

# CLOSING CEREMONY AND RESULTS

The project's final phase starts with the preparation of the final presentation in the European Center Memory, Education, Culture.



Together as a group the participants show their results and share their experiences with the public. Supporters, friends and city officials come together in the end of this two weeks to commemorate the thousands of victims of the Stalag VIII A.

During this two weeks young people from different countries and cultural background got to know and respect each other. The participants have learned more about

a not very common historical topic and realized that their own lives and the lives of their families are connected to the past. Coming together, trying to understand the lives of those who have been held captive in this camp can teach the participants to respect each other cultures and languages and enables them to not only work together on this project but to work together in building a strong European bond which they are part of.



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NEXT WORCATION  
13.07.-27.07.2019

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#YOUR SUMMER IN GÖRLITZ-IGORZELEC  
WORCATION 2018



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# WORCATION-what is that?

**Worcation – that means creative international work in a historical place – Stalag VIII A. There is so much to do - digging, sweeping, cleaning, welding and bending and at the same time contemplating! But there is also a lot of fun - chilling out, having barbecue, swimming and exploring the magnificent region.**

All this and a lot more is what Worcation has to offer. Every year the MEETINGPOINT MUSIC MESSIAEN e.V. invites young people from Europe to participate. Participants from Germany, Poland, Italy, Ukraine and for the first time participants from our French twin town Amiens met for the Worcation 2018.

In the beginning of Worcation a group of 23 young people came together in the Twincity of Görlitz-Zgorzelec on the German-Polish border. After two weeks all of them felt that they have changed with the experience, they were closer to people from other countries, spoke foreign languages and talked about history.

The participants, aged between 16 and 24, learned something about tolerance and confidence to one another and the work as a team. Moreover, they got to know the Stalag VIII A and its history from different perspectives. Together they actively learned to better understand European History, which is still valid today and affects us all more than ever. They are guided by the motto "European Youth Works European History".

Worcation revolves around a place, which has been almost forgotten for decades – the prisoner of war camp Stalag VIII A in former Görlitz (now Zgorzelec). Approximately 120 000 soldiers from all over Europe spend their years of captivity during the Second World

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# WORKSHOPS

**In the first two days the participants got to know the meaning of the place they came together in different workshops and work in small groups. Another goal was that the participants get to know each other better. Afterwards, the group split into an archeology workshop and an art workshop.**

## IN TOUCH WITH HISTORY

The participants of the archaeological workshop work together with the experienced archaeologist Paweł Zawadzki. This year, two night toilets of one of the barrack were uncovered. The participants found artefacts that reflect the reality of this place: soldier's equipments from different countries, preserving jars, dishes, coins and various other things of daily usage. The archaeologist showed the group how to correctly clean the artefacts, document the findings and how to make conclusions out of the findings.

## ART MEETS HISTORY - VISUALISING HISTORY

In the art workshop, a piece of land art - art made of natural materials outdoors - was created directly between the two archaeological sites. With the support of Eric Beier and Susanne Buchart, the second group explored the concept of art and decided to present their thoughts on the place in this way. The material comes directly from the Stalag - branches, leaves and bricks that were dug up directly by archaeologists" said Eric Beier. Furthermore, one of the participants drew a comic, with a fictional story which plays in Stalag VIII A. In addition, a poem written by the group was created, which was recited during the closing event in five languages.

# VENUES

All participants were accommodated together in the CVJM Peregrinus hostel in Görlitz. The group had the whole hostel for its sole use and could evolve very freely. One of the most important parts of Worcation is "self-organizing" which means the group has to cook, do grocery-shopping, wash, clean and organize their evenings amongst themselves. The hostel is located in the middle of the old town of Görlitz which means all the interesting places are in a walkable distance and you can easily cross the border to the Polish part of the twincity Zgorzelec.

The workshops take place on the grounds of the Stalag VIII A. In 2015 the European Center Memory, Education, Culture - Meetingpoint Music Messiaen has been opened on the memorial site. It provides the participant's with an exhibition and room for an initial workshop about the history as well as room to take a break. The final presentation is also held in the European Center.

After the workshops the participants come back to their hostel in the old town, where they can organize their free time in the evenings as a group. The programme is also accompanied by cultural evenings, a city game, daily

group sessions, evaluations, language animations, energizing games and, naturally free evening program.

On the few days free of work in the workshops the group started to get to know the so called Euroregion. During a trip to Dresden the group visited the German Museum of Military History which gave the participant's more background-knowledge on what happened during the Second World War and led to lively discussions while strolling around Saxony's capital city. To get moving the group embarked on a boat trip on the river Neiße and also took two rather relaxing trips to the nearby Berzdorf lake.

After work the group had the chance to get to know other young people in Görlitz-Zgorzelec during a barbecue at the youth centre "Rabryka" which was also the "Ukrainian evening" during which participants from Ukraine told the group about the war in their country with a passionate discussion following. The group also had the chance to listen to a concert of classical music.

