

Graduate Spotlight

Every year, the International School for Holocaust Studies holds hundreds of educational activities, in a dozen languages, for over 300,000 students and educators in Israel and around the world. Featured here is one of the School's graduates, and what she has achieved since:



Anita Lanszki Hungary

James Joseph McIntosh

■ In 2014, Anita Lanszki, an assistant lecturer at the Hungarian Dance Academy and teacher at the ELTE University in Budapest, attended a pedagogical seminar at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies. Lanszki has since become a leading member of the ever-growing group of Hungarian graduates of the International School. "I encountered a whole new approach to history at Yad Vashem," said Lanszki. "The Holocaust is not only a chapter in a book. It was a concrete process with real people. It happened with men, women and children like us. They were witnesses, victims, perpetrators, collaborators, rescuers and killers."

The pupils were asked to create digital stories based on three essential components: research, original testimony and their own connection to the topic

On an annual basis, the Hungarian Section of the International School's European Department proposes project topics for its graduate network. When Section Head Dr. Chava Baruch suggested making digital stories (short films) for the 2015 project, they contacted Lanszki, and asked her to take a leading role. Lanszki, who is currently studying towards a PhD in digital education,

agreed to lend her expertise, joining Baruch and local partner Szilvia Pető-Dittel in a project that attracted more than 40 Hungarian Yad Vashem graduates.

After writing instructions on the technical aspects of creating digital stories, Lanszki

organized a study day for the participating graduates at the Holocaust Documentation Center (HDC) in Budapest. The graduates' pupils were asked to create digital stories based on three essential components: research in libraries and archives as well as of personal artifacts; original testimony from Holocaust survivors; and the pupils' own connection to the topic. While the graduates offered guidance and ensured historical accuracy, the pupils had to find an appropriate balance between two voices: that of the survivors, recounting their stories; and that of the pupils themselves, describing the personal impact of their discoveries in the course of their research.

Thirteen such digital stories competed for first place at a follow-up study day at the HDC in October 2015. Using Yad Vashem's methodology, educational philosophy and age-appropriate



■ Yad Vashem graduate Anita Lanszki



■ Mária Árvai, who appears in a personal digital story made by her granddaughter Dorottya Kocsis

media coverage exceeded the organizers' expectations.

The winning entry was submitted by Dorottya Kocsis, who was mentored by Yad Vashem graduate Nora Kunos. Kocsis' story recounts the wartime experiences of her grandmother, Mária Árvai, who worked in the home of the Zimmermanns, a Jewish family that was eventually deported to Auschwitz. Balancing the story of the victims with Dorottya's emotional journey through research and interviews, and adding authentic photographs from the time and place of the events, the film concluded with a dedicatory message in memory of the Zimmermann family as well as Mária. "If they link faces, everyday stories and objects to the events, the learners can get closer to understanding this historical tragedy," said Lanszki.

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