



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Nathan Hilu Papers**

Manuscript Collection No. 799

Collection Summary

Title	Nathan Hilu Papers
Dates	1945-1957
Collection Number	MS-799
Repository	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator	Hilu, Nathan, 1926-2019
Extent	7 linear feet (7 record cartons)
Language of the Material	English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch Nathan Hilu was born in New York City in 1926 and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He served in the U.S. Army from 1945-1957. In Germany he served as a prison guard at Nuremberg, attached to the 6850th Internal Security Detachment where he guarded high ranking Nazis Party members, German military servicemen, and German government officials on trial for war crimes. Following the end of World War II, he continued his military service in Japan and various bases in the United States before being honorably discharged in 1957.

After his return to civilian life, Hilu settled in New York and achieved renown as an artist reflecting his life and times. The phrase art brut, coined by Jean Dubuffet in 1922, best describes Hilu's style — naïf, or outsider art that does not adhere to the mainstream. His 2008 series of drawings of the Nuremberg prison and its occupants are currently held at the Holocaust Resource Center Archives at Queensborough Community College, and a showcase of his work, "Nathan Hilu's Journal: Word, Image, Memory" is currently on display at the museum of the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, New York. Hilu continues to draw daily.

--Adapted from: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/25807>; <http://www.thelodownny.com/leslog/2010/04/nathan-hilus-lifetime-of-drawing-at-educational-alliance.html>; and <http://huc.edu/external/email/11/08/hilu/>. (accessed November 7, 2011)

Scope and Content This collection consists of Nathan Hilu's artistic 'memoir' of his service in the U.S. Army during World War II and the Korean War (1945-1957). The 'memoir' consists of nineteen binders created by Hilu containing his handwritten reminiscences, together with his drawings of persons and events described therein. In this sense, this memoir is both an autobiography and a work of art. Of particular interest are the binders concerning Hilu's time as a guard at the Nuremberg prison during the time of the Nuremberg trials in which he describes and sketches persons he encountered there such as Hermann Goering, Rudolf Hess, and other Nazi leaders.

Arrangement This collection is arranged in one (1) series: A. General.

Terms of Access The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

Preferred Citation Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Nathan Hilu Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-799. Nathan Hilu Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance Received from Nathan Hilu, New York, N.Y., 2003.

Processing Information Processed by Kevin Proffitt, August 2011.

This collection was arranged and described according to minimal-processing standards. Funding, in part, for the arrangement and description of this collection was provided by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Index Terms

Subjects	Jewish artists / Korean War, 1950-1953 / Nuremberg Trial of Major German War Criminals, Nuremberg, Germany, 1945-1946 / World War, 1939-1945
Personal Names	Hilu, Nathan, 1926-2019
Media	Personal narratives

Series A. General, 1945-1957

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1-3. Memoirs of GI Nathan Hilu, 1945-1957 (vol. 1-3).

Box 2. Folder 1-3. Memoirs of GI Nathan Hilu, 1945-1957 (vol. 4-6).

Box 3. Folder 1-3. My Memoirs as a Guard in the Nuremberg Prison (vol. 1-3).

Box 4. Folder 1-2. My Memoirs as a Guard in the Nuremberg Prison (vol. 4 and misc).

Box 5. Folder 1-2. My Memoirs as a Guard in the Nuremberg Prison (vol. 5 and 6).

Box 6. Folder 1-3. My Memoirs as a Guard in the Nuremberg Prison (vol. 7 and 8 and miscellaneous).

Box 7. Folder 1-3. Korean War memoirs (3 vols.).