

Bau, Yosef  
RG-50.120\*0317  
1 Videocassette  
In Hebrew

**Abstract:** Yosef Bau was born in Krakow in 1920. He studied art and German gothic letters, which saved him during the war. He fled to Olszana in the suburbs when he was not granted an ID card (Kennkarte) by the Germans after the war broke out. In 1941, the Jews were in the ghetto, and Yosef advertised his skills as a graphic artist. He was hired by the Germans. His family was transferred to the Plaszów camp. His name was added to Schindler's list because his wife saved the life of the list maker's (Pemper's) mother. Yosef spent time in Gross Rosen and Breznice, Czechoslovakia. Yosef wrote poetry in his spare time. After the war, Yosef searched for his family, eventually finding his wife in a hospital. His family lived with an acquaintance after the war because someone else was living in their home. In 1950, he moved to Israel.

1:00:27 Yosef Bau was born in Krakow in 1920. He didn't live in a very Jewish neighborhood. His parents had a store for women's hats. Yosef's parents' names were Adolph and Tzila. There were three boys in the family. His parents were modern in their religious outlook. When he was in high school, the principal advised him to study art. He transferred to a school of visual arts. Yosef liked to draw caricatures. He was in that school from 1938 to 1939. The teacher taught German gothic letters, which he mastered. That's what saved him during the war. He would do industrial drawing and wrote in the script he learned for the Germans.

1:08:19 When the war broke out, he was in his first year of graphics study. After the war, he completed four more.

1:12:43 When the war broke out the Germans distributed ID cards (Kennkarte). Yosef and his brother did not get one. Those without cards were advised to flee, which they did, to the outskirts of the city. A chimney sweep gave them lodging, but only for the night (8 PM to 8 AM) so the rest of the day they just loitered around. The place was Olszana. That's where the Krakow airport was located. His little brother, Ignatz, who did not flee home because he didn't look Jewish, brought them food, which their mother prepared in the afternoons. They waited for him at the train station. He removed the Star of David armband for the trip.

1:19:22 Yosef's mother continued to sell hats in her store, even though they had already been transferred to the ghetto. She had a special exemption that allowed her to leave the ghetto to go to the store but since it was forbidden for Jews to travel on the tramway, she walked the 4 km to the store and back. This continued until 1942, when her permit was not renewed.

- 1:22:50 The Jews were enclosed in the ghetto in 1941.
- 1:25:40 He describes the horrible conditions in the ghetto.
- 1:27:00 They lived in a basement room. Yosef put a sign on the window advertising his skill as a graphic artist. A Jewish policeman took him to the labor office of the Germans where they were looking for precisely that knowledge. He began to work there, and also later in Plaszów, where he prepared architectural drawings for a building firm.
- 2:00:34 Later he did the same work outside the ghetto at a German police station. When the order came to leave the ghetto, Yosef received a pass.
- 2:02:00 He tells a story about the German commander named Goeth and his request from Yosef to write something in German. Goeth was stealing valuables from the confiscated Jewish property for which he was sent to jail. This happened in Plaszów.
- 2:05:14 His younger brother, aged 13, was shot to death in the ghetto, with other children his age.
- 2:06:07 The family was transferred from Krakow to the Plaszów camp. His mother still received a pass to go to the family store.
- 2:09:27 He talks about witnessing his father's death
- 2:10:00 He tells the story of meeting his future wife and their wedding.
- 2:23:23 His wife was Goeth's manicurist who was instrumental in adding Yosef's name to Schindler's list of people. Schindler had received notice that the camp was to be liquidated, and he acted accordingly. In Yosef's office, there was another Jew working to compose lists; his name was Pemper. On his way to the office, Yosef's wife saw that they were taking a woman to be shot. She told the Germans: "But this is Pemper's mother!" At that moment, Pemper was putting together Schindler's list to give to the camp commander. In gratitude for saving his mother, Pemper added Yosef's name to the list. He was the last one to be added. This was done by Yosef's wife's request. Yosef's wife did not make the list: she was sent to Auschwitz. She didn't tell Yosef she had requested his inclusion in the list.
- 2:26:02 As the Russians approached, the Plaszów inmates were sent to other camps. Yosef was sent to Gross Rosen. He describes the cruelty at the camp. From there, they were sent to Breznice, Czechoslovakia. He

worked in the office of the factory that made men's hats for Schindler. They liquidated the factory and established one to manufacture bombs.

- 2:27:17 When food was not to be found, they ate the flesh of the horses that had died of starvation.
- 2:28:00 Jews began digging trenches, so the inmates knew what was coming. On his way out of the barracks, Yosef saw Schindler, who handed him a jug of some drink to give to the Nazi commander, Liebolt. After drinking it, he died immediately.
- 2:29:07 At night, they all fled in the direction of Vienna. The war was over. Russians appeared and Jews begged for food. They said, "Not yet, you will be sick."
- 2:29:28 Yosef's mother was in Bergen-Belsen, which was liberated by the Americans. They distributed food immediately and 10,000 women died from eating too much after a long period of starvation.
- 3:00:47 Yosef wrote poetry in Polish at the camp. The book was titled "The World and Myself." The notebook was also illustrated by Yosef. The book had been left in Gross Rosen with other things that belonged to Yosef. Schindler had it brought to him in Breznice.
- 3:03:39 Yosef reads one of his poems.
- 3:09:49 Yosef arrived in Breznice after a two-day trip without food. Half of the inmates arrived frozen to death. In order to open the car doors, the Nazis had to melt the ice with torches.
- 3:17:13 At the end of the war, upon liberation, Yosef started running just to run. He didn't know the area, so after a while he returned.
- 3:18:02 Both Yosef's wife and mother had been sent to Auschwitz and from there to Bergen-Belsen.
- 3:19:00 He talks about Schindler and his wife
- 3:21:19 The film "Schindler's List" portrays a wedding in the camp. It is supposed to be Yosef's. His name was mentioned in the movie. Yosef said the movie wedding was not the way it actually happened. There were no bed sheets to make a chupah, but there were yarmulkes to be found. The exchange of rings took place in Yosef's mother's room. The rings were fashioned from a metal spoon Yosef traded for a piece of bread.

- 3:26:35 The naked roll call in Plaszów lasted a night and a day, in minus 10°C cold, with no food. He talks about the selections.
- 3:29:10 Yosef describes his return to Krakow in search of family. His mother died after liberation and his brother was somewhere in Germany. Yosef looked for his wife in Czechoslovakia. At the border, he asked how to get to Foehrenwald. A train was departing at that moment but he missed the spot to get off. He took another train back in order to get to the right spot, but the train was delayed because the previous train, the one he had missed, had fallen into the river. Almost all the passengers drowned and the bridge was destroyed. Waiting for the next train at the station, he was suspected of being a fleeing Nazi. Nazis were now sitting in the concentration camps, wearing the striped uniforms that the Jews had been forced to wear and Yosef hadn't changed his clothes in his haste to find his wife. He was taken to the police station, but after he explained his situation, he was taken to the local hospital where his wife was recovering from a fall. Yosef describes the happy reunion.
- 4:04:38 He talks about them returning together to Krakow.
- 4:07:56 Someone else was living in Yosef's home and was ready to kill anyone who demanded his house back. Yosef didn't even try.
- 4:10:18 Yosef and his wife were given shelter at an acquaintance's home. Yosef's wife gave birth to a baby daughter. Another daughter was born in Israel.
- 4:12:46 Yosef began to work for the Jewish Committee.
- 4:14:00 Yosef and his family heard that Jews could go to Israel. They arrived in 1950. They were taken to Shaar Aliyah, where there was little food. From there, they were sent to Kefar Atta and Yosef started to work in Tel Aviv, as a graphic artist in City Hall.
- 5:00:00 Yosef shows charts of the population in Krakow, according to professions, age, sex, etc.
- 5:08:25 Yosef's work also involved falsifying documents and signatures.
- 6:06:39 He describes his workday in Plaszów.
- 6:13:52 He talks about commerce with the Poles.
- 6:16:15 Pemper was the secretary of the camp's commander, Amon Goeth.
- 6:18:00 Yosef reflects upon the horrors that befell him, and on the importance of the State of Israel and his belief in a superior power.