

REVIEW OF "THE WEIGHT OF MEMORY: I AM BERNIE FURSHPAN": A FILM BY Christiane Arbesu of TERREBONNE PRODUCTIONS AT THE MANHASSET CINEMAS, MANHASSET, NY ON MAY 4, 2025.

By Howard Tucker

Howard Tucker reviews theatre, film, and cabaret for the site Hi! Drama managed by Eva Heinemann.

On May 4, 2025, Frances A. Shea and I viewed the world premiere of "The Weight of Memory: I am Bernie Furshpan," a wonderful, deeply personal, and touching tribute to Moshe Furshpan, a Holocaust survivor who is the father of Bernie Furshpan. Today, Dr. Bernie Furshpan is the vice chairman of The Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County ("HMTc") (hmtcli.org).

Beautifully directed by Christiane Arbesu, this very intimate film follows Bernie as he celebrates the legacy of his father's frightening story of surviving the Holocaust in Nazi-occupied Poland (now Ukraine) by living in the woods for 3 years as a 10 year old child and his subsequent resilience, perseverance and success in Israel and the United States.

Director Arbesu follows Bernie as he shares his father's harrowing story with students and community groups. For Arbesu, the decision to tell Bernie's story arose from her hearing Bernie speak at the HMTc on the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi Auschwitz concentration camp, and her subsequent reading 2022 statistics about the highest incidences of antisemitism since WW II.

Arbesu tells Bernie's story, cutting between conversations of them in a car, to Bernie at a middle school, to Bernie at the HTMC museum, and then a sit-down interview. Despite some pain in telling his dad's story, he cites the social and historical significance of doing so. Bernie notes that this documentary is more than a personal story that reminds us that antisemitism is still alive, but ends with hope, telling us about the resilience of the Jewish people contributing to society, resulting from the lineage of the survivors like Moshe Furshpan.

"The Weight of Memory: I am Bernie Furshpan" is not to be missed. It will be shown next on June 22 at 5 P.M. at the Triad Theater (triadnyc.com) on 158 W. 72nd St., New York, NY. (212-362-2590). The Manhasset Cinemas were packed, and a full house is expected at the Triad.