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Platform “Past/Future/Art”

Platform

All actors • Ukraine

Name of the organization/initiative and year of foundation

[The project “Past/Future/Art”](#) started its work in November 2019 in Odesa.

Mission

To create a space for social dialogue aimed at transforming knowledge about the past from a conflict factor into a tool for building a common future.

Actions and projects in the context of armed conflict

Based on the fact that knowledge about the past is actively used in Ukraine for social conflicts, the project team sees the need for an asymmetric response to the use of history as a weapon. Odesa and Odesa region’s regional features contribute to the conflict of collective memories, making it one of the most conflict-ridden regions in Ukraine. Given the region’s strategic position, it is difficult to overestimate the danger of such a situation. The “Past/Future/Art” project was

created to work with the conflict past in the Odessa region. Given that a breakthrough in these issues was made in recent years in the field of art, the project team has chosen a strategy of public discussions on artistic memory practices.

The project works in three dimensions – public discussions, research, and education. The first dimension involves the organization of art projects and discussions of art practices working with the past – art exhibitions, art practices in public spaces, workshops for museum workers on representing a complicated past in the museums, and public discussions on the project's topics. It aims to involve people with different educational backgrounds and fields of interest including representatives of the professional community as well as people who have not previously thought about the problems of the past. Therefore, the project focuses on public discussions, allowing expanding public dialogue experience, which is a crucial tool for building social peace. When convening dialogues the project cooperates with the Odesa Regional Mediation Group. Furthermore, the project's curator Oksana Dvighopolova has got the experience of taking part in the dialogue practices in Odessa since 2014.

Development of the tools for social reconciliation with the past requires effective tools for monitoring the collective memory 'painful points'. The project develops and manages a research component – a map of conflicts of memory in Odesa and Odesa region. Based on the study of conflict points, experts develop ways to overcome the war of memories and introduce conflict-related topics in dialogue and discussion. The Past / Future / Art team also works with CityFace project (Kharkiv) to conduct a study of multicultural cities in Ukraine.

The perspective for dealing with memory conflicts chosen by the project has become the basis for developing partnerships with other organizations working with a difficult past. In October 2020, "Past/Future/Art" became a partner of the #bruederschaft for unity project initiated by the German Embassy in Ukraine. Cooperation with the Austrian Peace Service is planned for 2021. The development of tools for online events (including dialogue practices) allows the project to go beyond the boundaries of the Odesa region and recruit participants from other regions and countries.