

GEORGE BYFIELD ALBUM, circa 1942-1973
2001.156

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

Title: George Byfield album

Dates: circa 1942-1973 (bulk 1942-1943)

Accession number: 2001.156

Creator: Byfield, George, 1902-1982

Extent: 0.5 linear feet (1 oversize box and 3 folders)

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

Abstract: The George Byfield album titled "Oroszfront 1942-1943: Munkaszolgálat Oroszországban" was compiled by Gyorgy Beifeld (later George Byfield) while serving in a forced labor brigade. The album includes journal entries and drawings documenting Gyorgy's experiences in the Hungarian Labor Service in the Soviet Union from 1942-1943. The album also includes captions and artwork he created after the war, often relating to notes or memories of his experiences. The entries describe the scenery, observation of the surroundings, villages, people, struggles of war, and daily activities.

Languages: Hungarian

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), George Byfield album (2001.156), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: Harold Wheen Tebbutt, Judith Uri, Gabriella Teichner, and Ivan Marko donated the George Byfield album to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2001.

Related material: A self-portrait by George Byfield given to an Australian solicitor (2016.77.1 a-b), a portrait of a US soldier by Gyorgy Byfield, liberated concentration camp inmate (2016.114.2), a translation of George Byfield wartime diary and album ("Oroszfront, 1942/43") (2017.409.1), and a portrait of a US soldier by George Byfield, a former camp inmate, after liberation (2006.405.1) are all cataloged separately. The Museum's encyclopedia also includes entry on George's album: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/art-and-survival-gyoergy-beifelds-visual-memoir-from-the-russian-front-1942-1943>.

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

Processing history: Morgan Voth, July 2019

Biographical note

Gyorgy Beifeld (born Gyorgy Beamter, later George Byfield, 1902-1982) was born in Budapest, Hungary, on April 4, 1902 to Wilhelm and Hermine Hacker Beamter. His father was killed in 1917 while serving in the army during World War I. Gyorgy attended university and was trained as a lawyer, but earned his living as a stockbroker in Budapest. He was also an accomplished artist and was fluent in Hungarian, English, French, and German.

On April 1, 1942, Gyorgy was conscripted into the Hungarian Labor Service (Munkaszolgalat) and sent to a camp in Pomac, Hungary. Gyorgy began painting immediately after his induction, creating watercolors of the base camp in Hungary where the company was initially stationed. On April 20, 1942, Gyorgy's company departed by train for the Russian front in Orel. Their duties included building fortifications, transporting ammunition, constructing bridges and roads, laying mines, burying the dead, and carrying away the wounded. During this time, he made a visual record of his experiences, creating over 400 drawings and watercolors. He was wounded on August 28, 1943 at Prilutskiy. At the end of 1943, Gyorgy was sent home to Budapest.

On May 12, 1944, Gyorgy was arrested and held in a camp in Velence near Budapest for six months. He was assigned prisoner number 27990. On December 25, he was deported to Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany and worked as a draughtsman. In January 1945, he was transferred to Offenburg. In April, he was sent on a death march to Dachau concentration camp. The camp was liberated by the United States 7th Army on April 29, 1945.

Gyorgy returned to Budapest then immigrated to Australia in 1948. Following his move to Australia, he changed his name to George Byfield and opened a tobacconist shop with his wife. He later ran a successful interior design studio.

Scope and content of collection

The George Byfield album titled "Oroszfront 1942-1943: Munkaszolgalat Oroszországban" was compiled by Gyorgy Beifeld (later George Byfield) while serving in a forced labor brigade. The album includes journal entries and drawings documenting Gyorgy's experiences in the Hungarian Labor Service in the Soviet Union from 1942-1943. The album also includes captions and artwork he created after the war, often relating to notes or memories of his experiences. The entries describe the scenery, observation of the surroundings, villages, people, struggles of war, and daily activities.

System of arrangement

The George Byfield album is arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Person:

Byfield, George, 1902-1982.

Topical Subject:

Concentration camp inmates as artists--Germany--Dachau.

World War, 1939-1945--Conscript labor--Hungary.

World War, 1939-1945--Personal narratives.

Geography:

Budapest (Hungary)

Genre/Form:

Diaries.

Art.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: George Byfield album, circa 1942-1973

Box/Folder	Title
Box 1	Album, 1943-1944
Folders 1-2	Artwork, 1942-1943
Folder 3	Loose items from album, circa 1973