

One person can make a difference

An introduction to the works of art
in the Southern Connecting Room



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Making a difference

One person can make a difference. The deeds of Raoul Wallenberg, Harald Edelstam and Folke Bernadotte bear witness to this.

Raoul Wallenberg was engaged by the Swedish Consulate in Budapest in 1944 with the task of organising a mission to save Jews from the concentration camps. Folke Bernadotte's contri-

butions with the White Buses had the same goal. In connection with the military coup in Chile in 1973, Ambassador Harald Edelstam saved many people who sought protection or had been taken prisoner.

The works of art in the Southern Connecting Room remind us of the need for humanity, yesterday and today.



Raoul Wallenberg 1944.
Photo: TT Nyhetsbyrån



The White Buses Mission 1945.
Photo: TT Nyhetsbyrån/Röda Korsets arkiv



Harald Edelstam 1974.
Photo: Sven-Erik Sjöberg/TT Nyhetsbyrån

We should always remember

“We should always continue to remember when those who can bear witness have gone silent. Our responsibility for the future is to ensure that what happened then can never happen again.”

These were the words of Speaker of the Riksdag Birgitta Dahl at the inauguration of the work *Remembering – the ultimate accolade* in the Riksdag in 1998. A single person can have a decisive impact on the fight against evil. The purpose of the memorial to Raoul Wallenberg is to remind us of this.

Raoul Wallenberg was just 32 years old when he started to work for the Swedish Consulate in Budapest, Hungary in July 1944. His task was to lead a neutral mission to save Jews from the concentration camps.

In January 1945 the Russians occupied parts of Budapest, and Raoul Wallenberg was taken to Moscow. After that, no one knows for sure what happened to him. One assumption is that he was executed by the Russian security services.

In 2012 – the same year as Wallenberg would have turned one hundred – he was awarded the US Congressional Gold Medal in July. This is the most prestigious award a private individual can receive in the USA. Two years later, a relative of Raoul Wallenberg received the medal in his honour at a ceremony in the US Congress.



Raoul Wallenberg



Photo: Melker Dahlstrand



Images from a slide show created by photographer and graphic designer Karl Gabor.



The bronze bust of Raoul Wallenberg was created by American sculptor Lotte Stavisky (1908–2000). The original can be found at New York Public Library.

Remembering – the ultimate accolade

Lenke Rothman (1929–2008)

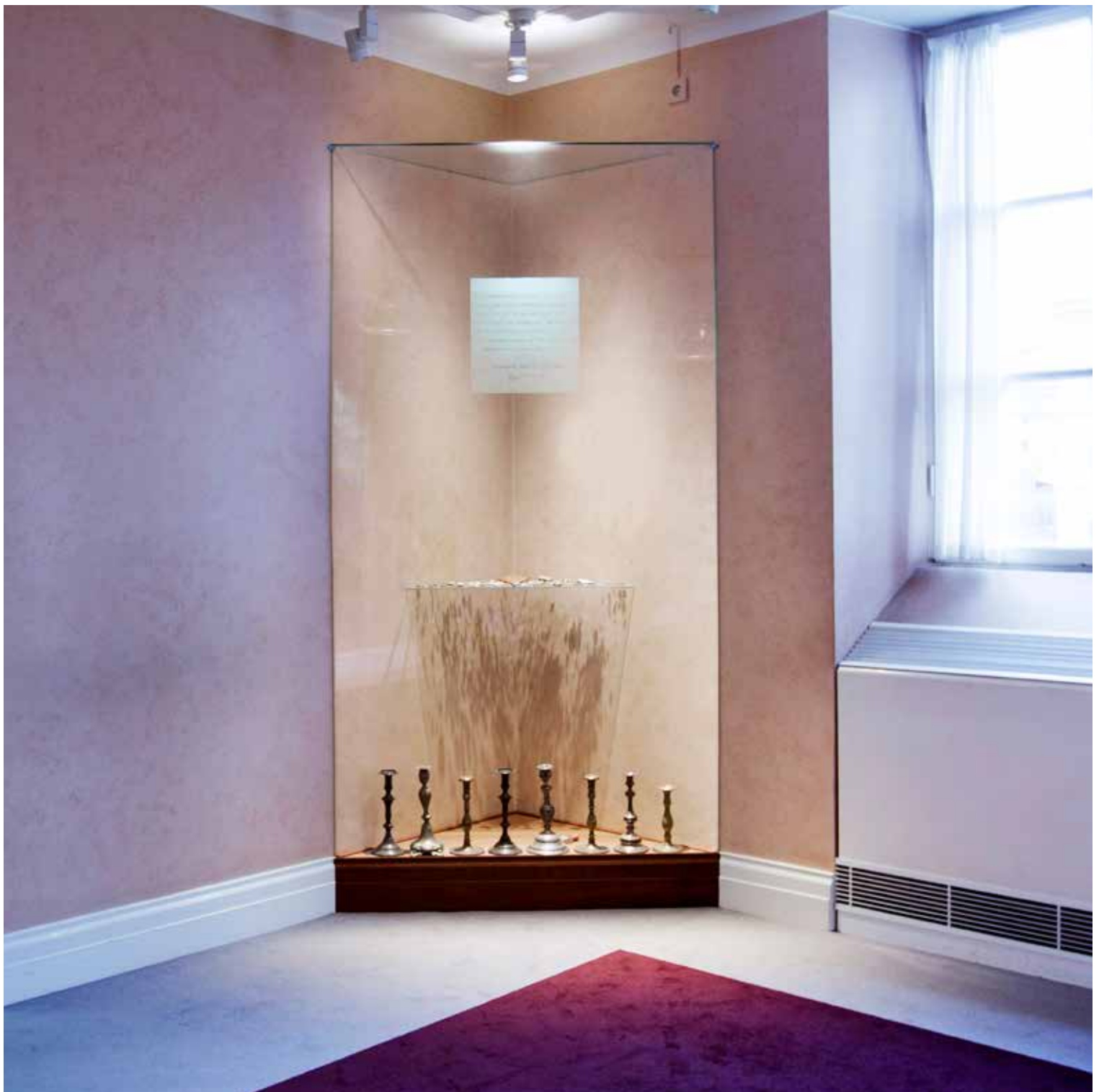
The Riksdag, in cooperation with the National Public Art Council, assigned the task of creating a memorial to Raoul Wallenberg to the artist Lenke Rothman. This is the first memorial in honour of Raoul Wallenberg in Sweden. It was specially designed for this exact spot in the Riksdag and may not be moved. When the work *Remembering – the ultimate accolade* – was inaugurated in January 1998, a manifestation was held in the Chamber of the Riksdag in memory of the Holocaust.

The installation consists of pebbles and gravel together with eight candlesticks gathered by Lenke Rothman from buildings in districts of Budapest in which Raoul Wallenberg carried out his mission. A copy of Raoul Wallenberg's diary from 1944 rests on the pebbles.

An excerpt from one of his writings has been engraved into the exhibition case. It is an extract from the report that Raoul Wallenberg sent from Budapest to the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs on 18 July 1944. In it, he describes the desperate situation of the Jews.

The lighting creates an evocative shadow-play beneath the glass, with gravel and pebbles. The artist was involved in arranging the lighting and liked the fact that the shadows evoked images of human figures.





We should always remember

Harald Edelstam was a diplomat who was strongly committed to human rights. He began his career in the early 1940s. During World War II he was stationed in Norway and succeeding in saving many Jews and resistance fighters from the Nazis.

What Harald Edelstam is most well-known for is his efforts in Chile in 1973. This is when the elected President Salvador Allende was overthrown in a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet. Edelstam made it possible for persecuted Latin Americans to find refuge in the embassy. He also helped to prevent executions and negotiated with the military so that prisoners were released.

Harald Edelstam was a committed diplomat who used his professional position to carry out rescue missions – something that gave rise to a certain degree of criticism. Despite this, Harald Edelstam has been hailed many times for his efforts and his standpoint on human rights.



Photo: Leif R. Jansson/Scanpix

Harald Edelstam



Photo: Melker Dahlstrand

The bust of Harald Edelstam was created by Luciano Escanilla (1955–).

Interface between light and dark

Lenke Rothman (1929–2008)

A textile work in natural tones is the first meeting with Lenke Rothman for visitors coming from the Chamber Foyer. It alludes to the Bernadotte (“White Buses”) Operation in April–May 1945. The piece was a gift from the Jewish communities in Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö and was woven by the Friends of Textile Art Association.

The **White Buses Operation** was an operation run by the Red Cross between February and May 1945, which was led by Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte. During the operation, Jews were transported to Sweden and rescued from the concentration camps. According to estimates by the Swedish Red Cross in the year 2000, approximately 15,000 prisoners were saved by this operation.

Lenke Rothman was born in Hungary and was imprisoned in a concentration camp herself. Of her family of eight, just she and her younger brother survived. She has said that she views her works as a response to the Holocaust. Despite this, just a handful of her artwork actually refers to the Holocaust.

Since its establishment in 1874, the **Friends of Textile Art Association** has collaborated with many major contemporary artists. A number of these artists have had their paintings transferred to tapestry by means of a special technique which makes it easier to weave the image using an ordinary loom. The Friends of Textile Art Association has also woven the tapestry *Memory of a landscape* in the Chamber of the Riksdag.



Folke Bernadotte af Wisborg (1895–1948). Bronze bust by Solveyg W. Schafferer-Sigerus.

Photo: Melker Dahlstrand



Folke Bernadotte led the White Buses Operation in 1945.

Photo: TT Nyhetsbyrån/Röda Korsets arkiv



Flight

Eva Ek-Schaeffer (1941–)

For those who flee across the Baltic Sea, the island of Gotland may be the first land mass they encounter. The tapestry *Flight* (2002) depicts the first boat of Kurdish refugees to arrive in Fårö, Gotland in the early 1990s. There were more to come.

Gotland has a tradition of receiving refugees. In 1944, tens of thousands of Baltic refugees came to Sweden and many of them disembarked in Gotland.

The artist has also been inspired by a painting from 1618 in a stone church on Fårö. It depicts the rescue of a team of seal hunters from an ice floe. Another painting portrays a similar event in 1767.

Eva Ek-Schaeffer uses traditional weaving technique. She spins the woollen yarn herself and also uses flax and silk threads. She has lived on Fårö for many years and gathers plants from the local environment to dye her yarns.





Newly Ploughed

Philip von Schantz (1928–1998)

The oil painting *Newly Ploughed* by Philip von Schantz represents the country in which the refugees arrived. Would Sweden become their new homeland? It was also the country in which Raoul Wallenberg was born, and which he left for Budapest in Hungary – never to return.

The characteristic red barns and the glossy black earth. The food to come from the land. The sky, almost covered by clouds, but at the same time glowing. The artist has played with perspectives and tricks the beholder's eye.



Eva Ek-Schaeffer (1941–) is a textile artist who creates narrative, poetic tapestries. Her figures dance, fly and fall, and the contents are often mystical and heavy with symbolism. She also portrays existential conditions of life and death. Her many works include public assignments for the Friends of Textile Art Association and she is represented at Nationalmuseum in Stockholm. Her works can be found throughout the country, especially on Gotland, where she has lived for many years.

Luciano Escanilla (1955–) is a conservator and artist. He was born in Chile, but moved to Uppsala in 1974, where he has studied and lived ever since. As an artist, he has primarily devoted himself to painting, sculpture and photography.

Lenke Rothman (1929–2008) was a Hungarian-Swedish artist and author. She came to Sweden after being held in a concentration camp and studied at Konstfack (the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design) in Stockholm in 1951–55. As an artist, she worked with many different techniques. She liked to combine them and her works are often constructed like collages.

Solveyg W. Schafferer-Sigerus (1928–), Norwegian sculptor, who made the bronze bust of Folke Bernadotte. The bust is a replica of the work she sculpted for the UN headquarters in New York in 1997.

Philip von Schantz (1928–1998) was a graphic artist and painter. He was Professor of Graphic Art and Principal at the Royal Institute of Art, Head of Moderna museet in Stockholm and President of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. In his still lifes, von Schantz played with the ambiguities of illusion in a personal way, often basing them on fruits and everyday objects. This is known as trompe-l'oeil technique and can be described as the artist deceiving the eye.

Lotte Stavisky (1908–2000), American sculptor, who made the bronze bust of Raoul Wallenberg. The original work is displayed at the New York Public Library. It was by coincidence that this, out of the many existing sculptures of Raoul Wallenberg, ended up here in the Riksdag.

The artist Lenke Rothman www.lenkerothman.org

Raoul Wallenberg Academy www.raoulwallenberg.se The Academy brings attention to Raoul Wallenberg's deeds in order to inspire young people to act for the equal value of all human beings.

The **Wallenberg Archive** at Uppsala University Library.

The **Edelstam Foundation** was established in 2009. Every year, it awards the Edelstam Prize. The Foundation bases its activities on the UN Declaration on Human Rights, and is politically and religiously independent.

The **Swedish-Chilean Culture Institute** works to strengthen ties between Sweden and Chile and to stimulate exchange between the two countries.