

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Existence is Resistance: A Documentary on Cultural Resilience in Wartime Ukraine

Exploring the Role of Art, Activism, and Identity Amidst Conflict

Prague, September 28th 2024 – *Existence is Resistance* is an experimental documentary that delves into the role of culture as a form of resistance in Ukraine during the ongoing full-scale Russian invasion. Directed by Tyko Say and Sandra Pasławska, the film highlights how culture, activism, and collective expression have become vital in preserving the momentum to resist amidst the destruction of war.

Filmed entirely in the historic city of Lviv, the documentary captures the stories of **artists, curators, musicians, and activists** who are using culture as a tool for resistance. From performance festivals to underground punk shows, *Existence is Resistance* explores the many ways that existence and resistance intertwine in times of crisis.

Synopsis:

Through the lens of a 1996 Panasonic M-40 VHS camera, *Existence is Resistance* immerses viewers in the cultural heartbeat of a country fighting not only for its territorial integrity but also for its cultural survival. Lviv, a city far from the war's frontlines, has become a refuge for internally displaced Ukrainians and a hub for creative resistance.

As the war rages on, Lviv continues to experience blackouts, air raids, and constant disruption, yet it remains a cultural stronghold. The film features intimate interviews with individuals who are not only surviving but actively fighting through their art, their music, and their community initiatives. Among those featured are:

- **Andrii Linik**, a curator at *House of Sound*, who discusses the lasting effects of Russian occupation of Ukraine on culture.
- **Khrystyna Kovalyshyn**, a punk musician who has her own band but is also a substitute drummer when her boyfriend is on the frontlines.
- **Yaryna Shumska**, an artist and curator of the *Lviv Naked Forms Festival*, which hosted and showcased international acts for the festival "Anxiety in the Body."
- **Katya Hrytseva**, a student activist displaced from Mariupol who now creates zines and collages as acts of defiance.
- **Oxana Demych** and other young people who grew up reading about war and are now confronted with their own dilemmas of war in the 21st century.

Director's Statement:

*"This documentary is about more than war; it's about the people who persist and resist within it," says Tyko Say, co-director of *Existence is Resistance*. "The people we spoke to are not concerned about creating art, they're concerned about not creating." By capturing these stories through the same camera which could have documented the post-soviet signing of Ukraine's constitution in 1996, we show how the past and present can intertwine, and how the very fact of existence is an act of resistance."*

Cultural Frontline:

Lviv has seen a large influx of displaced people and serves as a vital center for cultural preservation and expression. The film emphasizes that the war isn't just being fought with weapons—it's also a fight to keep Ukraine's cultural heartbeat alive. Art, music, and community efforts have become essential forms of resistance, helping to sustain the nation's morale.

Key Themes:

- The intersection of **culture and conflict**: how the process of creating can be used as both a defensive and therapeutic tool.
 - **The role of Lviv** as a cultural stronghold and refuge for displaced Ukrainians.
 - **Personal stories of resilience** from a range of voices, including artists, musicians, and activists who are fighting for Ukraine's future through their creativity.
 - The use of **VHS technology** to explore the cyclical nature of history and the timelessness of resistance.
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Film Information:

- **Title:** *Existence is Resistance*
 - **Format:** PAL VHS
 - **Duration:** 38:32
 - **Directors:** Tyko Say & Sandra Pasławska
 - **Producers:** Louis Armand & David Vichnar
 - **Country:** Ukraine
 - **Language:** English
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Premiere Details:

The film is set to have its Czech premiere at the **Prague Microfestival** on **October 26th, 2024**, which will also be accompanied by a documentary book launch that features complete interview transcripts, essays, reflections, and photos from the project published through The International Arts Center Prague.

Film Contact Information:

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About the Directors:

Tyko Say and Sandra Paławska are directors of the Prague-based non-profit collective **OBJECT:PARADISE**. The mission of their work, along with the collective, is to promote discussions around the function of art in the public space. Their films include the OBJECT:PRAHA series, documenting the Prague underground art scene: the most recent edition, OBJECT:PRAHA IV (2023), documents an international happening between Prague & Krakow exploring performative poetics in collaborations with more than 50 artists based in Hungary, Slovakia, Poland & the Czech Republic.

Press Assets:

High-resolution images, a trailer, and further materials are available upon request.

For Further Inquiries:

To schedule interviews, request an exclusive viewing, or obtain additional information about *Existence is Resistance*, please contact Tyko Say at info@objectparadise.com.

End of Release