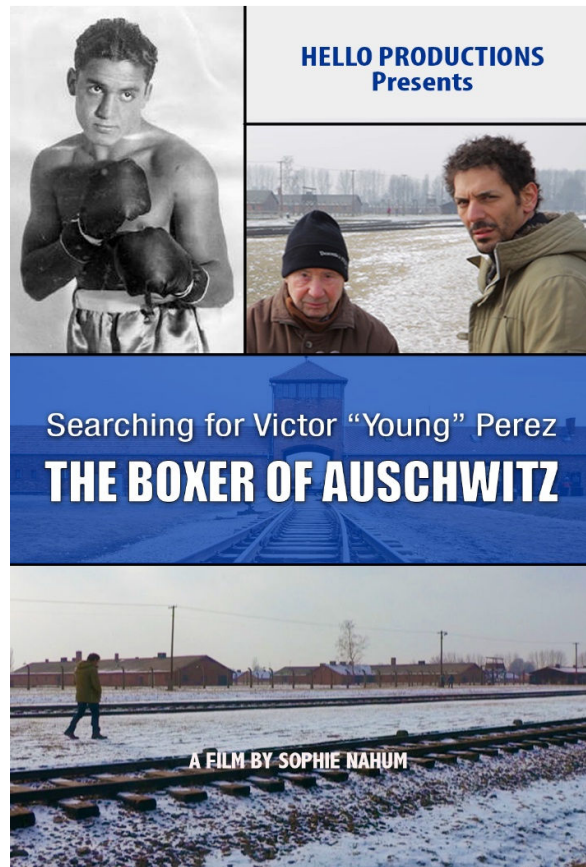


SEARCHING FOR VICTOR “YOUNG” PEREZ THE BOXER OF AUSCHWITZ



A FILM BY
SOPHIE NAHUM

64 mins / Color / 2016 / French, English Subtitles / France



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WINNER OF THE AUDIENCE AWARD
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SYNOPSIS

When actor Tomer Sisley first heard about Victor “Young” Perez, he couldn’t believe his ears. Inspired to make a movie about his life, Sisley became fascinated with the long-forgotten story of Perez, who rose to great fame in 1931 as the youngest world champion in boxing history—only to be deported to Auschwitz, where he was forced to box in the concentration camp for the amusement of the guards. This compelling documentary follows Sisley on his quest to learn more about Perez’s harrowing, emotional story and to meet the last people who knew Perez and the secret of his tragic fate.

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

“We made this documentary film for our children. When they grow up, they will not have the opportunity to visit a camp with a former deportee. The survivors will all be gone very soon.”

I always knew the story of Victor Young Perez because in the 1990s, my grandfather, André Nahum, wrote a book about his incredible life. I knew that he was born in Tunisia into a very poor family and that at the age of 20, he became the youngest world champion in boxing history. Later during WWII, he was deported to Auschwitz 3, and while there, he had to box in order to survive.

I knew that it would be difficult to make a documentary that would live up to his unbelievable story. There are few photos, no record of his fights in the camp and only a few witnesses. I thought that his history would be perfect for a movie, but feature film is not my field of expertise.

Then one day quite by accident, I met actor Tomer Sisley. He is a very famous and popular actor and filmmaker in France, especially with young people. We talked about our work, and he told me that he is writing a script for a feature film that he hopes to direct. When I asked him what the story was about, he responded, “I don’t think that you would know it. It’s the story of a forgotten boxer: Victor Young Perez.”

I was shocked. I told Tomer that I am the author’s granddaughter. He couldn’t believe it.

Tomer told me that he had an appointment with Jacques Altmann, a former deportee who had met Victor Young Perez (while prisoners in Auschwitz). Tomer wanted to obtain all the information possible for his film.

I didn’t hesitate anymore for a second. It was obvious that I should seize this opportunity to tell this story in a way that made it accessible for the general public, especially young people. It has become very difficult to teach about the Holocaust in France.

I followed Tomer as he worked on his project. I was behind him with the camera. We followed Victor’s life, and we met the last witnesses of his existence. One thing that moved us deeply was that even though we were in Auschwitz as Jacques Altmann told us his experiences, it is impossible to really understand the level of horrors which took place inside those camps.

Since our shooting, two witnesses have died. Very few are still alive. Meanwhile, the world has neither changed nor learned.

Sophie Nahum

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

After completing her philosophy studies and training in Media Studies at New York University, Sophie made her debut at Doc en Stock in 2000 with her film, *Will You Live Past 100?* She began as assistant and then became director on many documentaries – mainly for Arte.

Sophie is passionate about biotechnology and medical innovation. She has directed several films on a wide variety of subjects including *Demain les Clones* (Clones), *Tous centenaires!* (“Will You Live Past 100?”) and *La Vie à Tout Prix* (Life at All Costs).

Other social issues she has focused on have included prostitution in *Maisons Closes Et Si On Rouvrait?* (Brothels: What If We Actually Allowed Them?) and transsexuals in *Sexe* (The Gender Frontier).

Sophie’s goal is to always make information accessible through strong storytelling and by choosing interesting, unusual ways to examine difficult subjects. She has been editor-in-chief of the television magazine show *Us*, which airs in France on Channel 2. Sophie also has a blog on the Huffington Post.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

A Sophie Nahum Film

Director, Writer & Producer	Sophie Nahum
Starring	Tomer Sisley
Producer	Laurent Preece
Cinematographers	Arnaud Mansir Laurent Preece
Editor	Bob Rayers
Production Sound Mixer	Dominique Castinel
Asst. Production Sound Mixer	Antoine Fougère
Set Dressing	Simon Jung
Composer	Karen Ann Zeidel

Thank You to:

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