

THE WEIGHT OF MEMORY: I AM BERNIE FURSHPAN

A FILM BY CHRISTIANE ARBESU



MEDIA PRESS KIT

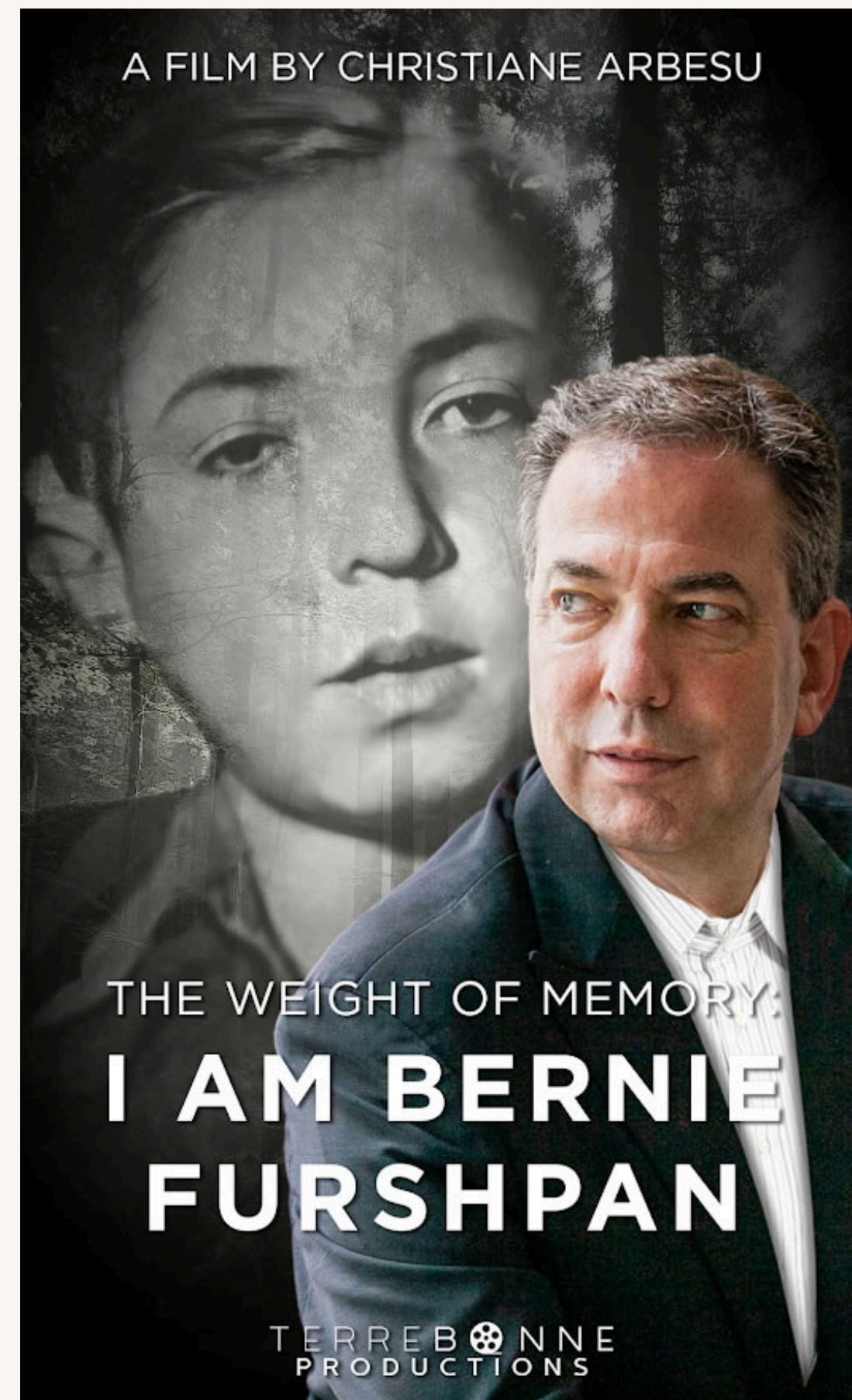
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Terrebonne Productions

Short Synopsis

The Weight of Memory: I Am Bernie Furshpan follows Dr. Bernie Furshpan, son of Holocaust survivors, as he travels across the country sharing his family's powerful story to inspire a new generation. Through personal testimony and historical truth, Bernie transforms memory into action, urging young people to reject hate, embrace empathy, and become upstanders. More than a documentary, this is a movement rooted in remembrance, moral clarity, and our shared human origins.

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Full Synopsis

The Weight of Memory: I Am Bernie Furshpan is a powerful documentary that follows Dr. Bernie Furshpan—son of Holocaust survivors — as he turns inherited trauma into purpose. Through storytelling, education, and tireless advocacy, Bernie brings the past to life for new generations, transforming painful memories into a mission for compassion, justice, and truth.

Filmed across schools, communities, and intimate family settings, the documentary traces Bernie's work as an educator and public speaker at the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center where his connection captivates students and moves audiences. His message is clear: genocide doesn't start with bullets — it begins with words. And history, if ignored, will repeat itself.

We follow Bernie beyond the museum into his home and history as he retraces his father Moshe's miraculous escape from the Nazis, and honors his maternal grandmother's desperate search for her family. These stories aren't just historical — they are deeply human, raw, and urgent.

As antisemitism and hate surge again globally, Bernie issues a call to action: we must remember not just for remembrance's sake, but to change the present and safeguard the future. The film introduces the concept of Sanity in Humanity — a global awakening based on science, empathy, and our shared genetic heritage. It reminds us that we are all cousins, all part of one human family. There are no separate races — only one species, divided by fear, politics, and forgotten truths.

Through themes of personal testimony, inherited trauma, and education as resistance, I Am Bernie Furshpan offers a blueprint for healing and hope. It challenges students, educators, and human rights advocates to stand against cruelty, question blind obedience, and reject ideologies that dehumanize others.

This is not just a film. It is a movement — a reboot of our moral compass, a plea to remember who we are to one another, and a promise to future generations that we will rise, stand, and act. Hatred only wins when good people stay silent. And silence is no longer an option.

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Filmmaker/Director's Statement

When I first heard Dr. Bernie Furshpan speak at the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center on the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, I was struck not only by his words, but by the urgency behind them. Just weeks earlier, I had read a report noting that antisemitic violence in 2022 had reached its highest levels since World War II. That statistic haunted me. And when I heard Bernie speak, I felt a profound responsibility to act, to help share his story, and by extension, the story of his family, his pain, and his purpose.

What drew me in was not only the historical significance of his message, but the deeply personal way he delivers it. Bernie doesn't preach, he connects. He walks students through the museum. He stands in front of middle school classrooms. He invites us into the most vulnerable corners of his life and memory. I knew the documentary had to reflect that same sense of movement and intimacy.

The structure of *The Weight of Memory: I Am Bernie Furshpan* is very intentional. It moves fluidly from Bernie and me talking in the car, to him guiding a tour to a formal sit-down interview. It allows the viewer to experience Bernie's story the way his audiences do: through presence, empathy, and revelation.

One moment that deeply moved me during filming was when I asked Bernie if he had ever seen his father cry. The pause before his answer told its own story. This isn't just a film about history, it's about generational trauma, the power of memory, and the courage it takes to transform pain into purpose.

This film is Bernie's story, but it's also a call to all of us to remember, to teach, and to never be silent.

Christiane Arbesu

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Key Themes and Topics

- Intergenerational trauma
- Holocaust remembrance
- Rising antisemitism
- Education as activism
- Moral courage and upstanders
- Tolerance and human dignity





Crew

- Christiane Arbesu, Director
- Terrebonne Productions, Producer, Photography, Script
- Piboon Otto Thongtanyong, Director of Photography
- Scott Roberts, Editor
- Ernesto Del Canal, Colorist
- Mary Donaghy, Photo Editor

Production Notes

The Weight of Memory: I Am Bernie Furshpan was filmed across a range of meaningful and emotionally relevant locations — from classrooms to community centers, and museum galleries to family living rooms, the documentary captures the breadth of Dr. Bernie Furshpan's journey as an educator, speaker, and second-generation Holocaust survivor.

Key filming locations include:

- Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County (HMTc) - Where Bernie leads powerful educational tours and speaks to students with authenticity and empathy.
- Middle and High Schools Across New York and Beyond - Capturing Bernie's mission to inspire younger generations to become upstanders through education and dialogue.
- The Furshpan Family Home - Offering rare, intimate moments of reflection, family history, and inherited resilience.
- On the Road - Bernie travels to meet with students, teachers, and fellow advocates, blending storytelling with real-time connection and outreach.

The Weight of Memory: I AM BERNIE FURSHPAN is a cinema verite documentary that captures a day in the life of Bernie Furshpan. It was filmed across a range of meaningful and emotionally relevant locations.



Festivals and Awards

Currently submitted to over 40 international film festivals.



Press Quotes & Endorsements

"At a time of rising antisemitism and fading firsthand Holocaust testimony, a new documentary seeks to bridge generations and confront intolerance with truth."

— **Roksana Amid, Herald Community Newspapers**

"A wonderful, deeply personal, and touching tribute... 'The Weight of Memory: I Am Bernie Furshpan' is not to be missed."

— **Howard Tucker, Hi! Drama**

Video testimonials by audience members
<https://vimeo.com/1082350016>

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Hi Resolution Images

- Key stills from the film
 - throughout this kit
- Behind-the-scenes photos
 - <https://iambernie.com>
 - Section: LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION: BEHIND THE SCENES
- Graphics
 - <https://iambernie.com/media-press>
 - Printable Poster
 - Printable Step and Repeat
 - Director and subject headshots



Trailer and Social Media Links

- Official Trailer: on homepage of www.iambernie.com and <https://vimeo.com/1082965698/6db136f049>
- Screener: Please request for private link
- Website: www.iambernie.com
- Instagram: [@iamberniefurshpan](https://www.instagram.com/iamberniefurshpan)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/iamberniefurshpan](https://www.facebook.com/iamberniefurshpan)



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Educational Materials

The Weight of Memory: I AM BERNIE FURSHPAN is more than a film. It's a movement.

The Sanity in Humanity Workbook is an interactive classroom guide designed for middle and high school students to explore empathy, diversity, shared ancestry, and leadership through engaging discussions, creative activities, and personal reflection. Rooted in science and social awareness, the workbook empowers students to recognize their interconnectedness, challenge hate, and become compassionate upstanders in their communities. Ideal for flexible use over multiple sessions, it serves as a powerful tool to reboot our perspective on what it means to be human, together.

Download the Workbook, Presentation, and Flyer at
<https://iambernie.com/the-movement>



CONTACT INFORMATION

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*Thank you for supporting this
movement of memory, resilience,
and humanity.*



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