

“Living with Hope: The Life and Story of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis”

An Honors Thesis

by

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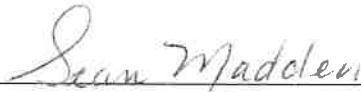
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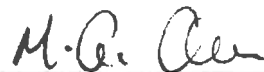
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Living with Hope:

The Life and Story of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis

“If we’re only given a day, we have to live it.” -Friedl Dicker-Brandeis¹

Friedl Dicker-Brandeis perished at Auschwitz in 1944 at the age of forty-six². She is one of so many heroes who are now historically documented for their extraordinary efforts during the Holocaust. What Friedl achieved in her short lifespan impacted thousands of children, women, and men living in Terezin during the Holocaust. What makes her efforts even more interesting and important is the unique manner in which she was able to accomplish so much under the worst conditions possible. But how can single person achieve so much? What strategies did Friedl use to continue her work under the constant scrutiny, along with the threat of death from her Nazi captors? Friedl was able to use her own trauma, skills, and passions to overcome the horrors that lie in wait within the star-shaped walls of Terezin. Not only did Friedl survive for two years within Terezin, but she also went above and beyond to expose the children to the world of arts.

Friedl experienced life as a Jew in Prague prior to the war, and slowly saw her world fall into turmoil as the Nazi’s expanded their campaign. She was branded, scorned, and cast out of society, forced to move from her home and flee to avoid capture. Only to be caught and sent to be incarcerated with her death not being a question of how many years away, but how many days. Even through all of that Friedl persevered and managed to put the needs of others ahead of her own. Friedl Dicker-Brandeis is not a commonly

¹ Rubin 2001, pg.8

² “Friedl Dicker-Brandeis” 2016

well-known figure of history, but she was certainly one of the most impactful on a population who desperately needed a reason to have hope. What Friedl accomplished in Terezin could have easily cost her life, but she did it anyways, despite any backlash that she may receive. She was utterly selfless despite her life being a mere pawn in the hands of the guards. She was kept in the model concentration camp for the Jews. Terezin was a prison like no other, holding no escape for the imprisoned, except the sweet release of death.

Terezin was a terrible place to live for adults and children alike. Disease would spread like wildfire and the only escape were the trains which almost certainly would take them to their deaths.³ Terezin was chosen near the start of Hitler's campaign to serve as a guarded ghetto to house the Jews, and other outsiders he deemed unfit for his empire. The Germans renamed it Theresienstadt and decided to use it due to its close vicinity to a railway station and the city of Prague⁴. Terezin boasted high walls, over 250 buildings including houses, schools, stores, barracks, churches, and a post office.⁵ It was the perfect prison guarded by the Schutzstaffel, or secret police, but it served another purpose. Terezin housed the educated populations of Jews, Germans, and Austrians. Philosophers, authors, playwrights, musicians, scientists, and scholars along with their families were all housed in this camp⁶. Nazi Propaganda referred to Theresienstadt as a "pleasant Jewish Settlement," a gift from Hitler to the Jews. In actuality it was the Nazis' attempt to hide "the final solution to the Jewish question⁷". Terezin, like other Jewish Concentration

³ "History of Terezin - Terezin: Children of the Holocaust" 2021

⁴Thomson 2011

⁵Thomson 2011

⁶ "History of Terezin - Terezin: Children of the Holocaust" 2021

⁷Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001

Camps, was meant to break the imprisoned spirits before they were shipped off to be killed like cattle to the slaughter. However, Terezin's main purpose was to deceive the outside world, through the use of professional artists and performers to promote and showcase normal life through cultural activities.⁸ Theatrical plays and musicals were permitted but only under strict rules and guard, as the incarcerated peoples were belittled and treated inhumanely. Life for the Jews in Terezin, was entirely in the control of the Nazis, who would showcase nicer aspects of the camp, and disregard any and all other problems. The Jews endured torment every day as their rights were non-existent and they were treated in such a way that they were better off being dead. Friedl's experience in Terezin was similar to many of her fellow captives, but she acted as a light in that dark camp. She provided warmth and comfort to all and was able to make the torturous Terezin tolerable even if it was only for an hour a day.

Friedl Dicker's story begins in Vienna, Austria on July 30th, 1898. Her father, Simon Dicker, was a shop assistant at a stationary store. While her mother, Karolina, passed away in 1902, leaving four-year-old Friedl without a mother's nurturing touch⁹. Friedl's passion for art grew from an early age as she often spent her time in her father's shop playing with clay and coloring pictures. Friedl went on to attend several universities to study the arts including drawing, sculpting, painting, acting, theatrical design, interior design, and much more. She even got a degree in art therapy in order to connect more closely with the children she worked with before Terezin. Friedl's art education played a major role in how she interacted with the children within Terezin. She used art as an

⁸ Leshnoff 2006, pg.93

⁹Makarova, Hong Kong: 2001

escape in her own life growing up, ended up falling in love with it, and made it her career. She knew the power that art held if individuals only knew how to utilize it in the necessary situations. While she hoped to work with children, little did she know she would be working with children on death row. The lack of a mother-figure wounded Friedl¹⁰, but also played a significant role in her becoming a mother to thousands within the walled fortress. Friedl's and the children's paintings and drawings serve as their lasting testimony of their will to hope even when their deaths were almost certain.

Friedl's work along with the work of other adults in the camp gave the children a sense of normalcy that had been denied to them since entering Terezin. Children were encouraged to draw, write, act, or sing even under the life-threatening conditions they faced every day. Friedl risked being killed on the spot if the officers or officials of the camp realized what she was doing and how she was acquiring the materials. By creating art, individuals are able to access what it means to be human being by using their imagination to reach the deepest sense of humanity¹¹. Children can let go of their fears, pain, and restrictions on their life to find some peace of mind if they are taught to harness creating art to their own benefit¹². Friedl's story is unique as her use of art to inspire hope was more impactful than she could have ever imagined. Friedl's heroics are similar to so many other heroes of the Holocaust tragedy. In this sense, my research joins the growing body of literature concerning Holocaust Heroes. Friedl's story is distinctly unique due to extraordinary impact as evidenced in the amount of art produced by her and the children of Terezin.

¹⁰ Makarova 1999

¹¹ Buchanan 2016 pg.6

¹² Spitz 2012 pg.11

Friedl began her art-focused studies at the Austrian Federal Education and Research Institute for Graphics located in Vienna in 1913¹³. Here, Friedl studied under Johannes Beckmann, a renowned photographer. She went on to the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts where she began working in a theater, where she organized props, wrote productions, acted in plays, and sewed costumes. In 1915, Friedl joined the textile department at the school and studied under Franz Cizek¹⁴. Franz Cizek was a popular Austrian genre and portrait painter who taught his students to expose themselves in their art. While her next instructor Johannes Itten encouraged students to utilize and follow their emotions when creating a masterpiece. Itten believed that one's art should reflect their soul, so one can better monitor their spiritual progress and wellbeing through the art produced. Both instructors encouraged Friedl to embrace art in all its forms and shared with her the keys to her own art-related success. It was in the textile department of the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts, that Friedl made the acquaintance of a Franz Singer¹⁵ who was studying architecture at the time. Franz Singer would play an important role in Friedl's personal life while also being instrumental in the development and popularity of her professional, artistic life. Johannes Itten established his own school, which both Friedl and Singer attended for a short period of time before Itten left his school to become a master at the Weimar Bauhaus, leading Friedl to follow him in 1919¹⁶. Friedl Dicker established lasting professional connections with several of her professors leading her to establish a deeper understanding of art and to attend one of the most prestigious art schools in the region.

¹³“Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student” 2021

¹⁴ Makarova 1999

¹⁵ Another ‘disciple’ of Itten’s

¹⁶ “Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student” 2021

While at the Weimar Bauhaus, Friedl studied and became accomplished at oil paintings, charcoals, jewelry, bookbinding, weaving, textiles, and poster art while under the instruction of several masters¹⁷. Itten was so taken with Friedl's gifts and her unbelievable teaching abilities that he permitted her to teach his freshman course at Bauhaus while she was still a student¹⁸. Friedl was quite gifted in the arts and thrived both professionally and personally while she was at Bauhaus. To earn money while attending the Weimar Bauhaus she produced bookbindings in a private workshop owned by Otto Dorfner and made marionette dolls to be sold at the state fair in Weimar, drawing many of the children in attendance¹⁹. However, Friedl was not seeking to profit off her dolls, but rather to see the looks of awe and amusement on the children's faces. In 1921, Paul Keene, a famous painter, arrived at the Bauhaus and gave a series of lectures on art's nature and how childlike imagination played a role. His teachings opened Friedl's mind to the concept of working with and teaching children in a theatrical setting²⁰. Keene was an inspiration to Friedl, who encouraged her to use her inner childlike curiosity to establish a practical understanding and relationship with art. The Bauhaus and its teachings highlighted the use of empathy; how to connect, feel, and understand art in its many forms²¹. Friedl and Franz Singer worked close together during their time at Bauhaus and established a close personal relationship where they even joined a theatrical troupe together. During their short-lived romance, Friedl experienced joy in having someone like-minded to share her passion with, as well as saw Singer as her chance to

¹⁷ Friedl studied under Johannes Itten, Georg Muche, and Lyonel Feininger (Cohen 2008)

¹⁸ Cohen 2008

¹⁹ Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001

²⁰ "Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student" 2021

²¹ Elsbey 2021

have her own family. However, in 1921, Singer married another woman while still maintaining his romantic relationship with Friedl for many years. Singer forced Friedl to have several abortions against her will, adding more trauma to a life already filled with it²². Friedl had always longed for a child; so much so that in a letter to her friend, Anny Wottiz she wrote: “[i]f I had a child, I would be better suited for battle and I would also hope that where I failed, the child would make a success²³.” Having a child, would give Friedl a new purpose, someone to care for and raise to follow in her footsteps. Friedl desperately wanted her own child to raise and to establish a loving bond with, partly due to the fact that she did not have a relationship with her deceased mother. Friedl had to watch as Singer and his wife had a child and lived happily as a family, until sadly, Singer’s son passed away ending his and Friedl’s romantic relationship. Between the traumas of Friedl’s lack of a mother figure in her early life and being forced to give up her children, acted as motivation for Friedl and helped her to connect and be successful working with the children in Terezin.

Franz Singer and Friedl maintained a professional relationship and opened the Workshop of Visual Arts in Berlin in 1923 after leaving the Bauhaus.²⁴ This workshop focused on producing jewelry, bookbindings, toys, and theater sets. Friedl also got more involved in the theater by designing set pieces, costumes, and props for Berthold Viertel’s theater. Friedl opened several galleries to showcase her work and in 1926 Singer and Friedl established the Atelier Singer-Dicker²⁵ which became one of the most popular design houses in Vienna. Friedl got to foster her love of art and profit simultaneously due

²² Wix 2003

²³ Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001, pg. 20

²⁴ Makarova 1999

²⁵ Architect and design school (Cohen 2008)

to the popularity of her innovative designs and taste. Friedl reimagined interior design; she designed and created stackable chairs for ease and convenience.²⁶ From there, her future projects²⁷ would win several awards and expanded her notoriety in the field. Their business grew past simple interior design as they hired architects to assist on projects such as the Montessori Kindergarten²⁸ and the guesthouse for Countess Heriot. The Atelier also later made the architectural designs for the Vienna Tennis Club along with set designs for Berthold Brecht's theater and the Vienna Tennis Club²⁹. Friedl's fame began to spread as her work became cutting edge in the artist community, but her passions did not stop there³⁰. Friedl also began teaching art classes to kindergarten teachers to use in their classes at the city of Vienna's request³¹. This was a stepping off point for Friedl's teaching career, as her reputation was attracting more attention as each day went by. She used some of Itten's teachings to guide her lessons for the teachers but in the end, it was her own personality and natural abilities that helped her to connect with the teachers and later the children. Friedl's main goal for working with children was to aid in their understanding feelings and the world they live in³². She did not simply want to teach them how to create art but how to use art to benefit oneself, along with the many other applications art has.

Friedl was also known as a political activist for the communist party, but not until the 1930s. The theater community in Berlin was not only filled with theatrical

²⁶ Makarova 2001, pg. 91

²⁷ Collapsible couches and tables, and adjustable lamps (Vellet 2021)

²⁸ Including collapsible/stackable furniture, Friedl designed, a true innovation for that time (Makarova 2021)

²⁹ Cohen 2008

³⁰ Friedl and many other contemporary artists were swept up in Communist activism (Spitz 2012, pg.4)

³¹ Makarova 2021

³² Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001

productions but also with political debate between the Communists and Social Democrats³³. Many other educated Jewish individuals turned to the Communist party in order to combat the rising right-wing ideals that were sweeping through Europe that threatened the progressive, open-minded, and free ideals of the left wing (Communist party). However, as Hitler rose and seized power in 1933, the Communist party was forced underground, and life gradually became significantly harder for Friedl and Europe's Jewish populations³⁴. Friedl would not be silenced so easily, she began using the Communist Manifesto in her adult art classes and made propaganda posters targeting Hitler himself. She also made inspirational and powerful photo collages for agitprop Communist posters that would strike the heartstrings of those who would see them³⁵. Even though Friedl's photography is not as popular as her paintings or sketches, one of her more well-known pieces of agitprop posters was called 'This Is How it Looks Like, My Child, This World³⁶,' showing a newborn baby surrounded by Hitler's war machine. Hitler shut down the Bauhaus in 1933, as he viewed it as a "breeding ground for Jews and Bolsheviks³⁷" that spread Communist ideologies. New laws were sanctioned limiting their ability to work or be out in public. They only became stricter as Hitler's power grew; his empire expanded to include parts of Czechoslovakia and threatened democracy in the region. Hitler rose through the ranks of the Nazi party starting as a mere soldier, and once he had power, he broke the Treaty of Versailles by rebuilding Germany's military³⁸. Hitler blamed the Jews for the bank failures and ultimately for Germany losing

³³ Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001

³⁴ Spitz 2012 (pg.4)

³⁵ Vellet 2003

³⁶ Please see Appendix A

³⁷ Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001

³⁸ "How did Hitler Happen?" 2017

World War I. He believed the ultimate solution was to collect and eliminate anyone who could not be a part of his master, 'Aryan' race. Many protests and putsches occurred during this time leading many members of the Left-wing Jewish population wondering if they should flee or stay and fight.

Friedl did not believe that fleeing was the answer and felt that she had a duty to stay and fight the rising repressive regime. In 1934, Friedl helped her friends hide their fake passbooks in the Atelier Singer-Dicker studio, however the building was searched by the new government and the forged passports were found³⁹. Friedl was immediately arrested and placed in jail. She remained strong while imprisoned by practicing her sewing skills on the patchy uniforms they were given to wear. During interrogations Friedl did not break and remained silent even though she was absolutely terrified. It was not until Singer was called to testify against her for forging official documents⁴⁰, that she was acquitted. Once released from jail Friedl fled to Prague as a political refugee, in hopes of starting over and forgetting her brief imprisonment. Her imprisonment traumatized Friedl, leading her to paint two main pieces, symbolic of her imprisonment, *Interrogation I*⁴¹ and *Interrogation II*. *Interrogation I* pictures a young individual from behind being questioned by a cruel looking specter and two hands typing on a typewriter. The image she painted was an expression of what she herself had experienced while imprisoned.

Once in Prague, Friedl's outlook on life had changed, proof coming from her own artwork. Friedl was trying to come to terms with her imprisonment and developed a

³⁹ Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001, pg. 21

⁴⁰ Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student" 2021

⁴¹ See Appendix A

different artistic style as a result. She no longer created the work that was expected of a former Bauhaus student, instead she began painting in a metaphorical or symbolic style⁴². However, that was not the only part of Friedl's life that changed. The move itself placed Friedl in one of the Nazi's strongholds in Europe, not an ideal place for a Jew⁴³. Additionally, Friedl's outlook on life also changed to the point where she sought help from Annie Reich, a psychoanalyst and fellow refugee⁴⁴. Reich aided Friedl in uncovering her childhood trauma and helped change Friedl's relationship with herself and the outside world. Friedl learned that it was okay to long for happiness and to seek it in the world. After so many torments and tragedies she endured, she rediscovered who she was as an individual, reclaiming her identity. While in Prague Friedl ended up finding her husband through her family connections.

Friedl sought out her mother's sister, Adela Brandeis, and ended up falling in love with Adela's youngest son, Pavel⁴⁵. Friedl Dicker and Pavel Brandeis married in 1936, giving Friedl Czech citizenship and granting them a few years of happiness together⁴⁶. During this time, it was not uncommon for individuals to marry distant relatives of the family including cousins. After Friedl married she took Pavel's last name and began signing her drawings as Friedl Brandeis (FB). Friedl spent her days spending time with her mother-in-law, worked on renovating homes, and creating textile designs. Friedl had finally found happiness in both her personal and professional life, however the quest for a child was less successful. Friedl diligently took her vitamins and spent every day wishing

⁴² Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001, pg. 22

⁴³ Makarova 1999

⁴⁴ Makarova, Los Angeles: 2001, pg. 22

⁴⁵ Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student" 2021

⁴⁶ Spitz 2012, pg. 5

and praying for the child. Sadly, Friedl had a miscarriage, and would never have her own, biological child. She turned her energies to political involvement, as well as her artwork. Friedl remained as active as she could with the Communist party mainly to protect her beliefs and those, she cared about⁴⁷. While in Prague, she met a fellow activist, Hilde Kothny. They ended up being great friends and helped each other as much as they could. Friedl felt called to fight fascism in the Spanish Civil War by going to Spain, but her commitment to Pavel reorganized her priorities. Once Friedl met Pavel, she was no longer making spur of the moment choices, instead she chose her own happiness, even if it was short-lived.

From 1934-1938 Friedl taught and worked with refugee children. Teaching them lessons she had adapted from Itten that allowed her to establish a strong bond with the children and foster their creativity⁴⁸. Friedl maintained a positive atmosphere when teaching the children which allowed them to form a close bond with Friedl. Even though Friedl did not have her own children, the students she taught absolutely adored her. By November 9th, 1938, Hitler had annexed Sudetenland and was planning to attack the Jews in his new territory⁴⁹. The new government of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia began forcing Jews out of professional jobs; jobs in leadership, medicine, business, and the law. Jewish property owners saw their buildings destroyed among the rubble of their synagogues. Even after they destroyed Friedl's old studio, Friedl remained with her husband, teaching the children, and staying involved in political activities despite the

⁴⁷ Friedl bravely smuggled the lists of the underground communist members out of Vienna (Makarova 2001, pg. 24)

⁴⁸ Makarova 1999

⁴⁹ "Anti-Jewish Policy after the Establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia" 2011

urge to go and fight on the frontlines⁵⁰. Several of Friedl's friends, including Franz Singer, attempted to convince Friedl to flee Europe for her own safety. Friedl had received a visa and many invitations for refuge, but she refused to leave her husband Pavel⁵¹. Friedl could have easily left her husband in order to secure her own safety and try to send for Pavel once she arrived. For Friedl, that was too large of a risk to take, if she could not escape with Pavel, she would not escape at all. Even though the Nazi's initially encouraged Jews to emigrate, by July 1939 the only legal form of emigration was the Centre for Jewish Emigration.⁵² Moreover, as Jews continued to emigrate the number of countries who would accept the fleeing Jewish populations became limited. By the end of the summer, 1939, emigration was no longer a viable option for the Jewish individuals still trapped under Nazi rule.

The Nazi's continued to establish new laws to make life for the Jewish population much more difficult. During the summer of 1938 Friedl and Pavel left the city of Prague and chose to go to Hronov in the Czechoslovakian countryside.⁵³ Pavel grew up here, and Friedl describes, "[i]t is peaceful here...I would not believe even in my final hour that something evil was taking place...⁵⁴" The countryside provided a short-term refuge for Pavel and Friedl to escape from the radical anti-Jewish society the Nazis had created. During this period in the countryside, Friedl worked mostly with pastels and oils to create landscapes, portraits, and still-life pieces⁵⁵. Pavel found work as an accountant at a local

⁵⁰ Makarova 2001, pg.24

⁵¹ Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student" 2021

⁵² "Anti-Jewish Policy after the Establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia" 2011

⁵³ Makarova 2001, pg.25

⁵⁴ Makarova 2001 pg. 25

⁵⁵ Spitz 2012 pg. 5

textile factory while Friedl taught art to local children from Jewish families⁵⁶. She also worked in the textile factory with Pavel⁵⁷. Friedl diligently worked on her pieces and managed to catch the eye of an art dealer she had previously known in Vienna. Paul Weingraf put Friedl's work on display at the Arcadia gallery in London in August of 1940⁵⁸. While Friedl's work was admired by many, it was no longer considered 'true art' by Adolf Hitler. His policies made it difficult for Friedl to continue concentrating on her artwork amidst the rising tides of war. Friedl began finding it difficult to finish her pieces as the external threats she faced became more real every day. In the summers of 1940 and 1941 they rented a room in the village of Ždárky⁵⁹. Friedl and Pavel had both lost their jobs at the textile factory in 1939, but Friedl encouraged Pavel to try carpentry while Friedl continued to teach local children and converse with friends. Friedl was able to send letters to her friends outside of Hronov, and she would count the days until the replies were posted. A great source of strength for Friedl during these times was the words contained in the letters from her friends. Friedl and Pavel moved several more times during their tenure in the countryside.

As anti-Jewish laws became worse, they were forced to move in February 1941 and finally in September 1942⁶⁰. Each time their accommodations grew poorer and smaller. Despite no longer having a sense of home, Friedl and Pavel were able to find solace in each other's company and the aid that their neighbors would give them. Jews were no longer permitted to rent empty housing, forcing Friedl and Pavel to find lodging

⁵⁶ Jewish children were no longer permitted to be in school (Wix 2010, pg.126)

⁵⁷ Makarova 1999

⁵⁸ Friedl Dicker 1919-1923 Bauhaus Student" 2021

⁵⁹ Makarova 2001 pg. 26

⁶⁰ Makarova 2001 pg. 27

with already existing Jewish property owners⁶¹. Despite this, Friedl stayed positive as she wrote in a letter to her friend Hilde, “[d]espite the discomforts, we still have courage and hope...”⁶². Friedl and Pavel were forced to move to protect themselves from the horrors that the Nazi party was enacting upon the Jewish population. By this point Hitler was shipping Jews by the thousands to one of his many concentration camps. By September 1942, Jews had to wear a yellow star on their clothes anytime they went out. They also had separate public areas and transportation and could only buy a limited amount of groceries⁶³. Any other wants or needs of the Brandeis’ came from locals or friends. The locals would assist with cleaning, obtaining extra rations, and would help them keep themselves busy with books and conversation. Friedl especially loved to read as it would give her a different world to escape into, similar to what she had found in her passion for art. However, Friedl began having difficulty with her sight and experienced periods when she could not read or write. Friedl was diagnosed with retina avitaminosis and could only receive medicines through the mail from Hilde⁶⁴. Friedl chose not to paint during her last few months in Hronov partly due to her eyesight, but more so due to a lack of will. Most of Pavel’s family had been deported in the spring of 1942, as well as many of Friedl’s friends.⁶⁵ By the fall, Friedl and Pavel received their own summons for deportation to Theresienstadt.

Friedl and Pavel prepared as best they could for their deportation and received much help from friends and the locals. The locals helped them make trades to obtain the

⁶¹ Frommer 2020

⁶² Makarova 2001 pg. 27

⁶³ Makarova 2001 pg.27

⁶⁴ Makarova 2001 pg.27

⁶⁵ Of whom she drew portraits of often (Makarova 2001 pg.27)

goods they needed for their imminent departure. Friedl would trade her artwork as well as their non-essential belongings for coats, clothes, and food. Once Hilde received word of Friedl's summons she traveled all the way from Hamburg to help her friend prepare. They spent as much time as they could together, a majority of time which occupied with packing and unpacking their suitcases. Jews who received summons were limited in the number of items they could bring with them, only being permitted fifty kilograms per person⁶⁶. Friedl was less concerned about bringing items for her own comfort and more concerned about the children who are going to be in Terezin. She packed some clothes for herself and Pavel, and filled a majority of her suitcase with paper, paint, brushes, pencils, and fabric to make costumes. Friedl also encouraged her students who were also being deported⁶⁷ to pack whatever art supplies or books that they could fit. Friedl and Pavel said goodbye to their friends at the school and began walking to the train station, with an escort from the local police⁶⁸. During their trek they lost some of their belongings and had already lost track of some of their friends and loved ones.

Once they arrived at the station they were loaded onto a somewhat crowded, but decent railway car. Each Jew was given a transport number that would be sewn into their clothes, Friedl's was '548' and Pavel's was '549'.⁶⁹ They had a short stop in Hradec Králové where they boarded a final train, which left them a few miles away from Terezin⁷⁰. They lugged their suitcases for miles before arriving at the gates of their newfound hell. As they entered the camp they were greeted by the sight of confused,

⁶⁶ Rubin 2001 pg.9

⁶⁷ All Eastern Bohemian Jews were deported in the Fall and Winter of 1942 (Wix 2010 pg. 127)

⁶⁸ Makarova 2001 pg.28

⁶⁹ Makarova 2001 pg.28

⁷⁰ Rubin 2001 pg.10

broken-hearted individuals aimlessly walking around in ragged clothing. Their belongings were searched at the 'sluice'⁷¹ and whatever was not taken by the guards they could potentially keep. They received food, bathing, and laundry vouchers, were deloused, given a medical examination, and were asked about their work history and skills.⁷² Pavel who had been recently working in carpentry was sent to the workshops while Friedl was placed in the technical department with the other artists in the camp. Friedl was hoping to work as a Matron, supervising a group of children and taking care of their needs.⁷³ Friedl protested her original assignment and with luck was reassigned to be a Matron in L410, the children's home for girls.⁷⁴ Friedl had the intention coming into Terezin of working with the children because she knew she could make a difference in their lives during their tenure there. She knew the power that art could have to help children forget their current situation and escape into their imagination, a world full of colors and endless possibilities.

The possibilities at Terezin, however, were far from endless. Their days would be stagnant and repetitive, serving the people who only wished them ill. The Jews incarcerated here were governed by a Jewish Council of Elders, made up of the elderly educated individuals who would tell the rest of the Jews what to do. However, the Council of Elders were simply a puppet government for the Nazis, a way for the Nazis to give out rules without receiving backlash for it.⁷⁵ The Council was responsible for giving work details, monitoring the children, issuing housing, keeping financial records, storing

⁷¹ Another name for the arrival point (Makarova 2001 pg.29)

⁷² Thomson 2011 pg.15

⁷³ Makarova 2001 pg.30

⁷⁴ Rubin 2001 pg.11

⁷⁵ Thomson 2011, pg. 18

health records, and choosing the Jews for transportation. The Nazi's saw this as an intelligent solution for keeping order, as most of the Jews in Terezin were educated or professional workers. Work details were distributed based on light, medium, and heavy detail to any Jew over the age of fifteen⁷⁶. The children were given the duty of caring for the gardens, where if they were lucky, they could steal extra food rations.⁷⁷ The rations that were given out on a daily basis were meager and lacked vital nutrition needed to stay healthy. Every day they would receive a cup of weak, black coffee, watery vegetable soup, half a loaf of stale bread, and another watery soup for dinner.⁷⁸ Extra rations were given to the children and those who worked heavy detail, but even that was not enough. Most would take to selling their belongings in exchange for food or giving lessons in exchange for some bread. Friedl however, never charged for her lessons, she only wished to see others happy amidst their slow descent into starvation. One of Friedl's students, Erna Furman wrote, "[i] think Friedl was the only one who didn't take a crumb of bread for lessons, she simply gave herself to us."⁷⁹ Friedl would selflessly travel to different buildings to share her gifts, as housing was divided based on gender and age. She never limited who could receive lessons from her, and even visited the sick and infirmed children in the hospital. However, it was very dangerous for Friedl to do so for several reasons.

Disease spread quickly among the captive Jewish population and would devastate the ranks. There was a hospital to take in the sick, infirmed, and elderly, but medical

⁷⁶ Thomson 2011, pg. 24

⁷⁷ Rubin 2001, pg.23

⁷⁸ Thomson 2011, pg. 22

⁷⁹ Rubin 2001, pg.21

supplies along with beds were limited, and medical professionals were often not fully educated. The conditions they lived under only promoted the spread of diseases like typhus fever, tuberculosis, dysentery, and pneumonia⁸⁰ as their houses were filled with bedbugs, lice, flees, and contagions.⁸¹ About 33,000 people died at Terezin due to disease and starvation out of the estimated 150,000 people that passed through Terezin's walls.⁸² Despite these risks that were inevitable for Friedl to face she still shared her materials and knowledge with those who wanted to create art. Yet, the largest threat Friedl faced in giving art lessons was being caught by the guards and possibly being punished or killed for her actions. Jews would be arrest for any number of reasons including, walking where they were not permitted, smoking, speaking with anyone who was not Jewish, or if they were in possession of illegal goods.⁸³ Jews would also be expected to inform on each other if they caught someone in possession of contraband or committing an illegal act, such as stealing food. It was a difficult world to tolerate let alone live somewhat comfortably in. The activities that the artists and musicians would put on for the children could not always be approved leading to secret gatherings in the attics and basements of buildings that were not frequently monitored. Those who were running activities, often Friedl, would have the students take turns guarding, and doing other activities to ensure they were safe while they work⁸⁴. These isolated locations gave the Jews a place to congregate without the terror of being beaten by a guard looming over their heads. It was

⁸⁰ Shasha 2004

⁸¹ Thomson 2011, pg. 20

⁸² Barickman 2020

⁸³ Thomson 2011, pg. 18

⁸⁴ Makarova 2001, pg.31

the plays, art, reading, and writing lessons that were given by kind intellectuals that provided a reprieve to the daily torture they endured.

Friedl was one of many intellectuals stationed to live with and care for the children, who were also responsible for their education. Home L410 housed girls ages ten to sixteen divided by age into rooms with triple bunk beds that could sleep twenty-four people per room.⁸⁵ There would be one teacher or matron, assigned to each room, with the teachers being supervised by the director of the home, Walter Freud.⁸⁶ The teachers were expected to supervise the children night and day and they would take turns on night duty. While all the teachers were intellectuals with a love for children, not all were overly well-versed or prepared to teach Judaism. However, the teachers knew how important the physical and mental state of a child is for their development. The Nazi's banned any formal education from taking place, but the teachers were able to give lessons under the guise of a 'cultural leisure activity'.⁸⁷ Teachers could give lectures on their experiences and studies, while painters and theatrical professionals could give lessons and put on shows and displays. The teachers began giving the children time and the ability to exercise and play in order to provide a therapeutic relief to the children under high duress.⁸⁸ Friedl was able to not only give art lessons, but also could design costumes and set pieces for the plays. Friedl would spend most of her time caring for the twenty-four girls under her charge, which would have been overwhelming at times.⁸⁹ As one child would need escorting to the bathroom, another one would need comforting as they cried

⁸⁵ Makarova 2001, pg. 30

⁸⁶ Freud served as director till the end of 1943, and was replaced by Willy Groag, a Zionist (Makarova 2001, pg. 30)

⁸⁷ Makarova 1999

⁸⁸ Glazer 1999

⁸⁹ Rubin 2001, pg. 12

for their parents, and another would need to get their medications. Friedl was finally a mother, but not in a way she could have imagined for herself. She suddenly went from being barren, to having a whole group of girls of different ages and personalities to keep safe and cared for.

One of the children Friedl worked with was Erika Taussigová, a young Jewish girl from Prague. Erika inspired this research project, as it was her drawing that led me to Friedl and the impact she had made. Dr. Madden discovered Erika's drawing, "A World Behind Bars"⁹⁰, while he was traveling in Prague. Erika was only seven years old when she entered Terezin along with her parents Margarethe and Paul Taussig on December 17th, 1941.⁹¹ Children were almost immediately separated from their parents, leaving the child alone to understand their new surroundings. The teachers stationed to watch over the children were not only the child's educators but also served as a temporary parental presence. While it is uncertain if Erika was ever housed under Friedl's care, she spent a significant amount of time with Friedl as twenty-three drawings of Erika's have been recovered. Erika came to love and admire Friedl so much that she even dedicated one of her drawings to her teacher on her birthday. The drawing was titled "Heart with a Horseshoe," upon which she wrote "Fir frau Brandjas-Erika", on April 8th, 1944.⁹² Erika had grown close to Friedl over the two years they spent together. The drawing is both a gift for Friedl but also a way for Erika to thank Friedl for her lessons and comfort. Friedl had been able to develop real relationships with the children through her positive company and her own love of children.

⁹⁰ See Appendix B

⁹¹ "Erika Taussigová" 2016

⁹² Eichenberg 1964, pg. 66

Friedl encouraged her students to draw and foster their imagination. However, as the popularity for Friedl's classes would grow, there were not enough materials for everyone to paint at a single time. Friedl was quite innovative in coming up with tasks for the children to complete while others were drawing. She would instruct one student to be in charge and organize the students, another would pass out materials, while another could write about their previous drawings and what it means to them.⁹³ Friedl took several art classes as a child and as she grew in hopes of being an artist, but she did not look at her own classes that way. Rather they were to encourage "...creativity and independence, to awaken the imagination, to strengthen the children's powers of observation and appreciation of reality."⁹⁴ Art did not discriminate against who could create it or what can be considered art, as it is all in the eyes of the beholder. Friedl knew this and did not impede any child from spending time learning from and drawing with Friedl. Friedl could only imagine the trauma some of the children had endured in their hometowns, during transportation, and since being in a concentration camp. She did her best to assist them without getting emotional, but the sight of a child mourning their parents lost at gunpoint, was too much for anyone to bear. Friedl not only carried her trauma from her childhood and early life but saw and empathized with the children and took the time to understand their trauma.

Friedl was capable of being there for her students and guided them on how to use art to their benefit. The children had endured abuse and shaming in their towns, lost friends, and family, and were sent away from all they knew to live a life of discomfort

⁹³ Makarova 2001, pg.31

⁹⁴ Makarova 2001, pg.31

and neglect. Fifteen thousand children entered through the gates of Terezin, but only one hundred of these children would survive to see freedom outside of Terezin's cursed walls.⁹⁵ Children were expected to live carefree, imagination-driven, childhoods, but for the children trapped in camps, it was no longer afforded. Most of these children had never gone a day without seeing and spending time with their parents, and now were deprived of a parents love and protection regularly. They had to seek comfort in each other and the new adults they found themselves being cared for by. Friedl excelled as a Matron to her students, always ensuring they were cared for before she would take time to care for herself. Friedl had worked with refugee children before using a Bauhaus-based teaching method. But her new pupils were not living in the same circumstances as before; Friedl changed her methods accordingly. Friedl utilized her past education, trauma, and developed skills to establish a healthy connection with the children to provide them with a support system. Friedl's overall teaching method was a combination of progressive ideals and lessons she had learned from her Bauhaus masters.⁹⁶ Friedl had learned from several masters in her field, observing different teaching styles and learning which could be applied to her current situation.

One of Franz Cizek's child-focused methodology involves inspiring to create art that replicates their own reactions to past experiences.⁹⁷ Friedl copied Cizek's methods to a degree, encouraging students to use their imagination and to make self-expressive art pieces. Cizek was well-known for his excellent work with children that yielded great responses them. Friedl's teachings that were lightly based on Cizek's lessons were

⁹⁵ Eichenberg 1964, pg. 81

⁹⁶ Leshnoff 2006, pg. 92

⁹⁷ Leshnoff 2006, pg.93

outlined in a short essay written by Friedl in the summer of 1943, called “On Children’s Drawings.”⁹⁸ Friedl presented her essay to her fellow teachers in Terezin to help them when working with the children. Friedl believed that one of the most important ideas for a teacher to follow was to know when to intercede with a student and when to hold back. Friedl believed that “knowledge brought to the child at an inappropriate time...will be perceived as an invasion into his world and will be met with a lack of enthusiasm and with failure”⁹⁹. A teacher’s influence is a powerful thing, so knowing when to extend your knowledge and influence is critical for a child’s own development. Friedl’s teachings also drew upon the lessons of another impactful master from the Bauhaus, Johannes Itten.

Johannes Itten’s lessons reflected those of Franz Cizek, but over time they became more progressive. Itten stressed the importance of allowing the artist to create genuine art through the limitation of ‘mechanical learning’.¹⁰⁰ Itten inspired his students to use any materials or methods that suit them to create their pieces naturally. He wanted any person studying under him to have their own style and personality shining through to their artwork. Friedl felt a strong connection with Itten as he pushed her to find her own place in the world of art along with helping her discover her own artistic style. Friedl created different broad exercises for her students to perform.¹⁰¹ Many of these lessons focused on art’s rhythm and simple ways to create art. These lessons helped the children liberate their minds from their reality through random scribbles and shapes. Friedl

⁹⁸ Wix 2010, pg. 129

⁹⁹ Leshnoff 2006, pg. 94

¹⁰⁰ Leshnoff 2006, pg.94

¹⁰¹ See Appendix B

believed “[d]rawing must free and make full use of such sources and energies as creativity and independence...”.¹⁰² A teacher’s job was to strengthen a child’s natural abilities, allowing that child to express themselves through their unique creative skills. Even students who could not draw, discovered in Friedl’s lessons that you did not require great skill rather the means to express oneself as they see fit. One of the most impactful lessons Friedl learned from Itten was that art acted as a bridge between spoken words, sounds, color, movement, and shape.¹⁰³ Friedl and Itten alike would come up with exercises that would allow the children to have their own perception and ideas about. They would act out a thunderstorm, then draw it on paper, listen to a song and draw the rhythm they heard. Friedl’s art classes helped the children express their feelings of fear, hope, and defiance.¹⁰⁴ Erna Furman, wrote about the art classes in a letter stating, “we did a lot of ‘liberating’ exercises—drawing circles and squiggles, letting our hands go and using scissors freely.”¹⁰⁵ The children were expected to be obedient youths, but through Friedl’s lessons the children could find their individuality and express it, even if only for an hour or two a day.

While in Terezin, Friedl gave much of her spare time and art materials to the children, only permitting herself to draw and paint occasionally. She knew how quickly they would run out of materials and tried to ration them as best as she could. When they ran low on materials, Friedl’s friends would take paper from the administrative offices. They did not see this as stealing from the Nazis, rather they called it ‘organizing’.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Leshnoff 2006, pg.95

¹⁰³ Makarova 2001, pg.11

¹⁰⁴ Linesch 2004, pg. 58

¹⁰⁵ Leshnoff 2006, pg.95

¹⁰⁶ Eichenberg, 1964, pg.14

When Friedl did decide to create art, she chose not to depict the horrible surroundings she found herself in. Rather she painted landscapes from out the windows, flowers, fellow prisoners, nudes, and made designs for theater fabrications.¹⁰⁷ Other artists within the camp were recording their daily lives and documenting the atrocities they lived through. This was how they felt they would survive their time in Terezin, by drawing the conditions and lifestyle they experienced daily. Though, if any of these drawings were found by the S.S. the artists would have been arrested and taken to the Little Fortress for interrogation and death. The Nazis did everything they could to prevent news of the real conditions of the camps from escaping into the outside world. Friedl had a different focus, sharing art with children. The children gave Friedl strength to survive in Terezin just as much as Friedl's care and lessons would strengthen the children. Friedl always made sure to have her students sign and date their drawings. She wanted the children to be proud of their creations. Friedl collected and kept all the drawings that the students made, and she would grade them on a one to six scale. She would judge them based on "[s]trength, [i]ntensity, [d]imensions, [f]orm, [c]haracter, [c]omposition, and [c]olor."¹⁰⁸ After each lesson, she would gather up the drawings and analyze them for signs of a child's development, trauma, or outlook on life. Friedl had experience working as an art therapist and learned how to decipher a piece of art to find out information about its creator. By analyzing her student's art, Friedl was able to connect and help each student as they needed and could find patterns and correlations between the drawings. Friedl was very proud of the artwork her students produced, so much so, that in July 1943 she put on

¹⁰⁷ Makarova 2001, pg.32

¹⁰⁸ Makarova 2001, pg.32

an exhibition.¹⁰⁹ The exhibition was located in the basement of L 410 and contained all of the children's drawings for the prisoners of Terezin to look at. Friedl gave the children a chance to present their work to friends and family and began to analyze her own experiences working with children.

It was the children's drawings that led Friedl to want to record her own art teaching experiences. She hoped to complete her own study on the use of art therapy with children based on her own encounters. By the end of the summer of 1943, Friedl had completed her study and presented the lecture, "On Children's Drawings" to her fellow teachers in Terezin. Friedl saw the artwork produced by the children to be an example of "the greatest possible freedom for the child."¹¹⁰ Friedl wanted adults to nurture childhoods rather than rushing a child to become an adult. She felt it was important to allow the child to grow and to foster their natural abilities. Friedl's summer exhibition was so successful that she even received an award that was usually only permitted for members of the Council of Elders and other significant prisoners. Friedl had permission to move into a room under the stairs with her husband, Pavel. Between Friedl's design skills and her husband's carpentry skills and access, Friedl designed a bedroom complete with mismatch beds, chairs, and a shelf.¹¹¹ Friedl turned a small closet under the stairs of L 410 into a cozy room for her and Pavel. Friedl would draw the plans and dimensions while Pavel would use excess materials to build the furniture during his non-working hours. With Friedl's urging they went on to design and build furniture for others in the camp so they could also get a sense of being home.

¹⁰⁹ Barickman 2020

¹¹⁰ Makarova 2001, pg.32

¹¹¹ Makarova 2001, pg.32

Friedl would have the children assist in decorating the rooms she designed and would even decorate the children's' bunks with ornamental sheets hanging on each child's bed.¹¹² The children could personalize their beds hence granting them a sense of safety and homeliness. Friedl also designed several living rooms for herself to escape into when she needed her own space. The skills Friedl learned at the Bauhaus were critical to her successes in Terezin. Additionally, Friedl's time spent in interior design prior to her captivity resulted in an uncanny ability to turn even the most barren of apartments into a cozy and comfortable home to live in.¹¹³ Some days Friedl would invite friends or children to come and have a chat in one of her rooms. Through her construction of rooms, she provided another escape from their harsh reality and gave them a sense of normalcy. Friedl would also sometimes choose to hold an art class in one of her rooms, to provide a change of scenery. Friedl used all her skills and past experiences to positively impact the children of Terezin, in a way that preserved parts of their childhood. The concentration camps were meant to hold and break anyone who passes through their gates. The captive population had their dignity, spirit, and personality taken away from them and for the children their childhood was stolen. Friedl's spirit and classes returned some dignity and power to the Jewish population as art was a free tool that Friedl encouraged everyone to use.

Another part of the arts that Friedl, with the help of other artists, exposed the children to was theater. Friedl's role of providing fun activities for the children to participate helped to bring some joy instead of fear. Friedl was an art therapist, who used

¹¹² Makarova 2001, pg.33

¹¹³ Eichenberg 1964, pg.12

art therapy protocols to help dislodge any issues in a child's mind.¹¹⁴ Theater posed a special playtime activity for the students as there were multiple jobs for a child to choose from. Some could help Friedl design and make costumes, others could help build and decorate the set, and still others could act in the play or help direct it. One of the theatrical productions, Friedl put on was called, "The Little Fireflies." The girls from L 410 would practice their lines in their rooms and ended up performing the play thirty-two times.¹¹⁵ The girls from L 414 acted out another play, "The Adventures of a Girl in the Promised Land." The children would light up as they painted the set pieces or tried on their costumes. The theater became a beacon of hope for adults and children alike, as it provided another means to escape from their cruel reality.

Terezin was built to deceive the outside world into believing that this was a culturally rich place where Jews could flourish and live-in peace. However, conditions were far from healthy or safe for the Jewish population. Transports would drop off new prisoners of all ages to Terezin, while transports going east initially would take adult populations to extermination camps. It was not until September 1943 that the transports going east included children, the first one taking 285 children.¹¹⁶ Friedl knew some of these children as well as heard the rumors of certain death in the east by means of extermination camps. It was heartbreaking for Friedl to say good-bye to these children because she realized she would be outliving the children she had grown to know and care for. She had hoped to help the children re-enter the world after their captivity, but in reality, they would never totally escape the horrors and traumas endured in the camp.

¹¹⁴ Glazer 1999

¹¹⁵ Makarova 2001, pg. 34

¹¹⁶ Rubin 2001, pg.25

Despite seeing almost 300 children sent to their deaths, Friedl kept her composure and continued to help the children that remained, and those that would arrive. In May of 1944, Friedl's niece, Eva Brandeis, entered Terezin without her parents to support her.¹¹⁷ Friedl almost immediately began caring for Eva, and together with Pavel they formed their own small, makeshift family.

The Nazi's kept up false pretenses so well, they even managed to deceive the Danish king and the International Red Cross.¹¹⁸ King Christian was concerned about his people in the camps and sent the Red Cross to investigate the living conditions and how his own people were faring there. The Nazi's prepared ahead of time for the visit and began the process of beautification of the camp. As part of their steps to make Terezin look like a cozy community they sent 7,500 prisoners to extermination camps to limit the looks of overcrowding.¹¹⁹ The remaining prisoners were expected to help deceive the outside world, by cleaning the streets and decorating the camp. The entirety of the camp was cleaned, and during the duration of their visit life slightly improved for those imprisoned. The beautification process started in late 1943 and continued until June when the visit was planned for. The Council of Elders assigned tasks for every group, whether it be planting gardens, renovating, painting buildings, or compiling cultural activities.¹²⁰ By the time the Red Cross arrived in June 1944, Terezin looked exactly like what a pleasant Jewish settlement was expected to look like. The Red Cross left, spreading the false news that the Nazi's planted to continue deceiving the outside world. However, as

¹¹⁷ Makarova 2001, pg.35

¹¹⁸ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum 2021

¹¹⁹ Rubin 2001, pg.36

¹²⁰ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum 2021

the camp was already beautified the Nazis decided to film a propaganda video inside Terezin. The Nazis sent a film crew from Berlin to capture the wonderful lives the Jews were granted in concentration camps. The video was titled *Theresienstadt: A Jewish Settlement*, but the Jews had another name for it, *The Führer Gives the Jews a City*.¹²¹ The Nazis chose the healthiest of prisoners to be seen by both the Red Cross and in the video and would hide any sick or frail from view. Overall, it was a successful tactic for the Nazis, but it came too late as rumors of the wars end were already spreading.

With the rumors, came re-found hope and strength for the prisoners in Terezin. For too long they had wondered how long they would have to survive within its walls. Friedl began drawing and painting with newfound determination and drive. Many other painters and artists in Terezin were creating more art with the hopes of it reaching outside of the camp. However, much of the art created showed the reality of Terezin complete with disease, punishments, death, and trauma. To draw and reveal the actual conditions in Terezin was a crime punishable by death, so the artists would hide these works in attics and basements. František Strass had connections inside the camp and would buy these pieces of art and smuggle them out of Terezin to an art dealer in Prague.¹²² From there, the pieces would be sent to Switzerland where they would be safe from the Nazis reach. However, the Nazis found out and arrested Strass along with the artists involved. They were taken to the Little Fortress where they were tortured for information, and some were killed. Hope was a powerful thing in Terezin, one the Nazis had hoped to snuff out. But

¹²¹ Rubin 2001, pg.36

¹²² Rubin 2001, pg.38

as news of the Germans losses and the Allies gaining ground entered Terezin, hope grew, and prisoners began thinking about their futures again.

During Friedl's last few months in Terezin she created some of her greatest works. She made landscapes, portraits of her friends, abstract art, and costume designs. Friedl never let the camp break her spirit, as by this point the children looked to her as beacon of hope. When Friedl's birthday came along on July 30th, her students gave her a bouquet of flowers they picked outside the camp when they were gardening.¹²³ Friedl painted the bouquet so their beauty could be preserved forever. Friedl received birthday wishes from friends both inside and outside of the camp. She even had a musical composition from her friend, Viktor Ullmann, dedicated to her. The joy she felt on this day was insurmountable to the pain she would feel in the coming fall. On September 28th, 1944, Pavel received his own summons to embark on a transport destined for the construction of a new concentration camp.¹²⁴ Friedl appealed to Egon Redlich to permit her to go on the same transport as Pavel, but her proposal was rejected. Friedl had refused to leave Pavel before, and she was determined not to be separated from him. Friedl volunteered herself for the next transport, despite her friends begging her not to. Friedl prepared for her departure by giving out her remaining belongings and art supplies. She collected all of the drawings from the students, packed them into two suitcases, and hid them in the attic of L 410 with the help of Willy Groag.¹²⁵ Children and adults alike were sad to see Friedl go, but she did not leave alone.

¹²³ Makarova 2001, pg.35

¹²⁴ Makarova 2001, pg.35

¹²⁵ Makarova 2001, pg.36

On October 6th, 1944, Friedl's transport left Terezin with 1,550 people on board, their destination unknown.¹²⁶ A majority of the transport was made up of women and children, even nursing infants. This provided sense of security for those on board; no one would expect the Nazis to be capable of murdering newborn infants. They were told that they were going to a new camp near Dresden to be reunited with their husbands, fathers, and brothers.¹²⁷ The journey was long, but Friedl was not alone, she had about thirty of her students on the transport with her. They heard bombings as their train continued on into Poland eventually stopping at Auschwitz. By the time they arrived on October 8th, the gas chambers had already reached their daily quota. By this point, Friedl knew she did not arrive at the same place as Pavel. She only hoped he would survive, as her death was guaranteed by this point. On October 9th, 1944, Friedl Dicker-Brandeis entered the gas chambers, and never walked out again.¹²⁸ The Nazis had managed to kill Friedl, but her voice lives on through her artwork and her children's artwork.

The artwork that would come out of the Holocaust became some of the most passionate and popular art to be created during that period. The art told the stories of the Holocausts victims and continued to live on well passed that of their makers. After the war, the children's artwork was recovered by Willy Groag and he delivered it to the Jewish Community Center in Prague, in August 1945.¹²⁹ Initially, no one showed any interest in these drawings, but later these drawings would make up their own exhibition attracting international appeal. Pavel Brandeis did indeed survive the war and went on to

¹²⁶ Rubin 2001, pg.39

¹²⁷ Makarova 2001, pg.38

¹²⁸ Sidenberg 2017

¹²⁹ Sidenberg 2017

remarry and have three children of his own. Friedl's drawings were left to his children who dispersed them to Holocaust Centers worldwide.¹³⁰ Friedl's and the children's drawings continue to bring life and hope even though most of them were made when life was hopeless. In the words of one of Friedl's students, Edith Kramer, "Friedl will speak to people for as long as there is paper and pastel chalk. That is all any of us can hope for after we die: that what one has made, what one has been, remains alive with one's fellow man. One cannot ask for more."¹³¹ The impact Friedl made on the children of Terezin, lasted well past her lifetime, and continues to impact new people every day. The Nazis were not successful in their attempt to silence Friedl, as her voice will continue to sound for the rest of time

¹³⁰ Makarova 2001, pg.40

¹³¹ Makarova 2001, pg.40

Fair Use Statement

The artwork being presented in this exhibition, directly correlates with my honor's senior thesis, "Living with Hope: The Life and Story of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis." Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and a majority of her students perished during the Holocaust, leaving behind works of art. These pieces represent their lives and their stories that were harshly cut off. The exhibition is a chance for their voices to be heard again, and to pay tribute to the lives lost during this horrific event. The exhibition would also provide an opportunity to further learning in regard to the Holocaust and, more specifically, the culture in Terezin. The works of art chosen for this exhibition have been compiled from books, websites, and museums.

Each image tells a different story about the creator and who they were. It is through seeing and discussing these images that we bring attention to the importance of their lives and pay homage to their memories. These images make the holocaust personal and real to those who chance upon them. An exhibition of the children's' art would provide new way of viewing the Holocaust, from the eyes of a child. Students learn the facts about the Holocaust, but nothing of the lives lost. These sketches and drawings give their beholder a glimpse into their lives, the pain they suffered, the joy experienced, and the hope that came from creating their pictures. The images will only be used for educational and exhibition purposes.

Appendix A: Friedl's Artwork



“Sitter with Wings,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1920.

In this piece the subject is sitting with its head bent low. The figure has wings to show the possibility of freedom, but she is being held back.

Brandeis, Friedl. Sitter with Wings. c. 1920. Jewish Museum in Prague. Jewish Women's Archive. Web. 18 Oct 2021.

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/dicker-brandeis-friedl>.

“Alpine Landscape,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1919-1923

This piece from Friedl's time in art school, was made with graphite on paper. She had a natural ability in creating landscapes that shows both depth and light. She later would design art lessons for her students, including a study of light and dark, similar to this image.

Brandeis, Friedl. Alpine Landscape. c.1919-1923. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 22 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/friedlscabinet/>.





“Lorenzo – Costume for the Merchant of Venice,” by Friedl Dicker, 1924.

Staged by Berthold Viertel in his theater in Berlin. Friedl had much experience working in the theater and designing modern and tasteful costumes for the productions. She used these skills in Terezin, to create costumes for her students to perform in.

Brandeis, Friedl. Lorenzo – Costume for the Merchant of Venice. c. 1924. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 24 Oct 2021.

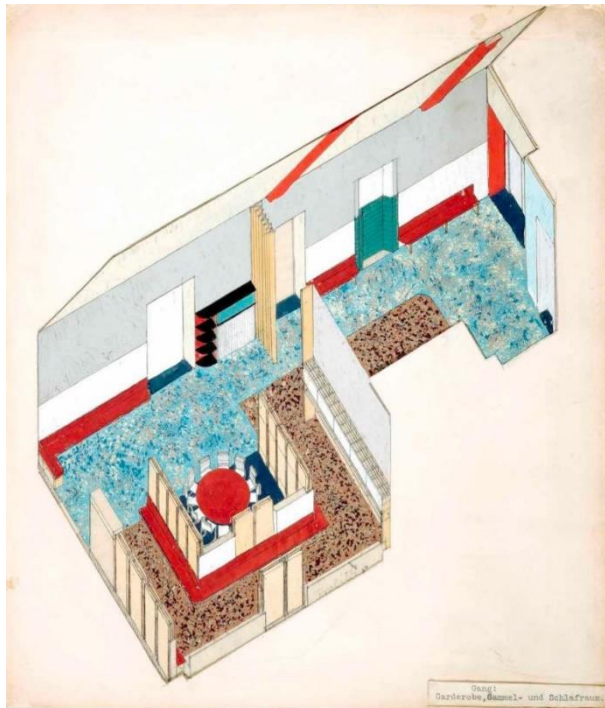
<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/friedlscabinet/>.

“Design for the Montessori Kindergarten,” by Friedl Dicker Brandeis, 1930.

Another design from the Atelier Singer-Dicker, that featured Friedl’s groundbreaking stackable chairs that set the new standard for classroom learning.

Brandeis, Friedl. Design for the Montessori Kindergarten. c. 1930. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 20 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/friedlscabinet/>.





“Design for the Reconstruction of the August and Hilda Heriot House,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1932.

One of Friedl’s and Singer’s designs made at the Atelier Singer-Dicker, in Vienna. Between Singer’s architecture skills and Friedl’s innovative designs they were extremely successful

Brandeis, Friedl and Franz Singer. Design for the Reconstruction of the August and Hilda Heriot House. c. 1932. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 22 Oct 2021.

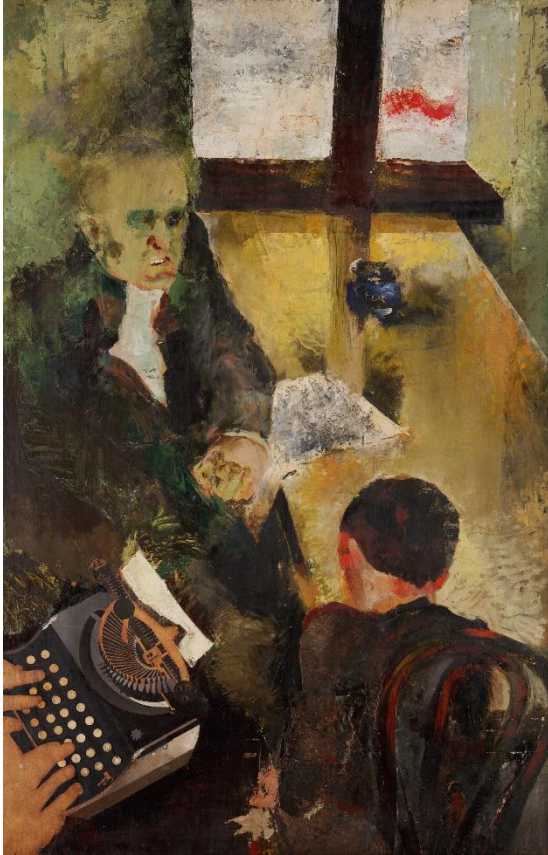
“So sieht sie aus, mein Kind, diese Welt” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1933.

Translation: ‘This Is How it Looks Like, My Child, This World’ 1933

This black and white agitprop poster, created by Friedl, showing a newborn baby surrounded by Hitler, his armies, and war, attacked Hitler’s campaign. The lack of color represents how dark a time they were living in, and the pain that would be felt by a newborn being brought into a warzone.

Brandeis, Friedl. So sieht sie aus mein Kind, diese Welt. c. 1933. Mumok Collection. Web. 18 October.2021. <https://www.mumok.at/en/so-sieht-sie-aus-mein-kind-diese-welt/>.





“Interrogation I,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1935

Friedl’s inspiration to create art came from many aspects of her life, including the time she was jailed and interrogated for illegal political activities. The experience scared Friedl, but in order for herself to heal from the encounter she expressed her feelings in this piece. The interrogator represents the white, politically corrupt man in power, versus a young boy showing the innocence and fear felt while being interrogated.

Brandeis, Friedl. Interrogation I. c. 1935. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/friedlscabinet/>.

“Dream,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1935.

This piece provides an example of Friedl’s abstract art. In it features the shapes individuals without faces.

Brandeis, Friedl. Dream. c.1935. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 30 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/friedlscabinet/>.





"View from the window in Františkovy Lázně," by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1936.

This piece features an open window and a chair. Representing that there are periods where we reach our limit, sitting down, but the world of opportunity still blooms outside the window.

Brandeis, Friedl. Views from the window in Františkovy Lázně. c. 1936. Jewish Museum in Prague. Jewish Women's Archive. Web. 18 Oct 2021. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/dicker-brandeis-friedl>.

"Maria Brandeis with Knitting," by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1938-1942.

A majority of the portraits Friedl painted were of friends and family she met during her time in Hronov's Countryside. Friedl and Maria spent a lot of time together working on knitting projects and they became close friends.

Brandeis, Friedl. Maria Brandeis with Knitting. c. 1938-1942. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.>





"Lady in a car / Imaginary self-portrait," by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1940.

Friedl is once again sitting in this image looking out the window. She had a limited station, as she was a woman, and she is looking out into the world from her own captivity.

Brandeis, Friedl. Lady in a car. c. 1940. Jewish Museum in Prague. Jewish Women's Archive. Web. 18 Oct 2021. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/dicker-brandeis-friedl>.

"Portrait of a Young Woman with a Lace Collar," by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1940-1944.

After Friedl's change in art style, she created several portraits of friends, family, strangers, and even people she just met. The common theme of a woman sitting, is repetitive throughout her art. This piece, showing a young woman sitting and looking off to the side represents Friedl's determination to break free from societies standards and live her own life.

Brandeis, Friedl. Portrait of a young woman with a lace-collar. c. 1940-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Jewish Women's Archive. Web. 18 Oct 2021. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/dicker-brandeis-friedl>.





“Wild Flowers,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1942-1944

Friedl Dicker-Brandeis use of color and an almost loose depiction of flowers represents how beauty is often imperfect. Friedl used art to capture the beauty she saw in the world. These flowers she drew, could have been the same flowers that her students gave her on her birthday in 1944.

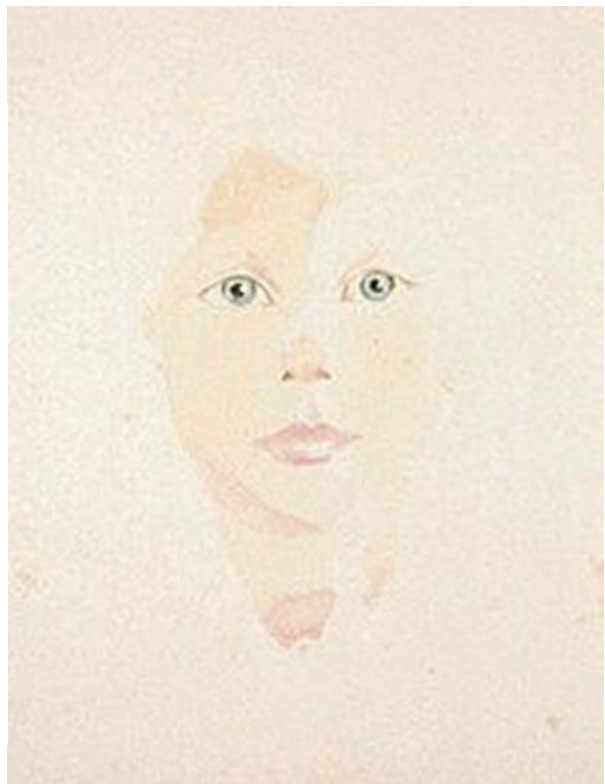
Brandeis, Friedl. Wild Flowers. c.1942-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 22 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/friedlscabinet/>.

“Child’s Face,” by Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, 1944.

Watercolor on paper depicting the innocent face of a child. Attention is immediately drawn to the eyes, wide with awe or curiosity. The face is unfinished allowing the viewer to fill in the missing pieces.

Brandeis, Friedl. Child’s Face. c 1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Friedl Dicker-Brandeis: Vienna 1898- Auschwitz 1944. Elena Makarova. Tallfellow/ Every Picture Press: Hong Kong, 2001. 187. Print.



Appendix B: Children's Artwork



“The World Behind Bars,”
by Erika Taussig, 1944.

This photo started this thesis project, Dr. Madden took a picture of this piece while at Pinkas Synagogue in Prague. Can also be found in the ...I Never Saw Another Butterfly Collection

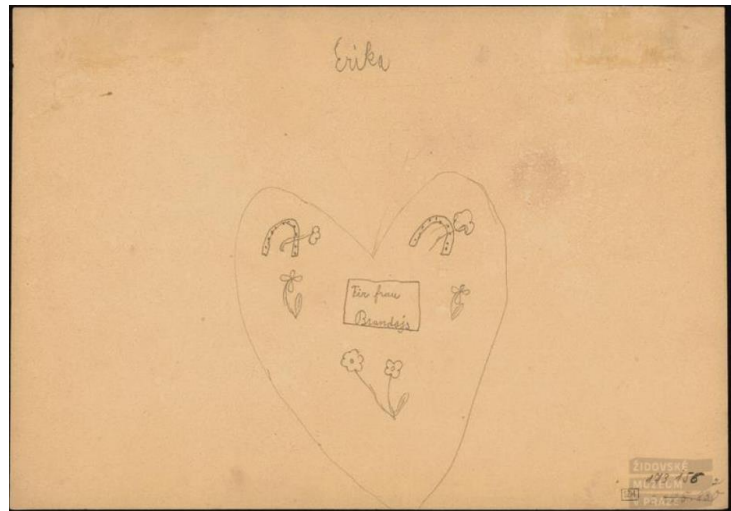
Taussig, Erika. The World Behind Bars. c.1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. ...I Never Saw Another Butterfly... Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp 1942-1944. Fritz Eichenberg. McGraw Hill: New York, 1964. 12. Print.

“Für Frau Brandeis,” by
Erika Taussig, 1944.

Erika drew this drawing for Friedl's 46th birthday. The image pictures flowers and horseshoes, symbols of luck and hope surrounded by a heart.

Taussig, Erika. Für Frau Brandeis. c. 1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collectio-n-research/collect-ions-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Underwater Fantasy,” by Ruth Gutmannová (1930–1944), Undated (1943–1944).

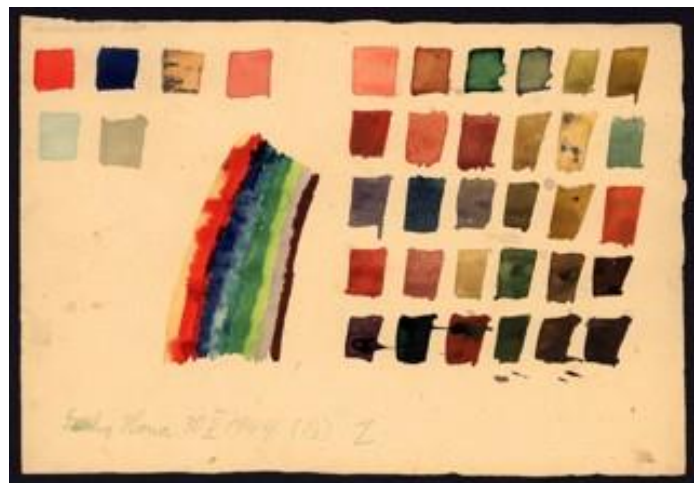
Watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 cm, Signed on the verso: Gutmann Ruth, L 410, Heim 28, 13 Jahre.

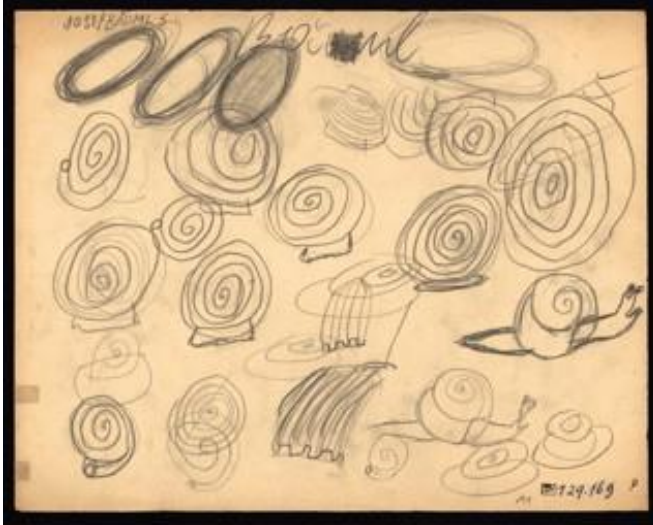
Gutmannová, Ruth. Underwater Fantasy. c. 1930-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 29 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Exercise – Color Theory,” by Hana Lustigová (1931–44), May 30, 1944.

Watercolor and graphite on paper, 17.2 x 25.2 cm, Signed and dated LL: Lustig Hana 30.5.1944, 13 Z.

Lustigová, Hana. Exercise – Color Theory. c.1931-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 29 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection-s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Drawing Exercise – Relaxing the Hand, Rhythm”, by Josef Bäuml (1931–44), Undated (1943–44).

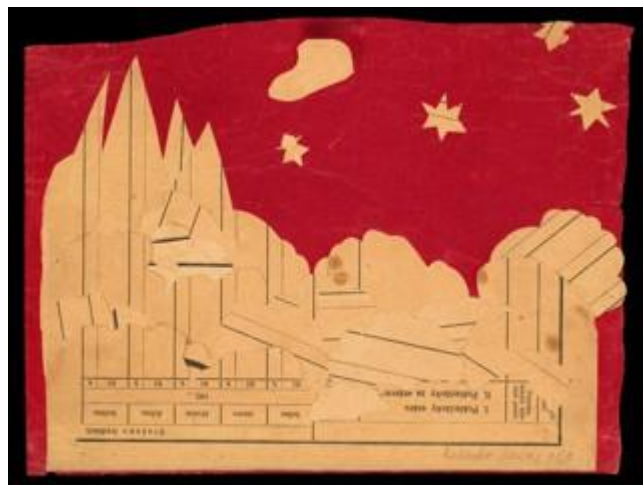
Graphite on paper, 25 x 31.2 cm,
Signed UL: Josef Bäuml 5.
Provenance.

Bäuml, Josef. Drawing Exercise – Relaxing the Hand, Rhythm. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 27 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Dream,” by Helena Mändlová (1930–44), Undated (1943).

Paper collage of old printed forms, 20.5 x 27 cm, Signed on the verso UL: Helene Mändl N72, Jahrgang 1930, XV. Stunde / and LR: Helenka Mändl 28 B.

Mändlová, Helena. Dream. c.1943. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 27 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Landscape with a River and Two Figures,” by Soňa Fischerová (1931-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Watercolor on paper, 22 x 29,9 cm, Signed UL: Sonja Fischer XIV V.

Fischerová, Soňa. Landscape with a River and Two Figures. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 26 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Airing Mattresses in the Garden,” by Irena Karplusová (1930-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite, pastel an colored pencils on paper, 20,3 x 29,8 cm, Signed LL: Irena Karplusová Heim 13. Provenance

Karplusová, Irena. Airing Mattresses in the Garden. c.1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 25 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Urban Scenery,” by Gertruda Kestlerová (1932-1944), 5. 4. 1944.

Graphite, pastel and colored pencils on paper, 20,5 x 30,8 cm, Signed LL: Trůda Kestlerová, signed LR: II. skupina 5. dubna.

Kestlerová, Gertruda. Urban Scenery. c.1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 27 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Forest,” by Vilém Eisner (1933-1943), Undated (1943).

Watercolor on paper, 15,2 x 21,3 cm, Signed LR: V. V. Eisner.

Eisner, Vilém. Forest. c.1943. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“House/Interior,” Jiří Mahler (1935-1944), 21. 6. 1944.

Watercolor on paper, 14,7 x 21,2 cm, Signed on the recto and verso UL: Jirka Mahler 21. 6. 1944.

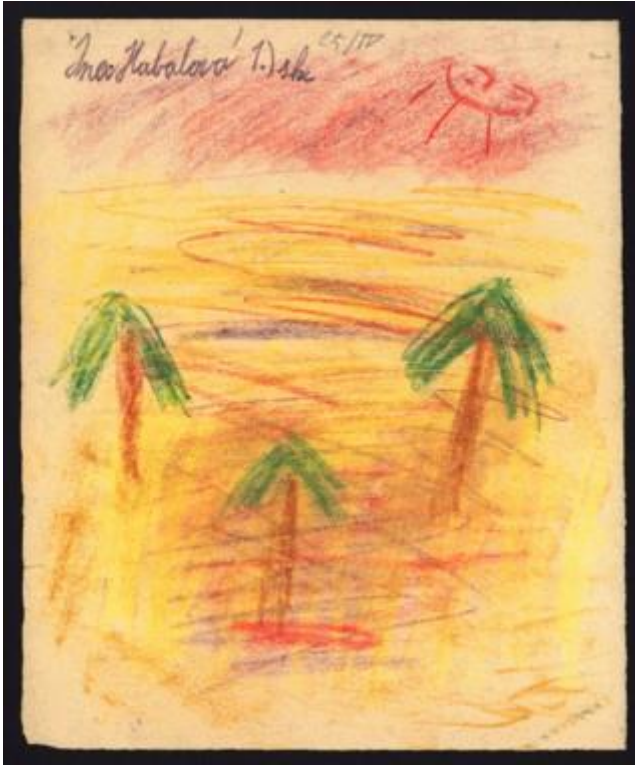
Mahler, Jiří. House/Interior. c.1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 29 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“A Figure by a Bunk,” by Bedřich Hoffmann (1932-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite on paper, 17,8 x 23,5 cm, Signed LR: Hoffmann 7 L 417 X.

Hoffman, Bedřich. A Figure by a Bunk. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 30 Oct 2021. [https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/](https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection-s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/).





“Oasis,” by Jindřiška (Ina) Habalová (1932 – survived), 25. 4. 1944.

Pastel on paper, 21,5 x 17,2 cm,
Signed UL: Ina Habalová 1. sk.

Habalová, Jindřiška. Oasis. c. 1944.
Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28
Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“By a Swimming Pool,” by Jindřiška (Ina) Habalová (1932 – survived).

25. 4. 1944, Pastel on paper, 21,5 x
17,2 cm, Signed UL: Ina Habalová
1. sk.

Habalová, Jindřiška. By a
Swimming Pool. c. 1944. Jewish
Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct
2021. [https://
www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-
n-research/collections-funds/visual-
arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-
terezin-ghetto/](https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/).





“Memories of Home,” by Heinrich Brössler (1934 – survived), Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite and watercolor on paper, 14,7 x 21,1 cm, Signed LR: III B 21. 6. J. Brössler.

Brössler, Heinrich. Memories of Home. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 27 Oct 2021.

[https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/](https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection-s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/).

“House in a Landscape,” by Hanuš Klauber (1932-1944), Undated (1943-1944). Watercolor on paper, 21 x 32 cm, Signed UL: Klauber.

Klauber, Hanuš. House in a Landscape. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Chateau,” by Dorit Weiserová (1932-1944), 3. 5. 1944.

Graphite on paper, 22,7 x 25 cm,
Signed LR: Doris Weiser III. s. 3. 5.
1944.

Weiserová, Dorit. Chateau. c. 1944.
Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28
Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Kite Flying (Memories of home),” by Zuzana Lieselotta Winterová (1933-1944),
Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite and colored pencils on
paper, 20,4 x 29 cm, Signed on
the verso UR: Zuzka Winterová.

Winterová, Zuzana. Kite Flying
(Memories of Home). c. 1943-
1944. Jewish Museum in
Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Study of Light and Shadow,” by Eva Lora Sternová (1930 - survived), Undated (1943-1944).

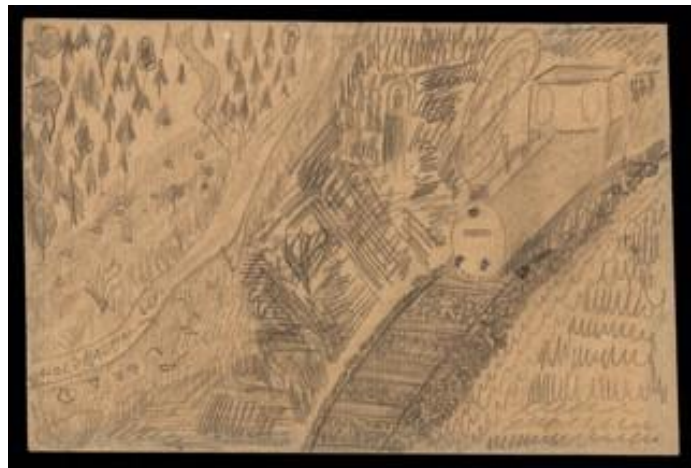
Graphite and pastel on paper, 22,9 x 23,8 cm, Signed on the recto UL: Eva Štern, 1931, 7 N III, 43 C III 104.

Sternová, Eva. Study of Light and Shadow. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 28 Oct 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Train Passing Through the Countryside,” by Petr Holzbauer (1932-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite on paper, 20,4 x 30,3 cm, Signed LL: VI Holzbauer, 3. 4. (L 417, Heim 6).

Holzbauer, Petr. Train Passing Through the Countryside. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 2 Nov 2021. <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.





“Flowers,” by Ruth Ščerbak (1934-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Watercolor on paper, 15,7 x 21,6 cm, Signed UR: Ruth Ščerbak.

Ščerbak, Ruth. Flowers. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 2 Nov 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>

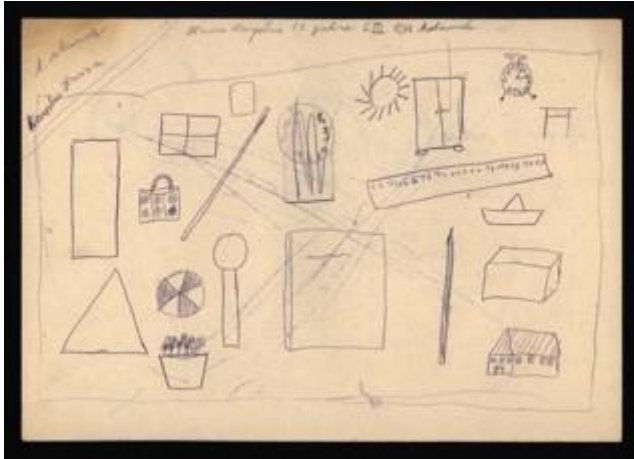
“Flowers,” by Ernesta Tischler (1930-1944), 7. 9. 1943.

Graphite on paper, 22,6 x 22,4 cm, Signed UL: Ernesta Tischler, 13 Jahre, 3. Stunde, 7. 9. 1943, C III 104.

Tischler, Ernesta. Flowers. c. 1943. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 2 Nov 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>





“Sketches of Objects/Hand Relaxation Exercise,” by Hana Erika Karplusová (1930-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite on paper, 20,5 x 32,5 cm,
Signed UM: Hana Karplus, 13 Jahre,
C III 104, 1. Stunde.

Karplusová, Hana. Sketches of Object/ Hand Relaxation Exercises. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 3 Nov 2021.
<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Drawing Exercise,” by Emilie Straková (1934 - survived), Undated (1943-1944).

Graphite on paper, 17,5 x 20,6 cm, Signed on the recto UR:C III 104, Emilie Straka, 7. ph. 9 ro[ků].

Straková, Emilie. Drawing Exercise. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 3 Nov 2021.
<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collection s-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.



“Train,” by Margit Koretzová (1930-1944), Undated (1943-1944).



Graphite and watercolor on paper, 16,2 x 21,4 cm, Signed UR: Koretz Margit, L 410/16, X. Stunde, 11 Jahre.

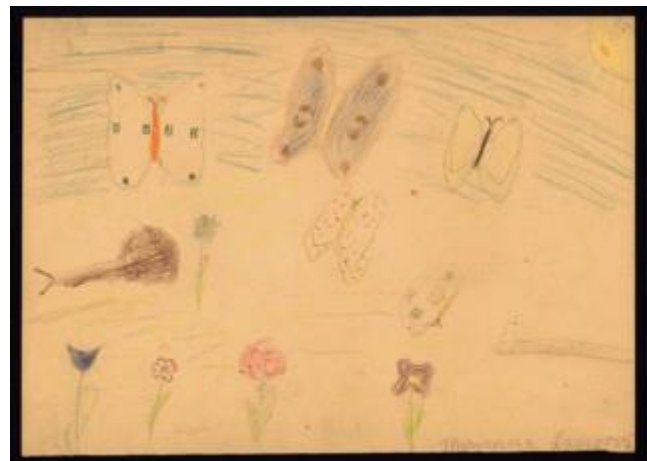
Koretzová, Margit. Train. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 3 Nov 2021.

<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.

“Butterflies,” by Marianna Langová (1932-1944), Undated (1943-1944).

Colored pencils on paper, 20,6 x 28,7 cm, Signed LR: Marianna Langová.

Langová, Marianna. Butterflies. c. 1943-1944. Jewish Museum in Prague. Web. 3 Nov 2021.
<https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/collection-research/collections-funds/visual-arts/children-s-drawings-from-the-terezin-ghetto/>.



Key Words:

- Holocaust
- Terezin
- Theresienstadt
- Friedl-Dicker Brandeis
- Art Therapy
- Children
- Jews
- Weimar Bauhaus
- Pavel Brandeis
- Erika Taussig
- Deportation
- Holocaust Artwork
- Franz Singer

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