

## ***IWM poll reveals around 50% of exhibition visitors would risk imprisonment and their life for music***



In spite of recent terrorist activity at music venues in Europe since 2015, an interactive poll of 11,600 responses at Imperial War Museums (IWM) has revealed that almost half of respondents would attend a concert even if they knew it would be dangerous. Forming part of the free *Culture Under Attack* season at IWM London, response rooms placed across three exhibitions have provided a fascinating snapshot into public willingness to risk life and prison to save culture.

Polls inviting exhibition visitors to agree or disagree with statements about the destruction and protection of culture have received a collective 183,468 responses over five months. Results have found that 92% of respondents believe that music has as much cultural value as a painting or building, while 87% disagreed with the statement that music has no purpose or value during a conflict. This general consensus about the cultural value of music, both in war and peace time, correlates to the extreme measures visitors indicated they would be willing to take to protect it, with 62% believing that the safeguarding of music is worth risking prison for and 48% willing to risk their own safety to attend a music event.

Carl Warner, Head of Narrative and Curatorial at IWM, says: "The results from IWM's poll emphasise an extraordinary response from museum visitors. Their support of music, especially at a time when tragic terror incidents in Manchester and Paris continue to weigh on public consciousness, demonstrate the crucial importance of culture in times of unrest."

In the exhibitions making up the *Culture Under Attack* season – *What Remains*, curated in partnership with Historic England, *Art in Exile*, and *Rebel Sounds* – IWM presents a range of case studies and perspectives that explore why cultural heritage is attacked during war and the ways in which people save, protect and restore what is targeted. The 15 interactive polls spread across the three spaces are an engaging part of the season's interpretation, inviting visitors to join in the conversation and discover how their views compare to others.

In addition to findings about the value of music, results analysed by IWM and Historic England reveal that 76% of respondents think that culture should not be destroyed in order to win a war; and 87% agree that historic buildings should be protected in conflict zones. 89% believe that governments should spend money on protecting artworks for future generations to enjoy; and 85% disagreed with the statement that art is a luxury and should not be saved during war.

*Culture Under Attack*, a free season of exhibitions, live music, performances and interventions that explore how war threatens not just people's lives, but also the very things that help make lives worth living, is open until 5 January 2020 at IWM London.

## Ends

### For further press information, images and interview requests please contact:

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### Notes to editors

Table of responses recorded between 5 July 2019 and 9 December 2019. 183,468 responses were recorded on survey.

Statement	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
It is okay to destroy culture in order to win a war	23.9	76.1
Historic buildings should be protected in conflict zones	86.5	13.5
We should build new buildings instead of saving old ones in the aftermath of conflict	26.3	73.7
Destroyed heritage sites should be rebuilt to what they were originally	64.9	35.1
A building is worth dying for in order to protect it	29.4	70.6
Contemporary art is not as valuable as traditional art	31.2	68.8
Governments should spend more money on protecting artworks for future generations to enjoy	88.9	11.1
The value of art objects should be decided by which ones are the most popular	20.6	79.4
An artwork is valuable because of who painted it	34.2	65.8
Art is a luxury and should not be saved during war	15.0	85.0
I would go to a music concert even if I knew it would be dangerous for me to attend	47.7	52.3
It is worth risking prison in order to protect music	61.7	38.3
Music has just as much cultural value as a painting or building	91.5	8.5
It is okay to censor music if someone finds its message offensive	22.7	77.3
Music has no purpose or value during a conflict	13.0	87.0

### Culture Under Attack

*Culture Under Attack* (5 July 2019 – 5 January 2020) is a free season of exhibitions, live music, performances and interventions at IWM London that explore how war threatens not just people's lives, but also the very things that help make lives worth living. The season comprises three exhibitions – *What Remains*, a partnership project with Historic England, *Rebel Sounds* and *Art in Exile*, as well as a series of events that reveal why some people try to eradicate or exploit culture, while others risk everything to protect, celebrate or rebuild that which defines us as human beings.

### IWM London

IWM London tells the stories of those whose lives have been shaped by war through the depth, breadth and impact of our Galleries, displays and events. Explore the [First World War Galleries](#) and iconic Atrium; visit our [Holocaust Exhibition](#); discover stories of bravery in [The Lord Ashcroft Gallery: Extraordinary Heroes](#) or take in our latest major temporary exhibitions.

Open Daily: 10am – 6pm. Last entry 30 minutes before closing. (Closed 24 - 26 December). Free Admission  
IWM London, Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6HZ

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## **IWM**

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches which attract over 2.5 million visitors each year are **IWM London**, IWM's flagship branch that recently transformed with new, permanent and free First World War Galleries alongside new displays across the iconic Atrium to mark the Centenary of the First World War; **IWM North**, housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; **IWM Duxford**, a world renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; **Churchill War Rooms**, housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser **HMS Belfast**.

## **Historic England**

[Historic England](http://historicengland.org.uk) is the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment, from beaches and battlefields to parks and pie shops. We protect, champion and save the places that define who we are and where we've come from as a nation. We care passionately about the stories they tell, the ideas they represent and the people who live, work and play among them. Working with communities and specialists we share our passion, knowledge and skills to inspire interest, care and conservation, so everyone can keep enjoying and looking after the history that surrounds us all.