

NEWS RELEASE

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Penn Cultural Heritage Center on Ukraine: Protecting Culture During Times of War



Image: iStock.com/[Ruslan Lytvyn](https://www.istock.com/author/Ruslan-Lytvyn)

PHILADELPHIA—The **Penn Cultural Heritage Center** (based at the Penn Museum) will bring together a diverse group of cultural leaders based in the Ukraine and the U.S. to discuss the devastating consequences of the Russian invasion on heritage and national identity. **"Ukraine & Keepers of Cultural Memory"** is scheduled for **Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 12:30 pm (ET)**.

The moderator of the online discussion, Dr. Brian I. Daniels, Director of Research and Programs at the Penn Cultural Heritage Center who is an expert in cultural preservation during wartime, says Ukraine's cultural institutions mobilized rapidly in response the Russian invasion.

"Museum curators are the keepers of the cultural memory for the entire nation," Dr. Daniels explains. "When the Louvre was evacuated during World War II, the

conservators and curators, they stayed with the collection to make sure it wasn't stolen and to make sure it received the care it needed."

He adds if Vladimir Putin's original justification for the invasion was that Ukraine is part of Russia's history and culture, "it becomes critical to understand which cultural sites Russia has destroyed."

In a recent piece in *Just Security*, Dr. Daniels outlines five considerations that look ahead to what is next, including the need for long-term financial assistance for Ukraine's cultural institutions, increased vigilance among law-enforcement agencies regarding looted cultural property, and the obligation to protect the cultural workers who are safeguarding Ukraine's heritage.

"Although cultural sites are important, it is also vital to support and protect, as much as possible, local cultural workers throughout Ukraine," adds Executive Director of the Penn Cultural Heritage Center and anthropology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Richard M. Leventhal.

The online discussion is open to everyone and pay-what-you-wish. Register here.

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About the Penn Museum

Home to over a million extraordinary objects, the Penn Museum has been highlighting our shared humanity across continents and millennia since 1887. In expanding access to archaeology and anthropology, the Penn Museum builds empathy and connections between cultures through experiences online and onsite in our galleries.

The Penn Museum is open Tuesday–Sunday, 10:00 am–5:00 pm; first Wednesday from 10:00 am–8:00 pm. The Café is open Tuesday–Saturday, 11:00 am–1:00 pm. For more information, visit www.penn.museum, call 215.898.4000, or follow @PennMuseum on social media.

About the Penn Cultural Heritage Center

Positioning communities in a leading role, the Penn Cultural Heritage Center reframes the preservation of cultural heritage within a context of social, political, and economic development through field projects, research, engagement in public policy, and public programs that emphasize the centrality of community priorities for successful outcomes.

Founded in 2008, and directed by Richard M. Leventhal, the Penn Cultural Heritage Center draws upon the expertise of scholars and the research collections of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, while collaborating with researchers across Penn and beyond whose research intersects with contemporary heritage issues.