

# MUZEUM

## KL PLASZOW

### PRESS RELEASE

*Kraków, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024*

#### Opening of the KL Plaszow Museum: the open-air exhibition

We invite you to visit the KL Plaszow Memorial Museum on 15 March 2024 at 10:00 and attend an official opening ceremony of the open-air exhibition and a presentation of the effects of development works completed in the area.

Eighty years ago, a labour and concentration camp was operated in the Podgórze borough of Kraków as part of the German genocide policy. The camp was a prison to about 35 thousand people, mainly Jewish but also Polish and Romani, of whom about 6 thousand were killed in the camp. When evacuating the camp in 1945, the Germans virtually razed it to the ground and effectively hid almost all traces of crime committed in Plaszow. However, the memorial site still contains three mass graves and two Jewish cemeteries. Today, the memorial site is protected by the local conservator of cultural heritage and has the status of a war cemetery.

Immediately after the war, Kraków city and government authorities, individuals and associations took measures aimed at preserving the knowledge and memory of this site. Their principal symbol over decades was the Nazi Victim Memorial erected in a place of executions. As of 2016, a number of Kraków institutions joined the commemoration process, including principally the Kraków Museum; and finally, the KL Plaszow Museum was established in January 2021.

The tasks of the KL Plaszow Museum include preserving the memory of the former camp victims, comprehensive education about their lives, and protecting the memorial site. The entire post-camp area and the historic relics preserved here form a bridge linking events from the past and their memory with the present, and reflection on our times. Education and learning about the past of this site will also be supported by two museum buildings: the Grey House and the Memorial. The whole project is designed to create in the future a coherent narrative of the former camp history.

The KL Plaszow Museum is committed to explaining the history of the memorial site to its visitors; this is done by organizing educational classes, lectures and guided tours. Now that the first development project phase is complete, we can invite visitors to see the open-air exhibition named “KL Plaszow. A Site After, A Site Without”, displayed in the

post-camp area. The exhibition features 15 boards, combining in their contents a historical message with accounts given by the Witnesses of history. It is complemented by 41 featured points marked in the area to indicate the structures of importance to the camp history. The site also contains three unearthed artefacts known as archaeological windows. The exhibition “KL Plaszow. A Site After, A Site Without” is a message on the history of KL Plaszow, and is accessible to all those who wish to visit the post-camp area.

Additional measures have been taken at the memorial site to make its features clearer: concrete blocks are used to mark the boundaries of two Jewish cemeteries; a gravel strip is laid along the roll-call ground perimeter, and two open-air flights of stairs facilitate access along steep paths leading to elevated commemoration places.

In our work, we are guided by the principle adopted as a motto of our Museum: KL Plaszow is part of Kraków’s history. The history of the Plaszow camp is an inseparable part of the city’s history and that of the Cracovians.

Thus, we welcome all those who wish to visit the KL Plaszow Memorial Museum on 15 March 2024 at 10:00 and attend an official opening ceremony of the open-air exhibition and a presentation of the effects of development works completed in the area.

The opening will be followed by a six-month series of events aimed at making their participants familiar with the stories of people whose fates are eternally connected with KL Plaszow.

More information about the opening and accompanying events coming soon on our website and the KLPM Facebook account.

#### Event schedule

11:00 – welcome and introduction

11:05-11:30 – guest speeches

11:30-11:50 – presentation of accounts of KL Plaszow prisoners in a poetic and musical setting by students of the Academy of Theater Arts in Krakow

11:50 – closing speeches

12:00-13:30 – guided tour of the KL Plaszow memorial site