

## War on Culture – Culture at War

**Madrid, 24 April 2023**

Auditorium Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum, Paseo del Prado, 8, 28014 Madrid

Organised by: CIDOB and FES Madrid in collaboration with Museums for Ukraine and National Museum Thyssen-Bornemisza

After over a year after the war started, Ukrainians are getting used to a sort of new normal. Reclaiming a “normal life” has become a form of civil resistance to the aggressor. This also applies to artists and the cultural world. The National Philharmonic orchestra keeps playing on despite power cuts. Painters, writers, dancers, filmmakers or playwrights work tirelessly, helping with their art to support the collective resistance and to depict the war crimes against their fellow citizens in various forms. No one has interrupted his/her creative work except to go to the front to fight. All the more so as the war is clearly aimed at destroying Ukrainian culture in all its forms.

And indeed, cultural infrastructure has been under systematic attack by Russia. As a result of ongoing hostilities and the lack of information from territories under occupation, it's hard to estimate the total number of damaged cultural sites. UNESCO has verified 236 such sites as of 23 January 2023. Museums, theatres, monuments are targeted, damaged and destroyed like the Ivankiv Historical and Local History Museum, the Kuindzhi Art Museum, the Mariupol Drama Theater, and many others. There is also looting of cultural sites, and re-appropriation, as it happened to museums in Mariupol, Melitopol, and Kherson, where the majority of collections were stolen. Ukrainians -West and East- know what they are fighting for, and this provides the country with an asset the Kremlin cannot even dream of. And the Ukrainian culture is a fundamental part of this asset, the shining expression of the popular resistance.

17.00 – 17.30 **Opening remarks**

**Luise Rürup**, Director, FES Spain and Portugal

**Pol Morillas**, Director, CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs)

**Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza**, Founder, Museums for Ukraine

17.30 – 19.20 **Conversation with**

**Konstantin Akinsha**, Art Historian; Curator of *In the Eye of the Storm: Modernism in Ukraine, 1900–1930s*

**Zoya Laktionova**, Filmmaker, Mariupol

**Anna Stavychenko**, Mission Head of the Philharmonie de Paris project to support Ukrainian musicians

*Chair:* **André Wilkens**, Director, European Cultural Foundation, Amsterdam

19.20 – 19.30 **Closing remarks**

**Felix Hett**, Director, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Ukraine and Moldova

*In collaboration with:*