

# MAJLIS @ THE ANU

## ARTISTIC ACTIVISM AND THE POLITICS OF ERASURE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS



Australian  
National  
University

This paper examines how contemporary artists from the Western Balkans have sought to engage with the legacy of ethnonationalist violence. Specific focus is placed upon the ways in which war crimes committed in the countries of the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s have been interpreted in contemporary artistic production in this region. Attempts to examine and openly discuss these crimes have often been undermined by a politics of erasure, by which inconvenient historical episodes are eliminated from public discourse. In response, however, the domain of art has become a critical channel for making visible and archiving a multifaceted account of the recent past. This phenomenon will be examined through a case study of the Four Faces of Omarska art collective, and an exploration of the concept of 'emergency aesthetics,'

which has emerged as a strategy for countering the political neutralisation of urgent issues. By bringing the experience of the Western Balkans into focus, this investigation will also contribute to the debate on the role of artistic activism in promoting human rights and justice.

### Details

11am, Thursday 20 January 2022

Online via Zoom, register at: <https://anu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEIc-mpqDoqHtSbaYoivsZe58t350tM-reb>

### Presented by

Dr Iva Glisic, Visiting Research Fellow, ANU

### Contact

Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies  
(The Middle East and Central Asia)

Ms Dana Rice

E — [majlis.cais@anu.edu.au](mailto:majlis.cais@anu.edu.au)

W — [cais.cass.anu.edu.au/events](https://cais.cass.anu.edu.au/events)