

# Marcel Marceau Was A Holocaust Hero

Marcel Marceau was best known as a master of the art of pantomime. He created the beloved silent character Bip and is said to have inspired Michael Jackson's famous ["moonwalk."](#)

But what you might not know was that before he was famous, Marcel Marceau used his many talents to fight against the Nazis during World War II.

Here are 4 facts about Marcel Marceau's heroics from [The Accidental Talmudist](#):

1. At the age of 16, Marcel changed his name from Mangel to Marceau to avoid being recognized as a Jew. He then joined the French resistance to fight against the Nazis.
2. Posing as a boy scout, he made three journeys to lead Jewish children from an orphanage in France to safety in Switzerland. He was able to save hundreds of children.
3. "Documentary filmmaker Phillipe Mora, whose father fought alongside Marcel in the French resistance, said, 'Marceau started miming to keep children quiet as they were escaping. It had nothing to do with show business. He was miming for his life.'"
4. "While fighting with the French resistance, Marcel ran into a unit of German soldiers. Thinking fast, he mimicked the advance of a large French force, and the German soldiers retreated."

Marceau would go on to become a much-loved silent artist, entertaining people until his death in 2007 at the age of 84. Marceau tied his choice of silence to the experience of those who suffered in concentration camps, his own father having

died in Auschwitz: "The people who came back from the camps were never able to talk about it. My name is Mangel. I am Jewish. Perhaps that, unconsciously, contributed towards my choice of silence."

It is truly laudable that Marceau used his talents to heroically resist evil, and despite his experiences, went on to bring joy to the world through his six decades of performing.