

'La cachette'

This installation is about the story of my grandfather, survivor of the Holocaust. Through this personal story, a tribute is done to all the children who died during the 2nd world war. Therefore, while entering the box you can see the ceiling covered with portraits of children from Wilno in Poland, my grandfather's city of origin.

The photographic archives are exclusively photos of children as my grandfather was eleven when he entered Auschwitz concentration camp. The pictures come from the archives department of the Yad Vashem museum and the Auschwitz Museum. There are no pictures of my grandfather in the hideout as almost all the photographs from himself and his family have disappeared during the war.

The shed contains a speaker with my grandfather's voice telling his story. The title "la cachette", hideout in English, evokes the hiding places children had to find in order to escape the raids and stay alive. The installation is made of cardboard, a rough material often used by children to play and hide. "La cachette" intends to show that anything was worth using in order to hide which meant survive.



This installation does not aim to immerse or confront the viewers to the 2nd World War tragedy but it is about hearing a personal testimony, doing an act of collective memory.

By sharing personal archives with the audience, I intend to bridge the gap between personal and collective memory. Photographs are evidence of the past. I hope that this installation, that provides an emotional language and shares a personal experience, can speak to anyone.



When Archives become Art

Archives are usually used as a testimonial of the past by historians. The word "Archive" comes from the Latin word "archivum" meaning "written records" and also from the Greek word "Arkhe" which means government, originally "beginning", "origin". Nevertheless, from the early 20th century, some artists have used archives in their works of art. My final research paper is about how archives can be used in contemporary art as working tools for remembrance and expression.

My research paper critically examines the way contemporary artists have used archival data to create art pieces that contributed to historical heritage and memory. Using evidence from artists who collected photographs and letters as well as artists who used archives from the 2nd World War, such as Christian Boltanski, my research paper also demonstrates that the effectiveness of this approach is the result of an artist's respect for truth, integrity and responsibility.

Artists, using archives as their medium, have created numerous and powerful artworks whose objective is to contribute to remembrance and offer visual information. Remembrance can be a personal or collective action that is potentially subjective. Visual information suggests the power to inform viewers and requires an assumption of truth and the reliability of the information presented.

Thus, in this research paper I have studied the way artists have investigated, reinvented and used the concept of archives from the early 20th century to the present with a particular focus on the remembrance of the Holocaust through Christian Boltanski's art. In terms of methodology, I have examined some interviews given by Christian Boltanski and other art specialists, studied academic articles and analyzed artworks including *The Picture Collection* by Taryn Simon, *Collage A* by Johannes Baader, *Boite-en-valise (Box in a suitcase)* by Marcel Duchamp, *Archives* and *Monument 'Odessa'* by Christian Boltanski and *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* by Zoe Leonard. My research paper has been supplemented by observing the limitations and counterarguments that might arise from the artistic use of archives such as the need to respect memory and heritage and glorify the archives without being superficial. This paper highlights the responsibility and duty that these artists have as they have given life and still give life to materials that were forgotten.

Esther Katz