

## **Press Kit**

***Claude Lanzmann:  
The Recordings***

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- Biography Dr. Sonja Göthel Knopp, Research Project Coordinator and Dr. Tamar Lewinsky, Exhibition Curator and Head of Project

Press release  
27 November 2025

Opening of the Exhibition  
*Claude Lanzmann: The Recordings*



*Claude Lanzmann: The Recordings*, design: buerominimal

To mark the 100th birthday of Claude Lanzmann (1925–2018) – the renowned French journalist, filmmaker, and chronicler of the Shoah – the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB) is presenting an exhibition that brings history to life through sound: *Claude Lanzmann: The Recordings*. “We are proud to make the audio archive of original recordings for Lanzmann’s world-famous documentary *Shoah* (1985) available to the public for the first time,” says Hetty Berg, director of the JMB.

The recordings document the numerous conversations with survivors, perpetrators, and third parties that Lanzmann and his colleagues Corinna Coulmas and Irena Steinfeldt-Levy conducted in the 1970s during their many years of research prior to filming. *Shoah* shaped international perceptions of the genocide of European Jews. The film runs nine hours and 26 minutes and contains no archival footage.

“In late 2021, the Association Claude et Felix Lanzmann (A.C.F.L.), represented by Dominique Lanzmann, donated Claude Lanzmann’s audio archive to the JMB,” explains Hetty Berg. “It now forms the heart of our *Lanzmann Collection*, which we have been cataloging ever since. Together with *Shoah*, the *Lanzmann Collection* was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2023.” Including the additional cassettes received in 2022, the archive now comprises more than 220 hours of audio. The JMB has digitized all 152 audio cassettes and transcribed their content. Once the exhibition opens, an initial set of recordings will be published in a publicly accessible online edition with German and English translations, with the gradual publication process to be completed by the end of 2027. In the interviews presented at the exhibition, the participants speak French, German, English, Hebrew, Yiddish, and Polish.

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Curator Dr. Tamar Lewinsky explains: “The exhibition takes visitors on a unique auditory journey. Selected original recordings trace Lanzmann’s research and offer insight into the multilayered memories of the Shoah in the 1970s.” A restrained visual design encourages close listening. The exhibition features roughly 90 minutes of audio.

Wearing headphones, visitors can move freely through the space, pause in one of the listening areas, and explore the exhibition’s six thematic focuses at their own pace. In the first section, visitors hear Lanzmann speaking with others about the project, describing what it meant for him financially and psychologically and the methodological challenges it posed. The second section introduces interviewees who later withdrew from the project and were therefore never filmed. The third section focuses on perpetrators, showing how Lanzmann managed to coax them into speaking and how they reflected on – or failed to reflect on – their actions. The fourth section examines the Holocaust in Lithuania as representative of the many research topics that did not make it into the film. The fifth presents Lanzmann’s 1978 trip to Poland, including his first visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial site and other locations, as well as his conversations with eyewitnesses. The sixth section juxtaposes selected audio and film recordings from the raw material.

Monitors provide transcripts and translations of the various languages in which the conversations were held. The recordings include background sounds from the different settings – the clatter of dishes, children’s voices, footsteps – creating a distinct atmosphere that prompts visitors to reflect on the possible meaning of every sound. The recordings are further contextualized by original documents from Claude Lanzmann’s private archive, by a video interview conducted by the JMB with his colleagues in 2025, and by additional documents and film footage.

“It is of great importance to me to support this significant project. Considering the shameful rise in antisemitism and that we are losing the last of those who can bear witness, we are all called upon to strengthen the memory of the Shoah and to create spaces where history can be experienced and reflected upon. By promoting the educational work on Claude Lanzmann’s audio archive, we at the Federal Foreign Office want to contribute to the preservation and further development of our culture of remembrance,” says Foreign Minister Dr Johann Wadephul.

Lena Altman, co-CEO of the Alfred Landecker Foundation, notes: “The Lanzmann Audio Archive preserves uniquely powerful testimonies of the twentieth century – voices of Holocaust survivors as well as those of perpetrators. It demonstrates the profound work that remembrance can accomplish when it makes the horror tangible through the voices of those who endured it, witnessed it, or indeed caused it. At a time when the last eyewitnesses are falling silent and antisemitism is once again on the rise, the archive ensures access to these voices and keeps their stories alive in the consciousness of generations to come.”

“Claude Lanzmann was one of the first French intellectuals to support a postwar rapprochement between our two countries, understanding that art, culture, and knowledge had never been the property of the Nazis and that European unification had to be imagined and built immediately after the war, free of resentment and any desire for revenge” says François Delattre, French Ambassador to Germany.

The exhibition will be on view at the New York Historical from 28 November 2025 to 29 March 2026 and at the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris from 10 December 2025 to 29 March 2026.

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Current information about the project is available at:

<https://www.jmberlin.de/en/exhibition-claude-lanzmann-recordings>

Effective today, all of the recordings featured in the exhibition can be explored – together with supplementary material – on the online platform Oral-History.Digital (OH.D). The complete set of recordings in the *Lanzmann Collection* will be made accessible there by the end of 2027:

<https://www.oral-history.digital/en/index.html>.

<b>Duration:</b>	28 November 2025 to 12 April 2026
<b>Location:</b>	Jewish Museum Berlin, Eric F. Ross Gallery
<b>Admission:</b>	Free
<b>Opening hours:</b>	Daily, from 10 am to 6 pm

The accompanying program includes, among other events, an academic conference in 2026 and workshops for school groups. On the learning platform *JMB di.kla – Jewish Content for Your Class* available in English and German, visitors will find a digital learning module featuring an animated film about Lanzmann and his preparations for *Shoah*. It explores questions of memory and eyewitness testimony. Please visit <https://dikla.jmberlin.de/en/>.

Supported by the German Foreign Office and the Alfred Landecker Foundation.

## Contact

Dr. Margret Karsch

Head of Press

T +49 (0)30 259 93 419

Melanie Franke

Press Officer

T +49 (0)30 259 93 340

[presse@jmberlin.de](mailto:presse@jmberlin.de)

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## Factsheet

### Claude Lanzmann The Recordings

Exhibition dates	28 November 2025 to 12 April 2026
Opening hours	Daily from 10 am to 6 pm
Location	Jewish Museum Berlin, Eric F. Ross Gallery
Admission	free
Website	<a href="http://www.jmberlin.de/en/lanzmann">www.jmberlin.de/en/lanzmann</a>
Social media	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/juedischesmuseumberlin">instagram.com/juedischesmuseumberlin</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/jmberlinTube">youtube.com/jmberlinTube</a> <a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@juedischesmuseumberlin">tiktok.com/@juedischesmuseumberlin</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/jmberlin">facebook.com/jmberlin</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/juedisches-museum-berlin">linkedin.com/company/juedisches-museum-berlin</a> Hashtag: #Lanzmann #JMBSammlung #JMBerlin
Exhibition space	400 m <sup>2</sup>
Exhibition curator and head of project	Dr. Tamar Lewinsky, Curator of Audiovisual Media
Research Project Coordinator	Dr. Sonja Göthel Knopp
Project management exhibition	Susanne Wagner
Exhibition design (Concept, architecture, graphics)	Fischer Ausstellungsgestaltung; Graphic Design: Lena Roob

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Sound scenography	Jascha Dormann, Idee & Klang Audio Design
Audio system	iaart – Studio für mediale Architekturen
Advertising campaign design	buerominimal Berlin
Central feature of the exhibition	<i>Lanzmann Collection</i> : Claude Lanzmann's audio archive relating to his documentary film <i>Shoah</i> (1985)
Acoustic and visual exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A total of 26 audio sequences from the <i>Lanzmann Collection</i> in French, German, English, Hebrew, Yiddish, and Polish, presented in six thematic chapters</li> <li>- 1 screening of a video interview with Corinna Coulmas and Irena Steinfeldt-Levy about their time working with Claude Lanzmann</li> <li>- 1 screening on the overlaps between the audio collection and film footage for <i>Shoah</i>: Contains four additional audio sequences and four sequences from the footage</li> </ul>
Further exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selection of compact cassettes</li> <li>- Claude Lanzmann's recording device</li> <li>- Documents on loan from Dominique Lanzmann's archive</li> </ul>
Lenders	Association Claude et Felix Lanzmann, represented by Dominique Lanzmann
Online feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exhibition website: <a href="https://www.jmberlin.de/en/lanzmann">https://www.jmberlin.de/en/lanzmann</a> with exhibition texts, an interview with Lanzmann's colleagues Corinna Coulmas and Irena Steinfeldt-Levy, and short biographies of all the people featured in the exhibition.</li> <li>- <i>JMB di.kla</i>: <a href="https://dikla.jmberlin.de/en/einheit/schoa-aufzeichnungen-einer-spurensuche">https://dikla.jmberlin.de/en/einheit/schoa-aufzeichnungen-einer-spurensuche</a>, a free digital learning tool for secondary schools from Year 11 onwards. Pupils engage with selected audios: they listen to a survivor, compare the statements of convicted perpetrators, discuss the significance of these recordings, and make their own audio recording.</li> </ul>
Barrier free offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of selected audio sequences in German Sign Language</li> <li>- Audio track for blind and visually impaired visitors in the JMB app</li> </ul>

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## Accompanying programme

27. November

Opening with speeches and greetings from  
Hetty Berg, Director of the Jewish Museum Berlin,  
Johann Wadephul, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Benjamin Haddad, Deputy Minister for Europe at the Ministry for  
Europe and Foreign Affairs, France, Lena Altman, Co-CEO of the  
Alfred Landecker Foundation, Dominique Lanzmann, Chair of the  
Claude and Felix Lanzmann Association (A.C.F.L.) and Tamar  
Lewinsky, curator of the exhibition

10–11 January 2026

Film screening *Shoah* (1985) by Claude Lanzmann (full length,  
shown throughout two days)

27 January 2026

Film screening *Je n'avais que le néant – 'Shoah' par Lanzmann*  
(*All I Had Was Nothingness*), documentary (2025) by Guillaume  
Ribot, and Conversation with the film director

9 February 2026

Event *The Making of Claude Lanzmann's Film Shoah*. Conversation  
Corinna Coulmas and Irena Steinfeldt-Levy (in German)

9–10 February 2026

Conference *The Sounds of History. Claude Lanzmann's preparations  
for Shoah* (in German)

7–8 March 2026

Film screening *Shoah* (1985) by Claude Lanzmann (full length,  
shown throughout two days)

18 March 2025

JMB Book Club with Anna Langfus *Gepäck aus Sand* (*Bags of  
Sand*)

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## Lanzmann Collection

The collection of 152 audio cassettes was donated to the Jewish  
Museum Berlin in 2021 by the Association Claude et Felix  
Lanzmann (A.C.F.L.), represented by Dominique Lanzmann. Since  
2023, the Lanzmann Collection has been part of the UNESCO  
Memory of the World Register.

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Online edition	From the start of the exhibition, the first recordings with German and English translations will be available to all interested parties in an online edition. The gradual publication process will be completed by the end of 2027.
Project partners	Oral-History.Digital (OH.D), UB-DIS (Digital Interview Collections Department of the University Library at Freie Universität Berlin) and Selma Stern Centre for Jewish Studies Berlin Brandenburg
Social media cooperation	Collaboration with author, influencer and Grimme Prize winner Susanne Siegert (@keineerinnerungskultur) on a series of video formats about Claude Lanzmann and the exhibition content.
With funding from	German Foreign Office and the Alfred Landecker Foundation



## Press Images for the Exhibition *Claude Lanzmann: The Recordings*

Runtime: 28 November 2025 to 12 April 2026

Current press photos and views of the exhibition can be downloaded at:  
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Images may be used without authorization for current reporting only, with the request to send a copy.

## Object images

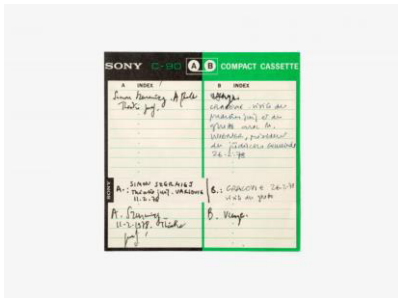
Image	Caption	Credit
	Audio cassette tapes of the <i>Lanzmann Collection</i>	Jewish Museum Berlin, photo: Roman März
	Audio interview for the movie <i>Shoah</i> with Mary Sirkin, Donation of the Association Claude et Felix Lanzmann	Jewish Museum Berlin, photo: Roman März

# JÜDISCHES MUSEUM BERLIN



Audio interview for the movie *Shoah* with Mary Sirkin, Donation of the Association Claude et Felix Lanzmann

Jewish Museum Berlin,  
photo: Roman März



Audio interview for the movie *Shoah* with Szymon Szurmiej, Donation of the Association Claude et Felix Lanzmann

Jewish Museum Berlin,  
photo: Roman März



Audio interview for the movie *Shoah* with Szymon Szurmiej, Donation of the Association Claude et Felix Lanzmann

Jewish Museum Berlin,  
photo: Roman März



Audio cassette tapes of the *Lanzmann Collection*

Jewish Museum Berlin,  
photo: Roman März

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Audio cassette tapes of the  
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Jewish Museum Berlin,  
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*Lanzmann Collection*

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From the exhibition  
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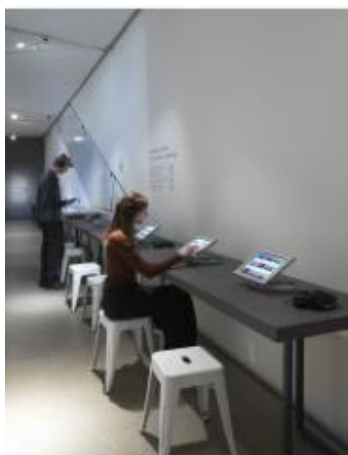
Jewish Museum Berlin,  
photo: Jens Ziehe

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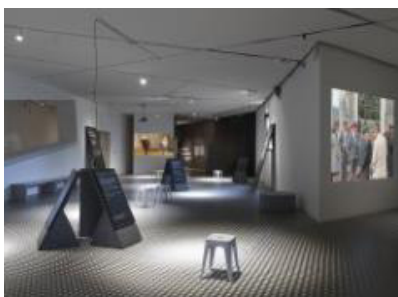
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## **Hetty Berg**

### **Director of the Jewish Museum Berlin**

Hetty Berg has been director of the Jewish Museum Berlin since April 2020. For more than thirty years, she served in various capacities at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam.

She began her work there as a curator in 1989. In the course of her career at the museum, she curated more than thirty temporary exhibitions and was responsible for the conceptual development and production of five permanent exhibitions. In 2002, she was appointed manager and chief curator at the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, which expanded in 2012 and became part of the Jewish Cultural Quarter. In addition to the Jewish Historical Museum, the quarter includes the Children's Museum, the Portuguese Synagogue, the National Holocaust Museum, and the Hollandsche Schouwburg Memorial.

Hetty Berg was born in The Hague in 1961. After training as a dancer for four years in London and Amsterdam, she studied theater in Amsterdam. While pursuing her career, she earned a master's degree in management of nonprofit organizations in Utrecht. A Dutch national, she is a member of numerous academic advisory boards and committees. For example, from 2016 to 2020, she served on the Dutch National Ethics Committee for Museums, and from 2007 to 2013, on the board of the Association of European Jewish Museums. Since 2020, she has been a member of the board of trustees of the following organizations: the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe Foundation, the House of One, and the Ernst Reuter Foundation for Advanced Study. She has also been a member of the Dutch "Commissie Verweesde Joodse Roofkunst" ("committee on orphaned Jewish looting art") since 2024.

Her work and research interests focus on museum studies, Jewish cultural history, and Jews in the Netherlands. She has published numerous books and scholarly essays on these subjects and is coeditor of *Site of Deportation, Site of Memory: The Amsterdam Hollandsche Schouwburg and the Holocaust* (2017), *Waterlooplein: De buurt binnenstebuiten* (2020), and *Reappraising the History of the Jews in the Netherlands* (2021).



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Since 2024, Sonja Göthel Knopp has served as research project coordinator for the scholarly edition of the Lanzmann Collection at the Jewish Museum Berlin. Previously, on behalf of the Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg and the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History, she worked on the VEJ source edition documenting the persecution of Jews in Germany and Europe from 1933 to 1945. Her research focuses on Holocaust and memory studies as well as oral history. In 2023, her pilot study *Zeugnisse erlittener Gewalt: Die Shoah im Videointerview* was published by Wallstein.

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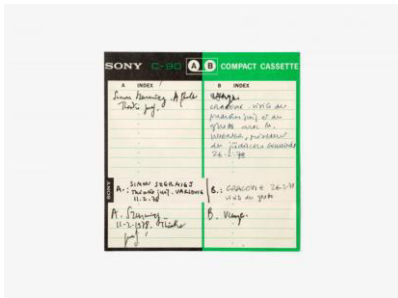
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