

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	[Multidirectional Memory: Remembering for Social Justice] – [MultiMemo]
Participant:	Stowarzyszenie FestivALT (FestivALT)
PIC number:	895375767

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP15
Event name:	FestivALT 2023
Type:	festival
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	Poland, Krakow
Date(s):	23.06-2.07
Website(s) (if any):	https://festivalt.com/en/project/7th-festivalt-doykait/ https://zapomniane.org/en/actions/ https://zapomniane.org/dzialania/ https://centralt.pl/project/multimemo-pamiec-wielokierunkowa/ https://centralt.pl/en/project/multimemo-multidirectional-memory/ https://urbanmemoryfoundation.org/multimemo-pl/ https://urbanmemoryfoundation.org/en/multimemo/
Participants	
Female:	387
Male:	221
Non-binary:	4
From country 1 [Bulgaria]:	1
From country 2 [France]:	1
From country 3 [Germany]:	2
From country 4 [Greece]:	1

From country 5 [Hungary]	9		
From country 6 [Italy]	2		
From country 7 [Ireland]	2		
From country 8 [Netherlands]	1		
From country 9 [Sweden]	2		
From country 10 [Poland]	590		
From country 11 [Austria]	1		
Total number of participants:	612	From total number of countries:	11
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>FestivALT 2023 spanned 10 days and 24 events in total, including performances, discussions, urban walks, workshops and more. The festival was themed around the notion of intersectional memory with a particular focus on “doykait” - a Yiddish word that can be understood as "Hereness" or the “here and now”. It was an idea popularized during the interwar periods by the Bund (Jewish Socialist Party) and it was most commonly connected to the struggle for Jewish rights and cultural autonomy wherever Jews were living. For the Bund, this meant advocating for the strengthening of Central and Eastern European Jewry and firmly claiming their homeland in the Diaspora, rather than being separated out and relegated to Israel. It was a firm statement of an intersectional Jewish-Diasporic identity, which is relevant again in today’s Polish-Jewish reality. We titled our 2023 FestivALT "Doykait" as a lens for considering our program but really as a departure point for expanding the notions of contemporary Polish-Jewish identity and intersectionality. For clarity of reporting FestivALT’s events can be grouped into four categories.</p> <p>EXPANDING INTERSECTIONALITY</p> <p>One of this year’s headliner events, presented at our opening night, was an exhibition by a Gdańsk-based Jewish artist, Jakub Skrzypczak, entitled Lady Loda. “Being transtemporal and transpatial, Lady Loda sometimes drops in a hereness or thereeness, now here and now there. Sometimes she is compatible with our contemporaneity, sometimes she is but a memory. Her hereness, or doykait / טײַקײַט, is always found in the absolute center of infinity, everywhere and nowhere, always in a space that is temporarily settled or bypassed and is always updated with a changeable superposition in the probabilistic space of consecutive plane-states. Although she was born in the last millennium, there are varying opinions about her actual age and sex. (...)” - writes the artist. Lady Loda is in a sense a separate being, existing beyond intersectionality, escaping all social categories and existing comfortably in all of them at the same time.</p> <p>Krakow’s premiere of the dance work, VALESKA VALESKA VALESKA VALESKA, introduced the audience to the tragic history of Valeska Gert’s; German-Jewish dancer and precursor of avant-garde performance art. Gert was discriminated against because of her race, gender, and nationality and was therefore never quite able to achieve her full potential. The performance is a clever way of restoring the artist’s memory without romanticizing her biography. Her story is told by 4 contemporary dancers (both male and female), who are at once trying to be her (and are helping the audience to understand her history) and to deal with their own complicated contemporary identities.</p> <p>Marcela Szablowska, a young trans-Jewish artist from Warsaw presented her Jewish Patchwork addressing contemporary queer-Jewish identity questions in Poland. The vernissage featured an eye opening conversation about challenges a young trans and Jewish person is dealing with in today's Poland, compared to previous generations. The vernissage involved a conversation with Michał Sosna, a queer mid-career artist, and it explored the generational intersectionality of the Polish queer experience.</p> <p>In the space that featured Szablowska’s and Skrzypczak’s exhibitions, two important conversations were held. During the Communities of Difficult Heritage panel, we asked: what happens when concern for the heritage of one community is expressed by representatives of another that may have been historically involved in violence against that same group? Together with experts from various fields, we considered this question, referring to</p>			

examples of concern for Jewish heritage in Poland and for the heritage of indigenous communities in North America.

"A city that believes innovation drives diversity drives innovation, and that multiculturalism is a force that pushes us into the future" we read in the proposal for the updated Kraków 2030 Strategy. This became a departure point for an open community consultation regarding what does openness to diversity and multiculturalism really mean? What do we expect as citizens? What actions should be taken by other cities in order to be perceived as open, building their cultural and business position on multiculturalism? We used a format of a Long Table, an experimental open public forum designed to facilitate dialogue through the gathering together of people with common interests. Together with the Czulent Association, we invited the audience to discuss how to build more inclusive cities, in the framework of the Open Krakow project, from which the recommendations will be included in a broader document presented to Krakow's municipality. Thus we have not only opened up conversations about intersectionality but are also aiming to impact the municipal policies to create a more open city for everyone.

NEW MEMORY PRACTICES

FestivALT and its framing was also a great opportunity to further explore non-invasive memory practices connected to the site of the KL Plaszow concentration camp and its complicated history. The site's history includes the tragedy of Polish and Hungarian Jews, Polish political prisoners, Roma people and often neglected brutal stories concerning women and children. **Daniela Molnar** - an American botanist and artist of Hungarian descent, whose grandparents survived the camp, led a series of walks and pigment-based workshops for the audience, helping to frame new approaches to the genocidal land by exploring the qualities of healing and pigment making plants growing in this area. Together with other facilitators: Greece-based photographer and essayist **Jason Francisco**, and Poland based **Karol Szurdak, Aleksdander Schwarz and Aleksandra Janus** we led a series of walks and workshops exploring the site's genocidal geography and healing properties. This series of engagements was summarized in a Green Commemorations panel allowing us to process the activities and practices we just experienced.

MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

Another important aspect of our work with memory was surfacing themes that are often neglected or avoided, often due to their complicated history and legacy. This group of events centered the questions of who has the right to speak on behalf of a certain group of people as well as issues of cultural appropriation.

We spotlighted several important Jewish heritage sites in Krakow, whose memory is currently being gradually erased. These were:

- Chevra Tehilim - a synagogue with one of the most valuable wall paintings in Poland, currently turned into a bar
- Former Ghetto Wall - where, in the course of its recent renovation, the city removed the plaque informing about the nature of the site
- Former Labor Camp - for Jewish women in Nowa Huta, which remains unmarked and commemorated despite appeals from local residents.

All these sites and their histories were brought to public attention during the **(non)practices of the memory** panel dedicated to exploring destructive methods of working with buildings and urban artifacts historically related to the Jewish community of Krakow.

The Former Ghetto Wall's recent fate was further highlighted during the **Listening to sites of (non)Memory** project, an original idea developed by a local musician Rafał Mazur. His practice of amplifying the sites of (non)memory is also an interesting memory practice that could be adapted to a variety of contexts.

In addition to Krakow we also explored how hidden heritage can be explored in the city of Węgrów. During FestivALT we showed the outcome of a year-long residency by an American artist of Polish descent whose family survived in hiding in Węgrów. **Gabriel Bielawski** created a series of sculptures from locally excavated materials, which he aims to then hide in Węgrów. This work considers the ways that history and memory function as open systems, constantly forming and reforming, absorbing and expelling content.

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

The final group of the project was concerned with awkward and difficult conversations around Holocaust memory. The book launch of **Terribly Close. Other images of the Holocaust** presented the results of an investigation of post-war "folk" art objects. The fundamental question was what does this art know about details of the Holocaust that occurred outside of big cities? What was perceived, seen, remembered? In the face of an increasingly dynamic discussion about the role of the Polish provinces in the processes of genocidal violence, the authors of the project decided to take a close look at works from outside the dominant circuits of today, in order to document the number of works about the war, which works were directly associated with the Holocaust, and how these folk objects uniquely communicate what it's artist's witnessed. .

Poland is Not Yet Lost! by Michael Rubinfeld and Dorota Abbe, is a satirical, futuristic vision of Polish reality, in which Jews are on the brink of taking power, changing the structure of the state and the existing social order. The play addresses the antisemitic rhetoric prevalent in Polish media and public discourse and turns it on its head. It simultaneously shows painfully accurately the mechanisms of an emerging authoritarian state.

Living the Dream with Grandma is a lyrical yet humorous one-man-show about processing third-generation trauma, demonstrating the deep impact that the Holocaust and its related traumas have had on subsequent generations. The topic of post-memory of the Holocaust and third-generational trauma is also explored in Poland is Not Yet Lost and in Gabriel Bielawski's piece.

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Information about the commemoration was published in various mainstream media channels, for example:

<https://polskieradio24.pl/130/5930/artykul/3200088.tu-i-teraz-czyli-festival-w-krakowie>

<https://player.chillizet.pl/Podcasty/Rozmowy-Chillizet/Krakowski-FestivALT-trwa-w-najlepsze/>

https://lovekrakow.pl/aktualnosci/weekend-pelen-atrakcji-wianki-jurajski-piknik-winnny-i-koncerty-w-ogrodzie-botanicznym_51565.html

<https://krakow.wyborcza.pl/krakow/7.44425.29894700.dojkajt-czyli-zydzy-wspolczesnie.html>

<https://radiokrakowkultura.pl/podcasty/festival>

<https://gazetakrakowska.pl/zydzy-w-polsce-tu-i-teraz-przez-pryzmat-sztuki-festival-w-krakowie-od-23-czerwca-do-2-lipca/ar/c13-17614073>

as well as on the organizer's website and social media.

The deliverable was achieved as planned.

HISTORY OF CHANGES

VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).