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SPIELBERG'S SHOAH FOUNDATION

Berlin University Presented with Holocaust Video Archive

A Berlin university has become the first outside of the United States to be given access to Steven Spielberg's archive of interviews with Holocaust survivors and witnesses.



AP
Steven Spielberg, set up the Shoah Foundation to preserve the testimonies of Holocaust survivors.

Berlin's Free University announced Monday that it has been granted access to a giant video archive of Holocaust survivor testimonies. It is the first European institution to be given access to the entire archive of the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education, a project initiated by the American director Steven Spielberg. Researchers, faculty and students will now be able to view more than 50,000 video interviews with Holocaust survivors and witnesses.

"History not only consists of facts and figures, but also of individual ways of life and personal destiny," said Dieter Lentzen, the President of the Free University. The archive was presented by Douglas Greenberg, the director of the foundation, which is based at the University of Southern California. He said "A primary goal of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute is to provide access to the archive to the broadest audience possible." Four US universities already have access to the archive, which is the largest of its kind in the world. It contains 52,000 videos of interviews with people from 56 countries in 32 languages.

Director Steven Spielberg set up the Shoah Foundation's video archive in 1994 after filming "Schindler's List" the previous year in Poland. He said he wanted to preserve the testimony of Holocaust survivors for future generations. Many of the interviews are with Holocaust survivors, including Jews, Sinti and Roma, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses and political prisoners. The archive also includes interviews with rescuers, liberators, members of aid organizations, eyewitnesses, and participants in war crimes trials.

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