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Press Release

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## Women, War and Peace

Using creative processes to explore the role of women in Europe from World War 11 to the present and the power of the EU in promoting Peace and Gender Equality today

Co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union

**Women, War and Peace** is a new project using creative processes to explore the role of women in European from World War 11 to the present, as well as the power of the EU in promoting peace and gender equality today. The project is co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union. This year-long transnational project involves four European partners from Ireland, Spain, Germany and Poland and marks the 70th anniversary of the ending of WW11 by using creative processes and on-line resources to promote a remembrance of European history with a focus on women's experiences of WW11 and their journey within Europe from 1945 to the present day. Using theatre, film and political activism, this project raises awareness of the formation of the EU, its history and diversity and its role today in promoting peace, gender equality, cultural diversity and the well being of all its citizens.

As one of Ireland's leading organizations in delivering performance work in social and professional contexts, Smashing Times is the lead organization working in partnership with Institute de Formacion Y Estudios Sociales (IFES), Valencia, Spain; Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universitaet Hannover, Hannover, Germany; and Akademia Humanistyczno-Ekonomiczna w Lodzi, Łódź, Poland.

The project brings different citizens and communities together to explore a remembrance of WW11 and all those who died including the women who actively campaigned against Fascism and Nazism and promoted liberty. The project explores what can lead to a rise of intolerance and totalitarianism and raises awareness of how citizens can actively support peace and equality today. Equality is a fundamental principle of the EU. However there is still more to be done and women's rights are under attack from extremists around the world. There is a need to re-affirm a commitment to gender equality as a key component for democracy and peace. Women's rights are an essential component of universal human rights. Women are powerful drivers of change and this transnational project remembers the role of women in Europe and power of the EU in promoting peace and gender equality for all. The project results in an on-line Research and Resource pack; a Remembrance through Drama Workshop model; a performance; public debates and Legislative Theatre sessions; a webinar linking four countries; an on-line Questionnaire and an International Conference taking place in Dublin in September 2016.

To launch the project Smashing Times held an International Pan-European Meeting on the 28 October 2015 at the Carmelite Community Centre, Whitefriar Street, Dublin where representatives from Spain, Germany and Poland met with artists from Ireland.

Do you think World War 11 has had any impact on your life or on the life of someone you know? Smashing Times are making an open call asking the general public to join their project. Although Ireland was neutral during World War 11, there are indeed many Irish women who travelled to Britain and beyond to fight against Nazism and Fascism. The company is searching for these and other untold stories of Irish women active in history including dissenters, anti-war demonstrators, soldiers, victims and pacifists. If you have any stories relating to the role of Irish women during WW11 that you wish to share please get in touch. And those interested in knowing more about the project are welcome to attend workshops and performances and to contribute to the memory of these women. For more information please contact Freda at Smashing Times using the details below.



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