

Institute of National Remembrance

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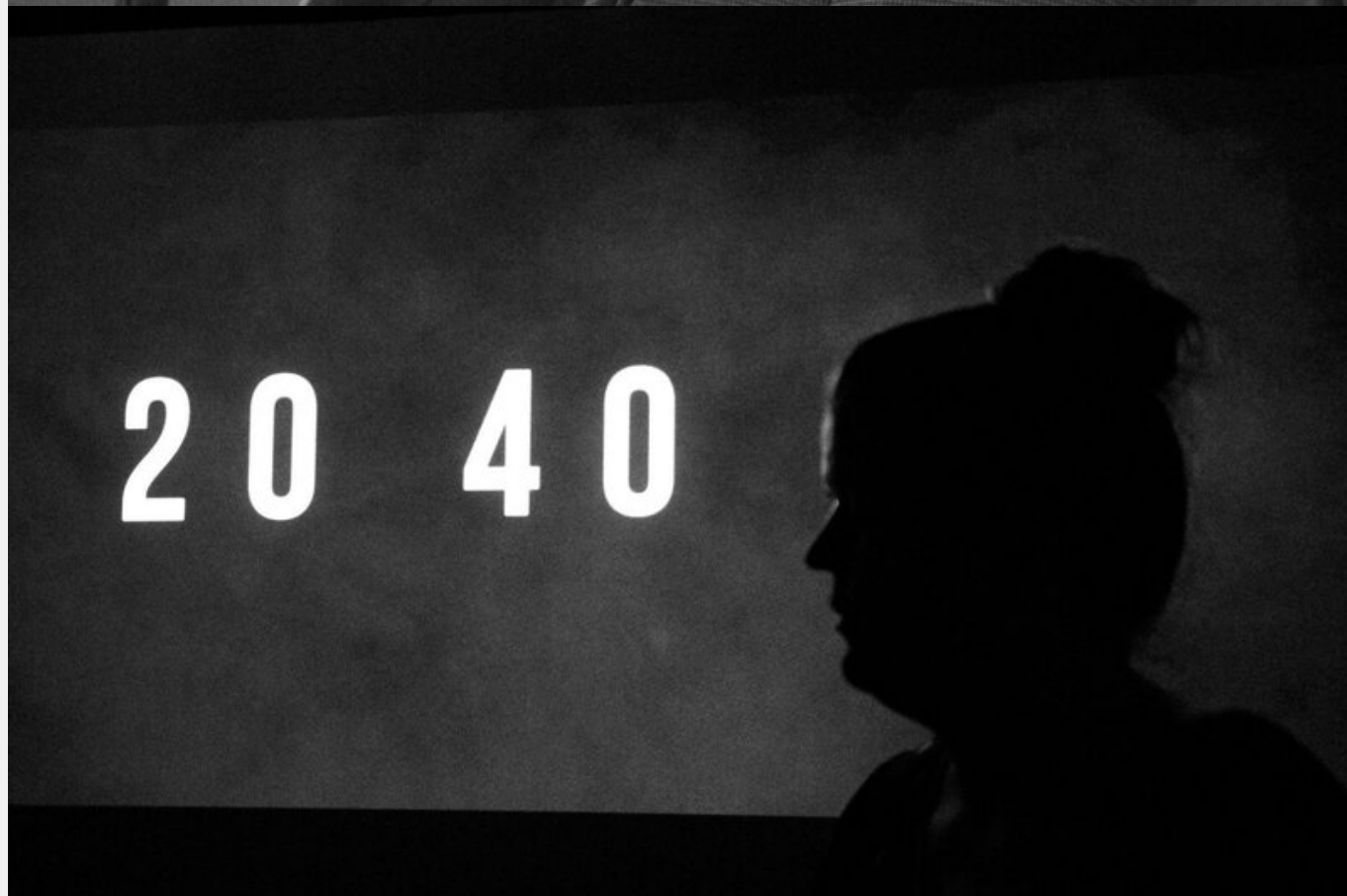
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PRESS RELEASE: A MULTIMEDIA EXHIBITION “20 – 40 – 20” from the Battle of Warsaw to Katyń

On 17 September at the IPN’s Janusz Kurtyka Educational center a press briefing devoted to “20-40-20” exhibition alongside with the screening of a feature film was held.









On the same day at 2 p.m., the IPN's President, Jarosław Szarek,

officially opened the above mentioned exhibition commemorating the heroic victims of the Katyn Massacre and the entire Soviet invasion of September 1939.

The exhibition was prepared by the IPN's National Education Office on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Polish victory over the Bolsheviks and the 80th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre. It can be viewed from 17 September to 14 November 2020 at the IPN's Janusz Kurtyka Educational Center at 21/25 Marszałkowska Street in Warsaw.

For Poles, 1920 is a symbol of great triumph, while 1940 will always be associated with the Katyn death pits, one of the cruelest genocides in the history of mankind. These two dates have a lot in common, but they are primarily connected by the fate of Poles who fought on the fronts of the Polish-Bolshevik war, and 20 years later became victims of a ruthless decision made by the highest authorities of the USSR.

"We still remember the year 1920, the victory over the Bolsheviks, we remember that triumph. And yet, that victory lasted less than two decades. Two of our neighbors agreed to deprive Poland of independence on 1 September (German aggression) and 17 September (Soviet aggression)," recalled Jarosław Szarek, Ph.D., President of the Institute of National Remembrance, in his speech.

"We can see the extraordinary drama of our fate when we look at the consequences of what began on 17 September 1939, when hundreds of thousands of our compatriots were deported deep into the Soviet Union, and at everything that is symbolized by the Katyn massacre.

Photographs from that time, uniforms of Polish Army officers, piles of Virtuti Militari or Independence Crosses, which were also found in the Katyn death pits, look impressive. It was there that our independence was also to be buried. However, this did not happen. It is impossible to murder Poland dreaming of freedom,” emphasized the President of the Institute of National Remembrance. He also recalled the role of the "Solidarity" Independent Self-Governing Trade Union in restoring the memory of the Katyn massacre. - Today we have an obligation to pass this knowledge and memory to the young generation. We want to teach history in an attractive way that appeals to imagination and emotions,” said Jarosław Szarek.

The briefing was also attended by Adam Hlebowicz, Director of the National Education Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, who emphasized that the exhibition had been created with young audiences, using modern technologies in mind.

“We had an idea to recreate the Katyn forest in the center of Warsaw, recall the characters who first fought against the Bolsheviks in 1920, and then were murdered in Katyn pits. The exhibition depicts the fate of five extraordinary heroes: Jan and Stanisław Ozimek, father and son, Lieutenant Julian Gruner, Lt. Wilhelm Kasprzykiewicz and Fr. Józef Skorel. At the exhibition, you can read their biographies and see archival photos showing the world in which they lived and the people they loved the most,” he said.

A moving 30-minute feature film portraying the biographies of these extraordinary heroes constitutes the highlight of the exhibition.

More information on the Katyn Massacre:

In English:

<https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/publikacje/ksiazki/95535,The-Katyn-Massacre-PDF-do-pobrania.html?search=405397>

In Russian:

<https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/publikacje/publikacje-edukacyjne-i/101160,Katynskie-priestuplenije.html?search=264053>

In Polish:

<https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/publikacje/ksiazki/95100,Zbrodnia-katynska-PDF-do-pobrania.html?search=405397>



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