



Introduction to Ivan Wilzig. 2:12 min. Interview: Raymond Elman. Post-Production: Lee Skye. Music: "Get Together" by Sir Ivan. **Recorded via Zoom:** 2/10/2021, Miami Beach.

# Ivan Wilzig

## and his "UNSTOPPABLE" Father

By Elman + Skye

**Ivan L. Wilzig** (b.1956) is a recording artist and songwriter who is best known for his pop-dance remakes of 1960s and early 1970s peace songs.

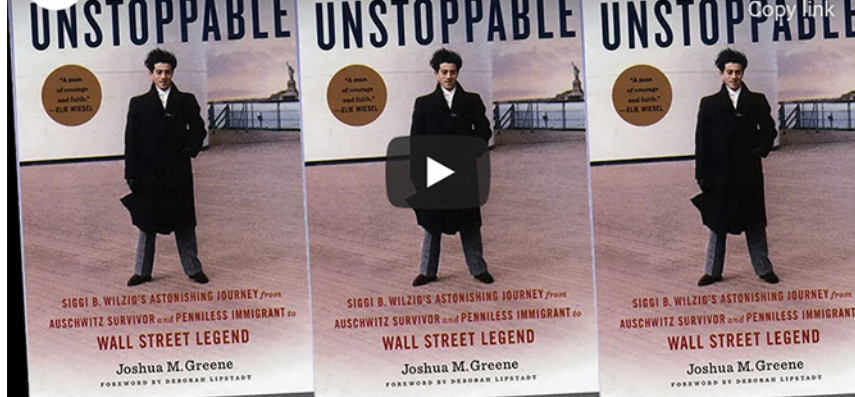
He created **The Peaceman Foundation**, a non-profit organization that battles hatred, violence and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Wilzig was born in Newark, New Jersey and raised with his two younger siblings, Alan and Sherry, in Clifton, New Jersey. Wilzig's father, **Siggi B. Wilzig** (1926–2003), came to the United States as a Holocaust survivor from Germany. Fifty-nine of his relatives were murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. His mother was the erotic art collector Naomi Wilzig (1934-2015). After multiple salesman positions, Siggi B. Wilzig ultimately became chairman, president and CEO of Wilshire Oil Company of Texas, then listed on the NYSE; and chairman, president and CEO of The Trust Company of New Jersey, then listed on NASDAQ.

Ivan Wilzig graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1977, earning a B.A. degree in European intellectual history. He then earned his law degree at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in 1980. Instead of practicing law, he joined his father in running The Trust Company of New Jersey, a full-service commercial bank founded in 1896.

In 2001, Wilzig met recording industry executive Dave Jurman, senior director of Dance Music at Columbia Records. Jurman introduced Wilzig to two-time Grammy-Award nominee and record producer Ernie Lake, who produced Ivan's remake of John Lennon's "Imagine" with Ivan performing vocals. Tom Silverman, owner of Tommy Boy Records, signed the track and released it on September 4, 2001. "Imagine" sold 10,000 vinyl copies in its first three months and became a Top-40 hit on the Billboard Club Play Chart. It was the first time a Beatles or John Lennon song had been remade as an electronic dance music song.

### SIGGI B. WILZIG, IN BRIEF: 16:30 min.



A Production of **Stories to Remember**. Executive Producer: Ivan Wilzig. Written & Produced: Joshua M. Greene. Directed & Edited: Shiva Kumar. Music: Joe Deihl. Researcher: Alicia Gough.

The videos below were **recorded via Zoom**, are organized by Success Factor, and run between 30 seconds and 8 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

#### DEVELOP A VOICE: 0:52 sec.



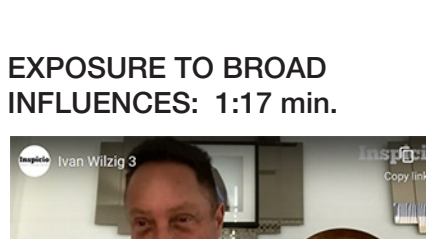
*Where did you grow up and what was your first awareness of music?*

#### CREATIVE FLEXIBILITY: 1:53 min.



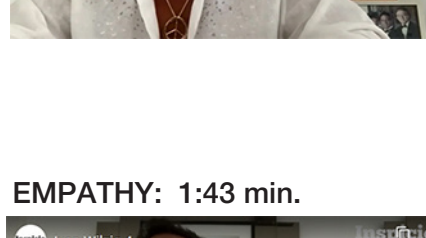
*Given that your father, Siggi Wilzig, was a Survivor, what was your first awareness of the Holocaust?*

#### EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 1:17 min.



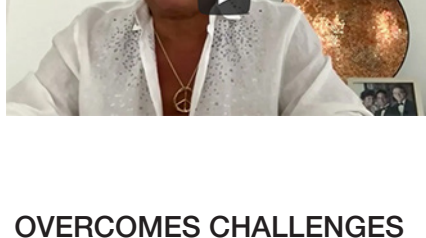
*It sounds like your father had a great sense of humor.*

#### EMPATHY: 1:43 min.



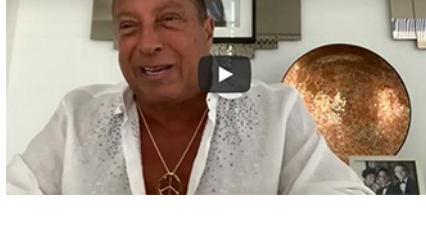
*How much was your father willing to tell you about his experiences in concentration camps?*

#### OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED: 1:55 min.



*Do you feel a burden as the son of a Holocaust survivor?*

#### DEVELOP A VOICE: 0:35 sec.



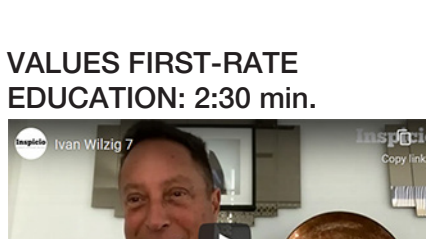
*Did your siblings participate in creating "UNSTOPPABLE," the memoir about your father?*

#### VALUES FIRST-RATE EDUCATION: 2:30 min.



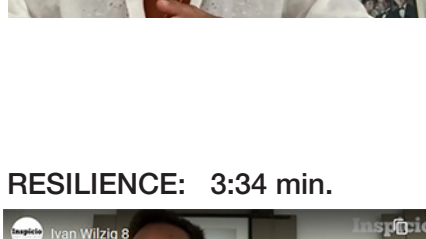
*Where did you go to school, and what did you learn that still informs you today?*

#### RESILIENCE: 3:34 min.



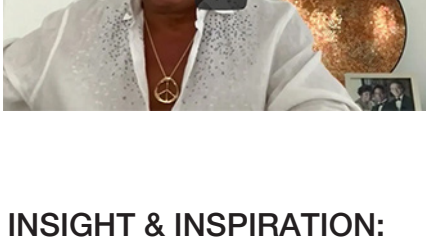
*If your father saw things in "black and white," while you saw "shades of gray," that must have put you at odds quite a bit.*

#### INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 1:19 min.



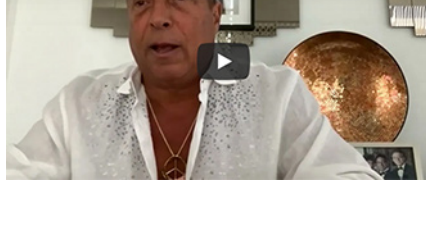
*It sounds like you were very mature in your relationship with your father. You made sacrifices to avoid creating disharmony.*

#### OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED: 8:28 min.



*What happened to your father after he was liberated from the Mauthausen concentration camp? And how did he develop his astounding business acumen?*

#### SELF-CONFIDENCE: 1:09 min.



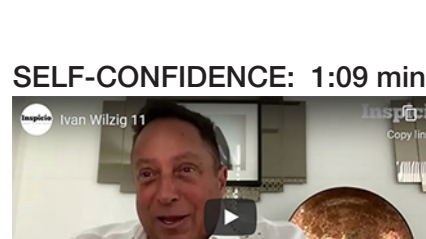
*You said that your father taught himself how to successfully run an oil company and a bank. Did he read business books?*

#### COMMUNITY VALUES: 0:34 sec.



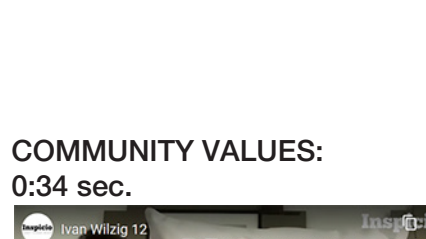
*Talk a little about your Peaceman Foundation.*

#### SELF-CONFIDENCE: 1:27 min.



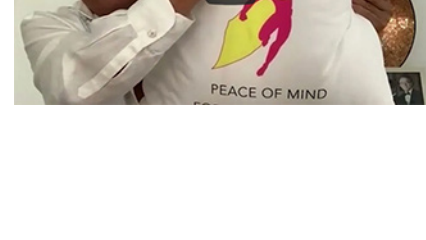
*Tell us the backstory of the photograph of your father on the cover of his biography, "UNSTOPPABLE."*

#### RESILIENCE: 1:43 min.



*How many languages did your father speak, and did he have a heavy accent when he spoke English?*

#### SELF-CONFIDENCE: 0:41 sec.



*In Stephen Birmingham's classic book, "Our Crowd," he documents how the German Jews formed an elite upper class in America. Did your father identify with that?*

#### STRONG DRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT: 0:33 sec.



*Did you wait until your father passed away before you started to organize "UNSTOPPABLE"?*

**RESILIENCE: 0:44 sec.**



*How old was your father when he died?*

**PERSEVERANCE FURTHERS: 3:21 min.**



*It's a blessing that the USC Shoah Foundation recorded your father's Holocaust testimony. Can the public view the testimony?*

**SERENDIPITY: 5:08 min.**



*Why did you wait 12 years after your father's passing to start the book project?*

**CREATIVE FLEXIBILITY: 0:45 sec.**



*Who were the members of your iconic Peaceman back-up band?*

**CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND: 6:21 min.**



*Describe the arc of your singing and performing career.*

**CRITICAL THINKING: 4:07 min.**



*What's the role of a university in combating Holocaust deniers?*

**COMMUNITY VALUES: 3:06 min.**



*Tell us about your Peaceman Foundation.*