

## UI Museum of Art marks memory of Holocaust

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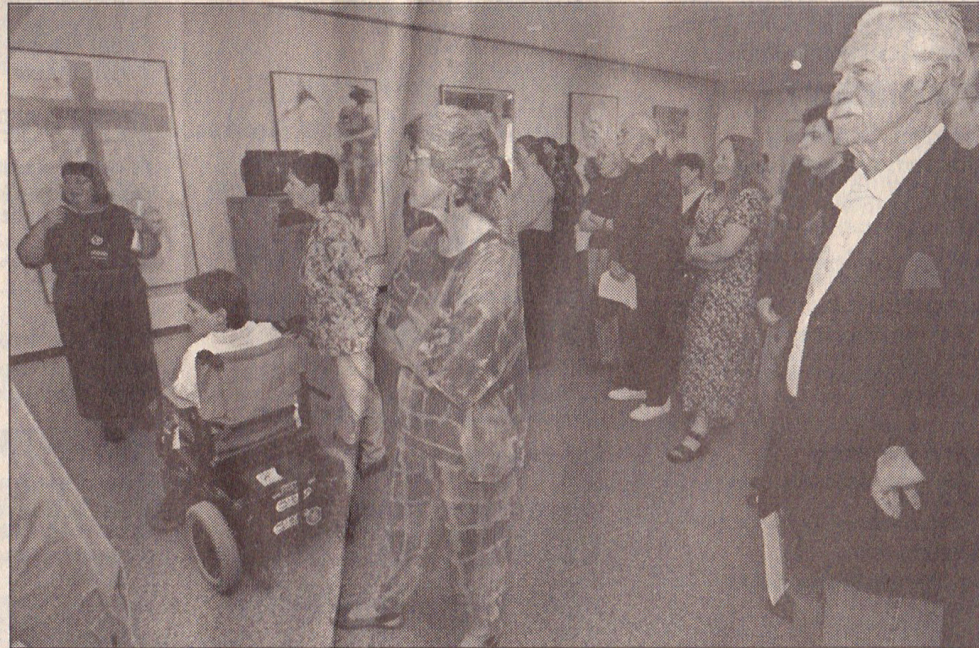
IOWA CITY — Iowa City resident Ethel Rothstein wasn't sure what each of the Nazi drawings in the Lasansky room of the University of Iowa Museum of Art represented, but she understood the emotion behind them.

"I think my husband could not have looked at any of them. Usually he didn't want to talk about what happened," the widow said. Her Polish husband lived through the Holocaust but lost his entire family.

Rothstein was one of about 40 people who gathered to honor Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day. The actual holiday isn't until Tuesday, the anniversary of the liberation of the Warsaw ghetto, but the gatherers spent Sunday afternoon looking at paintings about Nazi atrocities, remembering family and friends who died in the Holocaust and praying.

The Nazi drawings by Mauricio Lasansky, owned by Gary Levitt, are on long-term display at the museum. Lasansky is a pioneering printmaker and professor emeritus from the University of Iowa. Made with paper, pencil and sepia wash, the collection is filled with distorted bodies and blood.

"It's disturbing to even look around. There's a feeling of flesh



Gazette photo by Jason Cook

**Wes Caliger (right), Ellen Hartz and Susan Rotman, all of Iowa City, listen to the University of Iowa Museum of Art Docent Jean Martinolich talk about the drawings of Mauricio Lasansky as a part of Holocaust Remembrance Day at the University of Iowa Museum of Art in Iowa City Sunday. Lasansky's drawings depict the horrors he saw surrounding the Nazis and the Holocaust.**

and blood, and you can't tell who's alive and who's dead," said Jean Martinolich of the UI Museum of Art.

After looking at the paintings, the

into a context that's not sterile or Hollywood. It's more difficult in terms of understanding what it's trying to convey," Aliber/Hillel Jewish Student Center director Gerald Sorokin said.

Rabbi Jeff Portman of the Agudas Achim Congregation said it is important to find ways for those who don't have actual memories of the Holocaust to mark its memory.

"With each passing generation, and as it's more years after the Holocaust and more survivors die, it makes it more important that we do something for those who are still here," he said.

UI junior Bernie Isacovici, of Chicago, is old enough to have known his grandfather, Salomon Isacovici, a Holocaust survivor and author, who died two years ago. Bernie came to the event to read from his grandfather's book, titled "A Man of Ashes," about surviving the Auschwitz concentration camp. Bernie said his grandfather wouldn't talk to him about the Holocaust before the book was published.

"One of the things that got me to ask him about it was that he had a number tattooed on his arm — A7393. The 'A' stood for Auschwitz," Bernie said. "I want people to know the stories so it never gets forgotten."

group watched a film about Lasansky's life. Organizers say it was a way to use local resources to remember.

"The drawings put the Holocaust