

g3nerations

PRESENTS

HERE LIVED

Approx 79 min.
2023

A FILM BY JANE WELLS

LOGLINE

HERE LIVED is the story of hidden children, murdered parents, and the stones that bring healing. Gunter Demnig's Stolpersteine project provides a path from one of the most egregious wrongs of history, the Nazi reign of terror, to individual and community reconciliation.



Stolpersteine: What a beautiful name they have! You do stumble. You catch your breath. You are reminded of the everyday reach of the Nazi dragnet, of what diligence it took to decompose the (German) Jewish world. — Roger Cohen, Daydreaming in Germany, New York Times

STORY SUMMARY

When conceptual artist Gunter Demnig first conceived the idea of laying Stolpersteine (literal translation: stumbling stones) for Roma, Sinti and disabled victims of National Socialism in his native Germany, he never imagined his project would grow to become the world's largest decentralized memorial. The Stolpersteine he crafted are, in theory, quite simple: concrete blocks measuring 10x10cm, topped with permanent brass plates that are hand stamped with the names and fates of victims of Hitler's reign of terror. The stones are laid into the pavement in front of the last voluntarily chosen residence of those murdered by the Nazis. They are deeply personal and draw attention to individual tragedies. They have now been placed in 30 countries across Europe and on May 23rd 2023 we filmed Gunter Demnig laying the 100,000th Stolpersteine.

The Netherlands, second only to Poland in the percentage of Jews murdered in World War II, is where the demand for Stolpersteine is greater than anywhere else in the world. It is here that the film is focused. **HERE LIVED** tells the story of the current Stolpersteine project, as racism, anti-semitism, and autocracy are on the rise and another grim war is being fought in Europe. The film opens as Demnig lays his 100,000th stone in Nuremberg. It retraces his work, journey and impact, through the stories of families of Dutch victims: Ulrika Citron (daughter of a hidden child), Reini Elkerbout (a hidden child), Demnig's Amsterdam apprentice Alexander Stukenberg, local and international politicians, volunteers, and even an American teenager Bella Leavitt. As their stories merge, we come to understand how the art project Demnig calls "social sculpture" has created a new way to help heal the Nazi horrors. And it does so on the eve of the 80th anniversary of the fall of their regime. This is one of the most unusual story-telling projects in history.

SUBJECTS

Ulrika Citron, grandchild of Dutch Holocaust victims and daughter of their hidden child. Ulrika's journey to reclaim her Jewish identity and honor her family is the narrative thread of the film.

Reini Elkerbout, a Dutch hidden child and the founder of the local Stolpersteine Foundation who shares the story of her mother, killed at Auschwitz after the birth of her third child.

Gunter Demnig, the German conceptual artist who developed the Stolpersteine project. The story follows him over several months as he travels to and from his studio in Germany to the Netherlands.

Alexander Stukenberg, the first person permitted by Demnig to create Stolpersteine outside Germany. Supported by the Goethe Foundation, he built and runs a workshop in their central Amsterdam location where visitors can see the stones as they are hand-crafted. He has become the leading Ambassador for Stolpersteine across the globe.

Emile Schrijver, General Director of The Jewish Cultural Quarter. A world-renowned expert, he explains Jewish history during the Nazi occupation and his role in the initiative to place 731 stones in his home town of Haarlem.

Jos Weinen, the Mayor of Haarlem who has made it his mission to support the Stolpersteine initiative through crowd-funding and civic support.

Judith Uyterlinde, daughter of Reini Elkerhout. She is a writer, publisher and board member of the Stolpersteine Foundation of Haarlem.



*Ulrika Citron being interviewed for **HERE LIVED** in Amsterdam.*



The 100,000th stone & the shadow of Gunter Demnig. Photo Katja Demnig.



The 100,000th stone in Nuremberg, Germany.



Producer/Director Jane Wells interviewing artist Gunter Demnig.

CORE TEAM BIOS

FRANCESCO PORTINARI, Editor



Francesco Portinari is an award-winning film editor, music supervisor, and production coordinator. He has edited a wide range of films including narrative and documentary features and shorts, commercials, music videos, and experimental films. These include ***A Postcard from Lily Dale***, ***Small Potatoes***, ***Memories***, ***Stripes***, and ***Mind Games***. He has edited ***A System of Justice***, ***Native Silence***, ***Preserving The Holocaust***, and ***Tricked***, for 3 Generations. He teaches in the Master's Program at the School of Visual Arts, New York.

BRIAN KEANE, Composer



Brian Keane is an Emmy and Grammy award-winning American composer, music producer, and guitarist. A foremost pioneer in documentary music scoring, Keane has worked with every major network and many multi award-winning filmmakers including Barry Levinson, Ric Burns, Susan Lacy, Henry Hampton, Stephen King, and Thomas Lennon, scoring some of the most memorable documentaries in history such as the epic Burns history of New York in ***New York: A Documentary Film***, the inspiring story of the 1980 Olympic hockey team in ***Do you Believe in Miracles?***, Jane Goodall's ***Chimps: So Like Us***, and ***The Battle Over Citizen Kane***.

ULRIKA GRÜNWARD CITRON, Producer



Ulrika Grünwald Citron was born and raised in Sweden, moved to the US to pursue college, and began her career as a production intern at WHYY in Philadelphia. For the past two decades, Ulrika has dedicated her life to not-for-profit non-governmental organizations, chairing and co-chairing committees at the USC Shoah Foundation and the UJA (United Jewish Appeal) of New York. A daughter of a Holocaust survivor from Amsterdam, Ulrika is actively involved in organizations whose aim is Holocaust and Genocide education. She serves on the Board of Governors of the National Holocaust Museum in Amsterdam and supports the Amsterdam Stolpersteine Project.

MATTHEW LANDFIELD, Cinematographer



Matthew Landfield is a co-founder of TimeTravlr Creative, a social-impact focused production company in Brooklyn, New York. He is currently directing and producing ***Private Money Public Power***, a documentary about the history of philanthropy in the United States.

EMMANUEL BASTIEN, Cinematographer



Emmanuel Bastien is a photographer and videographer who works between New York and Paris. For the last 20 years, he has shot documentaries, fashion, commercials, and hard news for major channels such as the BBC, Reuters, AP, Globo, and Aljazeera. He shot ***Pot Luck*** for 3 Generations.

JANE WELLS, Producer/Director



Jane Wells is an Emmy-award nominated filmmaker, best known for producing and directing **TRICKED**, a documentary, about sex trafficking in the USA, and for producing the groundbreaking documentary feature **The Devil Came on Horseback**, about the genocide in Darfur. As the founder of 3 Generations, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to tell the stories of survivors of human rights abuses, she has written, produced and directed over 50 short films and videos. Her films have been selected by film festivals including Sundance, AFI/Silverdocs, Hotdocs, Tribeca, Montclair, Nashville, Thessaloniki, Aspen Shorts Fest, Red Nation and The American Indian Film Festival. In addition, her documentary credits include the features **Pot Luck: The Altered State of Colorado**, **A Different American Dream** and **Lost In Lebanon**. Her award-winning shorts **A System of Justice**, **Native Silence**, **Go Debbie**, **Preserving The Holocaust**, and most recently **A Kaddish For Selim** have played widely on the festival circuit.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My vision for this project was to let the stones, each individual Stolperstein, tell the story. The challenge was to find a way to show how a small square block of brass and concrete illuminates the Holocaust through a different lens..

To do this I focused first on the Netherlands, then on the detailed hand-production of particular stones, and finally their placement for selected survivors and their families and communities. I honed in on the particular experiences of two hidden children and their descendants. By adding drones we were able to show the chosen stones in their broader urban contexts, while demonstrating how people do literally stumble upon them. Additionally, I chose a composer with strong emotional capabilities in his music to create the score. Gunter Demnig, creator of the Stolpersteine project, makes occasional, elusive appearances in the film. This reflects my new understanding of his true nature.