

‘Drawing Against Oblivion,’ Film about Holocaust Artist with Stockton Ties, Named Best International Documentary at Garden State Film Festival

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Galloway, NJ - “Drawing Against Oblivion,” a film about artist Manfred Bockelmann’s drawings of children murdered in the Holocaust which includes his visit with a Holocaust survivor at Stockton University, won “Best International Documentary” at the Garden State Film Festival in Atlantic City this week.

Bockelmann, an internationally known artist who lives in Austria, is the uncle of Stockton’s Marion Hussong, professor of Literature and The Carol Rittner Professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies. She secretly arranged for her uncle to do a portrait of fellow professor Murray Kohn’s 7-year-old sister, Ida Rebecca, who was killed along with his mother and other family members in the Holocaust.

Kohn, rabbi emeritus of Beth Israel Congregation of Vineland, NJ and a professor emeritus of Holocaust Studies at Stockton, survived two-and-a-half years in a Nazi death camp, along with his father. The moving moment when Bockelmann presents the portrait to Kohn is captured in the film made about his work.

Final Frame, an international film crew based in Munich, Germany, shadowed Bockelmann for 18 months as he worked on this project, which includes over 100 large portraits of children, done in charcoal on burlap. The film crew came to Stockton in April 2014 to film the meeting of Bockelmann and Kohn, who was the first to teach Holocaust Studies at the university. The film has also won numerous international awards.

Scenes shot on campus also feature Gail Rosenthal, director of the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center.

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A major exhibit of Bockelmann's charcoal drawings of children murdered in the Holocaust was shown at the Leopold Museum in Vienna in 2013. In 2015, the portraits were exhibited at the Bundestag, the German parliament in Berlin, to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Hussong is preparing to bring both the exhibit and the film, "[Drawing Against Oblivion](#)," to Stockton in Fall 2016.

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