



I was born in London in 1947 as the son of German and Czech Jewish refugees and grew up as an absolutely 'British' boy, without any knowledge of our German-Jewish background and without knowing that a large number of the family had been murdered by the Nazis: an utter non-topic at home.

When my parents left London for West Germany in 1961, I had no choice but to follow as I was only 13 years old at the time. I spent the first years in Germany in self-defined isolation, i.e. only mixing with English speaking foreigners, as the post-war years in Britain had made me - like the rest

of my generation - absolutely anti-German.

Having completed schooling in 1965, I began studying Economics at Cologne University. On June 2nd 1967, during a demonstration against the state visit of the Shah of Persia to West Berlin, a young student was killed by a policeman. The student movement began, and changed the course of my life and my further development:

- It opened my eyes to German reality and made me realise that young Germans were a lot different than my preconceived notion.
- I was impressed by the way the students queried their parents' behaviour during the Third Reich.
- I was not only an active member of the students' movement; the events also led me to begin to accept my other identities: German and Jewish.

I am German; as I have spent decisive years of my life in Germany.

I am Jewish; as a result of learning about our family history and as a reaction to the Six-Day-War in 1967. This led me to define my position towards myself, my family history and Israel.

With the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1990, I was able to get hold of family documents in Poland and Czechoslovakia that helped me uncover our family history right the way back to our roots in Galicia and Moravia in the 18th Century. As a result of this knowledge, I began giving talks and organising seminars on the history of anti-Semitism, the basics of Jewish religion and present day Jewish life in Germany above all for non- Jewish audiences.

My professional work began when I graduated in 1970 and moved from Cologne to West Berlin to take up work as a junior lecturer in Economics at the Free University of West Berlin. I also taught at the Berlin College of Economics (*Fachhochschule für Wirtschaft*). This was followed by lecture work for the West Berlin City Government up till German reunification in 1990. I was personnel manager at the German daily newspaper *Tageszeitung - taz* from 1986 to 1988 and also contributed articles. My main profession is still lecture work and drafting and conducting seminars in English and German for various adult education centres in Berlin.

My artistic work began in 1995 when along with two colleagues I participated in the competition for a National Holocaust Memorial in Berlin. In 1998 I converted a bus-stop shelter on Kurfürstenstraße in Berlin- Schöneberg into a permanent reminder of the site of Adolf Eichmann's 'Jewish Department' – the so-called *Judenreferat*. This was followed by a further five Holocaust related memorials.

I was a member of *Meshulash* a group of Berlin Jewish artists between 1998 and 2010. In 2004 I was a finalist in the *International Jewish Artist of the Year Award* with 'The Silent Concierge' ([www.rgolz.de/e-portier.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-portier.html)) and received a commendation from the same competition in 2007 for 'The German Gate to Paradise' ([www.rgolz.de/e-deu.paradies.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-deu.paradies.html)).

I am still not religiously Jewish in the context of practising religious rituals. But living in the country where 15 members of my family had been murdered, has created a personal commitment towards them, a commitment to actively work against anti- Semitism by furthering knowledge about Jewish history, Jewish religion and the day-to-day life of Jews in Germany today. I have been an active member in Berlin Jewish life for more than 20 years.

Further information about my Jewish approach can be found in an interview I gave GOLEM Magazine back in 1999 ([www.rgolz.de/e-interview.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-interview.html)).

Berlin has become my **HOME** but not my *Heimat* (**Roots**).

I feel that I have **four identities**:

- I'm basically very **British** owing to my upbringing in London.
- I'm also **German** in my intellectual approach to things.
- I'm very **Jewish** in a cultural and emotional context and
- I'm utterly **European** out of conviction.

## Personal Details

1947: Born in London as a son of Berlin and Czech Jewish refugees

1960: Move from London to Cologne, West Germany

1970: Move from Cologne to (West-) Berlin

1988 My son Elis is born

1991: Membership of the Jewish Community of Berlin: active member of the Cultural Committee.

1995: Marriage to a Lutheran vicar

1996 Our son David is born

2000 Our daughter Lilly Noa is born

## Art Work

- 1995: Entry to the competition for a National Holocaust Memorial in 1995  
[www.rgolz.de/e-memorial.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-memorial.html)
- 1998: **Just Stop!** – a bus shelter project outside Adolf Eichmann's 'Judenreferat' on *Kurfürstenstraße* in Berlin-Schöneberg  
[www.rgolz.de/e-busstop.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-busstop.html)
- 1998-2010 Contributions to exhibitions of *Meshulash - Berlin Jewish Artist Group* to be found under: [www.rgolz.de/i-ronnie-art.html](http://www.rgolz.de/i-ronnie-art.html)
- 2004 **Remembering Varian Fry** – a bus shelter project at *Potsdamer Platz* in Berlin-Mitte  
[www.rgolz.de/e-fry.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-fry.html)
- 2005 **The SS Head Office for Economic & Administrative Affairs** - an advertising board outside the original building on *Unter den Eichen 126-135* in Berlin-Steglitz  
[www.rgolz.de/e-wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt.html)
- 2007 **Action T4 and the Holocaust** – a bus shelter project on *Tiergarten Strasse* right in front of Berlin's Philharmonic Hall  
[www.rgolz.de/e-action-t4.html](http://www.rgolz.de/e-action-t4.html)
- 2010 **DP-Camps in Berlin 1945-48** – 2 bus shelter projects In Berlin-Mariendorf and Zehlendorf  
[www.rgolz.de/Z'dorf\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.rgolz.de/Z'dorf_ENG.pdf) & [www.rgolz.de/M'dorf\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.rgolz.de/M'dorf_ENG.pdf)

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