



## CFP: International Conference on the Role of Auschwitz in Holocaust Narratives

Toronto, ON, Canada- Conference Date: May 5, 2025 (mid-town Toronto)

The Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program invites proposals that interpret the place of Auschwitz in shaping Holocaust survivor narratives and contribute to the interdisciplinary discussion on the role of Auschwitz in influencing collective memory of the Holocaust.

The conference marks the 80<sup>th</sup> year since the liberation of Auschwitz and coincides with the Toronto run of the travelling exhibition *Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.* at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). A private pre-program event focusing on the exhibit will be held on Sunday, May 4, 2025, featuring Dr. Naomi Azrieli, CEO and Publisher, and Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt, curator of the exhibition and keynote speaker.

### Conference Overview:

Inspired by the memoirs program's nearly two decades of dedicated work on survivor memoirs, this conference aims to critically examine the impact of Auschwitz on the narratives of Holocaust survivor experiences. This international conference, serving as both a commemoration and reflection, will provide a platform for interdisciplinary discussions that plumb the complexities surrounding Auschwitz as a place of atrocities, its symbolism and the narratives surrounding it.

### Conference Themes:

Auschwitz occupies a unique place in history as the most infamous concentration camp and death camp within the Nazi camp system. The conference aims to explore and grapple with aspects of Auschwitz that have influenced survivor memoirs, short stories and poetry.

These aspects include but are not limited to:

- the role of Auschwitz as the most authentic representation of Holocaust experiences in the Nazi camp system
- survivor memoirs and storytelling; what is recounted or omitted, and how we reconcile memories that may conflict with the historical record
- memoir descriptions of ritual and Jewish agency; that is, how Jews responded to the conditions and treatment they endured
- collective memory, vocabulary, language and imagery surrounding Auschwitz

- the narrative significance of Auschwitz as the symbol of the Holocaust and its impact on shaping collective memory
- the voices of women, sexuality studies and the gendered lens
- the representation of a diverse range of experiences including those of non-Jews, Polish political prisoners, Roma, Catholic clergy and others
- representation of Auschwitz and survivors in works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and/or cultural productions
- the role of survivors of Auschwitz in remembering the atrocities in contrast to other camps and experiences

#### Submission Guidelines:

We invite submissions that contribute to the interdisciplinary discourse on the role of Auschwitz in Holocaust narratives. This conference is primarily aimed at literary, Jewish studies, humanities, cultural, and gender studies scholars as well as historians. Early career researchers/academics and PhD candidates are also encouraged to apply.

**Submissions must demonstrate that at least one of the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs will be integrated into their final presentation.** For a complete listing of memoirs please see <https://memoirs.azrielifoundation.org/the-auschwitz-collection>

Abstracts (max. 500 words) and a short CV must be submitted by **September 15, 2024**. Please submit as one combined PDF file including the presenter's familial name in the following format: LASTNAME.AzrieliSem2025. All applicants will be notified by December 18, 2024. For inquiries and submissions, contact Carson Phillips, [carson@azrielifoundation.org](mailto:carson@azrielifoundation.org)

#### Conference Details:

The conference will convene in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, May 5, 2025, with a pre-conference event on the evening of May 4, 2025. The program will include a keynote address and approximately twelve, 20-minute presentations.

Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered for successful applicants. Should a proposal be submitted jointly for co-authors to present, funding will be offered for one presenter only.

#### Proposal Review Committee:

Debórah Dwork, The Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Crimes Against Humanity, The Graduate Center - CUNY

Sara Horowitz, Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies, York University

Carson Phillips, Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, The Azrieli Foundation

Join us in Toronto for a thought-provoking exploration of the significance of Auschwitz in Holocaust narratives. Together, let us unravel the complexities of this landmark and contribute to a deeper understanding of its importance as part of the collective narrative of the Holocaust.