

The background of the entire page is a faded, sepia-toned collage. It features several elements: a portrait of a man in a suit and hat with glasses, a woman's face, and various fragments of text and documents, some of which appear to be historical records or newspaper clippings. The overall tone is somber and historical.

OPERA

MAGYAR ÁLLAMI OPERAHÁZ
HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA

„Shattered, abandoned, dead...”

Exhibition in memory
of the Opera House
victims of the Holocaust

„SHATTERED, ABANDONED, DEAD...” – remembers his failed loves the poet Hoffmann in Jacques Offenbach’s opera, which was banned from the Hungarian stages in 1939. Fate or history had the same three paths in store for artists of Jewish descent and other employees of the Hungarian Royal Opera during the Holocaust. Some of them perished in the concentration camps or during labour service, many were forced to leave the Opera House forever and often their native country as well, but all of them were shattered, and the inhumane period full of humiliation, deprivation, flight and hiding after World War II left a mark on their souls for the rest of their lives.

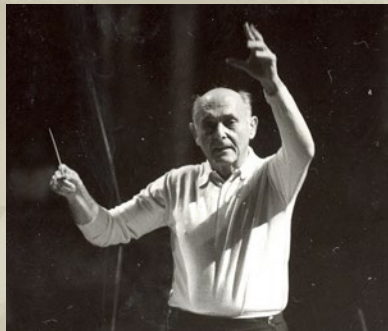
It is impossible to find out – and it would be inappropriate to make a list – of exactly how many members of the State Opera were of Israelite heritage since its opening in 1884. In the absence of a list like this, it is very difficult to research the fate of all those who were directly or indirectly involved in the terrors of the Holocaust. The spectrum would be very broad, as it would include Rózsi Fuchs, the assimilated Jewish ballerina who had been retired for decades, Rózsi Walter, the soprano prima donna of immaculate descent, who saved her Jewish husband and her half-Aryan daughter, as well as many later artists who survived World War II at a young age and became members of the Opera after 1945 only.

The primary purpose of the exhibition is to commemorate the persecuted employees of the Opera, and it also tries to present unique destinies in the storms of history. The research was made more difficult by the fact that nearly eighty years have passed since the events, and none of the victims are alive. For the survivors and their generation, in the years and decades following World War II, it was almost a natural reaction to remain silent, not to talk about what had happened. In addition to the lack of oral tradition, hardly any personal notes or reminiscences about the artists have survived. All this is especially true for the most inhumane period, the year after the German occupation.

DÓRA BÁRSONY AS CARMEN



GEORG SOLTI IN REHEARSAL AT THE OPERA HOUSE IN 1985



ANNA BRUCKNER’S TRANSPORT CARD TO BERGEN-BELSEN
(SOURCE: YAD VASHEM ARCHIVES)

Date	22.12.90/wi-I	De No.	131 753	Ung-Jidm
Name	B R U C K N E R	Anna		DOB 2/62/
BD	1.11.10	BP	Budapest	Nat
Next of Kin				
Source of Information	Orig.	Dechou	Entry	Registry
Last kn. Location				Date
CC	Dechou	Arr.	26.11.44	from
Transf. on		to		Ship
Died on		in		
Cause of death				
Buried on		in		
Grave				D. C. No.
Remarks				

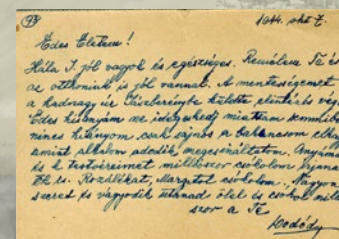
THE OPERA ORCHESTRA IN 1934



DÁVID NEY JR.'S LAST KNOWN POSTCARD FROM THE CAMP TO HIS WIFE, IBOLYA DARVAS



DÁVID NEY AND IBOLYA DARVAS'S WEDDING PHOTO



In the absence of personal „experiences” and specialist literature on the Opera House, the curators were left with dry data fragments lurking in the depths of various collections and digital archives. They attempted to string them together to the best of their ability in order to give a deeper and truer picture of former colleagues.

The presentation of the material is made special by the location: it takes place in a section of the basement-labyrinth of the Opera House, where our former colleagues hid and lived during the siege of Budapest. After the muses fell silent for months following a performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) on 23 December 1944, the basement of the Opera House in Pest took on a „historical significance”. While, at the order of director Zoltán Sányi, a few employees sympathizing with the Arrow Cross Party loaded the theatre’s costumes, sheet music, and musical instruments onto a so-called culture train, a significant proportion of the company (often along with members of their families) sought refuge under the Opera House from the increasing bombings.

The biggest name among the constantly arriving refugees was Zoltán Kodály’s, who might also have felt uncomfortable in this environment because of his wife, Emma, who was forced into hiding because of her descent. Not long before, in December 1942, the Opera House celebrated the 60th birthday of the internationally renowned with a special gala. At the time, no one could have guessed that a mere three years later, Kodály would owe his life to these walls. He lived in a corner of the extras’ dressing room in the basement separated by a curtain and composed his *Missa brevis*.

THE OPERA HOUSE IN 1945



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CURATOR
MÁRTON KARCZAG

CONCEPT AND BASIC RESEARCH
SYLVIE GÁBOR

LAYOUT
MÁTAI ÉS VÉGH KREATÍV MŰHELY

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