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Light from the Yellow Star: A Lesson of Love from the Holocaust

Robert O. Fisch

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Book by Fisch, Robert O.

From Publishers WeeklyRobert O. Fisch, a survivor of the Holocaust who is now a pediatrician and a painter, has set down the memories of his wartime experiences in Light from the Yellow Star: A Lesson of Love from the Holocaust. His spirit undefeated ("As beautiful pearls are produced by the suffering of an oyster, so the Holocaust created beautiful heroes"), Fisch urges compassion and learning from tragedy. His often stark, abstract paintings convey the range of emotion in his reminiscences. Originally published in 1994 in conjunction with an exhibit of Fisch's work at the University of Minnesota's Weisman Art Museum, the book has been reissued by the Yellow Star Foundation.

(Dist. by Oliver, \$14.95 40p ages 12-up ISBN 1-885116-00-4, \$9.95 paper -9644896-0-0; Feb.) Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Gr. 7⁺-12. A Hungarian Jewish survivor of Nazi concentration camps, Fisch is now a professor of pediatrics at the University of Minnesota. He tells his story alongside his paintings of the Holocaust experience. The abstract pictures on large-size, quality paper are like monuments, with flames, blood, and barbed wire; black boots crush white outstretched hands; sometimes there's a yellow star. Opposite each painting is a short narrative, beginning with Fisch's joyful childhood in Budapest, then moving to the Nazi occupation in 1944, the transports, the camps, the massacres, the marches, the liberation. The powerful account combines statistics (out of 600,000 Hungarian Jews, only 80,000 survived) with one person's experience. Throughout the spaciously designed book are translated quotes from gravestones in the Budapest memorial cemetery, where Fisch's beloved father is buried. Remembering his father, Fisch insists the Holocaust teaches that "love overcomes hate." More convincing than that healing message is the stark truth of his narrative and the form he has found for his art. Profits from sales of this book go toward educating young people about the Holocaust. Hazel Rochman