

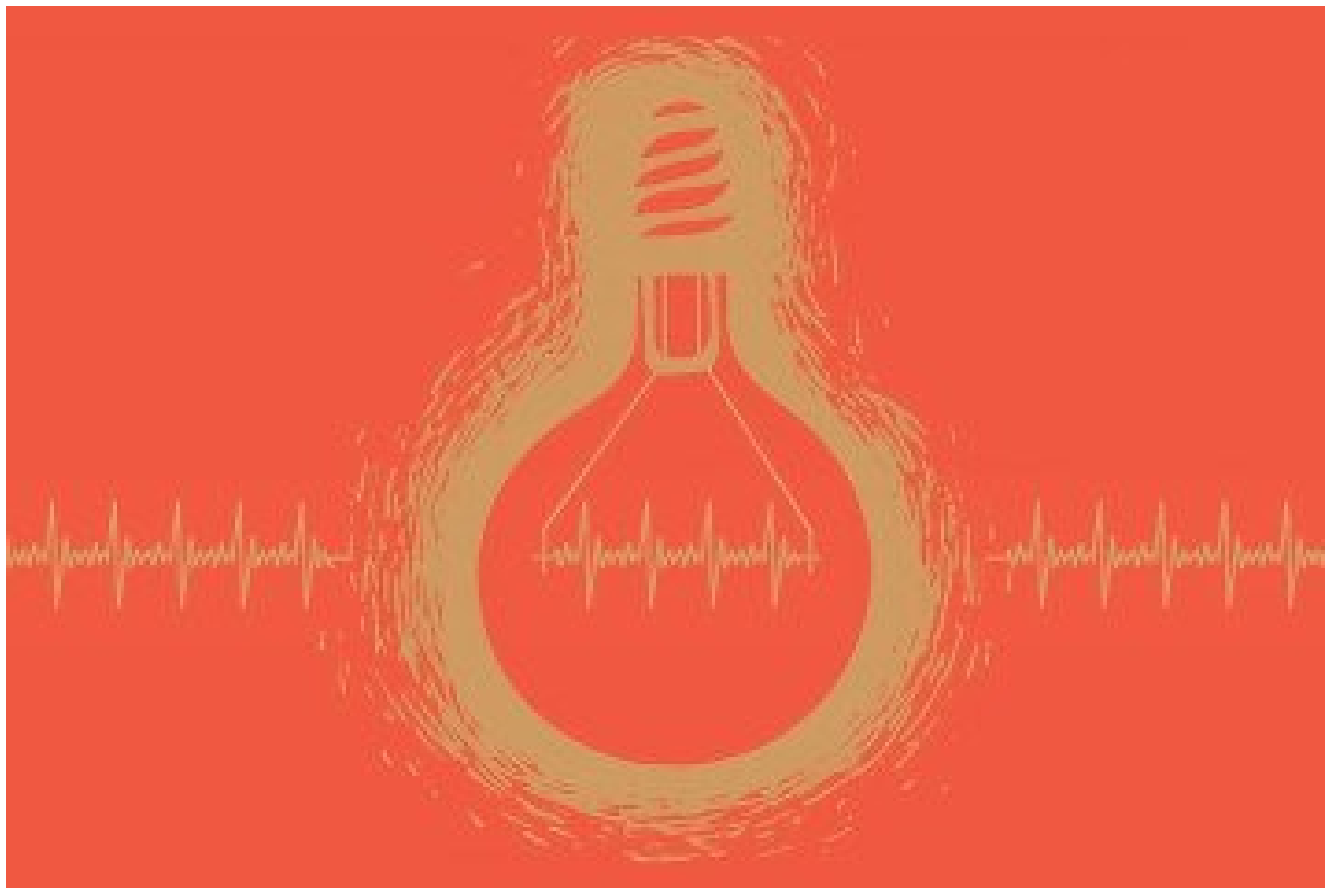
Donetsk Pulse Room Archive Becomes “Pulse Agglomerate” Performance at Art Basel 2026



united24media.com/culture/donetsk-pulse-room-archive-becomes-pulse-agglomerate-performance-at-art-basel-2026-19651

Dariia Mykhailenko

June 9, 2026



Promo poster for “Pulse Room” installation (Source: IZOLYATSIA, Platform for Cultural Initiatives)

A biometric memorial performance titled *Pulse Agglomerate* will take place in Basel on June 15 as part of the Art Basel programme, the IZOLYATSIA cultural centre announced.

The installation consists of 100 light bulbs, each blinking in sync with real human heartbeats [recorded](#) in Donetsk in 2013 during the *Pulse Room* installation by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer hosted at the Izolyatsia cultural centre.

At the time, visitors placed their hands on sensors, converting their pulse into a light signal that activated a blinking bulb, creating a living archive of individual heartbeats.



The Pulse Room installation by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer in IZOLYATSIA, platform for Cultural Initiatives, Donetsk, Ukraine, 2013. (Source: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's website)



The Pulse Room installation by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer in IZOLYATSIA, platform for Cultural Initiatives, Donetsk, Ukraine, 2013. (Source: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's website)

In 2014, the recordings were evacuated from Donetsk shortly before the city came under occupation and the Izolyatsia centre was transformed into a site of detention and torture. The preserved archive now forms the basis of the new performance.

In Basel, the project will be presented under the title *Pulse Agglomerate*. Ukrainian artist Maria Kulikovska will take part in the work, alongside the Izolyatsia Foundation and international galleries and partners.



UNITED24 Media graphic designer Oleksandr Manukians during the Pulse Room installation by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer in IZOLYATSIA, platform for Cultural Initiatives, Donetsk, Ukraine, 2013. (Source: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's website)



The Pulse Room installation by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer in IZOLYATSIA, platform for Cultural Initiatives, Donetsk, Ukraine, 2013. (Source: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's website)

The installation will also be interactive: visitors will be able to contribute by placing their hand on a sensor. Their heartbeat will be added to the sequence, while the oldest recorded pulse will be removed.

“Each new recording replaces the oldest one—simultaneously provoking mourning and affirming continuity, solidarity, and resilience in the face of war,” the announcement of the performance stated.



The Pulse Room installation by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer in IZOLYATSIA, platform for Cultural Initiatives, Donetsk, Ukraine, 2013. (Source: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's website)

The project comes amid a series of recent artistic initiatives that use physical remnants of the war as cultural testimony. Italian artist and designer Walter Espedito Trento has [launched](#) an independent project titled *Reliquiae*, which presents objects brought from Ukraine as material evidence of the ongoing war.

The project was presented in Venice on May 8–9, ahead of and on the opening day of the Venice Biennale, according to remarks the artist gave to Ukrinform on May 5. The presentation will take the form of a secular procession moving from Venice's central railway station through the city's main tourist routes.

Participants were able to carry individual “relics” placed on red velvet cushions, including a scorched fragment from a Russian drone strike on the Bernardine monastery in Lviv, a brick fragment from a destroyed residential building in Odesa, a bullet-riddled city sign from Ukraine, and other symbolic artefacts.



Espedito Trento said the project was conceived as a deliberately provocative response to the decision by Biennale organizers to reopen the Russian pavilion, a move justified by the argument that “culture is outside politics.”

At the same time, the *Invisible Pavilion*—an unofficial artistic initiative taking place across Venice during the Venice Biennale—is [drawing](#) attention to the human toll of Russia’s war against Ukraine.

Running in parallel with the 61st Biennale from May 6 to November 22, 2026, the project deliberately forgoes a conventional gallery format in favour of a citywide poster campaign in public spaces. Each poster mimics standard cultural announcements such as book launches, film screenings, or poetry readings, but is stamped with the word “CANCELLED.”

