

## THE BUTTERFLY

The last, the very last,  
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.  
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing  
against a white stone...

Such, such a yellow  
Is carried lightly 'way up high.  
It went away I'm sure because it wished  
to kiss the world goodbye.

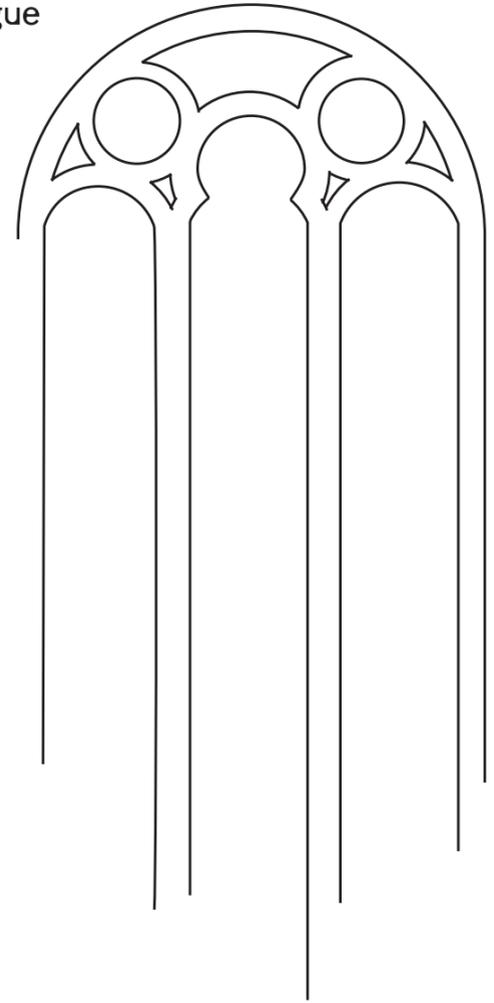
For seven weeks I've lived in here,  
Pinned up inside this ghetto  
But I have found my people here.  
The dandelions call to me  
And the white chestnut candles in the court.  
Only I never saw another butterfly.

That butterfly was the last one.  
Butterflies don't live in here,  
In the ghetto.

# PINKAS SYNAGOGUE

**m** jewish  
museum  
in prague

●  
worksheet for  
children



fold

\* This **memorial** was opened in 1960, but for political reasons it was closed eight years later. The monument and the synagogue were reopened in 1992 after the fall of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia and the completion of reconstruction work.

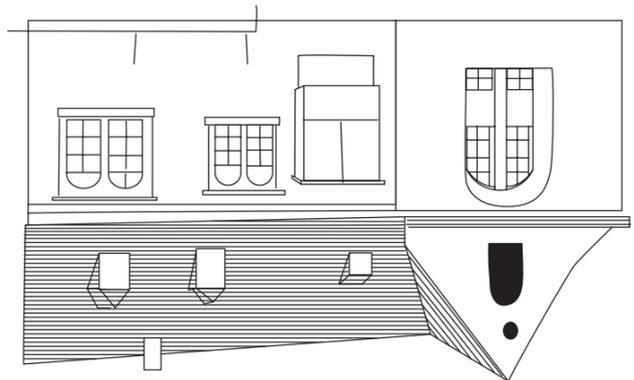
\* The names of nearly **78,000 Jewish victims** of the Holocaust from Bohemia and Moravia are inscribed on the walls of the synagogue. A memorial service is held here for the victims every year on 8th March, a date that is tragically burned into the memory of Czech Jews as the day when those in the family camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau were murdered in 1944.

\* The list of names is sorted alphabetically according to the Czech towns and villages, which are written in **yellow**. The victims' surnames and the initial letter of their first names are distinguished in **red**. Their dates of birth and dates of presumed death are also recorded. On the walls of the main nave of the Pinkas Synagogue, 50,000 names of Shoah victims from Prague are inscribed.

\* Approximately **11,000 children** from Central and Eastern Europe passed through the Terezin concentration camp.

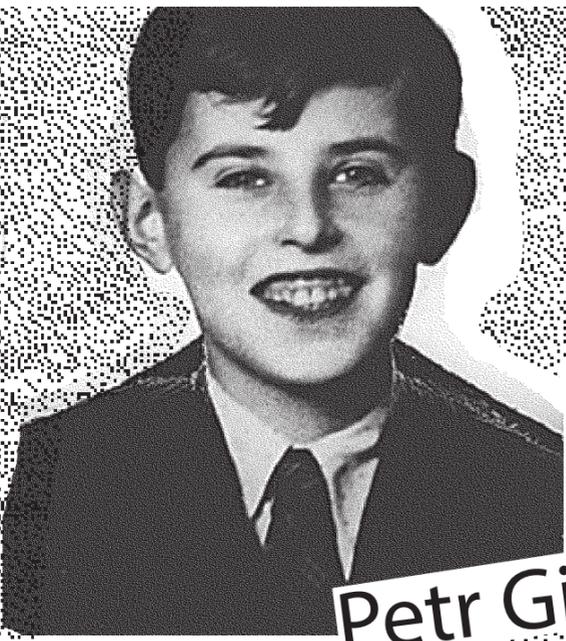
\* A database of victims, important documents, terms, and data on the persecution of Jews and other groups of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia can be found at [www.holocaust.cz](http://www.holocaust.cz).

\* The **Pinkas Synagogue** is the second oldest preserved synagogue in Prague. It was built on the initiative of the Horowitz family in the first half of the 16th century. Its design combined late Gothic and early Renaissance styles. During the Second World War, it served as a warehouse for liturgical objects. Today it is a memorial to the Bohemian and Moravian victims of the Holocaust.



\* The term **Holocaust** originally referred to a burnt sacrifice and later came to symbolise total destruction as well. It is now usually used to refer to the systematic extermination of Jews (but also other groups of people, such as Roma, political opponents, homosexuals, and people with physical or mental disabilities) by the Nazis in the period before and during World War II.

\* The Hebrew word **Shoah**, which means evil or destruction, is sometimes used to refer to the Holocaust of Jews who were liquidated all at once, first in pogroms and later in extermination camps. That is why the Pinkas Synagogue is also referred to as the Memorial to Bohemian and Moravian Shoah Victims.



**Petr Ginz**



**Helga Hošek-Weiss**

Petr was born in Prague in 1928 and lived with his parents and younger sister Eva near the Vltava river. He was an avid reader of adventure literature and wrote short stories, poems and novels. He liked to draw, so he also illustrated his texts. He painted and sketched the objects, houses and landscapes around him, and he invented devices. One of his most famous pictures is a drawing called *The Moonscape*. Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon took a copy of it with him on a space mission in 2003.

In 1941, Petr began to keep a diary. In it, we can see through the eyes of a 13-year-old boy what life was like in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The first entry dates from 19 September 1941, when it became compulsory for all Jews over the age of six to wear a six-pointed star with the word *Jude* (German for Jew) sewn on the left side of their clothing, which reminded Petr of a sheriff's star. "The weather is foggy. A badge has been introduced for Jews that goes something like this. When I went to school I counted 69 'sheriffs', and my mother counted over 100."

Petr's father was of Jewish descent, and so at the age of 14, Petr was deported to the Terezín concentration camp, where he lived with other boys in building L 417, the so-called Heim.

With the help of the educators there, the boys formed a special community, which they called the Republic of Shkid. Despite the limitations and hardships of camp life, they tried to live at least a somewhat normal life. Together they published a magazine called *Vedem*. Petr was one of its main contributors. It published short stories, poems, reflections, jokes, riddles and various other columns. Within two years, the boys published several dozen issues, which together totaled almost 700 pages.

Unfortunately, Petr's life ended in the Auschwitz extermination camp. But his legacy lives on. Petr's diary was later published by his sister Eva (Chava) Pressburger under the title *The Diary of My Brother* (Trigon, 2005). You can also learn more about Petr and his life during the war in František Tichý's book *The Prince with the Yellow Star* (Geum, 2004).

The anti-Jewish regulations introduced in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia also applied to the family of Helga Weiss. What did it mean for her? She was not allowed to go to the park, the playground, the ice rink, the swimming pool or the theatre. She was expelled from school. From 1941 onwards, she had to wear a yellow Star of David on her clothes with the word *Jude* on it. Her father lost his job. In December 1941, the whole family was called to be transported to the concentration camp at Terezín, where Helga eventually spent three years. Before her deportation, she packed watercolours and crayons in her suitcase. She and her mother stayed in a different building from her father, but they secretly sent each other notes and pictures. Her father once sent her a note that said, "Draw what you see." Helga obeyed him and for three years, she drew everyday life at Terezín. She later lived with fellow girls in a children's home where she took part in secret lessons, and she kept a diary and drew life around her all the while.

In October 1944, her father was taken to the extermination camp in Auschwitz. Helga and her mother went on the next transport. In Auschwitz, they were stripped naked, shaved and dressed in old clothes. They were lucky, because they were chosen to work in an aircraft factory and were later transported to Mauthausen concentration camp, from which Helga was rescued at the end of the war. But returning home was far from easy. She was 15 years old, and no one was waiting for her at home. Nevertheless, she did not give up, completing her education and deciding to develop her artistic talent. She graduated and became a painter.

The pictures she created in the ghetto are not only of artistic value, but are also an important testimony to the lives of the Terezín prisoners. You can see some of the pictures in the gallery on the first floor. Helga Weiss's diary was published under the title *Diary 1938-1945. The Story of a Girl Who Survived the Holocaust* (Jota, 2017), and she also describes her experiences in her memoir *Nikdo nás nečekal* (Nobody Expected Us, 2020).



**Hana and Jiří Brady**

Hana and Jiří were born into a Jewish family in Nové Město na Moravě. There they attended public school, and their everyday life was no different from that of the other students. They played in the woods and meadows behind the house. They played sports all year round. In the winter they skied and skated, and summers were spent playing by the brook, climbing trees, and going on trips. Their idyllic life was interrupted in 1939 by the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the anti-Jewish regulations that came into force in our country. Suddenly they were not allowed to go to school, to the park or to the playground, and they lost many friends. They played only in the house or in the garden. Jiří was a support for Hana. As their lives became harder, he always tried to think of something to cheer her up. "So I thought, let's write down everything we miss and maybe it will come back. We put the note in a bottle and buried it in the garden." For a moment, the world seemed a little happier.

However, the anti-Jewish regulations grew until finally the entire family had to leave their home. The children were deported to Terezín. This fortress town in northern Bohemia served as a concentration camp. Each person was only allowed to take one suitcase with them. Hana and Jiří arrived there in 1942. Hana was 11 years old, and Jiří was 14.

Each lived in a different building, called a Heim. Knowing that they had each other helped them to survive. Jiří became involved in publishing children's magazines. The children also took part in secret lessons in their respective homes. Hana enjoyed art classes the most, which were taught by the painter Friedl Dicker-Brandeis. Thanks to her, the children were able to escape all the troubles of Terezín for a while. Friedl encouraged them to use their imaginations and to draw something beautiful, such as a memory. And so Hana drew her house, her garden, and the places she loved.

More and more people arrived at Terezín, but others were transported from Terezín to the extermination camps. Jiří was taken to one of them. Before leaving, he said goodbye to Hana, urging her to take care of herself and to eat as much as possible, even the smallest crumb. After the war, however, he learned that Hana had not survived. She, too, had eventually been sent to Auschwitz, where she perished. Jiří later emigrated to Canada, where he started his own family. You can read about the story of Jiří, Hana, and her suitcase in Karen Levin's book *Hannah's Suitcase* (Portal, 2003).

