



Bosnia-Herzegovina's Cultural Institutions in Crisis

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PARTICIPATE: DAY OF MUSEUM SOLIDARITY - MARCH 4

February 1, 2013

TO REPRESENTATIVES OF MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES WORLDWIDE:

I ask you to participate in an important international cultural awareness campaign. This campaign is a reaction to the acute crisis affecting major cultural institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On October 4, 2012, after 124 years of existence, the country's National Museum (Zemaljski Muzej) closed down due to the government's failure to secure legal status and adequate funding. Your solidarity is needed!

FOR INSTITUTIONS

STEP 1: PROVIDE ADDRESS TO PARTICIPATE

Confirm your participation and provide the address to which I can send you the yellow CULTURESHUTDOWN barricade tape. Your contact will be treated confidentially and will only be used for the purpose of correspondence in this campaign.



Planks nailed to the main entrance of the National Museum in Sarajevo symbolically marked the closure of one of the most important cultural and historic institutions of BH,

Oct. 4, 2012. Foto: RSE / Midhat Poturović

Six other state-level institutions, including the National Art Gallery (Umjetnička Galerija BH) and the National and University Library (Nacionalna i Univerzitetska Biblioteka BH) are also about to become permanently inaccessible. The safety of precious artifacts and heritage are at stake.

Why am I doing this? I am one of the founding members of the platform **CULTURESHUTDOWN**, an international initiative connecting scholars, artists and cultural producers responding to this crisis. Cultural institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina are keepers of the unique historical and cultural treasures that provide evidence of coexistence in the region. Preserving them is crucial for securing a sustainable peace. Artifacts kept in these institutions are an important component of the world's cultural heritage. Preserving them is a matter of global relevance.

I call on you and other museums across the globe to demonstrate your solidarity with threatened

Email*

Name*

First Name

Last Name

Institution Name*

Institution website

For questions or concerns, please email to info@cultureshutdown.net

Submit Form

FOR INSTITUTIONS

PUBLIC CALL: DAY OF MUSEUM
SOLIDARITY

UPLOAD IMAGES FORM+INSTRUCTIONS

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Bosnian cultural institutions by symbolically “erasing” one precious artwork or artifact, rendering it inaccessible for the **Day of Museum Solidarity**. How? On March 1, I ask you to place the yellow barricade tape in front of the chosen object (ranging from a dinosaurs skeleton to a painting, depending on your collection and your choice). I will provide this custom-designed non-adhesive tape featuring the CULTURESHUTDOWN logo. Take a picture of the “crossed out” object and send it to me. The “crossed out” artifact should be publicly visible in your institution from March 1 – 3. The collected pictures of Museum Solidarity across the world will be posted on the CULTURESHUTDOWN website **on Monday March 4**, the scheduled **Day of Museum Solidarity**. As many museums are closed on Mondays, our global campaign will take the form of a virtual collective exhibition on CULTURESHUTDOWN website. We would appreciate it if you were to post images of this campaign or host this virtual group exhibition on your institutions’ website, should that be possible.

February 1, the date of this public call, marks the 125th Anniversary of Zemaljski Muzej’s existence. **March 4**, the date of this Day of Museum Solidarity, marks the beginning of the sixth month since the Zemaljski Muzej has been closed to public. We plan to call attention to this sixth month with a virtual exhibition showing documentation of institutions’ solidarity acts across the globe.

This crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina requires political, economic, and institutional solutions. By participating in the Day of Museum Solidarity, you will make an important and much needed contribution to resolving this crisis.

TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE DIRECTIONS:

STEP 1:

February 1-22: Provide your mailing address to receive the tape >>> [Fill out the form on this page](#). Spread the word though your network and media.

STEP 2:

On March 1: Use the CULTURESHUTDOWN barricade tape that you receive to “cross out” your chosen

SOLIDARITY GALLERY

TESTIMONIALS

PRESS MATERIAL >> DOWNLOAD

MAPPING THE STATUS QUO

SUMMARY OF INSTITUTIONS’ POSITIONS

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

CATEGORIES

- NEWS / ARTICLES / MASSMEDIA
- STUDIES / REPORTS / DOCUMENTS
- PERSONAL STATEMENTS
- PROTEST
- VISIONS / PROJECTS
- RESOURCES / OPPORTUNITIES

artifact. Edit and print the campaign poster. Display the poster next to the “crossed out” artifact to inform visitors. The “crossed out” artifact should be publicly visible in your institution during the period of March 1 – 3.

STEP 3:

On March 1: Take a picture of the “crossed out” artifact and send it to me >>> Upload the image through this online form. Pictures of “barricaded” artifacts from museums across the world will be displayed on the CULTURESHUTDOWN website on March 4.

In solidarity,

Dr. Azra Aksamija for CULTURESHUTDOWN

Assistant Professor, Program in Art, Culture and Technology
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

E-Mail: info@cultureshutdown.net



Credits for the “Day of Museum Solidarity” campaign:

Initiated, conceived and managed by: Azra Akšamija

Organization and production by: Members of the platform CULTURESHUTDOWN: Azra Akšamija, Selma Gičević, Maximilian Hartmuth, Asja Mandić, Jasmin Mujanović, Dietmar Offenhuber, Susan Pearce, Andras Riedlmayer, James Thomas Snyder, Jeff Spurr, Sonja Srdanović, and Mladen Vuković.

Financed by: Azra Akšamija (private), with the Director’s Grant from the Council for the Arts at MIT

Participants: 225 cultural institutions from 40 countries across the globe.

Support by: CIMAM, ICOM, ICOM Hrvatska, Društvo Povijesničara Umjetnosti Hrvatske, e-flux.

CULTURESHUTDOWN logo designed by: Jegan Vincent de Paul.

We thank all individuals and institutions supporting this campaign, especially to Ljerka Dublić, Toshiro Ihara, Eva Meran, Floor van de Velde, and Zdenka Badovinac. Many thanks to all of you who mobilized your personal contacts in this call and helped spread the word.



MIT program in art,
culture and technology

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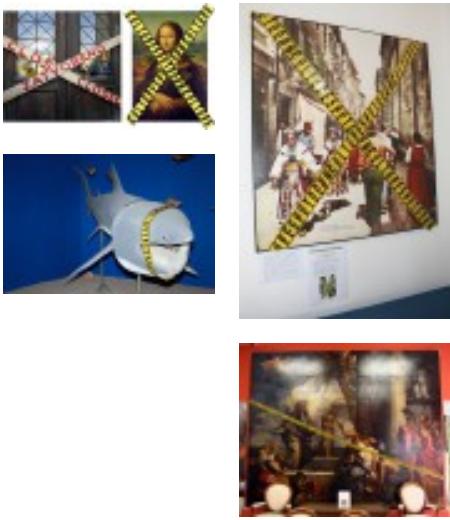
 

february 28,
2013

act faculty member azra akšamija
organizes global day of solidarity

2013

september 2013



august 2013

july 2013

june 2013

may 2013

april 2013

march 2013

february 2013

january 2013

CULTUREShUTDOWN

Left: Planks nailed to the main entrance of the National Museum in Sarajevo symbolically marked the closure of one of the most important cultural and historic institutions of BH, Oct. 4, 2012.

Foto: RSE / Midhat Poturović;

Right: Azra Aksamija, Mona Lisa Erased, 2013. Photomontage.

Logo design: Jegan Vincent de Paul.

ACT Professor [Azra Akšamija](#) recently initiated the CULTURESHUTDOWN campaign, calling on museums and galleries across the globe to demonstrate solidarity with threatened Bosnian cultural institutions through a collective action: symbolically “crossing out” one piece in their collection with a special yellow ‘CULTURESHUTDOWN’ barricade tape. Resonating with a wider discussion about the relevance and crisis of major cultural institutions across the world, in just one month CULTURESHUTDOWN has managed to attract more than 150 high-profile museums, galleries, and leading universities in the world [[see the preliminary list of participants here](#)]. This campaign is supported by CIMAM, the largest global organization for Museums and Collections of Modern Art, as well as ICOM-Europe, the International Council of Museums. The movement has been featured in major international media channels such as the [Guardian](#) and [Art Newspaper](#).

On March 4th, over 160 museums, galleries and libraries in more than 20 countries around the world will symbolically “close” exhibited objects to raise awareness of the crisis facing the shuttered National Museum of Bosnia-Herzegovina and six other Bosnian cultural institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina of national stature that have been indefinitely closed or are

2012

december 2012

october 2012

september 2012

june 2012

may 2012

april 2012

march 2012

february 2012

january 2012

under threat as a result of a political fight in the country's federal parliament.

Sarajevo's National Museum, National and University Library, National Art Gallery, the Historical Museum, the Museum of Literature and Theater Arts, the National Film Archive and the National Library for the Blind have all closed or are on the verge of closure during the past year because factions in Bosnia's parliament cannot agree to fund them as national institutions.

"This is a real crisis because collections, art pieces, and artifacts need care and attention of institutions with electricity, climate and pest control, and paid, professional curators to protect them," said [Azra Akšamija](#), who founded CULTURESHUTDOWN, the international group of academics and cultural activists coordinating the day of solidarity. "Most of these institutions and their collections survived the war with the heroic help of their curators. Their collections are irreplaceable. To face ruin due to pure political neglect is hard to accept, which is why we're organizing this protest."

Several American cultural institutions are participating in the protest, including the Museum of Modern Art in Chicago; the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA, the Frost Art Museum in Coral Springs, FL; the Rose Art Museum of Brandeis University in Waltham, MA; the Zimmerli Art Museum in New Brunswick, NJ; the Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg, FL; the Museum of Arts and Origins in New York, NY; as well as galleries such as the Pitzer College Art Galleries in Claremont, CA; the SPECTRE Arts in Durham, NC; and the White Box in New York, NY.

Additionally, faculty from different academic institutions in the United States are also supporting this action, such as from the The New School Art Collection in New York, NY; the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, MA; National Louis University in Skokie, IL; Parsons The New School for Design, Fine Arts Program in New York, NY; the University of Illinois-Chicago; Cornell University in Ithaca, NY; and the Richard Stockton College, Galloway, NJ. A complete list of the participating institutions can be found at <http://www.cultureshutdown.net/participating-institutions/>.

Just as the National Museum in Sarajevo barricaded its doors when it was forced to close, these institutions will "tape off" parts of their exhibits to raise awareness of the plight of Bosnia's institutions.

2011

november 2011

october 2011

september 2011

may 2011

march 2011

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“We believe that this show of unity can demonstrate to the parliament that a solution can be found,” Aksamija said. “Money isn’t the issue and this is not just Bosnia’s problem. The world’s heritage is at stake.”

More information: <http://www.cultureshutdown.net/>

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