



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** November 10, 2022

**The Reagan Library Welcomes one of the most Historically Significant Exhibitions  
Touring the World, “Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.”**

*On the Anniversary of the November Pogrom (Kristallnacht), an Authentic WWII-Era Freight Car Arrived in Simi Valley by Motorcade this Morning, Announcing the Exhibition’s West Coast Premiere*

**Simi Valley, CA** – The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute announced today that they will host the world-renowned traveling exhibition, “Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.” The acclaimed exhibition, traveling from Sweden, is scheduled to open for its West Coast premiere on March 24, 2023. Tickets to the esteemed exhibition are now on-sale at [www.ReaganLibrary.com/Auschwitz](http://www.ReaganLibrary.com/Auschwitz) and expected to sellout.

The Auschwitz exhibition, created by Spanish company Musealia together with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland, will feature more than 700 original artifacts, the first of which arrived today.

A German-made, World War II-era, Model 2 freight car was escorted by motorcade today through Simi Valley and up Presidential Drive to the Reagan Library and was installed in the museum’s main courtyard. The procession was led by over 50 motorcycles, including those of the Patriot Guard Riders, veterans, and the Simi Valley Police Department, who were on hand to offer remembrance.

Before World War II, this type of car was used to transport food, goods and livestock. During the war, cars like this were used to transport Jews, Roma, Poles and many others as part of forced resettlement or deportations to ghettos, execution sites, concentration camps, and extermination centers - including Auschwitz - established by Nazi Germany across occupied Europe. Up to 80 people along with their belongings would be crammed into each car for what was often a several-day journey to a grim reality.

The West Coast debut of the 12,500 sq. ft. exhibition is the first of three final North American stops. This exhibition was made possible by our Presenting Underwriter Ambassador Gordon D. Sondland and other generous sponsors. The initiative to transport the Model 2 freight car was supported by BNSF Railway.

Upon the freight car’s arrival, two Auschwitz survivors, David Lenga and Joe Alexander, provided heartfelt remarks during the unveiling.

“We all owe it to the Holocaust victims - both those who lost their lives and those who were fortunate to survive - to show our respect,” said Auschwitz Survivor David Lenga. “We must remember them with dignity and gratitude and recognize the horror they endured. Survivors like myself need to know that our lives have meaning and that our community deeply cares about what becomes of us— that our suffering will never be forgotten.”

The event took place today on the anniversary of the November Pogrom (Kristallnacht). Eighty-four years ago today, Nazi leaders unleashed violence on the Jewish people of the German Third Reich that at that time included annexed territories of Austria and parts of Czechoslovakia – attacking Jews in their houses, burning synagogues, and shattering over 7,500 other Jewish-owned commercial establishments.

“To echo the sentiment of Ronald Reagan’s remarks at the opening of the Washington, D.C. Holocaust Museum in 1988, this exhibition commemorates not only the immense loss during one of the darkest chapters in history, but also the necessary effort to keep the memory of the millions lost alive,” said John Heubusch, Executive Director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute. “I encourage everyone to see the Auschwitz exhibition and learn firsthand from some never-before-seen artifacts. We must ensure that such evil is never repeated.”

Hundreds of personal items such as suitcases, eyeglasses, and shoes that belonged to Auschwitz deportees will be on display in this exhibit, which will offer an audio tour in both English and Spanish. Other artifacts include: concrete posts that were part of the fence of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp; fragments of an original prisoners’ barrack from the Auschwitz III-Monowitz camp; a desk and other possessions of the first and longest-serving Auschwitz commandant, Rudolf Höss; a gas mask used by the SS; and this original, German-made, Model 2 freight train car.

The exhibition was created by Musealia and curated by a panel of experts that included Robert Jan van Pelt (Chief Curator), Michael Berenbaum and Paul Salmons, working in close collaboration with Piotr Setkiewicz, head of the Auschwitz Museum Research Center. In addition to the hundreds of objects displayed from the Auschwitz Memorial, over 20 other international museums and institutions have participated with special loans, such as Yad Vashem in Israel and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

About the significance of the exhibition today, Piotr Cywiński, Auschwitz Memorial Director said: “Russia’s barbaric invasion of sovereign Ukraine clearly shows how much the world needs historical memory to be a lasting and clear warning. Auschwitz was a far too painful experience for today’s world to tolerate any symptoms of hatred, aggression and dehumanization. Remembrance must be the key to building a peaceful and just world. This exhibition will help us shape this remembrance.”

“At the heart of this project is the idea of making accessible, to audiences all over the world, the history of Auschwitz in all its enormous complexity. Visitors will encounter Auschwitz as the site where one of the largest mass murder in history took place; but also as a symbol and manifestation of the limitless borders of human barbarism,” said Luis Ferreiro, Director of Musealia. “The

exhibition will become a powerful opportunity for West Coast residents and visitors to understand how such a place could come to exist, and what that means for us today.”

Through a daunting selection of objects, the Auschwitz exhibition portrays the dark reality of the notorious camp, which remains a universal symbol of the Nazi horror. The curators reveal the world of Auschwitz, both its victims and perpetrators, with a clear goal: to elucidate how such a place comes into being. The exhibit forces its viewers to dig into how the Auschwitz existence and its role in the Holocaust has determined our present worldview and reminds us of our responsibility to keep such evil from ever resurfacing.

“Concentration camp operations forever shifted the foundations and perspective of humanity, and this Auschwitz exhibit ingrains in us that sinister period of time through the preservation and collection of what remains. History, especially its darkest moments, must be remembered and learned from,” said John Norman, President of World Heritage Exhibitions, who is presenting the exhibition locally. “*Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.* is one of the most remarkable exhibitions to ever travel the globe, and it is a true honor to present the exhibition at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. We encourage patrons from across the region, and the world, to make it a point to come and see this awe-inspiring display.”

To learn more about this exhibit and purchase tickets before they sell out, please visit [www.ReaganLibrary.com/Auschwitz](http://www.ReaganLibrary.com/Auschwitz).

#### **About the Reagan Foundation and Institute:**

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute is the sole nonprofit organization created by President Reagan charged with continuing his legacy and sharing his principles – individual liberty, economic opportunity, global democracy and national pride. The Foundation is a non-partisan organization which sustains the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley, CA, the Reagan Center for Public Affairs, the Presidential Learning Center, The Air Force One Pavilion, the award-winning Discovery Center and the Reagan Institute, which carries out the Foundation’s mission in Washington, D.C.

The Reagan Library houses over 55 million pages of Gubernatorial, Presidential and personal papers and over 60,000 gifts and artifacts chronicling the lives of Ronald and Nancy Reagan. It also serves as the final resting place of America’s 40<sup>th</sup> President and his First Lady.

#### **About Musealia:**

Musealia is an independent Spanish company that creates and manages global touring exhibitions, which inspire us all to explore the past, understand the present and shape our collective future. With more than 20 years of international experience, our exhibitions are characterized by their strong narrative character, their historical rigor, educational value and emotional impact. More than 70 museums and institutions in countries such as the United States, Mexico, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, Estonia, Poland or Spain have hosted our exhibitions.

**About the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum:**

Fulfilling the wish of survivors, on July 2, 1947, the Polish parliament created the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum on the site of two preserved parts of the former German Nazi camp: Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau. The Memorial today includes an Archive and a Collections department, and undertakes research, conservation, and publishing activities. It is, above all, an education center that teaches visitors about the history of Auschwitz and the Shoah. More than 2 million people visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum every year.

**About World Heritage Exhibitions:**

World Heritage Exhibitions (WHE) is renowned for producing, promoting, and designing the finest quality museum content on the globe. Their exhibitions have captivated, educated, and inspired visitors in virtually every major market on the planet. With a combined 150 years of exhibition experience, the WHE executive team has been responsible for touring many of the world's most valuable treasures, including objects from King Tutankhamun's tomb, relics from Cleopatra's Royal Palace, artifacts from the Titanic, items from the discovery of Pompeii, and more. Their exhibitions have now been enjoyed by over 30 million people spanning six continents, and their collective expertise has come together in one of the industry's most influential touring exhibition companies.

In 2021, World Heritage Exhibitions became a part of NEON, a global leader in immersive experiences that is responsible for the touring phenomena "Marvel Avengers S.T.A.T.I.O.N.," "AVATAR: The Experience," "Jurassic World: The Exhibition," and more. WHE and NEON have brought their expertise together to launch the awe-inspiring, artifact-based exhibitions "Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs" and "Machu Picchu and the Golden Empires of Peru." Coupled with some of the most successful artifact exhibitions on tour: "Mummies of the World: The Exhibition;" "Pompeii: The Exhibition;" "Victoria the T. rex;" and "Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away," their collective exhibition and I.P. portfolio now highlight some of the most significant items and events in history with many of the most sought-after I.P. properties.

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