



New IWM exhibition profiles those who have risked their lives in times of conflict for the music they love

Throughout history, oppressive regimes have attempted to eradicate forms of culture and expression, from Hitler's persecution of swing and jazz groups in 1930s Nazi Germany to the ban of music in Northern Mali under Islamist rule in 2012. In spite of this, there have always been those willing to risk everything to resist oppression and protect threatened culture.

Rebel Sounds (5 July 2019 – 5 January 2020) is a powerful new exhibition at IWM London that reveals how groups and individuals use music to resist, rebel and speak out against war and oppression. Exploring the significance of music in relation to cultural and personal identity, the exhibition demonstrates how, in the face of adversity, music has been used both as a weapon to fight battles and a means by which to defy the chaos of conflict.

Rebel Sounds will tell four unique stories of resistance using personal accounts, photographs, memorabilia and music. These stories will include Nazi Germany in the 1930s, Northern Ireland in the 1970s, Serbia in the 1990s and present day Mali. Drawing on specific moments in history, these stories will profile the rebels who placed their love of music above their own personal safety.

The exhibition showcases the musical endeavours of German swing kids who chose to oppose Nazi ideology by playing and listening to jazz music, and Terri Hooley, a music lover and founder of the record label Good Vibrations, who used the emergence of Punk during The Troubles to put Northern Irish music back on the map. More recent conflict is also explored through Radio B92, which championed great music, free news and human rights during a decade of economic turmoil, war and censored press under Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic; to this day, the band Songhoy Blues continue to explore the political situation and lost culture in Northern Mali, despite being exiled from their homes and their style of music being forbidden under Sharia Law.

Offering unique opportunities to see some of these extraordinary individuals in performance and in conversation, IWM will also present *Rebel Sounds Live*, a series of live interventions and discussions with those taking personal risks for the culture they love. Exploring stories from the genres of Syrian Death Metal and Serbian Techno to African Desert Blues, events will take place throughout IWM's *Culture Under Attack* season, revealing the realities of performing at risk of serious punishment, arrest or death.

Emily Charles, IWM curator of *Rebel Sounds*, says: "Music has suffered in the endurance of war, when violence makes it too dangerous to attend gigs or oppressive regimes persecute certain genres. *Rebel Sounds* tells the stories of those producing, promoting and broadcasting great music despite the dangers, demonstrating the ability music has to bring communities together."

Rebel Sounds and *Rebel Sounds Live* are part of *Culture Under Attack*, 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. Comprising three exhibitions and a series of events, which collectively tell stories spanning a hundred years, *Culture Under Attack* reveals 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.

Ends

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Notes to editors

Culture Under Attack

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#CultureUnderAttack

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

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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**.

IWM Institute for the Public Understanding of War and Conflict

The IWM Institute for the Public Understanding of War and Conflict is a hub to explore and experiment with innovative ways of deepening public understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and conflict through research, public programming and digital innovation. iwm.org.uk/iwm-institute