

Interviewee:	<u>FILAR</u> , Marian	Dates:	September 5, 1994
Interviewer:	Edith Millman		November 16, 1994
			June 16, 1995
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## SUMMARY

Born December 17, 1917 in Warsaw, Poland, Marian Filar was a member of a musical and religious Jewish family who became a child prodigy and a noted concert pianist and teacher. His father was a manufacturer and his grandfather was a rabbi. He studied at the Warsaw and Lemberg conservatories and graduated from *Gymnasium* in Warsaw. In September, 1939, he fled to Lemberg following the German invasion. After graduation from the Lemberg Conservatory in December, 1941, he rejoined his family in the Warsaw Ghetto. He worked with a labor group taken outside the ghetto to a railroad workplace in Warsaw West. He describes severe beatings by S.S. guards and his rescue by a Polish railway man. He details his solo performance and other symphony concerts in the ghetto by Jewish musicians, often playing music by forbidden composers. He mentions ghetto deportations, 1942-43, when his parents and siblings were taken.

In May, 1943, after the ghetto uprising, he was deported to Majdanek. After beatings and near-starvation, he volunteered for a labor camp in Skarzysko-Kamien, where he received aid from a fellow worker who was Polish. Moved to Buchenwald in August 1944, he was housed in a tent camp with Leon Blum, Deladier and other prominent politicians and clerics. Mr. Filar was moved next, by train, to Schlieben, near Leipzig, to work in a bazooka factory, where a Polish kitchen maid gave him extra food. His piano playing impressed the German civilian camp supervisor who transferred him to an easy job to protect his hands. As the war front moved near, he was sent with other prisoners by train to Bautzen and then on a death march to Nicksdorf (Mikulasovice) in Czechoslovakia. He and two brothers survived and lived in Zeilsheim Displaced Person's camp in Germany for two and a half years.

After liberation, he performed in concerts through Western Europe and toured Israel, playing with the Israeli Philharmonic during the war in 1956. He shares a moving vignette about going to Professor Walter Giese's villa and auditioning to become his student. He studied with him for five years. He emigrated to the USA in 1950, where he played with many American orchestras, headed the piano department at Settlement Music School in Philadelphia, and joined the faculty at Temple University. After retirement, he taught privately and judged international piano competitions.

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#### SUBJECT HEADINGS

Jewish ghettos - Warsaw, Poland  
Aid by non-Jews  
Jewish ghettos - Music  
Majdanek, Poland - concentration camp  
Skarzysko-Kamiena - labor camp, Poland  
Buchenwald concentration camp  
Schlieben, Germany - labor camp  
Death march - Bautzen to Nicksdorf (Mikulasovice)