

SHELOMO SELINGER

The survivor of nine concentration camps and two death marches, Shelomo Selinger is an internationally known sculptor.

*“Through sculpture I find my way to freedom, just like a prisoner excavating a tunnel.
The mere act of excavating is in itself a liberation.”*

Shelomo Selinger was born on May 31, 1928, in Szczkowa, Poland. He lived there happily with his parents and two sisters until 1939, when Poland was invaded by Germany. In 1942, Shelomo and his father were deported; three months later, his father was murdered.

Throughout his ordeals, memories of his family and his childhood kept him fighting for life. In 1945, a Russian officer found him in Theresienstadt camp among a pile of cadavers. Shelomo was in a coma. He was cared for by a Jewish doctor from the Soviet army and was restored to life, but he had no memory of the past.

Shelomo traveled to Israel clandestinely with a small group of other young survivors and fought in that country's war for independence in 1948. Afterwards, with a group of friends, he helped found a new kibbutz in Galilee and began to rediscover the pleasures of a normal life. In Israel, Shelomo met and fell in love with music student Ruth Shapirovsky, whom he married in 1954. It was during this period, that Shelomo recovered his memory, reliving the horrors of the past in haunting nightmares. He began his career as a sculptor and his work brought him some relief by channeling some of his anguish into creativity.

Soon after their marriage, Shelomo and Ruth went to Paris so that he could study at the École des Beaux-Arts. They continue to split their time between Israel and Paris where Shelomo maintains his studio. They have had three children and are grandparents.

Shelomo's works reflect his inner world which is related to the history of the Jewish people, the Bible and the Holocaust. He works in wood and in granite, its hardness symbolizing the forces of nature against which man battles. Shelomo's sculptures have been exhibited extensively and are included in major museum collections. “Memorial to the Righteous among the Nations” is at Yad Vashem, Israel; the “Memorial to the Resistance Fighters” is at the outskirts of Paris. He has created the memorial statue at Drancy, the Nazi era transit camp near Paris. Shelomo has received numerous awards, including being named a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.