

Observatory Case update

Jam Factory Art Center, Lviv, Ukraine

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Jam Factory Art Center

Jam Factory Art Center is a revitalization project of the former industrial neo-gothic building and its adjunct buildings in the Pidzamche district in the UNESCO heritage city of Lviv, Ukraine. The premises were initially the alcohol factory 'Kronik and Son' from 1872, and later during the Soviet period, the complex was turned into a factory producing jam and canned goods. The 'Jam Factory' was neglected for a decade before grassroots artist initiative came to revitalize it. In 2015, Herald Binder Cultural Enterprise (HBCE) bought the site and started its conversion into a multidisciplinary art centre that combines various forms of arts, educational activities, exhibitions, and research and operates locally, nationally, and internationally. The construction and restoration work began in 2019. At the moment, the institution is located in a temporary building and has launched its educational and grant programs. It primarily focuses on the presentation, research, and development of contemporary art in Ukraine and East-Central Europe, as well as in international cooperation.

During the pandemic, the site construction got affected in many ways. Jam Factory struggled to obtain the primary construction permits because the state office was closed, and everything had to be managed online, creating difficulty in communication. Another challenge was the availability of certain materials exported to Ukraine, their price, and their delivery time, which resulted in postponing the Centre's opening from 2021 to 2022. The pandemic not only affected the Jam Factory restoration but also its team and programming were heavily disturbed. Most of the scheduled events were cancelled, and others were rescheduled for one or two years later. The work with curators and artists turned to a complicated process, because they could not visit the site due to Covid restrictions and could not imagine the space. They were forced to work with ideas and virtual models.

Finally, the construction of the Jam Factory Art Centre site was successfully completed in winter 2021/2022 and the grand-opening was scheduled for August 2022. However, also this plan has been disintegrated because of the Russia-Ukraine war, leaving the Jam Factory striving to continue pursuing its goals. At the moment, the Jam factory is trying to fulfil urgent needs in Ukraine. During these difficult times, the Centre has converted its halls and basement into humanitarian aid distribution hubs and provides sheltering for refugees and civilians from the neighbourhood. As a result of the ongoing war against Ukraine, art professionals are among the most affected groups as all the financial resources have been redirected to support the armed forces in resisting Russian aggression. Therefore, Jam Factory Art

Centre launched the **Artists in War** program to financially support and encourage the artists to reflect on the wartime through their artworks.