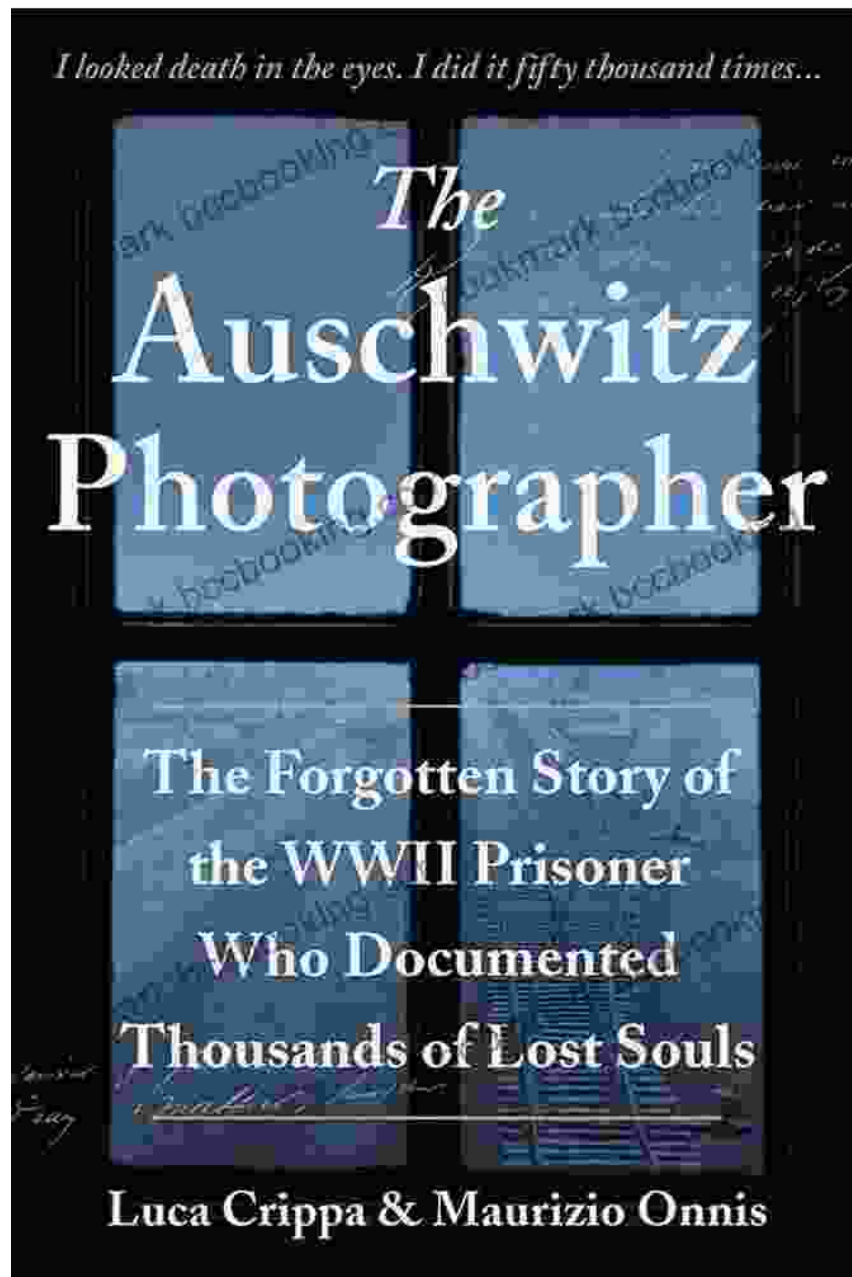
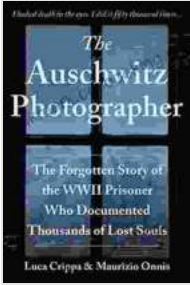


# Uncovering the Hidden Legacy: The Forgotten Story of the WWII Prisoner Who Documented Thousands of Lost Souls



The Auschwitz Photographer: The Forgotten Story of the WWII Prisoner Who Documented Thousands of



## Lost Souls by Maurizio Onnis

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 5937 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 372 pages



Amidst the horrors of World War II, a forgotten hero emerged, a man whose unwavering determination and selflessness preserved the identities of countless victims of Nazi atrocities. Stanislaw R. Dobrowolski, a Polish prisoner of war, risked his own life to meticulously document the names, faces, and personal stories of his fellow prisoners in the depths of Auschwitz, Birkenau, and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps.

### **Stanislaw R. Dobrowolski**

Born in 1915 in Warsaw, Poland, Dobrowolski was a young married artist when war broke out in 1939. After Poland's defeat, he was captured by the Germans and sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. In 1940, he was transferred to Auschwitz, where he became known as prisoner number 36687.

### **The Documentation Project**

In the face of unimaginable suffering and brutality, Dobrowolski found solace in art and his deep desire to preserve the memory of his fellow

prisoners. Using stolen paper, pencils, and ink, he began to secretly sketch their portraits and record their personal information.

At great personal risk, Dobrowolski smuggled his contraband sketches and notes beyond the camp's barbed wire fences. He entrusted them to trusted individuals who eventually delivered them to the Polish government-in-exile in London.

### **The Auschwitz Album**

Among Dobrowolski's most significant contributions is the so-called "Auschwitz Album," a collection of 348 meticulously drawn portraits and personal stories of women prisoners from Block 10 in Auschwitz. This album, hidden in a milk can and buried beneath the camp's floor, survived the war and became a powerful testament to the human spirit.

### **Bergen-Belsen and Beyond**

In January 1945, Dobrowolski was transferred to Bergen-Belsen, where he continued his documentation work. After the camp's liberation, he was instrumental in identifying victims and providing invaluable information for war crimes trials.

Post-war, Dobrowolski's sketches and notes formed the basis of several exhibitions and publications dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust. His work played a crucial role in preserving the identities of thousands of victims who would otherwise have remained lost to history.

### **Recognition and Remembrance**

Despite his extraordinary contributions, Dobrowolski's story remained largely unknown until recent years. In 2019, the Polish Institute of National

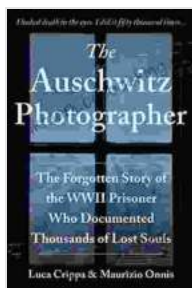
Remembrance (IPN) published his memoirs, "The Forgotten Secret: Stanisław Dobrowolski's Account of Nazi Camps."

In 2021, the "Auschwitz Album" and Dobrowolski's other sketches were inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register, recognizing their exceptional historical significance.

## Preserving the Legacy

Stanislaw R. Dobrowolski's legacy stands as a beacon of hope and resilience. His unwavering commitment to documenting the identities of his fellow prisoners ensured that their memories would not be erased. His work continues to inspire generations, reminding us of the horrors of the past and the importance of preserving human dignity in the face of adversity.

As we delve into the pages of Dobrowolski's forgotten story, we find a testament to the indomitable human spirit and the transformative power of art in the darkest of times. Through his sketches and notes, we pay tribute to the countless lost souls who lived and died in the depths of Nazi concentration camps.



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