Can you imagine being woken up at 4 a.m. by the sound of a beating drum, and when you stumble out of bed, squinting your eyes, you go to the door and hear the worst news of your life?

“They told us to be ready within one hour, and to assemble right in front of our houses, and we could only take whatever we could carry ourselves,” Max Steinmetz said. Steinmetz, who was forced to leave his Transylvanian home, is a survivor of the Holocaust.

He spoke to a crowd of over 400 people Thursday evening in the Ernest Stone Theater, many of them high school students.

Every detail was real to those in attendance, but one could not put himself in the shoes of 79-year-old Steinmetz. Inside each head, imaginations were running, trying to imagine how you would feel if you were in a labor camp at the age of 13.

A few of the students tried to capture their feelings on paper, when the winners of the “Imagining the Holocaust” writing competition read their works aloud.

Amelia Bass from Coleman Middle School said her teacher assigned the topic as a paper and that she really got into it. “I thought it was a horrible, horrible act,” Bass said about the Holocaust.

Speaking into the microphone slow and with poise, Bass could probably relate better than others because she is about the same age as Steinmetz when he was sent to the concentration camp.

Steinmetz was forced to walk to a railroad station with many other Jews. They were met by German SS and a freight train that would soon become their living quarters for the next three days, with only one bucket of water and a slice of bread.

“There was not enough room for everybody to sit down or to stand up,” Steinmetz said.

When they opened the train doors he was in Auschwitz, one of the most infamous concentration camps. Steinmetz remembers being shoved off the train and being put into lines. Dr. Josef Mendal, “the angel of death,” stood in front of them.

With the point of his stick, Mendal selected the Jews to either move to the right or to the left. At this point they did not know the meaning of the two groups, or even why they were there.

Steinmetz vividly recalls the two-piece suit the Germans gave him after his shower, white and blue stripes with a yellow star of David on his left chest and his back. “My name died at that moment,” he said, “I was referred to as 7241.”

Later that night, still very confused, Steinmetz finally had the opportunity to ask another prisoner some questions. He asked him what the foul stench in the air was, and the man asked him where the rest of his family was.

Are we reminded enough about all the things that should never happen again? Think about it. Last Thursday I attended, for the first time, the annual Holocaust Commemoration at the Stone Center theatre. I listened Max Steinmetz telling his story, how he lost his family and was the only one to survive the concentration camps, including Auschwitz. I listened but I couldn’t comprehend. How can you even imagine something like that? How can you possibly understand what any of the survivors went through?

I was deeply affected by the Holocaust Commemoration and it made me proud to think that, at least, our school and community cares. Still, do we think about it enough? Are we doing everything we can so it would never happen again? Do we really see the whole picture of this horrible act? Do we acknowledge that it happens everyday all around the world to different kinds of people because of the color of their skin, the religion they believe in, or just because they are innocent bystanders?

Just the other night, I
At the right “Some Women Are” series by Elizabeth Baxter (Ceramics/Mixed Media) and above “Dog Bite Action Sequence” by Scotty White (oil and acrylic on canvas, collage and wood panel) are just few of the art works displayed at Hammond Hall art gallery during April.

This year’s BA and BFA Senior Show has been split into two exhibitions. First one started on March 30 and it will last until April 9. The second show begins April 13 with opening reception at 7 p.m. and it will end on April 29.

Review by Nick Mackay
The Chanticleer Staff Writer

Lou Reed is a legend. Actually, beyond a legend, Lou Reed is an icon. As the leader for 60’s into 70’s art-punks The Velvet Underground, Reed defined himself as Andy Warhol’s muse, his inspiration, his icon. But one problem has dogged Reed throughout his career: he’s a jerk. He’s an unabashed, walking, talking, Noo York cliché. He’s a F***-you-my-friend.

Animal Serenade

Reed then saunters into a cleared, and musically brilliant and damn near likeable as a person. Who would have thunk it? Reed, the fans man.

Although the first disc features a stirring rendition of “Men of Good Fortune,” a playful “Smalltown” and a searing, soaring “Venus in Furs” which is more sinister than the original, the majority of the good stuff is saved for the second disc.

The introduction of “Sunday Morning” draws only a slight cheer form the crowd, and what follows is a song that feels exactly like its title. It feels like a lazy weekend morning, sitting on the porch, reading the newspaper over coffee. While that’s not necessarily exciting for many Lou Reed fans, it’s nice to see his sensitive side.

Reed then saunters into a funk up rendition of “All Tomorrow’s Parties” which features an unrecognizable drumbeat that turns the song from a lamento for yesterday into an actual party. It’s unsure if this was the intent, but the song does loose a little of its edge. This problem manifests itself again in the nine minute rendition of “The Raven.” Reed’s homage to Edgar Allan Poe. It’s lengthy, pointless and altogether out of place amongst the more upbeat song list. Reed jokes when he introduces the poem that “you may have been forced to read this in high school...torture.” Well he’s not far off. His re-writing of the classic poem is the only thing on the two discs that dips below average, and yes, it does border on torture. Skip.

The saving grace of the album, if it really needs one, is the final two songs. “Candy Says” is re-worked by Reed’s backing band and session player Antony takes lead vocals away form the great one. Reed jokes that he never sang the song very well anyway, just the though of him sharing his stage is astounding, especially considering his history of band abuse.

The closer, fittingly, is “Heroin.” Reed’s best song form The Velvet’s era. The slow verse/fast chorus/slow verse technique drags until the final chorus when the song breaks into a gallop, the audience claps along with the rapidly increasing beat, and Reed grows out the final words as if he’s having all together too much fun, which, in retrospect, is maybe what he needed all along.

Veronica Guerin

Just the other night, I watched a movie called “Veronica Guerin.” This movie is about an Irish journalist who challenged some of the most powerful underworld drug lords in Ireland. Only after she was shot to death, some changes were made and people woke up and realized that there really was a problem with drugs. Whether it is one innocent person, or millions of people, it shouldn’t go that far to make us realize the problems in our society. Why does somebody always have to lose their life in order for us to change things?

What makes me humble in front of people like Steinmetz or hearing a story, like that of Veronica Guerin’s, is the way they lived on even after everything, including their dignity, was taken from them. Steinmetz lost his house, his family and his name, all in that order. I don’t know about you, but after everything else had been taken away from me, including my freedom, and then even considered a person, but a simple number, would probably crush me. How would I go on, what would I have faith in after that?

Veronica Guerin lost her life because she wanted to make a difference. She lost her family and a life with them, because she cared about everyone in her community. In the end she did make a difference, but it cost her everything. Ireland rose to the barricades and demanded changes be made, but not until Guerin was shot six times. She had to die, before people believed her.

We should be aware of how lucky we are. We are lucky because we can live as who we are, we are referred by our name, we have our families around us and there is nobody we should be hiding from. I couldn’t imagine living as Steinmetz did for a period of time. But if I were constantly reminded about the madness of this world, I know it would be easier to appreciate everything I have, all the time.