

#GEORGE HARRISON

He wants to plant trees

Friar Park isn't just a garden. It's an eccentric's fever dream from the 1890s. Caves. Underground tunnels. A four-acre Alpine rock garden with a scale



1970. George Harrison stands at the gates of Friar Park, staring at what anyone else calls a catastrophe.

The Victorian mansion is rotting. Grass pushes through floorboards inside. The estate's gardens, once the pride of England, have gone feral. Collapsed greenhouses. Buried grottoes. Pathways strangled by decades of neglect.

He's 27 years old. The Beatles just ended. He could go anywhere, do anything. The world is waiting for his next move.

He buys the wreck and decides to dig in the dirt. Not as a weekend hobby. As a life. He hires ten gardeners and works alongside them, dawn to midnight, covered in soil. His sister-in-law takes one look at the estate and asks what he's thinking. George doesn't try to explain. He just keeps digging.

His son Dhani grows up watching his father work by moonlight, squinting in the shadows because darkness hides the imperfections that would bother him during the day. The music industry keeps calling. They want albums. Tours. More of George Harrison the Beatle.

He wants to plant trees. Friar Park isn't just a garden. It's an eccentric's fever dream from the 1890s. Caves. Underground tunnels. A four-acre Alpine rock garden with

a scale Matterhorn on top. Garden gnomes everywhere. He photographs himself among them for *All Things Must Pass*, then goes back to pruning. When a nurseryman mentions slow sales, George buys one of everything in the shop. When someone offers 800 varieties of maples, he takes them all. His wife Olivia remembers him saying, "It's not my garden, Liv." He sees himself as a custodian. The garden doesn't belong to him. He belongs to it.

By 1980, he publishes his autobiography and dedicates it "to gardeners everywhere." He writes that he's simple. Doesn't want the business full-time. He's a gardener. He plants flowers and watches them grow.

Journalists visit and call it un-rock-star-ish. George doesn't flinch. He's lived through Beatlemania, screamed into stadiums, changed culture. He found it hollow compared to restoring topiary. After John Lennon's murder, the gates lock forever. George and Olivia keep working. Not for visitors. For the work itself. He dies in 2001. The gardens are now considered masterpieces of Victorian landscaping. Olivia still tends them at Friar Park. The estate stays private. George Harrison chose dirt under his fingernails over applause. And in that choice, he found something the stadiums never gave him. Freedom.



Escaping From a World War II Death Camp **PART: I**

Eighty-two years later, the Sobibor Uprising is lesser known than many other acts of Jewish resistance. Yet, the event played a significant role in Holocaust history. "Without the uprising, there would have been no survivors, no one to testify to what happened at Sobibor," wrote survivor Jules Schelvis in *Sobibor: A History of a Nazi Death Camp*. "No court proceedings could have been started ... and the crimes that were carried out in the strictest secrecy would never have been exposed." Of the roughly 170,000 Jews transported to Sobibor during World War II, only 58 survived until the conflict's end.

• **Bulbul Joshi**

When Alexander Pechersky, a Jewish soldier in the Soviet Army who'd been captured by the Nazis, arrived at Sobibor in German-occupied Poland in September 1943, he and his fellow prisoners of war quickly attracted the attention of the death camp's existing inmates. "They knew that the war was going on but had never seen the men who joined up in it," Pechersky later recalled. "We were approached by men and women who made us understand that their wish was to get out of hell."

In a matter of months, between the spring of 1942 and the fall of 1943, at least 167,000 Jews were killed at Sobibor. A relatively small campus, the Nazi death camp was situated in a remote part of Poland, albeit alongside a train track. The SS used trains to deport Jews from ghettos across Europe to Sobibor. Most would go straight from the freight cars to the gas chambers, but many others, particularly the old, the infirm and the sick, were shot in an open pit. Only a few were selected as workers who would be kept alive to support the camp's upkeep, enduring weeks or months of torturous hard labour until they too were killed.

By the time Pechersky and the other Jewish soldiers joined the approximately 650 prisoners needed to keep the camp functioning, the Nazis had already begun winding down Sobibor's operations, possibly to convert it into an ammunition supply depot. The remaining Jews feared they would be murdered soon, just as their counterparts at the nearby killing center of Belzec had been after outliving their usefulness to the Nazi cause. A nascent resistance rightly saw the Soviet soldier's military expertise as just what they needed.

The underground appealed to Pechersky to devise a plan for an uprising. In a series of carefully orchestrated attacks on the afternoon of October 14, 1943, the con-



Stanislaw Szmalajner, a Sobibor survivor, who joined up with partisan forces after his escape from the death camp.

spirators killed around a dozen SS men and several non-German guards; more than 300 prisoners took advantage of the chaos to try to escape from the camp, though the majority was either murdered as they fled or later tracked down and shot.

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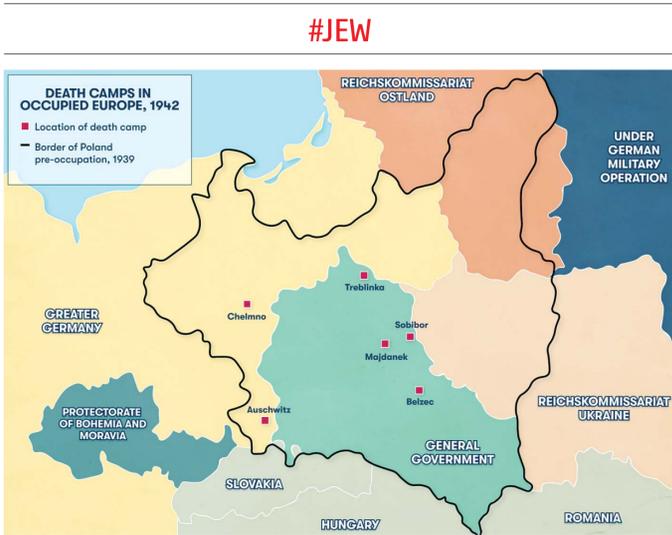
Sobibor's operation as a Nazi killing center

Sobibor started operating as a Nazi death camp in April and May 1942. Alongside Belzec and Treblinka, it was one of three killing centers established as part of Operation Reinhard, a plan to systematically murder the Jews of German-occupied Poland.

Operation Reinhard was named after Reinhard Heydrich, a high-



View of Sobibor in the summer of 1943.



A map of death camps in occupied Poland in 1942 / Map by Meilan Solly, based on data from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

ranking Nazi who was one of the central architects of the 'Final Solution.'

Czech resistance operatives assassinated Heydrich in the spring of 1942, prompting Adolf Hitler to retaliate by ordering the eradication of a Czech village called Lidtice. The June 10, 1942 Lidtice Massacre claimed the lives of 340 residents.

At concentration camps like Bergen-Belsen and Mauthausen, the Nazis forced prisoners to work under inhumane conditions that often resulted in death by starvation, disease or exposure. At death camps, however, the vast majority of Jews were gassed to death or shot upon arrival, with only a small group of prisoners selected to remain alive as workers. These forced laborers, known as Arbeit häftlinge, were typically young men and women with experience in fields vital to the maintenance of the camp, including carpentry and tailoring. As Hershel Zukerman later testified, the SS, the Nazi police force that oversaw the camps, once asked a group of 100 men who'd arrived at Sobibor the previous day whether any of them could cook. "My son and I volunteered; we remained alive, while the other 98 went to the gas chambers."

Most of Sobibor's Arbeit häftlinge lived in a part of the camp called Lager I. Staffed by around 400



Alexander Pechersky, a leader of the 1943 Sobibor Uprising.

prisoners, including 100 women, Lager II contained the camp administration office and an undressing area for Jews en route to the gas chambers, while Lager III, which was closed off from the rest of the camp, held the gas chambers and mass graves. Contact between workers in Lager III and the rest of the camp was strictly prohibited to limit knowledge of the murders taking place there. "The most conclusive evidence that something murderous was occurring in Lager III was the fact that nobody ever came out alive," wrote survivor Thomas Blatt, also known as Toivi, in *Sobibor: The Forgotten Revolt*. A Nazi com-



Celebrating Harmony and Unity

World Understanding and Peace Day, observed annually on February 23, encourages reflection on the importance of empathy, dialogue, and global cooperation. The day highlights the need to bridge cultural, social, and political divides, fostering mutual respect and harmony among communities. Schools, organisations, and communities engage in discussions, workshops, and peace-building activities to promote tolerance and understanding. It serves as a reminder that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of compassion, dialogue, and cooperation. The day inspires individuals to contribute actively towards a more united and peaceful world.



Surviving members of the Sobibor Uprising in 1944. Leon Felhendler, a leader of the revolt, is standing in the back row at far right.



Leon Felhendler in 1933. The resistance leader was fatally shot under unclear circumstances in April 1945.

ance, other members of the work crew fled, only to be gunned down or recaptured. "We were summoned to witness their punishment, so that we should hear and be afraid," survivor Moshe Bahir testified. "Before our eyes, the 11 men from the 'forest group' were brought out to be executed. All the victims fell with the first salvo. One of them got up on his feet and they fired again. Even this shot didn't kill him. A third salvo of shots put an end to his life."

In the aftermath of the executions, Bahir recalled, "The mood in the camp was tense. Various rumors flew through the air. We felt that our end was rapidly approaching." It was against this backdrop that Pechersky and the other POWs arrived at Sobibor in late September 1943. Born in Kremenchuk, Ukraine, in 1909, Pechersky was captured by the Germans in 1941, during the Battle of Moscow. He managed to conceal his Jewish heritage from his captors until the following year, when he underwent a medical examination after a failed escape attempt and was revealed to be circumcised. "I was locked up with other Jews in a place nicknamed the Jewish cellar," where we spent ten days in complete darkness," Pechersky later said. Upon arrival at Sobibor, Pechersky sought out SS officer Karl Frenzel to volunteer himself as a skilled worker. Frenzel selected



Auxiliary guards in front of Sobibor's Lager III.

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#DIFFERENTIATING

Between Powerloom and Handloom

The key differences between handloom and powerloom fabrics lie in imperfection, lack of uniformity, and subtle variations in motifs

Handloom and powerloom fabrics may look similar at first glance, but they differ significantly in the way they are woven. These differences are most evident in the imperfections, uniformity of weaving, and the appearance of motifs. Understanding these aspects helps in identifying authentic handloom textiles and appreciating their craftsmanship.

1. Imperfection in Weaving

One of the most important indicators of a handloom fabric is imperfection. Handloom fabrics are woven manually by artisans. Because the process relies on human skill rather than machines, slight irregularities naturally occur. You may notice uneven thread thickness, minor gaps, or small variations in tension. These imperfections are not defects; instead, they are a hallmark of authenticity and reflect the individuality of the weaver.

Powerloom fabrics, on the other hand, are produced by machines operating at high speed. The weaving process is mechanically controlled, resulting in a smooth, flawless surface. There are almost no visible irregularities, as the machine repeats the same motion with precision.

2. Uniformity of Weaving

Uniformity is another key factor in distinguishing between the two. Handloom weaving is not perfectly uniform. The fab-



ric may show slight variations in the density of the weave or alignment of threads. When you examine the cloth closely or stretch it gently, these inconsistencies become noticeable. This unevenness adds character and depth to the fabric.

Powerloom weaving is highly uniform. The fabric looks consistent throughout, with evenly spaced threads and identical texture from one end to the other. This uniformity is a result of automated processes and standardized settings.

3. Motifs and Designs

Motifs provide strong visual clues about the weaving method. In handloom fabrics, motifs are often woven individually or with manual assistance such as jacquard attachments. As a result, motifs may show slight variations in shape, size, or alignment. Borders and patterns may not be perfectly symmetrical, and the reverse side of the fabric often reveals loosely carried threads.

In powerloom fabrics, motifs are machine-generated

and repeated exactly. The designs appear sharp, precise, and identical throughout the fabric. Borders are straight and symmetrical, and the back of the fabric looks almost as neat as the front.

4. Overall Look and Feel
Handloom fabrics usually have a softer, more organic feel. They drape differently and often feel more breathable due to the less compact weave.

Powerloom fabrics feel smoother and sometimes stiffer, as the threads are tightly packed and treated for mass production. The key differences between handloom and powerloom fabrics lie in imperfection, lack of uniformity, and subtle variations in motifs. Handloom textiles celebrate human craftsmanship and individuality, while powerloom fabrics emphasize speed, precision, and consistency. By closely observing these features, one can distinguish between the two and better appreciate the artistry behind handloom weaving.

#VAN GOGH

Fiction with a reputation

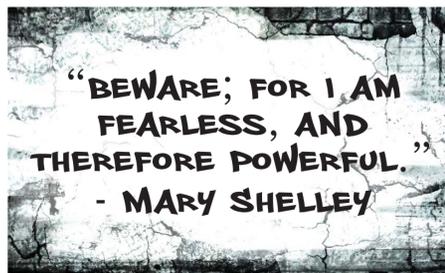
Newest French literature: cheap, pocket-sized novels whose contents were current, urban, and sometimes a bit daring

At first glance, these little yellow paperbacks might seem like quiet props, just a stack of novels tossed on a table. But this still life is also a snapshot of modern culture in Van Gogh's Paris. Back then, yellow covers were a kind of visual shorthand for the newest French literature: cheap, pocket-sized novels whose contents were current, urban, and sometimes a bit daring. Writers of the day didn't sugar-coat life, they wrote bluntly about the modern city, ordinary people, and subjects polite society often preferred to avoid. So, instead



of showing off old classics, Van Gogh was perhaps telling us: look what modern stuff I'm reading right now.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman