

**RAFAEL AND NELLY BRENNER FAMILY PAPERS, 1924-1956**  
**1995.61**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
Tel. (202) 479-9717  
e-mail: [reference@ushmm.org](mailto:reference@ushmm.org)

**Descriptive summary**

Title: Rafael and Nelly Brenner family papers

Dates: 1924-1956

Accession number: 1995.61

Creator: Brenner (Family : Köln, Germany)

Additional creators: Brenner, Rafael, (1898-1973)  
Brenner, Nelly, (1901-1991)

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (11 folders and 2 oversize folders)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,  
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Rafael and Nelly Brenner family papers consist of advertisements, photographs, printed materials, and store catalogs documenting the Brenner family's photograph supply stores in Cologne, their expropriation under the Nazi regime, the establishment of their store in Rome, their escape to the United States, the establishment of their store in Washington, DC, and Leo Brenner's store in Haifa.

Languages: German, English, Italian, Hebrew

**Administrative Information**

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Rafael and Nelly Brenner family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Berthold Brenner donated the Rafael and Nelly Brenner family papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1995.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at [collections.ushmm.org](http://collections.ushmm.org) for further information.

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, February 2014

### **Biographical note**

Rafael Brenner (1898-1973) and his brother, Leo Brenner (approximately 1896-1958), were born in Poland and founded photographic product retailer Photo-Brenner in Cologne, Germany in 1919. The business grew to include three photographic supply stores and a mail order business, and Rafael's wife, Nelly Brenner (1901-1991), helped with the business. After Nazi harassment and a boycott of the business in 1933, Rafael was arrested, forced to sign over the family property at a discounted rate, and pressured to leave Germany. He moved to Rome with his wife and sons, Norbert (1924-2013) and Berthold (b. approximately 1927), where the family established a new store. Leo moved to Palestine and established a store in Haifa. Nelly was arrested in Rome in 1938 around the time of Hitler's May visit and was persuaded to leave Italy. The family immigrated to the United States at the end of the year and established a new store in Washington, D.C.

### **Scope and content of collection**

The Rafael and Nelly Brenner family papers consist of advertisements, photographs, printed materials, and store catalogs documenting the Brenner family's photograph supply stores in Cologne, their expropriation under the Nazi regime, the establishment of their store in Rome, their escape to the United States, the establishment of their store in Washington, DC, and Leo Brenner's store in Haifa.

### **System of arrangement**

The Rafael and Nelly Brenner family papers are arranged as four series:

- Series 1: Advertisements, 1924-1948
- Series 2: Photographs, approximately 1933-1945
- Series 3: Printed materials, 1933-1952
- Series 4: Store catalogs, 1932-1956

### **Indexing terms**

Jews--Germany--Cologne.

Jewish refugees--Italy--Rome.

Jewish refugees--Washington (D.C.)

Jewish property--Europe.

Photography--Equipment and supplies--Marketing.

Cologne (Germany)

Rome (Italy)  
Washington (D.C.)

Photographs.

## CONTAINER LIST

### Series 1: Advertisements, 1924-1948

Box	Folder	Title
1	1	Cologne store, 1924
1	2	Haifa store, approximately 1933-1948
1	3	Rome store, 1938

### Series 2: Photographs, approximately 1933-1945

Box	Folder	Title
1	4	Rome store, approximately 1933-1938
1	5	Washington, D.C. store, approximately 1939-1945

### Series 3: Printed materials, 1933-1952

Box	Folder	Title
1	6	Cologne stores, <i>Westdeutscher Beobachter</i> articles, images, and advertisements about the harassment of Rafael Brenner under the Nazi government, 1933 (see also oversize)
1	7	Rome store, <i>Il Popolo di Roma</i> image showing Brenner store in background, 1937
1	8	Washington, D.C. store, <i>Photographic Trade News</i> articles, 1946, 1952

### Series 4: Store catalogs, 1932-1956

Box	Folder	Title
1	9	Cologne stores, 1932
1	10	Rome store, 1937-1938
1	11	Washington, D.C. store, 1940, 1956

### Oversize materials

Folders	Title
1-2	Cologne stores, <i>Westdeutscher Beobachter</i> articles, images, and advertisements about the harassment of Rafael Brenner under the Nazi government, 1933 (2 oversize folders)