

# PRESS RELEASE

## THE HOLOCAUST AND COMICS: Totem or Taboo?

### EXHIBITION

January 19 to October 30, 2017

Drawing: Enki Bilal © Mémorial de la Shoah

#### The Shoah Memorial

17, rue Geoffroy-l'Asnier, Paris 4  
01 42 77 44 72

Open every day except Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Thursdays until 10 p.m.

Free admission

Metro: Saint-Paul or Hôtel-de-Ville

#### Press day

**Tuesday, January 17, 2017**

[www.memorialdelashoah.org](http://www.memorialdelashoah.org)

[facebook.com/MemorialShoah/](https://facebook.com/MemorialShoah/)

[instagram.com/memorialshoahofficiel/](https://instagram.com/memorialshoahofficiel/)

[#ExpoShoahBD](https://twitter.com/Shoah_Memorial)

**The exhibition catalogue**, co-published by Mémorial de la Shoah/Denoël Graphic, will be out on January 15, 2017.

#### Press Contact

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On **January 19, 2017**, a major exhibition focusing on how the Holocaust is depicted in comic books will open at the Shoah Memorial.

The Holocaust, an unprecedented event in history, holds a special place in contemporary memory. By nature, an event is something that can be written about in newspapers, history books or novels. The genocide of Europe's Jews is no exception. Comic book authors gingerly tiptoed around the topic, sometimes stumbling, other times producing brilliant work. This historical and artistic exhibition on what is sometimes called the "ninth art" focuses on those depictions' visual sources, relevance, reach and limits (humor and satire).

It made sense for the Shoah Memorial to feature this popular art form in all its diversity, from comic books to graphic novels and mangas.

How, and since when, have comic book artists turned their attention to the Holocaust? How is testimony communicated? How realistically is the horror depicted? What are the themes,

motifs and symbols? How are they presently changing in keeping with the political, social and aesthetic references of our time, when a form of anti-Semitism persists? How have comic books depicted the Holocaust, such as Calvo's *La Bête est morte!*, which already featured the theme in 1944? Nearly 75 years later, some points in common, almost a grammar, emerge from these narratives and depictions. This exhibition will try to assess them for the first time.

Over **200 original documents** will be on display, from *Mickey au camp de Gurs*, *Superman to L'Oncle Paul*, *Master race*, *Unknown Soldier*, *Maus*, *L'Histoire des 3 Adolf*, *Déogratias*, *Deuxième génération* and many other major pieces.

A program of events in the auditorium will round out the exhibition. For example, at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 22, writer, screenwriter and comic book author (*X-Men*) **Chris Claremont** will take part in the conference *Why Didn't Superheroes Liberate Auschwitz?* in partnership with the International Comics Festival.

**Specialized curators:**

**Didier Pasamonik** is a publisher, journalist and curator specializing in comics.

**Joël Kotek** is a professor at the Free University of Brussels and teaches at Sciences Po Paris.

**General curator:** Marie-Édith Agostini, the Shoah Memorial

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**The Shoah Memorial**

*Europe's biggest Holocaust archive, the Shoah Memorial is a place of remembrance, education and transmission of the history of the genocide of the Jews during the Second World War. The Memorial hosts permanent exhibitions at both of its sites: in Paris, in the heart of the historic Marais quarter, and Drancy, opposite the Cité de la Muette, the former internment camp from which most of France's Jews were deported. At the Paris site, the Memorial hosts two temporary exhibitions a year plus a wide range of activities to help young people and adults better understand this bleak chapter in French and European history and pass it on to future generations.*