

VIOLINS *of* HOPE

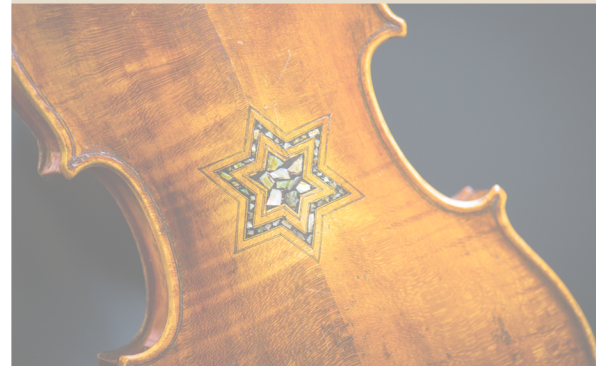
on display

EVERY INSTRUMENT HAS AN INSPIRING STORY TO TELL

April 21 – 26, 2020



The work of Amnon Weinstein
Violins of Hope Founder and Creator



JHV 23: THE AUSCHWITZ VIOLIN

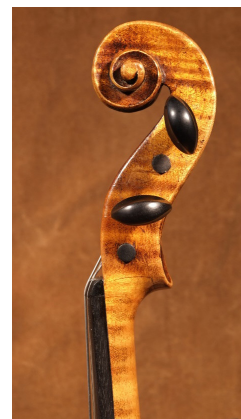
Germany, 1850

This violin was made around 1850 in Saxony or Tirol in a German workshop by J.B. Schweitzer, a famous luthier of his day. The instrument was originally owned by an unnamed Jewish musician who, as a prisoner, performed in the men's orchestra at the concentration camp in Auschwitz.

Abraham Davidowitz, who fled from Poland to Russia in 1939, later returned to postwar Germany and worked near Munich, helping Jews living in displaced people's camps. One day, the aforementioned Jewish musician — having survived the horrors of Auschwitz — approached Abraham and offered him his violin. Abraham paid \$50 for the instrument, hoping that his young son, Freddy, would play it when he grew up.

Many years later, Freddy heard about the Violins of Hope project and donated his instruments — including this one — to be fully restored. Since then, this violin has been played in some of the most renowned concert halls of the world, by musicians of all colors, faiths and backgrounds.

Underwriting Opportunity Available: \$25,000





JHV 32: THE ERICH WEININGER VIOLIN

Germany, 1870

This instrument was crafted in the workshop of Schweitzer in Germany around 1870 and owned by Erich Weininger, a butcher in Vienna as well as an amateur violinist. When the Nazis marched into Austria in 1938, he was arrested and sent to Dachau where he managed to bring along his beloved violin. Later sent to Buchenwald - one of the largest concentration camps on German soil - he was forbidden to play yet still kept his violin close.



Miraculously, Erich was released from Buchenwald through the assistance of the Religious Society of Friends, better known as Quakers. He then returned to Vienna, only to be one of the very last Jews to escape Nazi Europe. He boarded an illegal boat to Palestine but was soon intercepted and detained by the Royal Navy, who were no longer allowing Jewish immigrants into the country. Erich, with violin in hand, was deported to the island of Mauritius off the coast of East Africa where he stayed till the end of World War II.

While in Mauritius, Erich was confined to the Beau Basin Prison where he and other refugee musicians formed a group called the Beau Basin Boys. The popularity of the Beau Basin Boys extended well beyond the prison walls, and their performances were broadcast over the radio and the musicians

were permitted to leave the prison several times a week to give performances in town, providing them with their only moments of freedom.

Erich died in 1988, at the age of 76. His violin was passed down to his son Ze'ev who in turn left it to his daughter, Tova. In 2012, Tova considered selling the violin and asked her son to take the violin to Tel Aviv to have it appraised. Her son quickly learned of Amnon Weinstein and paid the luthier a visit. The violin was damaged from being played outside in the tropical heat of Mauritius and was not worth much; however, Amnon quickly recognized the instrument's historical significance. He agreed to restore the violin for free in exchange for it to become one of the most fascinating instruments in the Violins of Hope collection.

Underwriting Opportunity Available: \$25,000



JHV 7: THE FEIVEL WININGER VIOLIN

Germany, 1880

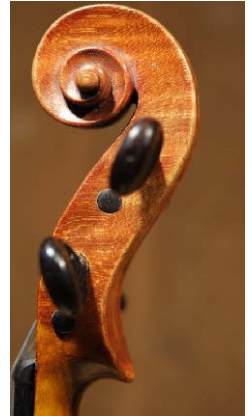
Jewish musician Feivel Wininger was living in Romania with his elderly parents, wife and newborn daughter, Helen, when in October 1941, he and thousands of other Jews were deported by train to the swamplands of Moldova and Ukraine.

The suffering and horrors of this exodus were unspeakable. Finally arriving in the Ukrainian ghetto of Shargorod, he found a way to survive. A well-respected judge and amateur violinist recognized Feivel as the gifted child-violinist he had seen play years before and gave him his violin. Feivel, who labored during the day chopping wood for local Ukrainians, tried the Italian Amati model violin and his life changed. Suddenly there was music again, purpose and hope.

Local residents requested he play at weddings and holidays in exchange for food, and through learning the music of traditional Ukrainian and Romanian songs, Feivel was able to feed his family and some 17 other refugees – enabling them to survive the war.

Many years later, in Israel, Helen brought her father's violin to be repaired in the Weinstein's workshop in Tel Aviv. Upon hearing this incredible story, the Weinsteins repaired the violin and it has since been a treasured instrument within the Violins of Hope collection. It serves as a memorial to a man of courage and kindness who used music to save lives.

Underwriting Opportunity Available: \$25,000

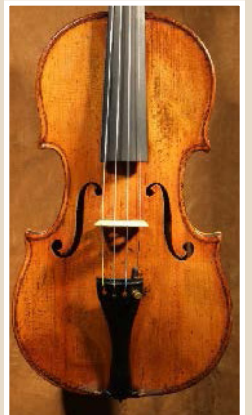
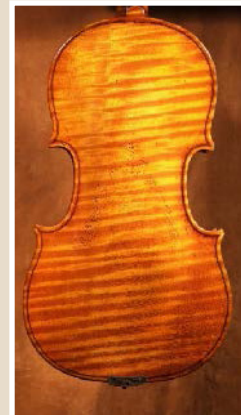


JHV 39: THE HAFTTEL VIOLIN

France, 1870

This violin belonged to Zvi Haftel, the first concert master of the Palestine Orchestra, later to become the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. It is a French instrument made by famous luthier, August Darce (1830-1892), in the town of Mirecourt around 1870. Heinrich (Zvi) Haftel was one of about 100 musicians gathered by Bronislaw Huberman from all over Europe in 1936 and brought to Palestine. Haftel was a distinguished violinist before the war and joined Huberman after he lost his job in a German orchestra. Huberman's vision to create an all-Jewish orchestra in Palestine is credited with saving the lives of some of the most talented musicians of the era. The Haftel violin is one of the finest in the collection of Violins of Hope.

Underwriting Opportunity Available: \$25,000





JHV 16: THE BIELSKI VIOLIN

Germany, 1870

This beautifully adorned instrument is a German-made violin originally constructed in 1870. Played by a Klezmer, or Ashkenazi Jewish musicians of Eastern Europe, they were self-made and self-taught instrumentalists who displayed a natural talent for their craft. As many arts were not encouraged by strict Jewish tradition, music became one of the very few venues available for artistic expression.

It was quite common for young children to play violins, as told by Yiddish author I.L. Peretz who wrote in one of his short stories that, "...one could tell how many boys were in a Jewish family by counting the number of violins hanging on the wall." This is most likely the reason why so many recovered Klezmer violins were inlaid with the Star of David crafted in Czechoslovakia or Germany by luthiers who specialized in making the beautifully ornamented - though inexpensive - instruments.

The Klezmer tradition was almost lost with the extermination of many Jewish musicians in World War II but has enjoyed a contemporary revival in Europe as well as in Israel and the United States. The Weinstein's restorative work of this violin is dedicated to the Bielski partisans who fought fiercely to save 1,230 Jews from the onslaught of German SS units near Novogrudok. Asaela

Weinstein, Amnon's wife, is the daughter of Asael Bielski, one of the three brothers who formed the Bielski brigade in Belarus, memorialized in the 2008 Hollywood film, Defiance.

Generously Underwritten by: The Bershtel Family Foundation



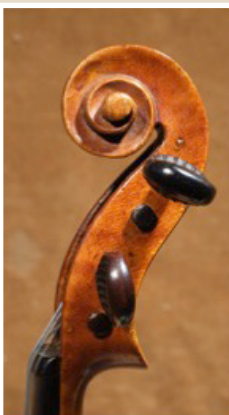
JHV 18: GERMAN VIOLIN PLAYED BY SHLOMO MINTZ

Origin unknown

This is clearly a violin that survived the Jewish fate – either a ghetto, a hard labor camp or worse. Neither its original owner, nor the musician who played it throughout the war is known. In the documentary film, *Le Voyage d'Amnon* (Amnon's Journey), it was played by Shlomo Mintz in a powerful performance at the gates to Auschwitz. Amnon Weinstein states "We took the violin back to where it once belonged to show it as a symbol of hope. When Shlomo Mintz played "Ba'al Shem" by Ernest Bloch, we felt as if the violin had gone a full circle, returning to the place where it – and others like it – had once been played."



Shlomo Mintz



Generously Underwritten by: Hennings-Fischer Foundation

JHV 24: THE WAGNER VIOLIN

Origin unknown

This beautifully crafted, concert-quality instrument belonged to a member of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, created in 1936 by famed Polish violinist, Bronisław Huberman. Along with other instruments in this collection, it tells the story of the refugee musicians who, after the 1948 War of Independence, formed the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO).

Most members of the IPO were world-class Jewish musicians in prestigious orchestras across Europe who fled their positions when the Nazis came to power in 1933, enacting their racial laws across the continent. Huberman enabled dozens of these leading musicians and their families to seek refuge in Palestine, saving as many as 1,000 lives in the process. When World War II ended, there was a general boycott of German goods in Israel. So much so that the word "Germany" was even boycotted on the radio. In this atmosphere, musicians refused to play German-made instruments and many came to Moshe Weinstein and asked him to buy their violins. "If you don't buy my violin, I'll break it!" Moshe recounted one musician as saying, with others threatening to burn their instruments outright. Weinstein dutifully purchased and saved each instrument, forever preserving this important part of contemporary Jewish history.

Generously Underwritten by: Mrs. Becky M. Cool | RM Cool Co.



Bronisław Huberman



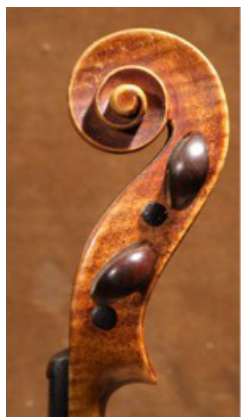
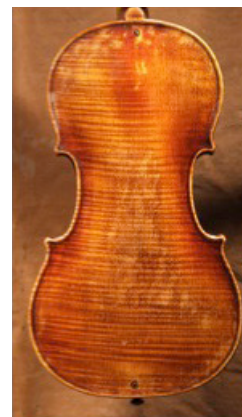
JHV 61: AIPAC VIOLIN

Warsaw, 1924

This beautifully crafted violin belonged to Dr. Leon Schatzberg-Sawicki. Born in 1918 in Kolomyia, Poland, he graduated the prestigious Ukrainian Lviv Conservatory in 1938 and continued on to study medicine at Lviv University. While there, he met and married fellow student, Ella Schrenzel.

During the Nazi occupation of 1941-1944, he changed his name to the Polish, Sawicki, with the help of falsified identity papers. He played this violin on street corners, in restaurants and with impromptu bands across Poland while Ella tutored local Polish children. Surviving until liberated by the Soviets in July 1944, Leon and Ella eventually emigrated to the United States, enjoying long and happy lives with their children and grandchildren. Dr. Leon Schatzberg-Sawicki died in New York City in 2008; he was 90 years old.

Generously Underwritten by: Mrs. Susan Stuhlberg in
Memory of Morton Stuhlberg





GERMAN CELLO BY DR. ALFRED STELZNER

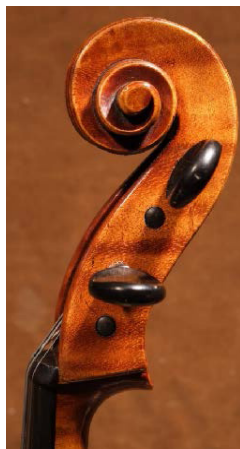
Dresden, 1893

This beautiful cello, handcrafted in Dresden in 1893, is the only instrument of its kind included as part of the Violins of Hope collection. It belonged to a member of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra which was created in 1936 by famed Polish violinist, Bronisław Huberman. Along with a viola and two violins from this collection, this instrument tells the story of the refugee musicians who, after the 1948 War of Independence, formed the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO).

Generously Underwritten by: Ms. Cindy Costello

JHV 25: VIOLA BY CARL ZACH

Vienna, 1896



This beautiful viola, handcrafted in Vienna in 1896, is the only instrument of its kind included as part of the Violins of Hope collection. It belonged to a member of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, created in 1936 by famed Polish violinist, Bronisław Huberman.

Most members of this Symphony were world-class Jewish musicians in prestigious orchestras across Europe who fled their positions when the Nazis came to power in 1933, enacting their racial laws across the continent. Huberman enabled dozens of these leading musicians and their families to seek refuge in Palestine, saving as many as 1,000 lives in the process. His vision to create an all-Jewish orchestra in Palestine is credited with saving the lives of some of the most talented musicians of the era.

Along with other instruments in this collection, it tells the story of the refugee musicians who after the 1948 War of Independence formed the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO).

Generously Underwritten by: Dr. Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg | Rod and Elsie Nakamoto



JHV 9: GERMAN VIOLIN WITH STAR OF DAVID

Warsaw, 1924

This violin came to the Weinstein's workshop in very bad condition. The signs on it indicate that it was played in the worst conditions imaginable. The top has no varnish and the inside parts are crudely glued and nailed in an unprofessional way. It appears to have been played in a camp or ghetto and was repaired in any way possible, perhaps to give the owner a little more time to play it.

The Weinstains decided to leave this violin as is, so that viewers can see the condition of some instruments when they arrive at the workshop—and perhaps, in seeing it, imagine what some of these instruments and their owners had to endure at the hands of the German Reich.



Generously Underwritten by: Dr. Mathew Davis and Dr. Mark Dressner
On Behalf of: Barbara & Ray Alpert Jewish Community Center

JHV 34: THE HEIL HITLER VIOLIN

Warsaw, 1924

This instrument is presumed to have been owned by a Jewish musician or an amateur who, at some point, required a minor repair. The craftsman doing the repair work opened the violin and for no apparent reason, crudely inscribed on its upper deck the words "Heil Hitler, 1936," alongside a swastika. He then closed the violin case and handed it back to the owner who had played it for years, unaware of the hidden inscription.

A few years ago, the violin was purchased by a violin maker in Washington, D.C., who was astonished to discover its insides. The maker's first instinct was to burn the instrument but upon second thought, contacted the Weinstains in Tel Aviv and donated it to the Violins of Hope project.

Today, it is part of the collection of instruments, but it will never be repaired or played. It is important to note that the majority of German violin makers were not Nazis. Many were known to support Jewish musicians who they considered devoted clients and friends.



Generously Underwritten by: NAACP Long Beach

The Second Violin "Wedding Violin"
made by LEOPOLD REININGER-DELZ
an Austrian, during the time, he spent as a
refugee in Switzerland ~

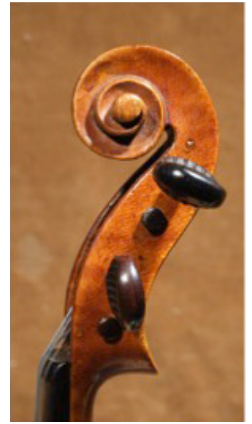


JHV 47: WEDDING VIOLIN

Origin unknown

This violin arrived from Switzerland with a written description of its history glued inside the instrument: "The second violin, wedding violin, made by Leopold Reininger-Delz, an Austrian, during the time he spent as a refugee in Switzerland in the year of the Han-World-War 1944."

Generously Underwritten by: Bonnie Adler Lowenthal and Evan Braude



THE BURIED VIOLIN

Origin unknown

Heinrich Herrmann grew up in Schwabach and Nuremberg in the South of Germany, where he learned to play the violin on an old, inexpensive Gypsy instrument. He studied law and became a judge, but lost his position following the implementation of the Nuremberg laws due to his Jewish identity. Fleeing to Amsterdam, he became a typewriter salesman and met his wife, Ilse. Heinrich clung to his old, inexpensive violin and often played chamber music with friends. In the mornings, he tried to secure visas to any country that would offer them a chance to leave Europe.



His plan to support the family upon arriving in their new home relied on spending his life savings to procure a rare, 150-year-old handmade violin by a famous atelier of the Klotz family in Bavaria, Germany. Travelling with large amounts of money could prove dangerous, but upon arrival he could sell the extraordinary violin and recoup his savings. His plan was thwarted however, when all Jews in Holland were forced to register with the Nazi regime and surrender their valuables. He brought the instrument and told the clerk that although he had no problem parting with his belongings, he could not bear to part with the violin. "Go home with your violin," said the clerk, "and come back tomorrow with another. But don't tell anyone I said so." The Herrmanns gave the violin to a Dutch friend, Yan Molder, for safekeeping and not a moment too soon. On June 23, 1943, they were arrested and imprisoned by the Nazis and sent to the feared Bergen-Belsen concentration

camp. Molder was afraid the Nazis would find Jewish owned property in his possession, so he gave it to a musician friend, who was equally fearful of the German's wrath and buried the violin in his garden.

Miraculously, Heinrich and Ilse Herrmann survived and in 1944 they were traded for German citizens being expelled from the British Mandate of Palestine. A year later, after the war ended, the violin was exhumed and brought to them in Palestine. Though badly damaged, it was repaired and stayed close to Heinrich who played it for the next 40 years.

Generously Underwritten by: Jewish Long Beach

