Murry Sidlin

Tues., November 19
7 p.m. in Anspach 161
Central Michigan University

Terezín, 1941-1945:
The Most Unlikely, Curious, 
Accidental, Enigmatic, and Inspiring
‘Improvised University’ in History

Murry Sidlin is a distinguished conductor, educator and artistic innovator. He is the founder and president of The Defiant Requiem Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to illuminating the legacy of the Terezín concentration camp prisoners, who, despite monumental suffering, disease and the constant presence of death, found hope and inspiration in the arts and humanities.

During World War II, Terezín was a prison to thousands of scholars, performers, musicians, actors, writers and philosophers from Central Europe. One prisoner, conductor Rafael Schächter, led a chorus of Jewish prisoners who learned Verdi’s Requiem (a Catholic Mass) by rote and then performed the piece 16 times before audiences of other prisoners, SS officers and German Army staff members. Their purpose: to sing to their captors words that could not be spoken—a statement of defiance and resistance.

In 1944, the Nazis used Terezín as a propaganda tool to show that they were treating prisoners humanely. Portions of the camp were cleaned and painted, and many prisoners were deported to Auschwitz to reduce overcrowding. Prisoners performed plays and sang for representatives from the Red Cross.

www.chsbs.cmich.edu/abel

Free and open to the public

The Dr. Harold Abel Endowed Lecture Series in the Study of Dictatorship, Democracy and Genocide was established in 2009. The series invites to campus distinguished scholars to discuss the impact of worldwide genocide and historical events such as the Holocaust and mass murders in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America.

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