In many countries, legacies of war, colonialism, genocide and oppression return again and again to dominate contemporary culture, politics and society. The controversies surrounding traumatic pasts can shape policy, make or break governments, trigger mass demonstrations, and even spark violent confrontation. These pasts also inspire creative means by which the past is remembered, remade and challenged.

This, the third issue of the *Open Arts Journal*, explores the theme of traumatic pasts and their complex and often dramatic influences on the present day, bringing to the foreground the rich visual and creative responses to such pasts that issue among artists.

The collection derives from a major knowledge exchange project that focused on a two-day event (Museum of Ethnology, Vienna/Weltmuseum Wien, 2012) sponsored by the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA), European Science Foundation. The project drew together individuals from the arts and heritage sectors and the wider public beyond academia – a diverse range of creative practitioners, including artists and photographers, curators, cultural policy-makers, and academics.

The collection includes clickable links to film footage of authors’ presentations and audience discussion.

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www.open.ac.uk/Arts/disturbing-pasts
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