

**Artivism: The Atrocity
Prevention Pavilion**



Press release

More than seventy years after the Holocaust, genocide and mass atrocities remain a constant threat to global peace and security. The violence we see today in, for example, Syria, Sudan, Yemen and Burma, serves as a daily reminder of the devastating consequences of the international community's failure to act. Recognizing the warning signs of mass atrocities is an essential step in preventing them and the key to taking action. With this in mind, the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) presents *Artivism: The Atrocity Prevention Pavilion*. Co-curated by Luca Berta, Francesca Giubilei, and Kerry Whigham, *Artivism* is the first exhibition of its kind, located at the intersection of art, human rights, and the prevention of genocide.

Artivism is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that illustrates how the arts are used as a mechanism for preventing and responding to mass violence. The *Artivism* pavilion introduces visitors to the personal, emotional, and historical realities of mass atrocities, inviting attendees to learn about the essential role played by the arts as a grassroots tool for social transformation and a deterrent to systematic violence. It showcases the works of six artists and activist collectives from across the globe: Rebin Chalak Ismael from Iraq, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Elisabeth Ida Mulyani from Indonesia, the South African Intuthuko Embroidery Project, the Argentinian Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC), and Aida Šehović from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Beyond demonstrating the fundamental role that the arts play in preventing large-scale violence, *Artivism* informs visitors about the power and the responsibility that individuals and their communities have to prevent mass atrocities and protect human rights. The exhibition educates, empowers, and transforms attendees into genuine agents for change by highlighting their capacity to contribute to the prevention of mass atrocities. In the pavilion's final room, AIPR and other human rights organizations from around the world share their work with visitors and offer a series of concrete steps that each individual can take at both the local and global levels to build a world that prevents genocide.

Artivism: The Atrocity Prevention Pavilion opens to the public on May 9, 2019 in Venice, Italy, and continues through November 24, 2019. The press are invited to view the exhibition and meet the curators and artists on May 9, 2019, from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm. Refreshments will be served. For further information, contact Rob Scharf at rob.scharf@auschwitzinstitute.org.

Participating artists are:

In 2014, the terrorist group ISIS began perpetrating a genocide against the Yazidis, a small ethnic-religious group in Northern Iraq. Yazidis were forced to convert to Islam or be killed, with many female members of the community captured and forced to marry members of the terrorist group. In response to this, **Rebin Chalak** has created a series of masks of Yazidi women survivors. These masks, which will be on display, are used by Chalak Ismael to tell their stories and raise awareness around the world of the violence faced by the Yazidi community.

Beginning in 2008, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission collected evidence and testimony from survivors of the national Indian Residential School system, which took indigenous children from their families for over 100 years and forced them to renounce their native cultures, languages, clothing, and relationships. *Artivism* features art created by indigenous artists, which have been loaned to the exhibition by **the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation** in Winnipeg, Canada.

In 1965 in Indonesia, as many as 1.5 million people were killed because of their purported ties to communism. Born in Indonesia and based in Belgium, **Elisabeth Ida Mulyani's** work responds to the enduring realities of this violence.

Organized by:

the Auschwitz Institute for Peace
and Reconciliation

Curated by:

Luca Berta, Francesca Giubilei,
Kerry Whigham

May, 2019 – November 24, 2019

**Palazzo Dandolo,
San Polo 2879
Venice, Italy**



Artivism will feature two of her works: *Oleh-oleh* (“Souvenir”), a sculptural and sound installation that commemorates the activists kidnapped in the 1990s for speaking out against the dictatorial regime, and *Supervivere*, a photography series that documents the lives of Indonesian exiles who were made stateless when their citizenships were revoked by the Indonesian government in 1965.

Established in 2002, the **Intuthuko Embroidery Project** is a community empowerment initiative established by a group of South African women located in the township of Daveyton, in the province of Gauteng. These women use embroidery as a means of building community, raising money, and telling their own stories of life during and after Apartheid. *Artivism* features embroidery created by the collective.

As many as 30,000 Argentines were “disappeared” due to their leftist political leanings during the military dictatorship of 1976-1983. Shortly after democracy returned in 1983, a number of laws and public policies granted impunity to the military officers in charge. In response to this, a group of artists known as the **Grupo de Arte Callejero** (“Street Art Group” or GAC) began to create street signs throughout the city of Buenos Aires to mark the homes of the unpunished perpetrators and to raise the visibility of the 30,000 citizens who had been kidnapped, tortured, and killed. *Artivism* features several of these street signs, alongside other media related to their activist practices.

Aida Šehović and her nomadic monument *ŠTO TE NEMA* (“Why are you not here?”) commemorates 8,372 Bosnian Muslims who were killed during the Srebrenica Genocide in July 1995. To accomplish this, she has collected porcelain cups traditionally used for coffee in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the goal of having one cup for each victim. Each year on the anniversary of the genocide, Šehović organizes the monument in the public square of a new city around the world, where passersby are invited to fill the cups with coffee and leave them in the square, undrunk, in memory of the victims. *ŠTO TE NEMA* will be on display at *Artivism*. The 14th annual iteration of the monument will take place at San Giacomo di Rialto in Venice on July 11, 2019.

The **Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation** is the largest non-governmental organization in the world for the training of public officials in genocide and mass atrocity prevention. Since 2007, the Auschwitz Institute has educated and provided ongoing support to over 4,000 officials from more than 80 countries. AIPR provides governments with the necessary tools to analyze risks for genocide and other mass atrocities and to design and implement effective policies that mitigate these risks and prevent from escalating. To accomplish this, the Auschwitz Institute maintains regional offices in New York City, USA; Oświęcim, Poland; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Kampala, Uganda and Bucharest, Romania.

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Title:

Artivism: The Atrocity
Prevention Pavilion

Location:

Palazzo Dandolo,
San Polo 2879, Venice
San Tomà Vaporetto Stop

Duration:

May 9, 2019 – November 24, 2019

Opening Hours:

10:00 – 18:00, closed Monday
and Tuesday

Cost of Entry:

Free

Curators:

Kerry Whigham, Ph.D.,
Francesca Giubilei,
and Luca Berta, Ph.D.

Organizer:

The Auschwitz Institute for Peace
and Reconciliation
(www.auschwitzinstitute.org)

Venice Logistical Partner:

iNEVENTS

Curatorial Support Services:

Venice Art Factory

Graphic design:

AUT | Design Collective
(www.autdesigncollective.net)

Artists:

Rebin Chalak
(Iraq)
Grupo de Arte Callejero
(Argentina)
Intuthuko Embroidery Project
(South Africa)
Elisabeth Ida Mulyani
(Indonesia)
Aida Šehović
(Bosnia and Herzegovina)
National Centre for Truth
and Reconciliation
(Canada)

NGO Partners:

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Technical Partners:

Tecnoluci
We Exhibit

Film installation:

RAVA Films
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Ava Wiland

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Cristiano Dabalà

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For More Information:

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