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Activities of Cultural Institutions During the COVID-19 Pandemic: a Case Study

Abstract. *The purpose of this article is to show the functioning of cultural institutions during the pan-demic. In the theoretical part the author presents an initiative of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage entitled “Stay at home – art will come to you,” including a list of cultural institutions that take part in it. The practical part contains an analysis of the cultural offering made available online by cultural institutions in Będzin, Lublin and Płock.*

Keywords: *cultural institutions, activities of cultural institutions, online cultural offering, pandemic*

1. Introduction

Closed to visitors but active on the web, cultural institutions have moved their activities to the virtual world. Quickly adjusting to work in a new reality. They make audiovisual collections available online, organize online events, remind us of the fight against the virus.

Following the pandemic, decisive steps have been taken to stop the spread of coronavirus. The crisis staff together with the Minister of Culture and National Heritage decided to temporarily close cultural institutions in the form of libraries, concert halls, operas, operettas, museums, theaters, cinemas, culture centers and art galleries. schools, universities and artistic education institutions. The official suspension of operations took place on March 12 this year.¹

¹ <http://dziennikustaw.gov.pl/DU/2020/403> [accessed: 18.05.2020].

2. Cultural institutions on the Internet

In the territory of the Republic of Poland, the majority of the cultural sector is represented by the public sector, which has a non-profit character. Organizational aspects of institutions operating in the area of culture are set out in the Act on the organization and conduct of cultural activities.

The first lines of the Act contain important comments regarding all entities involved in conducting cultural activities. Entities operating pursuant to the Act on the organization and conduct of cultural activities are: theaters, opera, operetta, symphonies, orchestra, cinemas, film institutions, museums, libraries, cultural houses, art centers, art galleries, research and documentation centers.

In connection with the temporary closure of libraries, philharmonics, operas, theaters, museums, cultural institutions run or co-run by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage have created a rich cultural offer. The offer enables contact with art through online channels. Recipients are encouraged to take advantage of the possibility of visiting, listening to concerts, reading, watching and contemplating art.²

The first group of entities presenting the online cultural offer are museums, art centers and galleries. Museums show their collections to visitors, offering virtual walks. Institutions often have a special educational offer with the option of publishing an electronic version, movies and games. This treatment is to attract the youngest. It is also worth following the institution's social media. This is where information about the latest museum offers is posted. The museums that took an active part in the initiative "Zostań w domu – sztuka przyjdzie do Ciebie" (Stay at home – art will come to you) are among others:

- Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach (National Museum in Kielce),
- Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie (National Museum in Warsaw),
- Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau (Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau),
- Muzeum Dom Rodzinny Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II w Wadowicach (Family Home of John Paul II in Wadowice),
- Muzeum Historii Polski (Polish History Museum),
- Muzeum im. Kazimierza Pułaskiego w Warce (Museum of Casimir Pulaski in Warka),
- Muzeum Józefa Piłsudskiego w Sulejówku (Józef Piłsudski Museum in Sulejówek),
- Muzeum Lubelskie w Lublinie (Lublin Museum in Lublin),

² <https://www.gov.pl/web/kultura/zostan-w-domu--sztuka-przyjdzie-do-ciebie> [accessed: 19.05.2020].

- Muzeum Łazienki Królewskie (The Royal Łazienki Museum),
- Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie (National Museum in Kraków),
- Muzeum Narodowe Ziemi Przemyskiej (National Museum of Przemyśl),
- Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie (Museum of Kings Jan III's Palace at Wilanów),
- Muzeum Pamięci Mieszkańców Ziemi Oświęcimskiej (Residents Memorial Museum – Oświęcimskie Land),
- Muzeum Piastów Śląskich w Brzegu (Museum of the Silesian Piasts in Brzeg),
- Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie (Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo),
- Muzeum Polaków Ratujących Żydów podczas II wojny światowej im. Rodziny Ulmów w Markowej (The Ulma Family Museum of Poles Saving Jews in World War II),
- Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie (Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw),
- Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi (Museum of Art in Łódź),
- Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku (The Malbork Castle Museum),
- Zamek Królewski na Wawelu (Wawel Royal Castel),
- Centrum Historii Zajezdnia we Wrocławiu (History Centre Zajezdnia in Wrocław),
- Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury w Krakowie (International Cultural Centre),
- Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej w Toruniu (Centre of Contemporary Art in Torun),
- Zachęta Narodowa Galeria Sztuki (Zachęta – National Gallery of Art).

Theaters, concert halls, operas, operettas form the second group of cultural entities participating in the online venture. The virtual offer is especially addressed to music lovers. Philharmonic and opera activities include registration, broadcast of internet concerts, audio recordings of well-known record publishers, and video coverage of interviews with well-known artists. Cultural institutions that promote online music services are:

- Polska Opera Królewska (The Polish Royal Opera),
- Filharmonia Narodowa w Warszawie (Warsaw Philharmonic),
- Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa (Polish National Opera),
- Teatr Wielki w Łodzi (Lodz Grand Theatre),
- Zespół Pieśni i Tańca Śląsk (Silesian Songs and Dance Ensemble).

The last group of cultural entities are research and documentation centers. These institutions deal with the dissemination of knowledge through audiobooks, museum collections and exhibitions. This allows you to reach the largest possible audience – adults as well as the youngest. Currently, the institutes using electronic media are:

- Instytut Adama Mickiewicza (Adam Mickiewicz Institute),

- Instytut Polonika (Polonika – The National Institute of Polish Cultural Heritage),
- Instytut Północny im. W. Kętrzyńskiego w Olsztynie (W. Kętrzyński's North Institute in Olsztyn),
- Narodowy Instytut Architektury i Urbanistyki (National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning),
- Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa (The National Heritage Board of Poland),
- Instytut Teatralny (Theater Institute).

Public television programs and radios also provide a rich cultural offer. Therefore, public television encourages viewers to visit its digital platform. The platform provides 836 titles for free. Among them you can find films and feature series, documentaries, animated series for children and television theater performances. The shared works have been digitized accordingly. Many of them under the project entitled “Digitalizacja Polskiej Szkoły Telewizyjnej i Filmowej z Archiwum TVP S.A.” (Digitization of the Polish Television and Film School from the Archive of TVP S.A.) co-financed by the European Union has been reconstructed by the best specialists in the field of film.³

Polish Television has also created an individual offer for children, teenagers and even entire families. Young viewers on TVP ABC channel from 9 am to 1 pm can watch the program entitled “Alchemik” (Alchemist), showing physical phenomena and the program “Zaczarowany świat” (Enchanted world), presenting contemporary art.⁴

TVP Kultura channel in the afternoon broadcasts movies and series from school reading. Examples of movie titles include *Szatan z siódmej klasy*, *Zemsta, W pustyni i w puszczy*. Polish Television Theater as the only one of the public theaters during a pandemic. He presents theatrical plays titled *Widnokrąg*, *Cena* and many other interesting performances.⁵

Polskie Radio (Polish Radio) also provides a rich cultural offer. As part of the action entitled “Wspieramy polskich artystów” (We support Polish artists) public broadcaster antennas broadcast a lot more Polish music, radio plays or programs for children, performed by Polish artists.⁶

In addition to the cultural offer, many radio stations have also created pandemic information campaigns. Polish Radio decided to launch additional programs and a portal to support listeners or conduct educational activities. This action is aimed at reducing the spread of the virus. Polish Radio shows a series of programs

³ <https://warszawa.tvp.pl/47229040/akcja-zostanwdomu-sztuka-przyjdzie-do-ciebie-mkidn-zacheca-do-korzystania-z-kultury-online> [accessed: 19.05.2020].

⁴ <https://abc.tvp.pl/18025423/nasze-programy> [accessed: 20.05.2020].

⁵ <https://www.tvp.pl/43861668/teatr> [accessed: 20.05.2020].

⁶ <https://www.polskieradio.pl/13/53/Artykul/2477454,Polskie-Radio-wspiera-polskich-artystow-i-obniza-ceny-ich-plyt> [accessed: 20.05.2020].

in which professionals answer the questions of listeners. In addition, the station is constantly announcing government and local government plans to reduce the coronavirus. In turn, Polish Radio 24 transmits all press conferences, statements related to the virus epidemic. The station broadcasts on an ongoing basis information and messages published by representatives of the government, state institutions, local governments and the authority of hospitals in the regions.⁷

Radiowa Trójka broadcast special editions of the program entitled “Puls Trójki,” “Za, a nawet przeciw,” “Do południa,” “Klub Trójki.” Then journalists show various aspects of life caused by the threat. Issues related to labor law, principles of safe behavior, proper nutrition, advice of psychologists and many others are raised. The station regularly displays messages important for reducing the epidemic.

3. “Będzin – actively at home”

The new project of the city authorities is “Będzin aktywnie w domu” (Będzin – actively at home). It is a program encouraging residents to actively spend time at home during quarantine (Table 1). The Municipal Office in Będzin together with

Table 1. Schedule of classes as part of the project
“Będzin – actively at home”

Day	Schedule of classes		
Monday	Reading a book on the screen from the Ibuk Libra platform 10.00 am	Zumba 6.00 pm	–
Tuesday	Creative fun for children Do it with us librarians 11.00 am	Sports activities for adults and children 3.00 pm	BPU 6.00 pm
Wednesday	A guide to the Treasury for adults and children 5.00 pm	Dance classes for children from Dance4you 3.00 pm	–
Thursday	Composing on demand for adults and children 3.00 pm	Tabata 6.00 pm	Zumba 7.00 pm
Friday	Art classes for children 1.30 pm	Joga 4.30 pm	Fitness 6.00 pm
Saturday	Balloon wonders for adults and children 2 pm	Good habit Read: Lyrical close-ups May 2, May 16, May 30 Meeting with the reporter May 9, May 23 7.00 pm	Zumba 6.00 pm
Sunday	Dance4You dance and sport activities for children	Sports activities for adults and children 11.00 am	One hundred albums in adult rock music 11.00 am

Źródło: <http://ok.bedzin.pl/2020/05/06/bedzin-aktywny-w-domu/> [accessed: 23.05.2020].

⁷ <https://www.polskieradio24.pl/> [accessed: 20.05.2020].

the employees of cultural and sports institutions prepared a number of leisure activities. It is a combination of online classes in the field of sport and culture. Each of the residents will find something for themselves. The offer includes sports training, art classes, broadcasts and radio plays. All this via the internet for children and adults. The proposed physical activities take the form of fitness classes, tabas, zumba, yoga. You can also try your handicraft and art classes. The initiative's motto is: Let's stay home and have fun!

4. "There is no boredom"

Lublin is one of the cities actively involved in the project „Zostań w domu – kultura przyjdzie do Ciebie” (Stay at home – art will come to you). Many Lublin branches joined the action organized through the Ministry of Culture. The institutions provide free movies, workshops and performances online.

Teatr im. H.Ch. Andersen (H.Ch. Andersen Theatre) promotes the work of Andersen. The theater website as well as the Facebook profile have video and audio materials. On Fridays from 9.30 am to 22.00 pm on Sunday recordings of performances are available. However, every Wednesday from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm you can use materials from the series “Andersen's home reading.” Then the actors of the theater prepare their own readings of selected Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales.⁸

Workshops of Culture have also been included in the online campaign. The website has video materials that can inspire action. During an epidemic, you can do something interesting without leaving your home. Workshops of Culture in Lublin propose a series of activities for people of all ages. Everyone will find something for himself. An example of the workshop plan is presented in Table 2.

Another cultural initiative was initiated by the Lubelska Grupa Poławiacze Perel (Lublin Pearl Fishers Group). As part of the closure of cultural institutions, audiobooks with recorded Lublin Legends were made available. The author of the scenarios for the presented legends is Marcin Wąsowski. The recipients have 10 titles at their disposal. Among others, the following legends have been made available:

- *Legenda o sądzie diabelskim* (The legend of the devil's judgment),
- *Herb Lublina z koziołkiem* (Coat of arms of Lublin with a goat),
- *Jak Boczarski na młynie* (Like Boczarski at the mill),
- *Nieszczęsna Rusalka* (The unfortunate Rusalka),
- *Legenda o jarmarkowej kurze* (The legend of the market chicken).⁹

⁸ www.teatrandersena.pl/teatroteka [accessed: 23.05.2020].

⁹ <http://polawiaczeperel.pl/impropowiesci-lubelskie/> [accessed: 23.05.2020].

Table 2. Sample activities under the “There is no boredom”

Date	Activities
June 2, at 11 am	Lekcje sztuki: wprowadzenie do fotografii analogowej Art lessons: an introduction to analog photography
June 5, 11.00 am	Lekcje sztuki: Domowe witraże Art lessons: Home stained glass
June 9, 11.00 am	Hoop dance czyli instrukcja obsługi hula hoop dla początkujących Hoop dance or hula hoop instruction for beginners
June 15, 5.00 pm	Od przybytku głowa nie boli – rozmnażanie roślin doniczkowych From the tabernacle, the head does not hurt – reproduction of pot plants
June 18, 4.00 pm	Domowy Warsztat: Wirtualne rzeźbiarstwo. Warsztaty modelowania 3D w programie Sculptris Home Workshop: Virtual Sculpture. 3D modeling workshops in the Sculptris program

Źródło: <https://warsztatykultury.pl/nudy-nie-ma/> [accessed: 23.05.2020].

City officials, Lublin artists, academic teachers, directors of cultural institutions, theaters and journalists were invited to co-create and collaborate on the audiobook.

Center “Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN” encourages Lubliners to take advantage of online mockups, Mockups created as part of the project “Lublin 2.0 – Interaktywna rekonstrukcja dziejów miasta” (Lublin 2.0 – Interactive reconstruction of the city’s history) and walks in former Lublin. The project was created as part of the celebration of the 700th anniversary of the location of Lublin under Magdeburg law.¹⁰

Due to the epidemic, all Lublin cinemas were closed. However, a large amount of production can be viewed online. Completely free and legal. Many productions have been made available on the YouTube platform. The Studio Filmowe TOR (TOR Film Studio) made the Polish cinema classic available to viewers. Through the online platform you can watch movies of Krzysztof Zanussi or Krzysztof Kieślowski. The Studio Miniatur Filmowych (Film Miniature Studio), on the other hand, offers the youngest viewers over 500 stories. This is a polar fairy tale entitled *Pomysłowy Dobromir* (Ingenious Dobromir) or *Dziwne przygody Koziołka Matołka* (The strange adventures of Koziołek Matołek).

The Culture Center in Lublin also decided to transfer its cultural activities to the network. The first of the proposed actions is live drawing. The initiative takes place from Monday to Thursday at 9.00 am Then Agata Jakuszko-Sobocka on her YouTube channel creates drawing notes about Lublin.

On the other hand, from Monday to Friday, the Culture Center encourages to take part in the venture entitled “NuciMisie w domu” (NuciMisie at home)

¹⁰ <http://teatrnn.pl/> [accessed: 23.05.2020].

then the youngest ones under the care of Sylwia Lasok are learning songs of the Deficyt Natury Band. The transmission can be watched via Facebook. In addition, Pracownia Sztuczka invites children to play in the “Sztuczki kulinarne na żywo” (Live cooking tricks) or “Domowe sztuczki sensoryczne” (Homemade sensory tricks) also available on Facebook.¹¹

5. “Płock – Culture to go”

Płocki Ośrodek Kultury i Sztuki (Płock Center of Culture and Art) in connection with the cancellation of the planned cultural events, he focused on relocating the business to the virtual world. During the quarantine period, the Płock Center of Culture and Art joins the “Zostań w domu – sztuka przyjdzie do Ciebie” (Stay at home – art will come to you). Therefore, it encourages you to take advantage of the online offer called “Kultura na wynos” (Płock – Culture to go). The offer includes virtual breakdance dance lessons, art workshops, guitar classes, visiting exhibitions, competitions, playing board games together.¹²

Art workshops have been moved to domestic comfort “Domowe Rodzinne Sztukowanie Online” (Home Family Art Online). Until now, classes were held at the “Kolor i Forma” (Color and Form) Creative Activities Studio at the Wisła Gallery. The workshops will use origami or decoupage techniques. However, the organizers ensure that each of us will have no problem finding the necessary materials. The joint creation of artistic differences takes place via an internet platform every Wednesday at 11.00 am Płock Center of Culture and Art also promotes physical activity. Breakdance workshops led by Zbyszek Góral have appeared in the online offer. Children and parents will be able to master breakdance steps and learn short dance arrangements.¹³

The “Czytanie na ekranie” (Reading on the screen) initiative is a suggestion for long evenings. The project involves reading fairy tales and excerpts from publications of the Płock Center of Culture and Art. The initiative invited the President of the City of Płock, Deputy Mayor of the City of Płock, theater workshop instructors addition, kids will be able to try their hand at the specially designed board game “Pełna Coolturka” (Full Coolture). All the necessary items in the form of boards, cubes, pawns and cards can be downloaded from pokis.pl. The game is available in the color version as well as in black and white possible to be colored according to the players’ preferences. The institution has also prepared an offer for

¹¹ <https://www.facebook.com/PracowniaSztuczka/> [accessed: 24.05.2020].

¹² <https://tp.com.pl/artykul/zostan-w-domu--kultura/944643> [accessed: 24.05.2020].

¹³ <https://kujawsko-pomorskie.travel/pl/wydarzenia/warsztaty-plastyczne-domowe-rodzinne-sztukowanie-online> [accessed: 24.05.2020].

music lovers. This is the “20 na 20” anniversary jubilee playlist available through the Spotify music service.

6. Summary

During the pandemic, the functioning of cultural and entertainment places was suspended. Despite this, the inhabitants were not alone in this matter. They do not have to fight the enormity of free time and boredom. Most cultural institutions took part in the project of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage “Zostań w domu – sztuka przyjdzie do Ciebie” (Stay at home – art will come to you). As part of the project, institutions such as museums, art centers, galleries, theaters propose specially selected online workshops. Classes help develop manual and intellectual skills. A wide range of workshops in the form of creative activities for children, sports activities, art lessons, interactive games enables the development of the child and his loved ones.

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Działalność instytucji kultury w okresie pandemii. Studium przypadków

Streszczenie. *W artykule ukazano funkcjonowania instytucji kultury w okresie pandemii. Część teoretyczna przedstawia projekt pt. „Zostań w domu – sztuka przyjdzie do Ciebie” ze wskazaniem instytucji kulturalnych biorących udział w inicjatywie, opracowany na podstawie strony internetowej Ministerstwa Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego. Część praktyczna to analiza dostępnej w Internecie oferty kulturalnej online. Pod uwagę wzięto działalność instytucji kulturalnych Będzina, Lublina i Płocka.*

Słowa kluczowe: *instytucje kultury, działalność instytucji kultury, oferta kulturalna online, pandemia*