EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Rescue Memory - Activism, Arts and Public Remembrance — ReActMem
Participant:	Stowarzyszenie FestivALT (FestivALT)
PIC number:	895375767

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	WP 10		
Event name:	Interactive performance "Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła" ("Poland is Not Yet Lost")		
Type:	theatre performance		
In situ/online:	*[*in-situ*]*		
Location:	Poland, Krakow		
Date(s):	14.09.2024		
Website(s) (if any):	difficultheritage.eu		
Participants			
Female:	41		
Male:	29		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Poland}]	70		
Total number of participants:	70	From total number of countries:	1

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

"Jeszcze Polska... (Poland is not Yet Lost)" is an interactive, satirical, and futuristic theatrical performance, presented in partnership with the Barakah Theatre, that imagines a world where the State of Israel has been destroyed, leading to the return of three million Jews to Poland. The plot explores a Poland governed by Jewish leaders, including the country's president, portrayed by Maciej Stuhr (played by the real-life actor himself). Stuhr's decision to convert to Judaism inspires four million non-Jewish Poles to follow in his footsteps. In this alternate reality, the audience is invited to witness a crucial moment in Polish-Jewish history: a referendum that will decide whether to establish a new Jewish state in Poland.

Interactive Aspect:
The heart of the performance lies in its interactive nature, which turns the audience into participants rather than passive spectators. Structured as a political rally, the show encourages attendees to engage with the

questions posed by the characters and challenges them to reflect on broader themes of nationalism, identity, and community. As the performance progresses, the audience is directly involved in the critical decision of whether to vote for an inclusive and egalitarian future for Poland—or for an alternative reality that echoes darker strains of historical and modern nationalist rhetoric.

This aspect of participation, where the viewers become quasi-voters and citizens within the narrative, gives "Jeszcze Polska..." a unique ability to provoke reflection. The show blurs the line between fiction and reality, pushing the audience to confront their own beliefs and biases.

Key Themes and Satire:
The performance delves into the dangers of nationalism, juxtaposing a vision of an inclusive Jewish-led Poland against the fears and prejudices embedded in traditional nationalist ideologies. It also satirizes the paranoia and xenophobia still present in Polish society regarding Jewish heritage and restitution issues. By incorporating humor and absurdity, the show disarms some of the tensions around these sensitive topics, allowing for a more open exploration of Polish-Jewish relations.

In the words of one reviewer:
"It is a challenging yet liberating experience to be part of this imagined future. The performance artfully plays with stereotypes, yet does not trivialize the complex history shared between Jews and Poles."

Performance and Artistic Vision:
"Jeszcze Polska..." is co-written, directed, and performed by two Jewish artists: Dorota Abbe, a Polish native, and Michael Rubenfeld, a Canadian with Polish-Jewish roots. Both actors play versions of themselves, further enhancing the authenticity and introspective nature of the performance. Through satire and provocation, the show encourages the audience to grapple with the long-standing tensions and misunderstandings that continue to shape Polish-Jewish relations today.

The performances of both Abbe and Rubenfeld are exceptional, as they manage to weave humor, tension, and provocation seamlessly into a cohesive and thought-provoking narrative. As one audience member noted in a review:
"The performances by Abbe and Rubenfeld are raw and real, drawing us in with their wit, only to confront us with uncomfortable truths about nationalism and identity."

Reception:
The performance has received widespread acclaim for its boldness and originality. Reviewers have highlighted the interactive format as a standout element, praising the way it fosters active engagement and reflection. One critic described the show as:
"An ambitious satire that bravely tackles sensitive topics like nationalism and antisemitism through humor and direct engagement with the audience. It is not just a performance, but a conversation about the future we want to create."

Another review emphasized the provocative and transformative experience of the performance:
"Jeszcze Polska is not only a performance—it is a mirror held up to Polish society, daring us to imagine what could be if we embraced diversity instead of fearing it."

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"Jeszcze Polska... (Poland is not Yet Lost)" is a highly interactive and thought-provoking performance that invites audiences to participate in shaping the imagined future of Poland. Through satire, humor, and direct engagement, it challenges deeply held beliefs about identity and community, making it not only a memorable theatrical experience but also a catalyst for broader societal reflection.

The performance will continue to be presented in partnership with the Barakah Theatre a few times a year for a general audience; it has also been invited to be presented in May at the University of Irvine, California.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2024	Initial version (new MFF).