



# HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS' FOUNDATION – USA

May 8, 2023

## Member Organizations (Partial List)

Amer. Assn. of Jewish Holocaust Survivors of Greater Boston  
Assn. of Holocaust Survivors from Former USSR, Los Angeles  
C.A.N.D.L.E.S., Terre Haute, IN  
Child Survivors of Arizona  
Child Survivors/Hidden Children of the Holocaust  
Coalition of Holocaust Survivor Clubs in South Florida  
Council of Nazi Holocaust Survivor Organizations of So. California  
Habonim Cultural Club, Miami  
Holocaust Child Survivors & Friends of Greater Hartford  
Holocaust Survivors Club of Boca Raton  
Holocaust Survivors of Greater Detroit  
Holocaust Survivors of Greater Pittsburgh  
Holocaust Survivors of South Florida  
Holocaust Survivors Group of Southern Nevada  
Houston Council of Jewish Holocaust Survivors  
The Jewish Holocaust Survivors & Friends of Greater Washington  
Jewish Survivors of Latvia, Inc. New York  
National Assn. of Jewish Child Holocaust Survivors, Inc.  
New American Jewish Social Club, Miami  
New Cracow Friendship Society, New York  
Survivors of Atlantic City, NJ  
Survivors of the Holocaust Asset Recovery Project, Seattle  
Survivors of the Holocaust of New Mexico  
Tikvah Acharay Hashoah, San Francisco

Mr. Guillaume Cerutti  
Chief Executive Officer  
[Gcerutti@christies.com](mailto:Gcerutti@christies.com)

Mr. Francois Curiel  
Chairman of Christie's Europe  
[fcuriel@christies.com](mailto:fcuriel@christies.com)

Anthea Peers  
President, EMEA  
[apeers@christies.com](mailto:apeers@christies.com)

## Subject: Christie's Sale of Horten Jewelry Collection Trivializes the Holocaust

Dear Mr. Cerutti, Mr. Curiel, and Ms. Peers:

The Holocaust Survivors Foundation USA, Inc. (HSF) is a national coalition of Holocaust survivor groups which formed in 2000 to advocate for honest and transparent restitution of assets looted in the Holocaust, and to draw attention to the dire conditions faced by tens of thousands of survivors in the U.S. and worldwide living – and dying -- in poverty. HSF leaders have testified before the U.S. Congress over a dozen times about these issues, and have participated in litigation against corporate and governmental collaborators and profiteers, either as claimants, or as organization leaders advocating for others who were not as fortunate.

We are appalled that Christie's is conducting an auction of jewelry from the estate of Heidi Horten, perpetuating a disgraceful pattern of whitewashing Holocaust profiteers, justifying commerce and "charity." To be clear: the Horten Foundation and Christie's actions are patently offensive and trivialize the Holocaust. The sale must be stopped, and its goals re-focused on making restitution to affected families, and providing desperately needed funds to assist indigent Holocaust survivors around the world.

According to the *New York Times*, *Fine Art Globes*, and several prominent historians, Helmut Horten's fortune was built on the acquisition of forcibly "sold" Jewish properties and businesses by Nazi Germany. It comes as no surprise that Ms. Horten hired a historian whose report couches her husband's profiteering in normalizing language – rationalizations that are offensive to Holocaust survivors and families and an insult to history and fact. Christies' pathetic justification for conducting the auction (and receiving a huge fee) – that Ms. Horten's foundation will use the proceeds for charity – is equally insulting. It isn't "charity" to give away money that was stolen from the victims of Nazism.

As the articles in the *Times* and *Fine Art Globe* articles show, the Horten-Christies charade is all too common. Holocaust profiteers were almost never punished or forced to disgorge their bloody fortunes, and were -- and

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remain -- accepted in polite society. We are grateful to these reporters for informing the general public about these grave injustices.

According to respected economist Sidney Zab Ludoff, "less than 20 percent of the value of Jewish assets stolen by the Nazis and their collaborators has been restored," leaving at least \$115-175 billion in 2005 prices unreturned. In addition, tens of thousands of survivors still live in poverty and cannot meet their basic needs for food, medicines, dental care, rent, utilities, and long-term care.

The top priorities for proceeds of the sale must be restitution to the heirs of the families whose properties Horten acquired, and funding for 100% of survivors needs. After these goals are achieved, funds for Holocaust and Jewish education would also be appropriate.

Sincerely,  
  
David Schacter, President

### Joined by the Holocaust Survivors Foundation USA Executive Committee:

- Dena Axelrod, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- Magda Bader, Boston, MA
- Esther Finder, Las Vegas, NV
- Renee Firestone, Los Angeles, CA
- Klara Firestone, Los Angeles, CA
- Ella Frumkin, Los Angeles, CA
- Jay Ipson, Richmond, VA
- Vera Karliner, Miami Beach, FL
- Annette Lantos, Washington, D.C.
- Louise Lawrence-Israels, Washington, D.C
- Steve Moskovic, New York, NY
- Shirley Rubin, Boynton Beach, FL
- Anita Schuster, Las Vegas, NV
- Neal Schacter, Miami, FL
- Charles Srebnick, New York, NY
- Agnes Vertes, Weston, CT
- Thomas Weiss, M.D., Miami Beach, FL

- cc: Francois Henri Pinault
- Jason Pollack
- Richard Aronowitz

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