



# 8<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF KUMA INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS | 2025

**JUNE 30 - JULY 5, 2025**  
**SARAJEVO**

# KUMA INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

## JUNE 30 – JULY 5, 2025

### SARAJEVO, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Kuma International is excited to announce the 8th edition of our Summer School, a unique program dedicated to exploring contemporary art practices created in the context of conflict and trauma that will be curated this year by Professor Stephenie Young from Salem State University.

The 8th edition of the Kuma International Summer School will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide and the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The program will examine the impact of Bosnia's violent past alongside its current social and political landscape, focusing on local artistic aesthetics, visual narratives, and cultural discourse – while also drawing connections to similar dynamics in other regions affected by war.

Building on the experience of the past seven editions, the school will explore how personal and collective memories shape narratives of war, exile, survival, and reconciliation. Participants will engage with contemporary art practices that challenge dominant narratives, investigate the politics of memory, and reflect on how art can serve both as a tool for healing and a form of resistance.



# CURRENT GLOBAL CONTEXT AND THE ROLE OF ART IN GIVING AGENCY AND HEALING

As we witness the troubling resurgence of fascist rhetoric, political extremism, and escalating global tensions, it has never been more urgent to come together and reflect on the lasting consequences of war. In many regions, these geopolitical shifts have fueled polarization, deepened societal divisions, and intensified hatred between communities—undermining efforts toward lasting peace and reconciliation.

In societies recovering from war, art plays a vital role in restoring agency to those affected by conflict. It offers a creative space where individuals can express, process, and share their experiences while preserving personal and collective memory. For artists and cultural practitioners, art becomes a powerful means of coping with trauma and fostering both individual and communal healing.

In this critical context, the Kuma International Summer School provides a multidisciplinary platform for participants from around the world to engage in critical reflection and collaborate in envisioning a future rooted in peace, empathy, and mutual respect. Most importantly, participants will have the unique opportunity to learn from and exchange with artists who have lived through war and genocide, and who have integrated those lived experiences into their artistic practices. Their invaluable contributions bring depth to the program and offer raw, authentic perspectives that ground the learning experience in reality.



# SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **June 30 – July 5, 2025:** A week-long program featuring lectures, panels, group discussions, and hands-on artistic workshops.
- **Lectures and Panels:** Experts, artists, and educators will present their work, many of whom incorporate autobiographical elements, processing past experiences, loss, trauma, and displacement into their artistic practices.
- **Workshop and Mentorship:** A new addition this year, the workshop and mentorship component is designed to support participants who wish to develop their own artistic projects. These projects may explore themes such as memory, exile and displacement, identity, trauma, and the complex interplay between personal and collective histories, as well as broader issues like cultural identity, conflict, and healing. Through personalized mentorship, participants will receive guidance to further shape their work and strengthen their creative development.
- **Site Visits:** Participants will also visit key sites in Sarajevo, such as museums and art galleries, where they can explore the role of art in shaping the landscape and the community.



## WHO SHOULD APPLY?

We welcome applications from individuals worldwide who are 18 years or older, including undergraduate and graduate students, professionals, artists, researchers, and cultural practitioners. Applicants should have a background in disciplines such as the arts, humanities, or political science, and a strong interest in exploring the complexities of post-conflict societies through the lens of visual arts, with a desire to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration.

We particularly encourage applications from those interested in artistic approaches to the themes of the summer school—whether they are already developing their own projects or seeking inspiration and guidance from our mentors within a collaborative and supportive learning environment.

## PARTICIPATION FEE

The participation fee is 150 EUR. However, participants residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina can attend free of charge and may request reimbursement for their travel expenses. Participants coming from outside Bosnia and Herzegovina are responsible for covering their own transportation and accommodation in Sarajevo. Kuma International will gladly provide guidance and a list of recommended places to stay upon request.

## HOW TO APPLY?

Please send your motivation letter and a CV or short biography to [info@kumainternational.org](mailto:info@kumainternational.org) with the subject line “Summer School Application”. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact us at the same email address.

## APPLICATION DEADLINE

**The final deadline for submissions is June 1, 2025.** We have a limited number of spots available, with **25 positions**. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Selected participants will be notified as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for travel arrangements and planning. Non-selected participants will also be notified accordingly.

## CERTIFICATION

Upon successful completion of the Kuma International Summer School, participants will receive a certificate of attendance.



## ABOUT KUMA INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 2018 in Sarajevo by Dr. Claudia Zini, Kuma International is a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching future generations how to use the arts to explore and address the profound impacts of war and genocide on individuals. Central to this mission are themes of reconciliation and healing, with a particular focus on post-war environments like Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through educational programs, workshops, exhibitions, and collaborations with local and international artists, scholars, and institutions, Kuma fosters dialogue and understanding across cultures and regions affected by conflict.

Kuma's team of educators includes survivors of war and genocide as well as former refugees who bring first-hand experiences of conflict, which they process through various artistic mediums such as exhibitions, films, and performances. Their work has inspired hundreds of participants in Kuma's educational activities, encouraging them to share their war memories, confront trauma, and embark on their own artistic initiatives.

Since 2018, Kuma has successfully organized seven editions of the Summer School in various locations across Bosnia and Herzegovina. The program has attracted over 175 participants from across the country, the Western Balkans, Europe, North America, and Australia. Kuma's reach has also extended to the Bosnian diaspora, with many eager to reconnect with their homeland and learn about its artistic scene.

The school is held annually in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as other cities across the country. Sarajevo, which endured a nearly four-year brutal siege during the Bosnian War, offers a distinctive and inspiring setting for our program. The city has become a symbol of resilience and defiance, with art and culture continuing to thrive despite the destruction surrounding it.



## **DR. CLAUDIA ZINI**

Dr. Claudia Zini is an art historian and curator and is the founder and CEO of Kuma International. Originally from Italy, Claudia moved to Sarajevo in 2015, where she has dedicated herself to exploring the intersections of art, memory, and healing in post-war contexts. Holding a PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, Claudia has extensive experience in curating, teaching, and writing on contemporary art. Recognized for her commitment to social engagement and cultural diplomacy, Claudia was recently awarded the prestigious Order of the Star of Italy for her contributions to strengthening ties between Italy and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **DR. STEPHENIE YOUNG**

Dr. Stephenie Young is a professor of Comparative Literature in the English Department and Senior Faculty Research Fellow for the Salem State University (Massachusetts USA) Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. She completed her M.A. and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the State University of New York, Binghamton and her B.A. in Art History from California State University, Long Beach. Her research focuses on her combined interests in art and writing about trauma and memory in modern conflict and post-conflict regions. She has published extensively on topics related to (former) Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe, Latin American (Argentina, Chile) and the nation of Georgia, concentrating on how traumatic material culture, often considered evidence in legal and social terms, is used to create visual narratives that shape memory politics. She is also a practicing photographer and a curator.





Thank you for your application!  
We appreciate your interest.♥