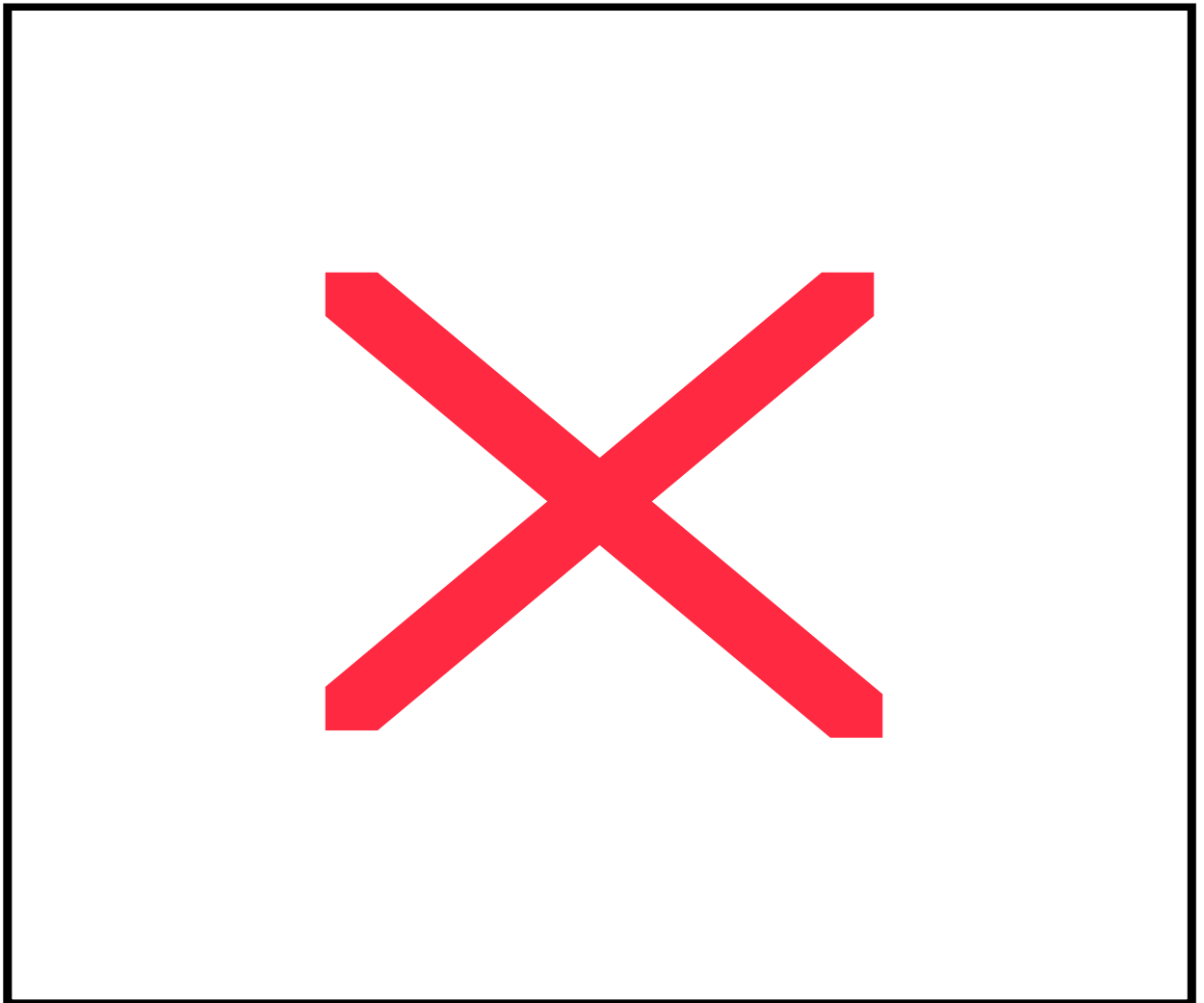


SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

A film by Maia Wechsler



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SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

A film by Maia Wechsler

SYNOPSIS

“This compelling documentary shares the story of four French women of uncommon courage who, in their teens and twenties, risked their lives to fight the Nazi occupation of their country. Neither Jews nor Communists, they were in no danger of arrest before they joined the Resistance. They could have remained safe at home. But they chose to resist. Within two years all four were arrested by the Gestapo and deported as political prisoners to the hell of Ravensbruck concentration camp, where they helped one another survive. Today, elderly but still very active, they continue to push forward as social activists and intellectual leaders in their fields. The film captures their amazing lives, and reveals an uncommon, intense bond of friendship that survives to this day.” - Human Rights Watch International Film Festival.

**2000, 60 minutes, Color, Video - US / France,
Subtitled**



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FILM FESTIVALS

Seattle Women in Cinema Film Festival - *Best Documentary*
Academy Awards Documentary Screening Committee - *Outstanding Documentaries of 2001*
Human Rights Watch International Film Festival
Avignon-New York Film Festival
Double Take Documentary Film Festival
Doxa Documentary Film and Video Festival
Arizona International Film Festival
Films des Femmes, Creteil, France
Silverlake Film Festival
Hartford Jewish Film Festival
Halfway to Hollywood International Film Festival
Reel Jewish Film Festival

QUOTES

“With a deft gift for storytelling, first time filmmaker Maia Wechsler, captures the courage and dignity of four not so ordinary French women who decided that they could resist and make a difference during the Nazi occupation of their country during WWII.”

Bruni Burres— Director *Human Rights Watch International Film Festival*

“This story of sisterhood and moral courage had a roomful of filmgoers misting over in sadness and admiration.”

Mike Wilson— *St. Petersburg Times*

“You may have heard stories of Resistance, but never in such a powerful and focused narrative as this. I urge you to view this film...”

Allen Daviau— *Cinematographer*



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SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

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BACKGROUND

Sisters in Resistance tells the story of four women of uncommon courage who, in their teens and twenties, risked their lives to fight Nazi oppression and brutality in occupied France. Neither Jews nor Communists, they were in no danger of arrest before they joined the Resistance. They could have remained safe at home. But they chose to resist. Within two years, they had all been arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned. They were then deported as political prisoners to Ravensbruck concentration camp, where they were crucial to one another's survival. Today, the women are elderly and live in Paris. They were decorated for their heroism and became social activists and intellectual leaders in their fields. History brought them together in prison and the camp, and they forged an everlasting bond of friendship. This film is about these four friends: as Resistance fighters, as fellow prisoners, as idealists, and as women, a perspective that has been largely overlooked in the history of the Holocaust.

Sisters in Resistance follows the paths of the four protagonists from prewar to the present. The women talk about what compelled them to resist. They talk about their roles in the Resistance, their arrests, deportation and liberation. They talk about the struggle to rebuild their lives after the war, their desire for children and their continued battles in the name of justice.

I filmed interviews of the women separately, in pairs and all together. I shot at Ravensbruck, at the French prisons, and numerous locations in Paris central to the story. Archival footage illustrates their activities in the Resistance.

The eldest of the women is Germaine Tillion. At 93, Germaine is the "mother hen." She was a founder of the famous Resistance network, Musee de l'homme. Before boarding the train that took her to Ravensbruck, Germaine met the youngest of the friends, Anise Postal-Vinay. Said Anise of Germaine: "This phenomenal woman, with her tremendous sense of humor, literally took me under her wings. Every day for the next eighteen months she gave me a piece of her bread ration, on the grounds that I was younger than she and would, as she said, on day be going home to get married and have ten children."

Genevieve de Gaulle Anthonioz, the niece of the general, was arrested while working for the newspaper, *Defense de la France*. Just before war broke out, she met Jacqueline Pery d'Alincourt; they immediately recognized they were kindred spirits. When they met again in 1941, Jacqueline was a war widow. She was 21 years old. Resistance and arrest led them to Ravensbruck, where they shared a straw mattress, and most importantly, defied the dehumanization of the camp by taking care of one another with love and tenderness.

Sisters in Resistance is different from other works about the Holocaust and resistance because, while telling the captivating story of the young women's struggle against the Nazis, the film also shows the power of friendship in the face of absolute evil. The intense friendship that existed between these four friends helped them survive the concentration camp and lead productive lives after the war. Few of us experience such friendship, as the women remind us in the film.



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SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

A film by Maia Wechsler

CREDITS

Directed by
Maia Wechsler

Produced by
Maia Wechsler and Catherine Scheinman

Director of Photography
Scott St. John
Peter Chappell

Editor
Anne Checler

Music
Sonya Heller

Narrator
Kate Mulgrew

Sound
Xavier Griette
Philippe Fabbri
Matthieu Bricout
Tom Walker
1993 guy

Additional camera
Pierre Olivier Bonnasse
Lionel Jan Kerguistel
Kevin Keating

Production Associate
Pascal Deymes

Research
Anne Feinsilber
Virginia Field

Preview Editor
Melissa Hacker



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SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

A film by Maia Wechsler

On-line editor

John Fordham

Assistant Editors

Lauren Barnello
Rebecca Neff
Tim Sternberg

Sound Designer

Ahmad Shirazi, MPSE

Sound Editor

Arya Shirazi

Sound Mixer

John Davis

Narration Recording

Greg De Belles

Off-line Editing Facilities

Sugar Pictures

On-line Editing Facilities

Teatown Video

Animation

A vidia
Film Video Arts

Subtitles

Stephen O'Shea

Graphics

Sondra Graff

Translators

Suzel Stampleman
Rainer Brueckheimer

Fiscal Sponsor

New York Foundation for the Arts

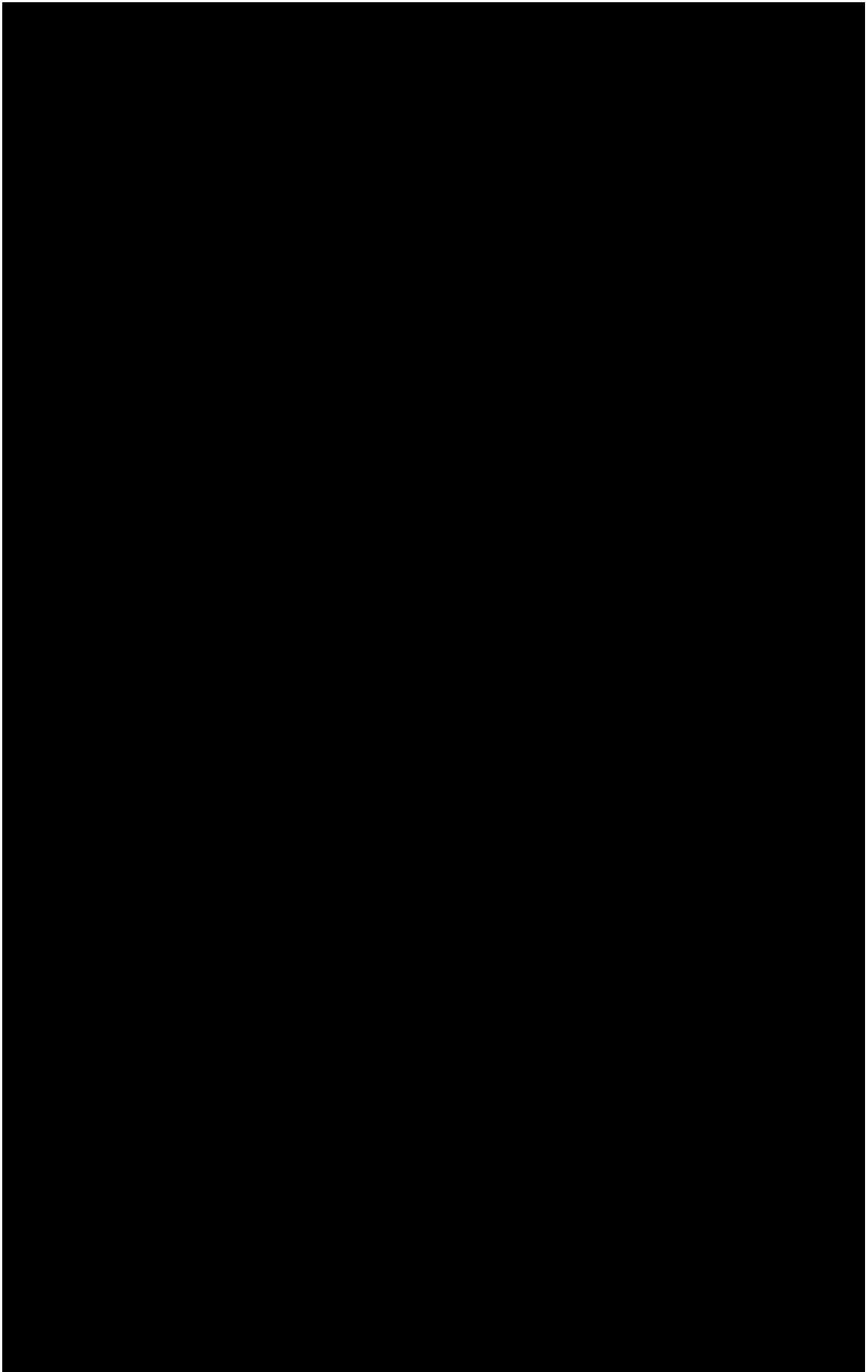
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JUNE 2001

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH FILM FESTIVAL REPORT

by Rachael K LeValley

The 12th annual [Human Rights Watch International Film Festival](#) opened June 13th and runs thru June 28, 2001. The Film Society of Lincoln Center has co-presented the New York festival since 1994 and films screen at the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center. The festival encourages communication, both within the film industry (by featuring a number of co-presentations with other New York festivals) and between the filmmakers and audience members (by discussing the issues represented in the films following the screenings).

...

Sisters in Resistance, a film by first-time Director Maia Wechsler, documents the lives of four French women who, in their youth, joined the resistance and risked their lives to fight the Nazi occupation of their country, not because they themselves were Jewish or in danger of being arrested, but because it was the right thing to do. All four women, because of their involvement, were eventually arrested by the Gestapo and deported to Ravensbruck concentration camp.

The film captures their recollections and the uncommon and intense friendship that has survived with them. *Sisters in Resistance* ran in the Double Take Documentary Film Festival, The International Women's Film Festival in Creteil, France and the Avignon-New York Film Festival. It is also scheduled for Reel Jews at New York's Makor in November. In our email interview, Wechsler said that documentary film is a powerful tool for advocacy and change, because, "there's nothing like seeing and hearing a story directly from the people who are living it". She also said, "Women should continue to bring women's stories, issues and struggles to the public through good storytelling and push to get films shown to those who do not watch public television or attend festivals". I asked Wechsler to respond to the statement, Equality in the film industry, too. Her response was, "I don't have anything to say about this because I worked on my film in relative isolation, with no contact with the film industry". Exactly. This was sort of my point. *Sisters in Resistance* will run several times throughout the festival and is co-presented by New York Women in Film & Television.

[Human Rights Watch International Film Festival](#)
Walter Reade Theater at the Lincoln Center, New York.
June 15-28, 2001

In just over twenty years, [Human Rights Watch](#) has become a real force in the human rights movement, widely respected for accurate research and creative advocacy. In the same way, the [Human Rights Watch International Film Festival](#) has become a force in the recognition of the power of film to educate and galvanize concerned supporters.

The world's foremost showcase for films and videos with a distinctive human rights theme, the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival has long been committed to showing challenging and inspiring works that capture humanity in all its struggles and triumphs. The festival returns in its twelfth edition with one of its most wide-ranging and artistically exciting programs ever. A co-presentation of Human Rights Watch and the Film Society of Lincoln Center, the festival will run from Friday, June 15 to Thursday, June 28 at the Film Society's Walter Reade Theater. Thirty-eight provocative works from around the globe, most of which are New York premieres, are featured. Many of the filmmakers are on hand after the screenings to discuss their films with the audience.

[Sisters in Resistance](#)

Maia Wechsler
U.S., 2000. 60 min.

Sisters in Resistance shares the story of four French women of uncommon courage: Geneviève de Gaulle-Anthonioz, Germaine Tillon, Anise Postel-Viany and Jacqueline Pery d'Alincourt, who, in their teens and twenties, risked their lives to fight the Nazi occupation of their country. Neither Jews nor Communists, they were in no danger of arrest before they joined the Resistance. They could have remained safe at home. But they chose to resist. Within two years all four were arrested by the Gestapo and deported as political prisoners to the hell of Ravensbruck concentration camp, where they helped one another survive. Today, elderly but still very active, they continue to push forward as social activists and intellectual leaders in their fields. The film captures their amazing lives, and reveals an uncommon, intense bond of friendship that survives to this day. In French with English subtitles.



JewishFilm.com

08/24/2001

SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

TITLE: SISTERS IN RESISTANCE

YEAR: 2000

DIR/PROD: Maria Wechsler

COUNTRY: USA

LANGUAGE: USA

TIME: 60 minute video

SOURCE: For a print of the film, contact Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, New York, NY 10013 212-925-0606 x360 Email: orders@wmm.com

Human Rights Watch Film Festival, June 2001

TEXT: *SISTERS IN RESISTANCE* shares the story of four French women of uncommon courage who, in their teens and twenties, risked their lives to fight the Nazi occupation of their country. Neither Jews nor communists, they were in no danger before they joined the Resistance. They could have remained safe at home. But they chose to resist. Within two years all four were arrested by the Gestapo and deported as political prisoners to the hell of Ravensbrück concentration camp, where they helped one another survive. Today, elderly but still very active, they continue to push forward as social activists and intellectual leaders in their fields. The film captures their amazing lives, and reveals an uncommon, intense bond of friendship that survives to this day.

Kikar Hahalomot / Desperado Square