the tears running down his face. I remember the chickens were jumping up and down without their heads before they died. I was shocked, but most of all, I remember that his face showed an emotion that is hard to describe---like being forced to do something that was against his grain.

Our captors transported us by cattle cars to Szeged, a regional distribution center where they made up transports of the Jewish population. Here there were many stages we had to go through beginning with selection. They moved us from one place to another. Then they shipped us further. Much later, only after the war ended, is when we learned one of the transports originating from Szeged never made its final destination, which would have been Auschwitz. But the ally bombs destroyed the railroad connection, forcing the Germans to change their final plans.

Together with my parents and other prisoners, we were herded into cattle cars to begin our arduous journey; many days of travel from Szeged to Strass Hoff. This is where some of the distribution of slave labor took place. Since there was room only for one of them to sit on the floor, my parents took turns sitting and holding me in their laps. During the long journey I was aware of the clicking sounds as our wagon was linked to other cars making it part of an ever growing transport of slave labor. There was no chance for us to wash or perform the basic necessities. Behind a hand-held cover for privacy, women had to use a pail. During the long journey, a boy travelling with his mother next to us, became my friend. My young pal unexpectedly and quite suddenly, became very ill. He developed a very high fever. We couldn’t get help for him. I lost my dear young friend.

I don’t even remember when we got any water for drinking or food passed around. I remember, however, at a railroad station our convoy was forced to stop briefly. We met Hungarian troops already there. A few of us children, in spite of parental warning, were curious enough to hang around the crack at the opening of the transport wagon. A couple of the soldiers, who came to talk to us, were very nice. One of them gave me his ration of canned meat. I will always remember this generous fellow.

The transport took us to Strass Hoff, a prison labor distribution center. We stayed here only for a short time, about two weeks. When we arrived, we found ourselves surrounded by chain link fences separating us from earlier arrivers. We spotted some relatives, from a different region of Hungary, through the fence and asked if they had heard from my brother.

While we were at Strass Hoff, we were fed hot broth made with a dry, grass-like plant. It turned my stomach, but my parents wanted me to eat it because that’s all the nutrition we were given. My parents bribed me with salami they had brought from home for emergencies in order to get me to eat it.

Our group from Szeged was then sent to Untertemenau, a large brick fabrication place that at that time was converted to serve other uses as well. A few days after our arrival, an officer asked the group to raise their hands if anyone had any experience with certain types of labor, i.e. cooking. My mother boldly raised her hand, thinking she knew about cooking for large groups even though she had never done this herself. She did observe the chef who cooked for the wealthy Jewish military officers who rented our home in Mako. And she was selected for this job. She worked very hard. She was responsible for the kitchen that cooked meals for all the prisoners.

And she was the special cook for the administrators of the factory as well, on-call 24 hours a day to meet their meal needs. I rarely saw her as she would leave early in the morning and come home very late at night. We remained in Untertemenau for about 7 months.

In early January 1945, due to the advancing Russian front, the Nazis realized that their commodity of slave labor was now at risk and issued a move of the Untertemenau camp. Carrying suitcases and a backpack, we began the march and eventually the treacherous descent down the icy mountain. We were taken to a smaller labor camp near Freiburg, where we were placed in a building near a dam to discourage the allies from bombing the dam. We were allowed to stay together as families, with each person being allotted a very narrow space, on the floor, as there were no bunks. A kettle heated on a wood burning stove provided a place to wash and also to cook food. Everyday my parents, along with the other prisoners of the camp, were forced to march and perform chores.

In the middle of this winter, adults were forced into hard manual labor such as cleaning away rubble on roadways. As children, we had a difficult time managing our constant hunger while our parents were away. Our camp site was isolated and often, during the harsh winter, we were left without any provisions or food for long periods. The men were forced to take risks, of being caught in the potato fields while hunting for left over potatoes missed at harvest. When we left Mako, mother had secretly packed a jar of rendered goose fat; reserved it strictly for such a time of emergency, when we would have nothing else to eat. From this fat, from home, she would occasionally feed me when I was really hungry.

By spring, the Russian front closed in again, and another retreat was ordered, abruptly ending the Jews' dual roles as slave laborers and human shields. We were ordered to march. During this evacuation march, my father and I found ourselves separated from the main transport and my mother. We were desperately worried.

We had no food rations, by this time, and we were very hungry. My father with me in tow, somehow we were able to enter a bakery on the tail of some shoppers. The smell of fresh bread was irresistibly enticing to us, making father forget all caution. He approached the baker and said, "My child is very hungry." The baker took pity on us and slipped him some bread and a slice of Swiss cheese. This was very dangerous, for my father and the baker as well, as the Nazis could have killed them if they discovered he had helped a Jew. I remember my father later shedding tears of desperation and gratitude. He was so moved that the baker took such a risk. The following day, we were reunited with my mother.

The Germans were marching us deeper into German-held territory. We were terrified that we would eventually be exterminated. And the Germans were afraid that they would lose the war. So my mother and our group leader, Szivos, hatched a plan on the spot. When the Germans stopped to rest their horses at a local market my mother, conversing in German with the regional leader (Gauleiter) of the area, suggested a trade of letters. In return for a letter that she gave him that he had helped us, he gave us a letter that identified us as refugees who were allowed to stay in the rural firehouse. Also, that the villagers should provide us with milk and eggs. During this time, Hungarian soldiers who were Mako residents, filtered into the area, and we were concerned they would recognize us and identify us as Jews. Thus, putting us up in a rural firehouse was desirable.

One night retreating German troops entered the firehouse hut, shining their flashlights on us. My mother held her hand over my mouth so I wouldn't scream. Perhaps, they assumed that we were refugees retreating from the Russian front. Since it was night, we could pretend that we were all asleep, avoiding their questions, which would have exposed us. I was petrified.

Within a few days, the region was occupied by the Russians. We were told by someone in the village that the war had ended. Relieved, yet fearful, we began to pack our remaining belongings to return to Hungary through Vienna.

The Russians, rewarded by their superiors by allowing the marauding of valuable goods, confiscated the village leader's horse and carriage, loading it with whatever they could put their hands on. This included a small suitcase belonging to us. In preparation to our return home, mother just finished packing it with my father's clothes including a treasured business suit. This enraged my mother, and she jumped onto the wagon, demanding that they give back the horse, wagon and her suitcase. In defiance, one of the soldiers cracked the whip into the horse, and while the carriage lunged forward, another pushed my mother and she fell into the moving wheel, ripping her leg open. They threw the suitcase out of the carriage and then drove off.

Although peace had been officially declared, the war was not yet over for us. Russian soldiers continued to pillage. I recall dead horses on the side of the road with rigor mortis, hooves pointed to the sky and swollen bellies. It took several days for us to arrive to Vienne.

Once the group arrived at Vienne, officials refused the non-Viennese members of our group admittance or passage through the city, holding them captive in Russian detention camps. At these times everyone was suspected and accused of being former Nazis running from the Russians. My mother, having lived in Vienna years ago and knew the city well, somehow convinced the official that we were former residents of the city. After we got through, we stayed at an inn that belonged to someone affiliated with members of our convoy that had traveled with us to Vienna. The next group following us had not gained admittance to the city. Since we had heard that detained people were being sent to Siberia, my mother, running an extremely high temperature from an infection in her torn leg, went back to the border and announced to officials that she was Viennese and was there to pick up her relatives. She said, "This is my mother, this is my father," and so on, claiming each person as her relative. She was successful at gaining their admittance into the city, but afterward she immediately went into the hospital with a deadly septic infection---it was a miracle that she survived.

Although, we had shelter at the inn, basic needs such as food and supplies were still difficult to obtain. I recall my father taking the last vestiges of the demijohn, goose liver, to a well-known restaurant to trade for some food.

Once my mother, was released from the hospital, hoping to reunite with Pista, we boarded a train to return to Mako. Upon our arrival, we were taken in by my friend Kati's family, staying in a former servant's room. After one month, although the Bank Angol-Magyar no longer existed, Jenó, my father obtained a position as bank director at a different firm. Life was never the same as before the war. The Pengő (Hungarian currency) went into horrible devaluation as Hungary suffered a terrible post-war inflation. My father's pay hardly covered eating and living conditions. Still we were hopeful for an improved and brighter future.

After the war ended we returned home. Months passed while we searched the news, in vain, for my 18 year old brother, Pista. We became even more fearful for his safety until miraculously one day we received wonderful news. A short note had arrived, in my brother's handwriting, simply stating he was alive. In the mean while we had learned, indeed, Pista was in Gauting, a tuberculosis sanatorium in Bavaria. His life still in danger, he was awaiting his fate. Many months had passed again before we got some news. A friend of my brother had arrived home, saying he had news from him and asked for a meeting with my parents. I could hardly contain myself. Beside the latest news on his health, my brother's friend had promised us a very lengthy letter from my brother. The letter, all 35 pages tightly written, in which Pista describes what he had to go through since we had seen each other last. This long letter, a bulky wad of bundle, smuggled in by his friend in his vest pocket, was not all good news, after all. After reading it, our friends, who were medical professionals cautioned us. The predictable future for a full recovery for him was grim. Travelling in his condition was out of the question. It would have been too risky.

From the letter my brother wrote, finally we learned what actually happened to him, that he barely survived the Dachau concentration camps. I remember reading my brother's letter and the impression it made on me when I read it. In it he described some of the things he had to go through. About this time, I got a hold of a book of documentary photos my father tried in vain to hide from me. It was the photos the allies collected when liberating the Dachau concentration camps. It was then when at such an early age I began to question the sanity of the human race.

After the war in Hungary, at least for a while we were hopeful that a more democratic system would rule and govern the country. What happened instead after the Soviets occupied Hungary was that Stalin never relinquished his power. By making sure the communist party was the only ruling party, Hungary was made to suffer under his dictatorship. Hungary became communist. At this time the iron curtain also went up. My father was called by the secret service and jailed because he was considered an enemy of the people. And because he was corresponding with someone in the west, my brother who had immigrated to the USA, he was accused of being an American spy. So for the second time my father again lost his job and was jailed. During the time he was jailed in Budapest for a few months, I was not able to see him as I was in Mako. When he was finally released, he was a broken and old man. He was never allowed to take a job with responsibility any longer and struggled from job to job as a minor clerk and bookkeeper from then on.

At age 8 and 9, I resumed my schooling and made up for the year I lost as a result of our confinement. When I finished high school I began my studies at university in Budapest. I wanted to focus on art. I applied for an art scholarship, which I did not receive.

The University of Budapest was something of a silent battlefield of hatred and tensions. On one side the students, working and silently hating, on the other side the now almighty Communist Party suspiciously and resentfully watching everyone. But still this was one of the happiest times in my life. I worked hard and loved my studies despite the many odds. Some of my older teachers were the source of inspiration, really wonderful people who gave me the courage for my struggle. They gave me hope that I was still very young, and this was not the kind of world I would live in forever.

However, I did receive a prize for a design I submitted for an art competition, which they ignored. Because of my background they kept refusing to let me continue with my art studies. I wanted to become an interior designer. While a student at the university, I was stopped many times and interrogated because of my inherited bourgeois family background. It was an up-hill struggle to remain in school.

After one year of study at the university, the Educational Committee of the Ministry of Interior Security notified me that I, as the daughter of a "class enemy," was no longer desirable at the University. As a generous gesture they suggested that they would rehabilitate me from my bourgeois background by sending me to a training course of the department of agriculture. Wounded and humiliated I was still not going to give up. At least I would be staying at the university. Little did this matter. At the end of the semester I was simply notified that I could not register at the university any longer.

In the short period of partial relaxation, after Stalin's death, I applied and was accepted at the Pedagogic Institute of Szeged to study as a teacher in art education. In October 1957, the Hungarian revolt occurred. The University of Szeged students, including myself, participated in this revolt. When the revolt failed and the soviet tanks came back rumbling through the streets of Budapest we feared reappraisal. So that is when I knew I had to leave Hungary. I also wanted to catch up with my brother, who was in the United States. Although I knew I would have to leave my parents behind, my days were endlessly drawing out in the insecurity, idleness and

sometimes remorse of the refugee camp. I felt happy and confident whatever the future may be, because I believed that I would be doing the right thing by escaping Hungary. My options were limited.

I found a group of people who also wanted to leave Hungary. We were concerned about retaliation by the Russians. First, we had to find someone to lead us through the Austrian-Hungarian boarder through mind fields. By word of mouth we did find someone. We waited for a cloudy night to escape. The group of about 30 people, including a baby, escaped in the night though fearful that the barking dogs would give us away.

Once we crossed into Andau, Austria previous escapees took us to a large wooden structure with straw on the floor, where we stayed for 3 nights. Then this good fellow took us to Vienna via his VW. When we first arrived, we walked the streets. We then saw this sign indicating rooms for rent, like a bed and breakfast. The owner really did not want to rent to us, but because my friend Judy gave her the gold necklace off her neck, she agreed to rent to us. The next day we found a dental lab where we could trade in our other gold jewelry for money.

Then we found a refugee camp to stay for a few nights. During this time, I located a Hungarian family who were old family friends, but were also sheltering other Hungarians. So they took me in, but no one else. I stayed in Vienna for a few weeks. While here I was able to contact my brother. I learned of an international student organization which was willing to help Hungarian student refugees relocate. This is when I applied for a student scholarship through the University of Michigan. This was a great opportunity for me. I was awarded the scholarship. Through the English Language Institute, I was able to learn enough English to pursue my degree at the University of Michigan.

Reviewing the copy of the letter I sent to the University of Michigan, I wrote the following:'I am writing to you as I would write to a friend. But here we are shipwrecked, floating on a crowded raft, looking for a sign of rescue on the horizon. Your name, Dr. Hatcher, has been the lights of a passing ship and I lift my only light, my pen, as the only signal I have, and hope that I was seen.' In addition, there was a PS: "Kindly disguise my name if any part of this letter is handled outside of your hands. My parents are still in Hungary." Many of us students were in fear and were concerned not only for our own wellbeing, but for the safety of our families.

Although I had not heard from the University, I was determined to see my brother. I investigated many organizations to help me travel to the United States. I also contacted the Red Cross and as it turned out, my brother also contacted the Red Cross in hopes of finding me. And it was through that organization that we were able to communicate. Thus in early February of 1957 I left Austria and through Hamburg traveled to the United States via ship, The Nelson, landing in New York City. It was quite an experience to see the Statue of Liberty. My brother was waiting for me in Brooklyn. It had been so long since I had seen him. He had grown older and heavier and he knew I would not recognize him. He was holding a sign with "Majtinszky" on it. He did recognize me on the ship and through to me a match box with a note inside it welcoming me. Upon leaving the ship we were taken to Camp Kilmer, where we were processed in as an immigrant and given a social security number and a green card. This took several days. My brother checked on my status daily. When I was free to go, he picked me up.

After he picked me up, on the way home, we got a flat tire. I, of course, wanted to change it. I had learned how to change a tractor tire while in university at the Agra economy program. My brother did not know how to change the tire, but he finally did change it. We stopped on Madison Avenue, near his house. He took me to a boutique and bought me a blue dress and more clothes, because he wanted to present me to his wife in a better light than what I looked like out of Camp Kilmer. He took my hat and tossed it in the garbage can. I was stunned. I had bought it in Budapest. It had come through various refugee camps. But apparently it was not as pretty as I thought it was.

Soon after, I got a job as a trainee for window display for the Barton Chocolate Company. Rocky Road is the name of the candy they made. It is almond that is dipped in chocolate. I really liked this job as I had not seen or tasted chocolate in years. Learning the subway system was a nightmare for me, but my boss was very understanding. New Yorkers were very helpful, but not speaking the language made it difficult for. Sometimes they sent me in the wrong direction because of the language difficulty and because I did not know the subway system. About a month into this job, I heard that I was awarded the scholarship from the University of Michigan to attend the English Language Institute.


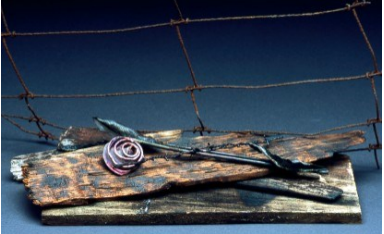


So then I made plans to travel to Ann Arbor. I left in April for Ann Arbor. I was assigned to Cousins Hall, where nursing students lived. I was first welcomed by the student's women's organization. Then I went to the English Language Institute. After that, the Dean of Women helped me get a scholarship to attend the University and obtain a degree in Art. I supplemented this by working part-time at Jacobson Store, a department store, in window display.

After earning a BS in Art and a teaching certificate, I decided to go to New York City. By this time my brother had remarried and was living in Munich. He went back there to get his medical degree. While in New York City, I met Alex, my husband. A friend asked me if she could give my phone number to a Hungarian man, Alex, and I agreed. At that time I was living in a boarding house, where I was able to get my meals as well. He was working as a research mathematician at Bell Labs while also working on his doctorate. During this time he got a new job teaching and doing research at Brooklyn Polytech Institute on Long Island. After he earned his doctorate

he got a job in Hartford, Connecticut with the Pratt Whitney Research Institute. Then the economy changed and he was downsized (last in, first out). He searched for jobs, finding several in California. He presented a published paper at SIUE, which then offered him a job. The whole family, including our infant son (George) and mother-in-law, moved to Hamel, Illinois. That is how I came to live in Illinois. We later moved to Edwardsville. I was able to take a variety of art courses at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. And that is when I became interested in metalsmithing.

Appendix B

Selection of Artwork Images of Agnes Majtinszky Pal Provided Courtesy of The University Museum at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

IMAGE	TITLE/FUNCTION/YEAR/ MATERIALS	DESCRIPTION (from artist)
	<p>“Yearning” (Ring) 2002 <i>Carved Wax-Silver Casting, Enamel, twisted Silver facsimile of Barbed Wire</i></p>	<p>The yearning to be free is self-explanatory. The ring is not your typical piece of jewelry. As you try to slide it on the finger, you become very aware of the wrapped barbed wire around a pair of hands and the danger implies.</p>
	<p>“Beyond the Fence” (Brooch) 2005 <i>Copper, Prismacolor Pencils, Brooch with Pin Stem, Found Driftwood, Found Iron Fence. The brooch pin stem is a separate section that is covered by a tubing sleeve that can be pinned to one’s clothing. The thistle flower and leaf has a barbed wire branch made from stove wire.</i></p>	<p>Thistles blew into the compound through the fence. The seeds in the spring began to germinate and by early summer the buds developed into beautiful purple flowers. It was the only flower that grew in the compound. We children used these thistles to replace the toys that we missed.</p>
	<p>“Fire in the Sky” (Brooch) 2001 <i>Enamel on Copper, oxidized Sterling Silver, 24KG Keumboo</i></p>	<p>This brooch depicts the fire rising from the ammunition plant, that was visible from the labor camp, after it had been bombed in the night by the allies or the American planes. The fire was considered almost beautiful. We secretly cheered the success of the allies. The action caused an evacuation of the laborers and all camp internees into the nearby woods, a type of freedom and reprieve. I remember how it felt to be near my parents whom I really missed. They were driven to work day in and day out. I also remember how the wood smelled, the sweet smell of the trees and decaying leaves.</p>
	<p>“Beyond the Fence of Adolph’s Playground” (Sculptural Box) 2003 <i>Copper, Electroformed, and Cloisonné Enamel</i></p>	<p>The inspiration of this box came from the only beauty that was to be found, the purple flowers on the thistle plants that grew just beyond the fence of the concentration camp where my parents, fellow prisoners and I were kept.</p>



“Violent Furl” (Box) 2003
Copper, Electroforming, Enamel, and Iron-Barbed Wire

Our lives were in constant turbulence. We were uprooted and it was hard to see if life would ever return to normal. When we went back home, adjustment never really ended because communism took the place of the previous regime. Our lives were always in a constant upheaval of emotion. My father was even jailed at one time. He was dragged to the secret service for questioning because of letters that he had received from his son living in the USA. That incident with my with my father, is why I left Hungary.



“Adolph’s Playground” (Thistle Teapot) 2003
Raised bowl form of Copper. Constructed and formed by chasing and repoussé. Handle and spout made of speculums.

This piece brings back bittersweet memories. Shortly after we arrived at Untertemenau, where a brick factory was located, we found it was newly converted to producing clay sewer pipes. To keep up with the need to replace damaged infrastructure there was an ever-increasing demand for the sewer pipes, and a constant pressure and rush to manufacture them. Working the clay, this is where my parents were made slave laborers. Day in and day out and with hardly any rest, they logged the heavy wheelbarrows filled with the wet clay. While our parents were at work, the children of the compound had nothing to do. We had discovered how abandoned we were. We missed our parents who were at work, from dawn to dusk, day in and day out. We had nothing to do. No toys, tools, games, no school to attend, only the gnawing feeling of hunger, and because we missed our parents, our feeling of loneliness. Utilizing our imagination, we played with whatever we found for our amusement; mud, pebbles, even leaves. At some point we discovered the thistles that the wind blew in through the barbed fence. They were covered with their tiny hooks, making them stick to everything, our clothes, our hair and even to each other. Disregarding their sharp and ugly stickers, we gathered these tiny gifts of the wind. We made sculptures from thistles by sticking them together and sticking them to ourselves. Weeks had passed while at this new and strange place of Untertemenau. I was missing everything we left that spelled home. This is where my eighth birthday found me. It was a dark period for us. I was so thankful for the thistle basket the other children made for me and surprised me with on my birthday. What a precious gift it was.



“Adolph’s Playground: In the woods” (Teapot) 2003
Copper constructed and forged, speculum-formed handle and spout

In the fall of 1944 during our captivity, my parents were put in the forced-labor camps, were they worked in factories of Untertemenau and its sister town of Obertemenau. The factories came under attack by the American allies. During a particularly successful bombing campaign they blew up the ammunition factory nearby. As the fire was spreading, it created a progressive succession of ear shattering noise. Our captors panicked, knowing their production quota would fall behind when losing labor; they chased us all into the woods for safety. I spent that night with my parents realizing how much I missed them! For the first time in my short life, I noticed the delicious fragrance in the woods. The spiraled-circular pattern inside the teapot represents the rings of a tree. I chose copper because it is a soft and pliable metal, suitable for heat coloration in the color range I was considering. The teapot design allowed for a variety of expressions, including representing the spirit of the woods and the feeling of being almost free. It captured my fantasy. I could at times imagine and make up stories or dreams in my mind.



“Grandma’s Memory” (Neckpiece) 2003
 (full and detail)
Locket, outer shell - formed on the hydraulic press, hinged, constructed of silver, etched photo image on copper, cast miniature baby shoes. Barbed wire neckpiece made of twisted silver wire.

This locket is dedicated to my grandmother whom I never had the chance to know. When the locket is opened, you see a picture of three figures of myself as a baby, my mother and my cousin. My grandmother was represented only by the house that stands behind us, which was her estate/farm home. On the right side of the opened locket hangs a tiny pair of baby shoes, cast in silver and enameled red. They represent the red shoes my grandmother gave me when I took my first steps as a toddler. Her memory lives on in the stories told to me by my mother. Also, the red enameled copper spiral - signifying life force, is set in a bezel like a precious stone.





“Haunted Pilgrimage” (Neckpiece) 2004
Sterling Silver, barbed wire, enamel

My mother took me through Slovakia to visit my aunt. I was about 12 years old. We were on a trip from Prague to Slovakia through the Carpathian Mountains on our way to find my aunt. I remember thinking how close we were to my grandmother’s place. At least I imagined we were close. Of course, my grandmother no longer lived there and I wondered what became of her and the family, my uncle and the two children. They were taken away and imprisoned behind barbed wire and then exterminated. This personal pilgrimage was my looking for a connection to my grandmother. We had to go through Prague to get to Slovakia in order to see my aunt because Hungary was at odds with Slovakia...It was Czech Slovakia at the time.






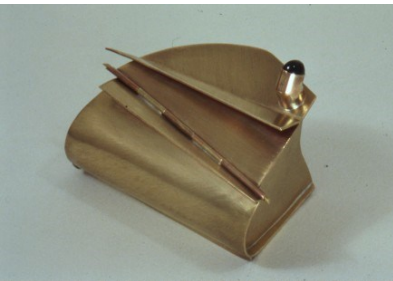
“Shelter” (Sculpture) 1998
Copper, formed, hammered folds, cold joining, riveted

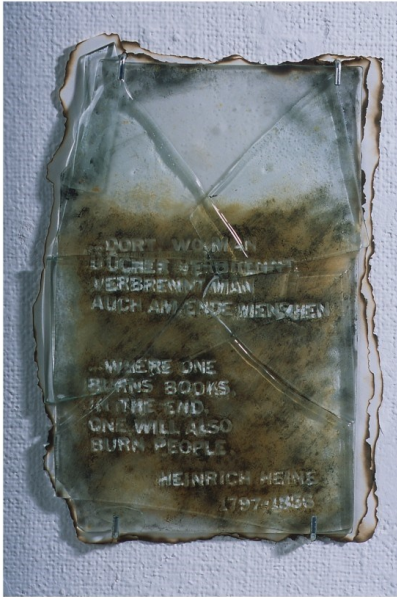
This represents a place of safety and protection. You can see out but you can hardly see in. There are several hiding places in it. The design is meant to look like leather and/or armor protecting the people within.



“Safe-House” (Sculpture) 1998
Sterling Silver, Steel with Fine Silver Damascene inlay, formed, casted, fabrication, chased

The Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg in 1944, during the dark days of the German occupation of Hungary, saved thousands of Hungarian Jews from deportation and certain death in the Nazi extermination camps. When any Jews presented themselves at the Swedish embassy in Budapest to apply for immigration papers, they would be granted safety and issued a letter of protection for each. Wallenberg used his own funds to buy buildings in Budapest establishing safe houses for the Jews. He risked his own life for some 5000 or more Jews to be transferred to Swedish-sponsored safe houses as well as giving them food and medical attention. This sterling silver container alludes to the shape of a shelter or place of safety. The cast screen-like grid covers the top, giving a sense of freedom to look out and upward yet still protected. The black damascene iron represents a secret portal for entering and exiting. The inlaid silver lines on the chiseled iron, and chased surface grid, camouflage the opening to all who may not know of the existence of the shelter.

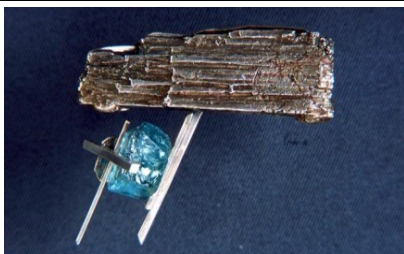
	<p>“In Flux” (Sculpture) 2004 <i>Sterling Silver, Raising, Fabrication, Cast Molten Glass, Acrylic</i></p>	<p>In 1956, students and intellectuals in Hungary started a movement to free the Hungarian country from the Russian Block and Russian government influence. As a university student at that time I participated in the Hungarian Revolt. The two opposing sides are represented in this sculpture entitled “In Flux”.</p>
	<p>“Escape” (Brooch) 2004 <i>Rutilated Quartz, Sterling Silver, fabrication, roll printing</i></p>	<p>It represents the time, towards the end of the war when we succeeded in freeing ourselves from our captors, whose intention was extermination for all of us. A group of us were able to escape from an unapproachable area when our captors were distracted.</p>
	<p>“Sustenance I” (Ladle) 1998 <i>Reticulation of #820 Silver, Sterling Silver, fabrication</i></p>	<p>A ladle serves food and drink, providing sustenance. At the labor camp every night the “slop” would arrive from the kitchen to feed us, the camp prisoners, in a large kettle. It was not served with silver spoons. It was distributed by using a beaten-up cup with a long handle. At times they served us dry grass that was reconstituted with hot water poured over it. This grass soup, I could never swallow. My parents had a piece of salami with them from Hungary, which they had squirrelled away. This they sliced into bits, putting it on the grass mixture for which I would be rewarded for eating it. My parents never ate the salami because they were saving it for me and for the worst possible times including when we were starving.</p>
	<p>“At Watch” (Box) 1998 <i>Brass, Green Tourmaline</i></p>	<p>Hinged Brass box with transparent green tourmaline cabochon stone. This sculptural container has a periscope type-handle for peering out from this place of hiding.</p>



*“Kristallnacht” (Glass sculpture) 2000
Cast and slumped (molten) glass in the shape of a book with the quote trapped between the pages. When the book is lit from behind, the text becomes visible. Glass, etched glass page with Heinrich Heine’s statement*

“Where books are burned, in the end people will.” The noted German poet, Heinrich Heine wrote and the “prediction” preceded by nearly a hundred years the infamous events of November 9th, 1938. On that night and the nights that followed, all over Germany books were burning in public places. That night in history is referred to as the night of the broken glass or “Kristallnacht”. The list of books destined to be burned on the pyre, was an ever-growing one, even to include classic authors, common only in that they did not tow the official political line.

The wave of lethal vandalism was instructed by Hitler, in revenge towards a killing incident by a 17 year old Polish Jew, who on November 7, 1938, shot and killed the third secretary of the Reich’s embassy in Paris. “Evidence that these November decreed pogroms of persecutions, massacres, and exterminations, came to be known collectively as “Kristallnacht” (Crystal Night or Night of Broken Glass). These actions were anything but spontaneous, illustrated by the telegram sent by Gestapo Chief Heinrich Mueller to all police units” Mueller instructed, “action against Jews and especially their synagogues will take place in all of Germany. These are not to be interfered with.” (The Holocaust Chronicle - a History in Word and Pictures. – p.123).



*“Icy Descent” (Brooch) 2004
Sterling Silver, rough Aquamarine stone, silver casting of burnt-out wood*

I have memories of being marched by the Germans down snowy and icy mountains, holding onto my mother’s hand as we were herded along to the next labor camp. Our campsite was very scenic and overlooked the town. We were strategically placed at the top edge of a dam overlooking an enormous lake. Hearing them talk, our elders suspected our captors were using us as human shields against bomb attacks by their enemy. A cavernous room served to house us all, men, women and children. We slept on the floor on top of just a thin layer of straw. As we later learned, our elders were correct. We had served as human shields against the allied bomb raids.



“Explosion” (Sculpture) 2003
Cast iron base, Nickel Silver, Copper, Enamel

There were quite a few bombings and cannon blasts from the tanks. This signaled the advancing of the Russian troops. There was still fighting going on, but I remember that after the Russians came, this young fellow picked up a unknowingly “live” hand grenade and it exploded and blew his hands off. He was a young teenager in the village where we were staying. It was after the war by then and the Russians were already occupying the area. As soon as we heard that the war was over, we decided to go back towards Vienna.

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