

**FOR STAN MARKS Centre News on  
Our Documentary**

**'IMAGES SPEAK'**

**Yael Codron & George Halasz**

**In early 2006, I (GH) watched what I thought would be another 'home movie' at the home of Lindy Tamir for maybe 40 participants of the Adult March of the Living 2005 (AMotL). I recognized something easy to overlook - fleeting images with a primal resonance. The images and sound captured telling private gestures, intense moments shattered in a look, a resonant sigh as father Berni Hamersfeld and daughter Lindy revisited Poland intrigued me. I needed to follow-up.**

**Yael Codron's rendered visual harmony exploded the limits of the viewer's empathy, revealing a new vantage point to appreciate the unworded interior rhythms trauma disrupts at its core, traces of memory itself.**

**One year later, Yael and I were putting final touches to a video to celebrate Alice Halasz's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday (Alice is the mother of GH). Over lunch, we brainstormed a new documentary to explore the creative process of artist and distinguished photographer Emmanuel Santos as he engaged in his commissioned mural for the Jewish Holocaust Centre.**



**At this stage a brief digression to answer why another Holocaust focused documentary?**

**If future generations find a time-capsule from our era they may ask why we were obsessed with the Holocaust. As we, a second (GH) and third (YC) generation descendants of Holocaust survivors, start our documentary, we also question if we are doing the right thing to speak to survivors, yet again, about their experiences.**

**In the end is the beginning: our documentary start where Emmanuel Santos' images stop. We explore two levels of an intimate relationship: first, Emmanuel's artistic processes as he creates his mural; second, his subjects, survivors and descendants, reflect on the critical moments captured in the artists mural.**

**Emmanuel describes the inner workings of his art, how he decides to celebrate his vision, those chosen images that convey the essence of his story. His mural balances images as participants are immersed in their outer and inner**

**traumascapes. What personal and family experiences inspired him to this creative art?**

**Turning to the participants, what motivated them to become share their intimate personal and family history, was it a moral imperative, a spiritual obligation or an act of commemoration of their personal loss amongst the lost generation?**

**During the preparation for our documentary, we delved into these and other questions, asked ourselves if as filmmakers we have a role to approach and render Holocaust images with a different reverence to other images.**

**As the photographed participants tell their story, to recall the feelings behind their fleeting glance, silent gesture or focused gaze, we were conscious how privileged we are to share with survivors their reflections on experiences ingrained for a lifetime, yet so delicate and fleeting in their recall.**

**What of the generations after? Will we remain conscious of our legacy, or will the past diffuse into the mist of history? The struggle to preserve an authentic past remains a generational challenge for each of us. Denial and myth's antidote is the power images unleash to shatter ignorance, myth and prejudice. Some images in the mural seem to pulsate with the rhythm of trauma, decades after. Can pictures, more than words, breathe new life into traumatized survivors, descendants and witnesses.**

**Our documentary, located at our critical generational cross-road's shifting consciousness is our personal commitment to our historical legacy through the medium of art, both the still and moving image.**