



Survivor-Centred Visual Narratives

Spring 2026 Newsletter

Dear Colleagues,

Since our newsletter in the fall of 2025, we've published our second graphic novel collaboration, *Two Roses*; celebrated the film festival success of our documentary short film 'Why We Dance'; launched our new 'Archiving with Care' webinar series; and continued to facilitate publications while supporting the development of the educational resources.

Each of the SCVN Research Clusters are at various stages of creative production, with many preparing manuscripts and working with publishers through final edits and updates. In February, *Emmie Arbel. The Colour of Memory* was published in the UK by graphic novel publisher [SelfMadeHero](#). This spring, we are anticipating the upcoming publication of *Al-Fazia' - The Horror: Surviving Syria's Prisons* in German with Carlsen Verlag in late May, and with the University of Toronto Press in English in November.

The winter months have also been a profusion of public engagements. Art from *Emmie Arbel* was featured in Rome at the [Goethe Institute](#) alongside a selection of Barbara Yelin's oeuvre, coinciding with her 1-year residency at the Villa Massimo. Our director, Charlotte Schallié, participated in a roundtable discussion on trauma-informed research ethics at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design in February. In March, graphic artist Jared Muralt also discussed his work on *Ružica's Last Summer* in a panel at the Stuttgarter Comic Days in Germany. Our biggest event was the book launch of *Two Roses* at the Toronto Holocaust Museum, which was a sold-out event and featured widely in the German newspaper

[Der Tagesspiegel](#). While the team was in Toronto, we also co-hosted an educator's workshop with project partners Facing History and Ourselves.

Looking forward, we are excited to be collaborating with several other project partners at the '[What is Testimony?](#)' hybrid conference at Yale University later this month.

These public engagement activities have been underscored by our ongoing webinar series, [Archiving with Care](#), co-hosted with the UBC Public Humanities Hub. The webinars will become open-access toolkits, preserving the critical insight of our speakers.

In these busy months, we're particularly grateful for the support and collaboration of our local and international partners. Thank you to our readers and partners for your continuous engagement with our project.

Charlotte Schallié, Andrea Webb, and Jennifer Sauter

[Project Updates](#) | [Events & Programs](#) | [Artist Spotlight](#) | [Student Spotlight](#) | [Communications & Connections](#)

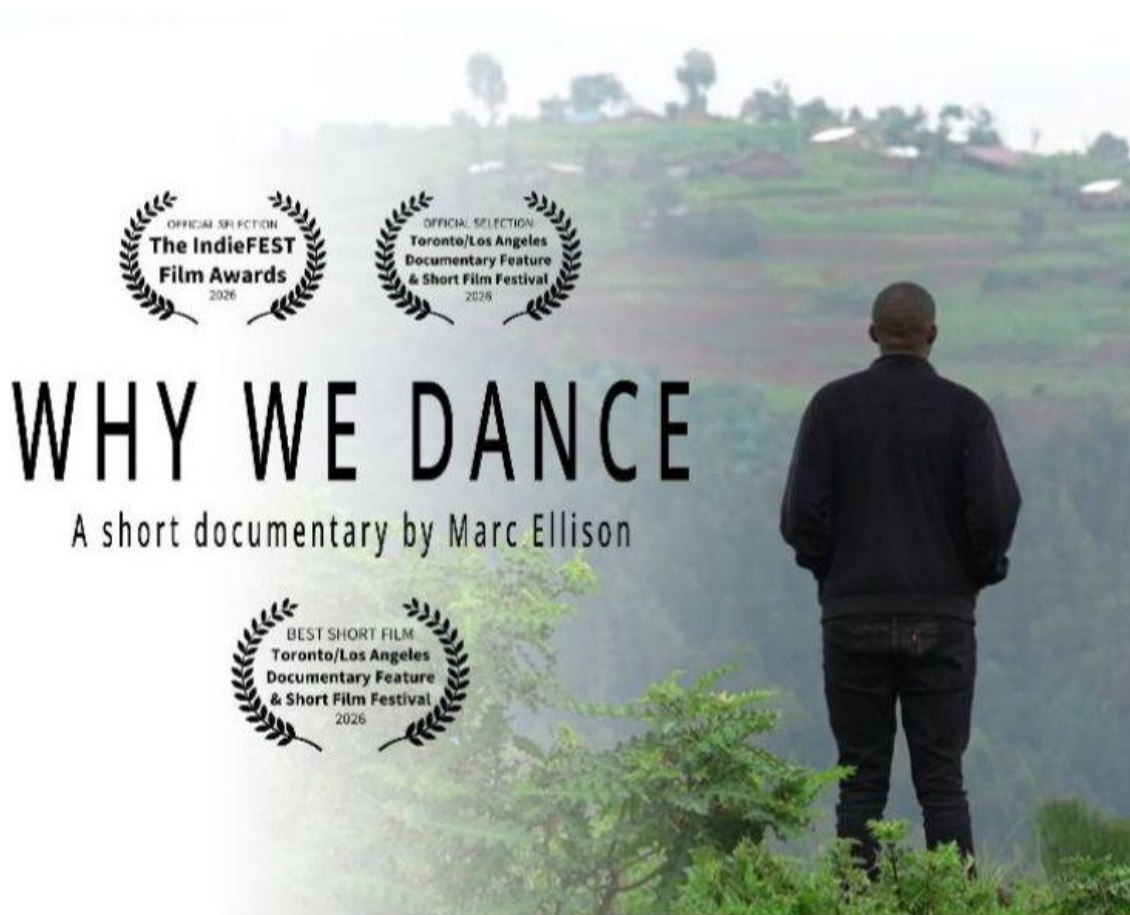
Project Updates

Rwanda Research Cluster

The Rwanda Research Cluster has been supporting the ongoing survivor and artist collaborations at different stages. Jerome Irankunda and Nina Uwera have approved the full storyboard, and Michel Kichka is moving forward with colouring the panels and translations from French to English. In April, co-leads Erin Jesse, and Fransiska Louwagie, with filmmaker Marc Ellison are travelling to Rwanda to meet with Madeleine Mukarwego, Nina, and Jerome for the first public showing of the films 'Why We Dance' and 'A Compassionate Heart' (more details to come). This trip will also bring Joëlle Ebene's (Elyon's) latest storyboard to Madeleine for her to review and provide feedback. Both collaborations, and the team, are working towards submitting the final manuscript this summer.

'Why We Dance' Film Festival Selections and Award

We're excited to announce that filmmaker Marc Ellison's 'Why We Dance' has been selected for two film festivals: 1) IndieFEST Film Awards and 2) Toronto/Los Angeles Documentary Feature and Short Film Festival, where it was also awarded the 'Best Short Documentary' Audience Award. Congratulations to Marc and everyone who worked on the film for this recognition! More details [here](#).



Title Card for 'Why We Dance' with award nominations.

Iraq & Syria Research Cluster

While the Iraq team is bringing together the final manuscript for *Don't Give Up! How a Young Yezidi Woman Survived Genocide* this month, the team behind the Syrian graphic novel is preparing for the publication of *Al-Fazla' – The Horror* in German with Carlsen in May, and in English with University of Toronto Press in the fall.

Iraq & Syria Films

Both documentary short films are complete. The first public showing of Lidija Zelovic's '[How to draw darkness? a story from Syria](#)' will take place at Yale's Fortunoff Video Archive on April 27 (see Events for details). There is also a [Filmmaker Spotlight](#) interview with Olaf Markmann discussing '[I Just Keep Going](#)', the film featuring interviews with survivor Jilan and comic artist Birgit Weyhe about Jilan's experiences as a survivor of the Islamic State (IS) genocide against the Yezidi people in 2014.



Filming on July 2, 2025, at the Bergen-Belsen Memorial. Photo credit: Kjell Anderson.

Holocaust Research Cluster

Since the fall of 2025, the Holocaust Research Cluster has largely focused on supporting the publication and book launch of *Two Roses*, while developing accompanying workshops and teaching resources with funding from Year 2 of our National Holocaust Remembrance Grant. The graphic narrative about Klaus Zwilsky is complete and under review with the French publisher ça et là and German publisher, C. H. Beck.

Sold-out Book Launch of Two Roses at the Toronto Holocaust Museum

The Toronto Holocaust Museum hosted the sold-out book launch of our graphic novel *Two Roses: A Story of Deception and Determination in Nazi Germany* on March 25, 2026. The program included a tribute to Rose, and a panel moderated by Dr. Sara R. Horowitz in conversation with survivor Rose Lipszyc, artist Miriam Libicki, and co-editors Mark Celinscak and Charlotte Schallié. More info about the event is available [here](#), including [photos](#), and the book is available to order on the University of Toronto Press's [website](#).



Rose watching the tribute presentation at the 'Two Roses' book launch, March 25, 2026.

Emmie Arbel Gets UK and North American Release



Barbara Yelin's *Emmie Arbel. The Colour of Memory* has been translated into English by Helga Dascherand and was released by publisher SelfMadeHero on February 5, 2026 in the UK and March 17 in North America. SelfMadehero is an award-winning independent graphic novel publisher, and both editions are available to order from them [here](#).

Webinar on Archiving the Zwilsky Collection with Aubrey Pomerance

The UBC Public Humanities Hub and SCVN co-hosted the webinar 'Personal Histories in the Public Archive: Archiving the Klaus Zwilsky Story' as part of the 2026 *Archiving with Care* series. Aubrey Pomerance, Head Archivist of the Jewish Museum Berlin, shared highlights his work with the Zwilsky family collection, and of working with Klaus, emphasizing the importance of relationships in the archiving process. The recording will be available via the [PHH YouTube](#) and more information is on our [blog](#).



*Aubrey Pomerance working with objects from the Zwilsky collection at the Jewish Museum Berlin.
Photo credit Charlotte Schallié.*

Yugoslav Wars Research Cluster

As the publication of 'As Long As We Are Together' is being prepared for publication in November 2026, Jared Muralt has developed the full storyboard of *Ružica's Last Summer* for submission this summer. As noted in the Award and Events sections, Jared was awarded a 'Comic Creation Grant' from Pro Helvetia (Swiss Arts Council) to support the creation of *Ružica's Last Summer* and he has presented about his work on the project at the Stuttgarter Comic Days. Congratulations Jared and we look forward to your final manuscript!



Webinar: Archives at Risk

The event, titled "Risk in the Archive: Preserving Anonymity, Access and Cultural Memory," took place over Zoom and explored ethical approaches to anonymity when working with archival material. Drs. Franziska Zaugg and Nathaniel Brunt shared insights from their work on at-risk community archives in the aftermath of mass atrocities, moderated by Dr. Kjell Anderson.

They reflected on the following questions which are critical to developing and maintaining archives with sensitive content that places them at risk: How can an archive at risk be supported to ensure its significant cultural, historical, or evidentiary value is preserved? What if the risk is in the process of creating the archive? Or in the decisions of what to include or exclude? How is an archive created when identities must be protected? And who has access to the anonymous records?



SURVIVOR-CENTRED
VISUAL NARRATIVES



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of Manitoba



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Public Humanities Hub



University
of Victoria



Canada

Archiving with Care Webinar Series

Risk in the Archive: Preserving Anonymity, Access, & Cultural Memory

Franziska Zaugg, University of Fribourg
Nathaniel Brunt, University of Victoria
Moderated by Kjell Anderson, University of Manitoba

Tuesday, March 24, 2026 • 10:00 - 11:30 PST

Register online: <https://publichumanities.ubc.ca/events/>



Events & Programs

Community Building

Archiving with Care Webinar Series

'Archiving with Care' is the 2026 webinar series co-hosted with SCVN and the UBC-V Public Humanities Hub that explores archival practices as a collaborative, participatory and care-based methodology, featuring conversations with SCVN's researchers, archivists, and survivors. By engaging with testimony and memory, the SCVN project is developing an archival approach guided by relational ethics and a deep commitment to survivor agency, shared authority and reciprocity. Each session will feature insights from SCVN's ongoing research and examine what archiving with care looks like in practice.

We'd like to thank Aubrey Pomerance, Klaus Zwilsky, Franziska Zaugg, Nathaniel Brunt and Kjell Anderson for participating in our first two webinars.

The next webinar in this series, "Trauma-Informed Archiving: Lessons from the War Childhood Museum", with Ajnura Akbaš will happen on April 22nd and is now open for registration [here](https://publichumanities.ubc.ca/events/).



SURVIVOR-CENTRED
VISUAL NARRATIVES

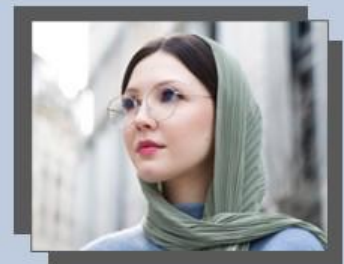


Archiving with Care Webinar Series

Trauma-Informed Archiving: Lessons from the War Childhood Museum

Ajnura Akbaš, War Childhood Museum
Moderated by Matt Huculak and Olivia Kozlovic,
University of Victoria

Wednesday, April 22, 2026 • 10:00 - 11:30 PST
Register online: <https://publichumanities.ubc.ca/events/>



Exhibits

Barbara Yelin's Work Featured in Goethe Institute Exhibition in Rome

An exhibition of Barbara Yelin's original drawings, including works from *Emmie Arbel. The Colour of Memory*, opened on January 22 in Rome at the Goethe Institute. The exhibition, titled "Drawing Lives: Memory and Biography in the Work of Barbara Yelin," features 80 panels from Yelin's major works and was on display until March 20, 2026. This is part of the prestigious 1-year artist residency she was awarded by the German Academy Rome Villa Massimo. More information about the exhibit is available on our [blog](#).

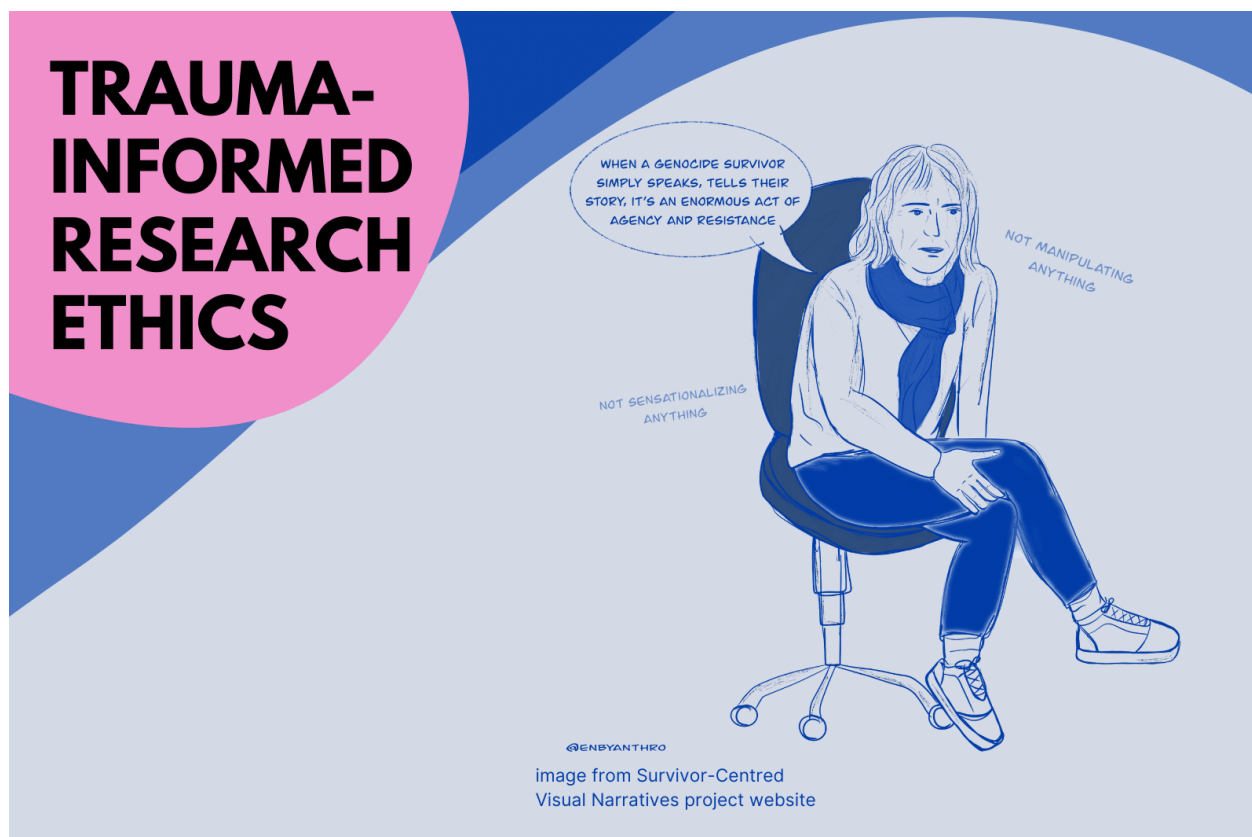


Barbara Yelin at the Goethe-Institut exhibit in Rome. Photo courtesy of the Villa Massimo, photo credit: Alberto Novelli.

Presentations & Events

Trauma-Informed Research Ethics Roundtable at Emily Carr University

On February 9, Dr. Charlotte Schallié was invited to participate in a roundtable discussion focusing on the ethical considerations and protocols of arts-based research with trauma survivors. The event was organized by the Emily Carr University Research Ethics Board. Dr. Schallié was joined by Dr. Alla Gadassik, an animation scholar and curator, whose work focuses on media materiality, creative labour, and animation exhibition practices. A guest blog summary of the event by Dr. Gadassik with illustrations by Hannah Strocel is available [here](#).



Stuttgarter Comic Days Hosts Jared Muralt

On March 14, 2026, Jared Muralt joined a panel discussion at the Stuttgarter Comictage in Germany, where he discussed several of his projects, including the graphic novel, titled *Ružica's Last Summer*, he is developing as part of our SCVN project. The graphic novel explores the lived experience of Ružica, a survivor of the Yugoslav wars. More information about the festival is available on our [blog](#).



Teaching Workshop with Facing History and Ourselves in Toronto

SCVN co-director Dr. Andrea Webb co-hosted a workshop on March 24 for educators in Toronto with the non-profit organization Facing History & Ourselves and their program assistant Amanda Baric. The event titled 'Teaching the Holocaust through Graphic Novels' was designed for middle and secondary teachers, provided resources and guidance to educators on how to teach the history of the Holocaust using graphic novels, including Miriam Libicki's *Two Roses* and the graphic novel *But I Live*. Find out more information about the event [here](#).



Co-hosted with FHAO and SCVN, Dr. Andrea Webb is opening the workshop for educators in Toronto on March 24, 2026.



Workshop at Yale: 'What is Testimony For?'

On April 26 and 27, SCVN is collaborating with several partners for a two-day conference titled "What is Testimony For?" that will be hosted at Yale University. The conference will bring together artists, co-applicants and a survivor from the SCVN project, including Nora Krug, Tobi Dahmen, Miriam Libicki, Akram Al Saud, Charlotte Schallié, Mark Celinscak and Alexander Korb. The event schedule as well as registration links for workshops is available at the following [link](#).

A TWO-DAY CONFERENCE FEATURING ARTISTS AND SCHOLARS DISCUSSING THE USE OF TESTIMONY FROM THE HOLOCAUST AND OTHER MASS ATROCITIES AS A SOURCE FOR THE VISUAL ARTS, LITERATURE AND NEW MEDIA

REGISTER HERE!

WHAT IS TESTIMONY FOR?

**APRIL 26-27, 2026
LUCIE HALL ROOM 203
34 HILLHOUSE AVENUE
NEW HAVEN, CT 06511**

But I Live
MIRIAM LIBICKI AND DAVID SCHAEFFER
CELIA HEINTZ AND MIMI AND BOB RANT
BARBARA FELIN AND EMILY ABELL
Edited by Charlotte Schallié

Diaries of War
Two Visual Accounts from Ukraine and Russia
Nora Krug

REMNANTS
What Remains
MOMENTS FROM A LIFE AMONG HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS
Henry Hank Greenspan

al-fazia' the horror
surviving syria's prisons
tobi dahmen akram al-saud
الفتية
القطيع
edited by edgar daniel douglas and charlotte schallié

Yale Fortunoff Video Archive For Holocaust Testimonies

Yale MACMILLAN CENTER
Genocide Studies Program

SURVIVOR-CENTRED VISUAL NARRATIVES

FRIED ACADEMY
SAM AND FRANCES FRIED
HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE ACADEMY

Awards

'Comics Creation Grant' Awarded to Jared Muralt

We're excited to announce that Pro Helvetia (Swiss Arts Council) has awarded a 'Comics Creation Grant' to Jared Muralt to support the creation of *Ružica's Last Summer* with the Yugoslav Wars Research Cluster. Pro Helvetia is a public foundation dedicated to supporting 'the creation and dissemination of contemporary, professional art from Switzerland.' More info and a full list of winners is available on their [website](#).

swiss arts council
prohelvetia

Filmmaker Spotlight

Olaf Markmann



Olaf Markmann filming for "I Just Keep Going" in Birgit Weyhe's studio, July 2025.

In January, SCVN Media Lead Maya Wei Yan Linsley interviewed filmmaker Olaf Markmann to discuss his work on SCVN's upcoming film ['I Just Keep Going'](#). As noted in the Research Cluster updates, the film offers a glimpse into the collaboration between comic artist Birgit Weyhe and Yezidi survivor Jilan (pseudonym) and explores Jilan's experiences in northern Iraq when the Islamic State (ISIS) began a genocide against the Yezidi people in August of 2014. An excerpt of the conversation appears below, with the full version available on our [blog](#):

Maya: So, in your perfect world, what kind of impact would this film have on its viewers?

Olaf: I don't know the word. I have the German word, but I just don't know the translation to English. In German, it's *Empörung* [indignation]...I want them to be angry about the situation.

I want them to be angry about the injustice, about racism, about fascism, about religious fanaticism. I want them to be angry and loud about it. And I want them to stand up and say,

“OK, I don't know what, but I want to do something about it. I want to take action and not sit silent at home and doom scroll till death.”

Hopefully it has the same impact. And if it's just one of 100 people that starts doing something, that would be enough. That's why I'm doing this...

This summer, former SCVN research assistant Lucie Kotesovska interviewed Barbara to discuss the creation of her graphic novel, *Emmie Arbel. The Colour of Memory*. In their interview, Lucie and Barbara reflect upon the novel's critical success, Barbara's collaborative approach to storytelling with Emmie, and the moments of narrative silence and interruption. The full interview is available [here](#).



Olaf filming Birgit Weyhe, Jilan, and Leyla Ferman in Birgit's studio, July 2025.

Communications & Connections

Follow our social media accounts for project updates and stories:

- Instagram: [@survivorvisualnarratives](#)
- Facebook: [Survivor-Centred Visual Narratives](#)
- LinkedIn: [Survivor-Centred Visual Narratives](#)

Submit stories and updates to commsvisual@uvic.ca to be featured on our social media and blog

Tag us in your content for a re-share!



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