

# Estonian Art





# On Art Book Publishing

This issue of Estonian Art focuses on the phenomena of art book publishing in Estonia. The rise of independent book publishers run by and for the artistic community has become a notable trend in how contemporary Estonian art and design is conceptualized and distributed both locally and internationally. From the Lagemik Bookshop in the yard of the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia in Tallinn to ;paranoia publishing group ltd's bookshop in Tartu Art Museum—art publishers in Estonia has reconfigured the current cultural climate. We trace the lifeline of art publication from concept and design to the publishing house floor. The story of art book publications and independent publishing in Estonia is told by eight authors. Marika Agu talks to Kiwa about ;paranoia publishing and considers the effects of ;paranoia publishing group ltd. Ott Kagovere writes about Lagemik and graphic design in Estonia. Martin Rünk talks to the editors of the multi-media publication project New Material and New Number. Andreas Trossek, editor of Estonia's oldest art magazine, talks about KUNST.EE and the digital turn and Laura Kuusk and Pascale Riou speak about the Side Effects book and projects. There is a photo essay by Liina Siib on Tallinn Book Printers and artwork by Triin Tamm.

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# *;paranoia— See Where It Takes You*

The heyday of institutionally promoting creative industries has passed in Estonia, and among its effects we can find interesting outcomes at the intersection of visual arts and publishing. Contemporary artists have been compelled to acquire market vocabulary, tools and reasoning, and ;paranoia publishing group is an example, although an ironic one.

;paranoia publishing group was founded by the multimedia artist Kiwa in 2014. Its brand reproduces the aesthetic of a global corporation, creating the impression of an elitist cultural product. Indeed, its logo seems to have spread all over the world—Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, Kolõvan (an ancient name for Tallinn), Paris and Tokyo—with its head-office apparently in Tallinn. ;paranoia insists on providing the literary market with the most abnormal texts, intending “to achieve consumer satisfaction and destruction of reality”.

;paranoia focuses on experimental literature. One of its goals is to produce a sense of estrangement in language and to deliberately challenge what is familiar. Starting with their name: instead of referring to the psychological condition “paranoia”, it derives from the Fenno-Ugric words para (absolute) and noid (shaman/stalker). Aside from producing intriguing works

of literature, the publishing house positions itself as part of the performance art scene, creating impressive shows for each book launch.

;paranoia is seemingly run by a number of high-ranking directors (managing, general, creative, art and a director of the board of directors), as well as several heads of departments (n0rmc0re, columnists, translation, AV solutions, personnel, photo and manuscripts). At the top sits the president of the corporation: Dr. M. Valdemar. To the general public, he's known as Paavo Matsin, a member of the experimental literature group 14 NÜ, which was active in the mid-1990s in Estonia.

In the same vein as 14 NÜ, ;paranoia publishing group's product presentations are spectacular events, with emphasis on attractive performances instead of just reading texts to audiences. At the inauguration of ;paranoia and the presentation of their “Anthology of Non-Existent Books”, Dr. M. Valdemar conducted an alchemical ritual. On many occasions, ;paranoia hijacks some bigger event, for example the opening of the 16th Tallinn Print Triennial at KUMU. This strategy guaranteed a large audience, including the Minister of Culture, which would otherwise require huge communication and advertising efforts.



The launch of Neon Black (Neonmust), a magazine of fictional tabloid articles, represents the other end of their agenda. The event was promoted through yellow journalism and was attended by local socialites, which is an exceptional achievement for a publishing house of experimental literature. In its press release, Neon Black was described as a new international trend magazine, which “is now accessible also to the Estonian reader”. Actually, the magazine had never been published abroad though ;paranoia’s website refers to the non-existent product through fictional cover designs. But, who cares? What’s important here seems to be the desire to play with the norms of capitalist consumer society and induce desire through appearance. Creating a glitzy image for oneself is common nowadays; people are famous for being famous, for no apparent reason.

It is not possible to find the edition number or the year of publishing on Neon Black’s cover, so its sustainability is not guaranteed. The idea of a tabloid rag is created, producing everything around it, except for the magazine itself. The texts inside are fictional, although inspired by real-life events. For example the article “Mel Kaldalu osutus SNOWDENIKS” [Mel Kaldalu turned out to be SNOWDEN] refers to the media-trickster and political activist Meelis Kaldalu, who stole a computer from the parliament building in 2013.

One shouldn’t judge a book by its cover, but it is evident that the majority of ;paranoia products (27 works released so far) are distinctive because of their clinically clean layout and occasionally toxic neon colours. The laconic style attracts with its lack of pretentiousness. The products are designed by the noted graphic designer Tuuli Aule, with whom Kiwa started co-operation back in 2004, when he published his first book *Roboti tee on nihe / Salatühik*. (The way of the Robot is the Shift / Secret Void).

Aule has managed to create a signature style for a large variety of products. To illustrate the scope, there is a colouring book (*TKUN ORHA PNUL* by M. Kleis and R. Jakapi), post-cards (by H. Hütt and E. Määrsepp), a music album (“Memorial”, by Cubus Larvik), a magazine (Neonmust), a reference book (the 1st volume of *A List of Every Band Ever*, by Celer Tambre), a book of verse with accompanying CD (“Sulgunud ruum”, by Joanna Ellmann and Kiwa), along with rather normal textbooks, although there’s nothing normal about their content. ;paranoia is inter-

ested in authors who are not attractive to mainstream publishers and whose manuscripts have been rejected (e.g. *Valegiid* by T. Novek), or who don’t intend to publish their texts in the first place (e.g. “Psaiko” by Psaiko). The latest issue of the so-called Beloved Classics series is by R. Velbaum, a notorious situationist, whose aphorisms wouldn’t have come to the surface from the underground club scene of Tallinn without the initiative of ;paranoia publishing.

In this regard, Kiwa works as the PR manager for experimental art and literature, bringing readers to unknown phenomena. The large network of people whom he has gathered in the functioning of ;paranoia publishing guarantees its unpredictability. Even though the publishing house has a seat for a president, this is rather symbolic. In reality ;paranoia publishing is lead by incidentalism: every member of the so-called corporation may shape market relations. Indeed, ;paranoia’s slogan, “see where it takes you”, delivers on its promise: all that one has to have is curiosity and a sense of irony.

## Marika Agu Interview with Kiwa

MARIKA AGU

What is ;paranoia that other publishing houses are not?

;paranoia

**;paranoia publishing is a metamedium. besides producing printed matter, we deterritorialize every single phenomenon in the broad field that connects text production and consumption, usage of language, words, letters and punctuation marks, the imperative notion of literature and ego-centred narrative techniques, the post-market situation, the current indie-publishing wave and books as tactile multiple artefacts (we do exclusive small editions, usually from 50 to 500). we value the self-filling of the text, and question the established hierarchies of meaning within the semiosphere.**

**instead of a homogenetic perspective, we model a space of dynamic interpretations on the polysemic horizon at a certain level of different and distinguishable structural, material and political apparatuses.**

we function as a black square, as a gateway to untitled experiences and as a network of cognitonauts.

MA Your co-operation with the designer Tuuli Aule began back in 2004 when she designed your book *Roboti tee on nihe / Salatühik (The Way of the Robot is The Shift / A Secret Void)*, which is very unconventional in form and content: the text is ordered in a way that it can be read in an infinite number of ways. Could you describe the design strategy you have applied for ;paranoia products?

;p possibly the most insane content in the most clinical, minimal, rigid, normative, conventional book-like form possible.

to give power back to the text, create imagery without visuals.

the shapes of the books are inspired by geometric figures to underline the contrast between the streamlined shape of the body and the geometric shape of the book. reading comfort is guaranteed by the unique design, with an emphasis on comfort and ergonomics. as the books adapt so smoothly to the body's shape, they feel like part of one's body.

MA Besides the distinctive design, what other elements have you applied in the branding of the publishing house? What's the role of the "para-twins" and the writer's "isolator"?

;p theisolatorandtwinsplaycentralrolesasthemascotsof;paranoiapublishingnotbecauseitwameant to be so, but because our clients love them, which confirmsthehumanoidpattern.likepavlov'sbitchgazingintotarkovsky'smirrorontheplanetsolaris.epic contact with the mysterious stranger.

thetwinessymbolizethecognitiveshiftinpatternrecognition.identificationas"becomingsomething"and the transpersonal dimension.

thetwinsarelikedynamicprocessesinagivenspace-time.tohaveacognitiveexperience,rhythmpatterns are necessary. all life, which can be observed as a certainmedium,isdeterminedbythetimingofenergy.rhythmicpatternsarethedivisionofenergy.brain-wavesynchronizationoccursforthesamereason.

theisolatorisapersonalwhitecubeforproductive alienation. cutting off outside stimuli is a perfect conditionwherethemindexperienceshevoidand startshallucinating.theisolatorismodelledafterhugo gernsbeck's prototype from 1925.

MA What'stheimport-exportstrategyof;paranoia?Which writersandartistsdoyougenerallychoosetopublish and what is the target group for them?

;p ;paranoiapublishinggrouppltd.isamajorinternationalpublisher,providingstatisticallythemosabnormal texts in the contemporary literary market.

asanagency,weofferplatforms,contextsandprofessional servicesforauthors:production,distribution and promotion.

we provide our clients with carefully selected textual operations:

- the most psychotic transborder dataflows
- irreversiblyimmanence-crossingdeterritorialization
- abreakbeatofmeta-meaningsandhallucinatingsycho-geographies
- experimentalandnon-creativeliterature,printed matter and text art.

ouraimsareresponsibleaction,consumersatisfaction and the destruction of reality.



# Lugemik: Books That Speak Volumes About Themselves

What does it mean to publish a book? This question is both the most childish and the most serious of questions. The childish part is asking questions about the obvious. Publishing a book means designing it, binding it, printing and selling it. What more is there to ask!?! But one can see this question as childish only when one's relation to publishing is trivial. The seriousness comes in when one actually meditates on the question. In this case, the question is as perplexing as the meaning of life itself.

I now offer you a small challenge. Step into a nearest bookshop, grab the first book and try to figure out if the relationship of the publisher towards the act of publishing is trivial or serious. The nearest bookshop for me is the Lugemik Bookshop in Tallinn, which is open during the summer on the premises of the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (EKKM). I step in and the first book that I reach for, Anu Vahtra's Untitled, published by the Lugemik publishing initiative, is perplexing. The dust jacket of the book is a huge folded black and white photograph. Some of the pages are not cut open and they make the reader struggle or play (depending on the person) with the pages a little to see the pictures and information fully.

The book is 95% percent photos. Many of them are shown only partially and lack explanations. Nevertheless, the book is fascinating. It speaks in code and it invites the reader to decipher. Most importantly, it was made with care, precision and the utmost attention to detail.

We might think that such an approach is common among publishing houses, but Lugemik is in the minority internationally and a rarity in Estonia. It was founded by two friends: Indrek Sirkel, a graphic designer and Anu Vahtra, an artist and a photographer, who had studied together in the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in the Netherlands. After graduating in 2007, they set out to work as freelancers, while teaching in the Estonian Academy of Arts graphic design department. They had worked together on various projects and publications, but the initiative to start publishing grew out of frustration. They had collaborated with various museums and galleries and were surprised by how little most of these institutions paid attention to the process of publishing an exhibition catalogue. Most saw it as a tradition, something that had always accompanied an exhibition, and thus never asked the question "why publish?" or "what should/could the

role of a publication be in the context of an art exhibition?” The process of publishing a catalogue was mostly isolating, many people working on it, but doing their work separately. The initiative to start Lugemik was exactly the opposite: to bring all the people involved in publishing a book (writer, designer, artist, photograph etc.) into close collaboration and instead of just doing it, thinking through why to do it in the first place and what would be the perfect means of execution. For them the question “why publish a book?” was of utmost importance.

Thus in 2010 the Lugesmik publishing initiative was established and ever since they have published an outstanding collection of books and other printed matter. In the autumn of 2015 a third member, Laura Toots, joined the gang and through her initiative Lugesmik has moved beyond publishing only printed matter. For instance in the spring of 2016 they represented Marge Monko in the alternative art fair Popposition in Brussels and produced her new performance.

In six years, close to 50 items have been published. These are publications that do not function as mere documentations of artists’ work, but stand out as art objects themselves. Some might consider this approach pretentious, because it puts too much emphasis on the form of the book: “A good book should be neutral in form, so that the content of the book stands out!” But this is too narrow a philosophy for Lugesmik. For them the form of a book can never be truly neutral and so, instead of trying to make the form of the book invisible, they use it to emphasize their motives. The book by Anu Vahtra (mentioned above) looks like a puzzle to a bystander, but this approach is most suitable for her art. Another good example is the book “Shimmer on the Surface”, published in 2012 and made in collaboration with the artist Neeme Klm. The book is a thick, hardcover book with pitch-black pages and nothing else. This book can be seen as a “traditional” artist’s book, but also as a work of art, as it was exhibited as such in Neeme Klm’s exhibition.

These are only two examples of the whole corpus of Lugesmik, which is driven by a conceptual agenda: to publish books with all participants in close collaboration. This statement is simple enough, but it has far-reaching consequences. The process of publishing becomes egalitarian and the final product, the actual book, is egalitarian as well. It shows us that the form and the content of the book are equally important

and that the form of the book can be and quite often is as communicative as the content itself. Quite often these books are not just anonymous bystanders. They constantly talk about themselves through small but utterly important design decisions. They speak through carefully chosen papers, binding and printing techniques, fonts and presentation of imagery. The books remind us of what they are—printed matter—and through this tender, but constant reminder, we come to appreciate the format of the book.

While actively publishing books by Estonian artists, they also promote them abroad through various book fairs: the New York Art Book Fair, Friends With Books (Berlin), Offprint (Paris and London), the Bergen Art Book Fair (Norway) and One Thousand Books (Kopenhagen). But promotion is a two-way street, at least for Lugesmik, and while promoting Estonian art abroad, they also introduce foreign art and various printed matter from other small publishing houses to Estonian audiences through the Lugesmik Bookshop.

The bookshop was opened in 2013 and has since functioned as an important venue in the Estonian graphic design scene, hosting various events and book launches. Nobody knows how Sirkel, Toots and Vahtra manage to keep this initiative going, while at the same time pursuing individual careers as a designer (Sirkel) and artists (Toots and Vahtra), but the important thing is that Lugesmik exists and keeps on producing exciting work.



Graphic designer Will Holder hosting Marcel Duchamp’s 128th birthday at Lugesmik Bookshop for the participants of Asterisk Summer School 2015

Neeme Kūlm "Shimmer of the Surface". Photo: Anu Vahtra



Marge Monko's book "Don't Wind It Up, Turn It On", which is part of the performance with the same name. Photo: Anu Vahtra



# Notes

on



New

# Number

Flickering outdoor candles guide people inside the freshly renovated Kultuurikatel, the creative hub situated in the historical Tallinn Power Plant building. The door at the foot of the 90 meter red-brick chimney leads through a labyrinth of corridors to a windowless concrete hall, where everyone is given a reflective mask and the occasional nibble of cotton candy. This is the presentation of the second issue of an art-project/magazine with a shifting name, identity and editorial board.

The people behind the project are young art writers and graphic designers with a common Estonian Academy of Arts background. For this year's issue, the co-editors of the magazine are, in alphabetical order: Madli Ehasalu, Marten Esko, Viktor Gurov, Eva-Erle Lilleaed, Evelyn Raudsepp, Brigita Reinert and Eda Tuulberg. "We try to maintain a non-hierarchical work environment. Everyone brings new ideas to the table and weighs in on making decisions," the team explained, in a group interview.

The goal of the project is to address the question of experimental art writing, as not much is to be found in Estonia. "We try to encourage writers to be more experimental and playful with the format and visual appearance of texts. If one takes one's own writing as an art form in itself, that might act as a catalyst for

changes in art writing. So in that sense we could say that we are interested in authors' texts, compared to say cultural journalists texts' or critics' texts or just texts." And they have done exactly that by experimenting with ways of writing and presenting texts.1

The first Estonian language only issue called *Uus Materjal* (New Material), was an impressive custom-made six-kilo concrete box containing texts and art objects tackling the topic of new materialism and the return of materiality, with contributions from art writers, philosophers, engineers, designers and artists. It was a phenomenon when it came out in 2014. Not only was it a collector's item, but it also managed to conceptually link its form and content into a seamless whole. "Both of our issues fall between being a magazine and an art object. Instead of being a publishing house or an art collective (or alternating between the two), we could describe ourselves as a project-based creative editorial team" said the editors.

After the very successful first issue, they have come out with a new English–Estonian bilingual instalment, appropriately entitled *Uus Number! / New Number!*, continuing the project with the topic of communication, hype and populism in contemporary art and culture. Again, more than just an art maga-

zine it's also a carefully conceptualized object with a design that is in dialogue with the previous issue. In stark contrast to the heavy concrete box issue of *New Material*, the new issue *New Number* looks like a half metal foil half translucent bubble of air—a publication heat-sealed in a plastic bag filled with air.

The topic of materialism is brought home and works off of the Marxist perspective of creating added value by communication and hype, and focusing—in a figurative manner—on the air surrounding the product. The air is just a symbol and should not be read in a judgemental way. It's there; it's the core of the thing. Commerce is everywhere and the field of art and culture is no exception. The measures taken to succeed, to achieve goals, to reach an audience, can all be described in terms of branding, marketing, communication and public relations work. Art is made to be communicated.

In an interview with Tallinn Television, Evelyn Raudsepp, one of the editors of the magazine, wearing a mask, talked about a short story written by the Dutch art critic and gallerist Kitty van Leeuwen that is included in the current issue. The story is about an important exhibition opening, with the entire international art scene present. After wine, gossip and professional networking, the audience is given masks with reflecting surfaces and finally shown into the exhibition space. To their amazement, all of the rooms are empty except for the last one, where they find a sculpture covered with the same kind of reflective material as their masks. The fable-like story polemicizes the tendency of the professional art world for constant navel-gazing. Repeated in real life at the *New Number!* launch, it was a joke on everyone present, with masked people from the local art community inadvertently fulfilling the prophecy.

Aside from the overall concept, *New Number!* is an interesting piece of critique and analysis of the local art world, reflecting on the rapid professionalization of art and culture management in Estonia. Interviews with some of the key players in the Estonian art scene reveal questions they are dealing with in order to build up a support network for developing artists' careers in the international art world.

In our pragmatic world, only art that has visibility is appreciated. Art management and communication have become central parts of the contemporary art

world, as most of the writers have emphasized in their writings. In helping artists gain international recognition, it takes a group effort to spread the word and create leverage. With a country the size of Estonia, it has always been a question of how to become part of the larger art scene and art market, how to gain visibility and credibility. This can be achieved only through professional contacts and a long-term strategy. A few cases emerge from interviews and articles that embody the recent success stories of “breaking through”.

One of the most notable cases is the Temnikova & Kasela Gallery, which has had an unparalleled impact on the presence of Estonian artists in the international art market. For the gallerist Olga Temnikova, last year was particularly successful, with the unprecedented amount of international media coverage Kris Lemsalu and her installation/performance *Whole Alone 2* received following the Frieze Art Fair 2015 in New York.

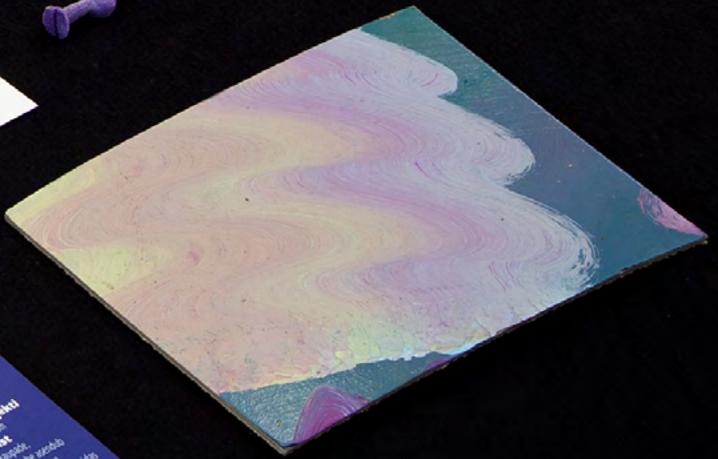
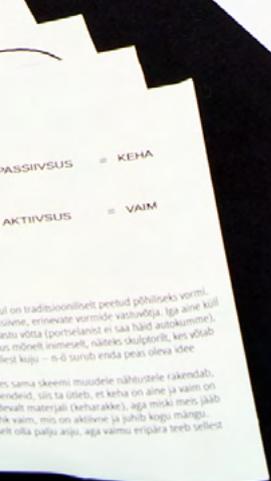
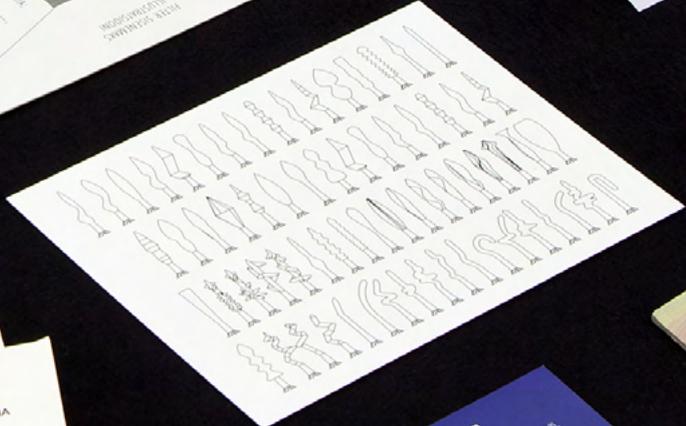
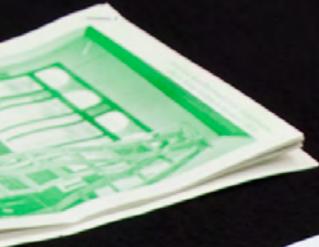
Another PR success story involves the giant megaphones installed in a forest in southern Estonia, also in 2015. It was a school project carried out by the students of the Interior Architecture Department of the Estonian Academy of Arts under the supervision of Hannes Praks. In *New Number!*, Triin Männik shares her experience of doing PR for the project, which went viral and ended up receiving unprecedented publicity, from specialised blogs to big international media outlets.

“We have started the research process for the theme of the next issue,” said the editors of the magazine when I inquired about the next issue. With just two issues under its belt, the project is still taking baby steps, but by generating fresh ideas and presenting them in unconventional ways, *New Material* and *New Number!* have proved to be a promising start in pushing the limits of art writing in Estonia.

*The full interview with the editorial team of New Number! is available on the Estonian Art website [estonianart.ee](http://estonianart.ee)*

1 This approach to art publication is inspired by the legendary US multimedia magazine *Aspen* published by Phyllis Johnson between 1965–1971, with a total of eight issues. *Aspen* was a conceptual publication delivered in a box containing booklets, sound recordings, posters and postcards. Each issue had a new designer and editor – among them Andy Warhol, Dan Graham and George Maciunas. The digitalized content is available on UbuWeb at [www.ubu.com/aspen](http://www.ubu.com/aspen).





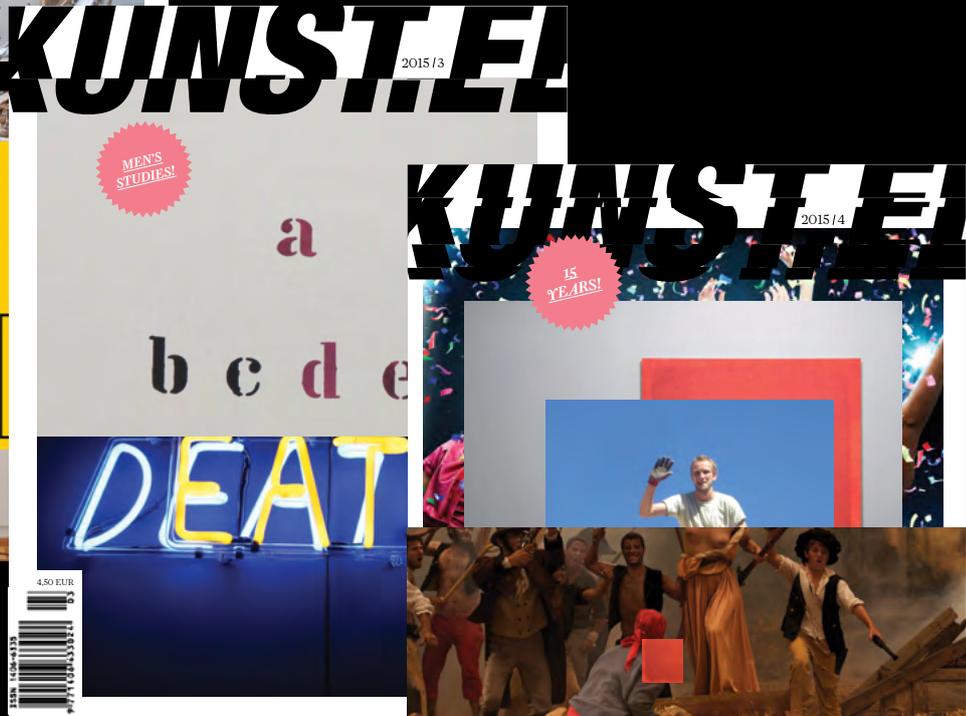
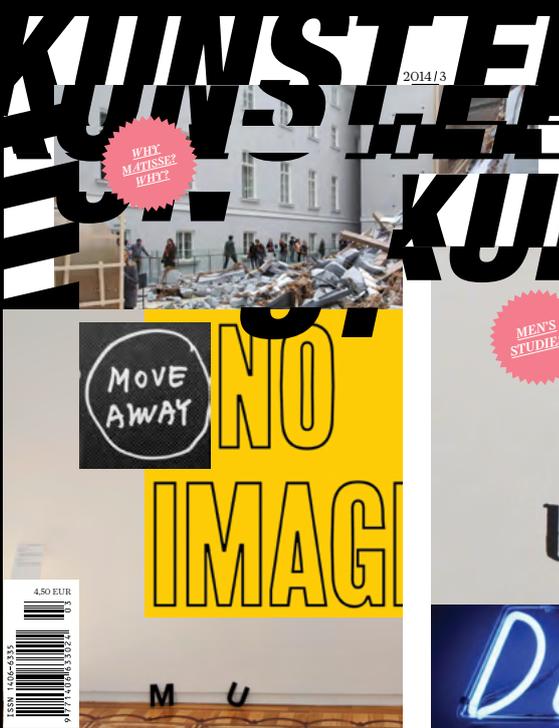
# *Art Journals and Magazines after the Digital Turn. The KUNST.EE Example.*

This story goes a long way back, some twenty five years at least. I remember it was some time in the early 1990s, when I was a preteen and taking my first bold steps at becoming a music lover and a record collector, when I went to the then biggest electronics store in Tallinn. I inquired whether I could buy a record player and how much it would cost me. The store clerk began to laugh. I remember him laughing so much that he almost had tears in his eyes. He even called his colleagues from the back of the store to see this nerdy freak, this four-eyed chubby boy that I used to be when I was eleven or twelve years old, in order to spit out the simple and cruel truth: “He wants, ha-ha-hah, to buy a record player! They stopped producing those years ago; haven’t you heard? Ha-ha-hah!”

I gave up, but the hunt was not over. A week later I had purchased an old record player, via a newspaper ad, at a rock-bottom price. Some years later, thanks to

the escalation of the DJ culture that really took off in Estonia during the 1990s, I sold that player, earning more than triple what I’d originally paid for it. I’ve never gone back to that big electronics store, mind you. Those dudes clearly didn’t know which way the wind was blowing. They were all about the status quo, i.e. they were lazy and they were superficial. And that isn’t kosher, as any of the representatives of any sub or nerd culture will tell you.

Still, this story needs some background. The beginning of the nineties was all about cassette tapes in Estonia. Music lovers recorded songs off the radio and scribbled down information on songs and performers onto cassette cases by hand. Also, pirate cassettes, mainly of Polish origin, were sold at semi-legal markets (that have now become totally legal supermarkets) and even newsstands, alongside cigarettes and bus tickets. Official import CDs were sold at music



stores, true, but kept under lock and key, as if they were jewellery and, considering what these “luxury” products cost in Estonia back then, it’s no wonder. The digital MP3 format, which turned the global music industry upside down at the end of the decade, still belonged to the realms of science-fiction back then, simply because you could only dream about a permanent internet connection and a home computer in the early 1990s in Estonia. I tell you, I’m not an old man yet, but it was a very different world and a very different Estonia back then (so excuse me if I sound like I’m sixty-four when I’m only thirty-six).

The point is that no-one knows how the future is going to unravel. Every time I hear someone predict the future is “going to be completely digital”, I feel that these people—without question very smart people—are more likely describing the present. The present is digital. I can concur with that. However, as someone who remembers a time without smartphones and Android tablets, Windows, Gmail, Facebook, Wikipedia or various iGadgets, I can honestly say that human life on planet Earth will not cease to exist if some global businesses decide, for whatever unexpected or freakish reason, to turn to real-estate or banking instead of information technology. Once you’ve earned your first million, your next business adventure simply needs to be more profitable: that’s how capitalism works. The gamers inside the anthroposphere are simply too good at the adaption game; we all know that in our guts. You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows: that’s the truth. The weatherman can only predict, or state the status quo: the status quo of “the future”. Yet the truth is that we don’t know what will really happen. Especially when it comes to those tiny little things—books, records, art etc.—that really don’t seem to matter in the general adaption game but that still mould us into who we really are.

As most of my readers have already guessed, I chose vinyl – or the story of “the rise and fall and rise again” of vinyl – to illustrate my point for a reason. As the current Editor-in-Chief of the art quarterly KUNST.EE, which is all about contemporary art in Estonia in printed form, I believe that art journals and magazines all around the world are currently experiencing a somewhat analogous, and indeed painful transmission phase, where all seems to be lost to digital platforms. Indeed digital platforms: web pages, blogs and Facebook walls are free for the reader, and for the sake of the argument, let’s ignore hidden advertisements here, O.K? Whereas, you still have to “physically” buy

a professionally edited art magazine/journal from a newsstand or get a subscription in order to read it. Why should you?

Similarly, there’s no point in buying a record either: nowadays you could simply download the music. Yet people do buy them, for whatever freakish reason, and records haven’t got lost in the dustbin of history, as many have predicted. It could be that it all comes down to the tangible presence of the body and the physical world and also the basic need “to historicize” ourselves. The clutter around us always reminds us of the life we’ve lived and the time we’ve spent here on Earth. Keep the important stuff; chuck the rest. That’s what they keep telling us. But we do love ourselves, don’t we? We don’t like the idea of a life gone wrong, especially if it’s ours. Eventually, everyone grows tired of a completely empty room: there’s a difference between a cosy apartment and a vampire’s coffin, right?

I’ve often joked that printing and distributing an art journal/magazine in the current digital age is a lot like selling records. In fact, we actively sell each new issue of KUNST.EE for a limited period, and eventually all the print files become available on our web archive for free downloading. So, yeah, it’s basically free. You can easily Google us to make sure. You can buy or pre-subscribe to “the vinyl version”, but you can also wait for six months or so and get it for free. Your call. However, getting your hands on a fresh copy right after it’s published is way cooler: it smells like...”napalm in the morning, it smells like victory!” All the bibliophiles and melomaniacs will understand my black humour here, no doubt.

True, most of the record stores that ruled the world in the 1970s and 1980s have gone bankrupt. Likewise, most print runs of art journals and magazines have faced catastrophic declines in recent years, and some of them have closed down completely. Yet the biggest brands are still out there, right? What does that tell us? The rise and fall of the Gutenberg galactic and the new digital age, blah-blah-blah...? Well, I think it says that the basic rules of the game haven’t changed at all. I might be wrong but as far as I can see it’s still a very big thing to an artist to be reviewed in a renowned art journal/magazine. If it’s also online, as a sharable link, all the better, but that’s just a bonus. No doubt, subscribers and readers also trust the brand better if a considerable amount of money has been spent on printing each new issue. We’re all smart here, and can all do the math. And yes, you can actually read KUNST.EE

from cover to cover (as a curated entity, if you like); each issue contains editorials, essays, reviews and news; and it's also professionally edited (i.e. before it's out there, people get paid to read it and point out the mistakes). Professionally edited: does that ring any bells? I hope it does. There's a difference between a published opinion and a professional opinion, mind you, even in the digital age. And, needless to add, there's the context. No Twitter "tweets" or blog entries can get the same job done: I can tell you that.

I won't fool you: you won't get the "full picture" on Estonian art, but then again who does? You'll get a general collectively analysed overview of what has been going on here delivered by critical minds keen on establishing the truth, and nothing but the truth. And if you don't care about the Estonian art world generally and you won't acknowledge the presence of KUNST.EE in the field, well good luck with that because the predecessor of KUNST.EE was the almanac *Kunst*, established in the 1950s, and our current quarterly format simply continues this tradition by providing "the whole picture" as best we can. And as life experience shows, our art experts' opinions still matter, at least in the long run.

However, the bitter truth of it is you can't really make good money out of publishing art criticism in Estonia, but at least you can get by, and that's the most important thing. It's not that people don't care generally about contemporary art in Estonia; it's just that there are so few of us. The numbers, it all comes down to the numbers. The average number of subscribers that KUNST.EE gets nowadays is about two or three hundred (plus the few subscribers abroad, mostly interested nearby art institutions), plus what we manage to sell in local newsstands. However, in a country of about one million plus, that's not bad for a strictly "targeted product".

This is also way more than in the nineties and the noughties, when the previous almanac *Kunst* made its way to the quarterly format, clearly shown by the ".ee" suffix (i.e. Estonia). Yes, our print run during the Soviet years was slightly bigger (approximately 2,000 copies then compared to 1,000 copies now). Yet, back then we didn't have the freedom of the Internet: no-one really knows how many people have actually read the previous issues of the almanac and the quarterly (or did they just download them for the sake of one article?). Plus, nothing compensates for the feeling of actually stacking all of them on your bookshelf, ready

to be browsed and browsed again, when you please: similar to having a proper record collection, don't you think? If the art journal's brand is strong enough in the digital age, the general readership can only grow.

Nowadays, by pre-ordering KUNST.EE, you can count on approximately an astonishing four hundred pages of art criticism and illustrations per year both in Estonian and in English. That's quite a lot of "art talk", both high-brow and low-brow, at least in a small country like Estonia. Needless to say, this publishing ideology goes a long way back: "Being reviewed in a daily Estonian newspaper is nice, but once you get reviewed in KUNST.EE, you get a ticket into Estonian art history", as one famous Estonian artist once told me. I am not sure whether this famous artist was being serious (probably not), but as a trained art historian, I understand completely what was meant by that (I've done my time sitting in libraries, mind you). Needless to say, this places a burden on my shoulders, of which I am fully aware, because it's the truth; nevertheless, it's also "a dream of Napoleon" that I am not fully capable of accepting, no matter how much I get paid (insert smiley face).

How to end this piece? Well, I still collect records. And I still collect art magazines and journals and art books, and pile them on my bookcase. And this bookcase is huge, it's long and wide, and it's a moving company's nightmare. Hey, I guess I'm still the chubby four-eyed nerd that I used to be in my preteens and this is my way to compensate. Nothing's changed, really. And I know there are more people like me out there, both in Estonia and elsewhere. Who like to read art criticism, if it's professionally edited, structured, and formed in specific sentences. Who feel that reading and subscribing to an art magazine/journal is a cool thing to do. Who adore the sight of a bookcase filled with printed matter. Feels a bit privileged in the digital age, right? That's how it's supposed to feel.

Art magazines and journals aren't going anywhere anytime soon. We're simply too accustomed to them. We want someone telling us how it is in the art world, because someone has to. I think art critics are still an integral part of the system, and without them the system we call the art world would simply collapse. And if you disagree, well, see you at some art fair where rich people gather to talk about...anywhere the wind blows.

TBC (02.04-15.04.2014)

1. BUYING/GETTING THE MATERIAL.
2. MAKING A SKETCH
3. RESEARCHING
- 4) Introduction how to install the piece.
- 5) installation & documentation in Grenoble

1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5

RESTRICTIONS:

1. MUST GET INTO THE REFERENCE WORKS (20kg)
2. EVERY PREVIOUS PERSON HAS TO LEAVE BEHIND 15x25 PHOTO OF DONE WORK IN SEALED ENVELOPE AND ONE RESTRICTIVE SENTENCE WRITTEN ON IT.
3. EVERYONE HAS 1 WEEK TO WORK WITH THE PIECE
4. STARTING POINT IS 50€ FOR MATERIALS.
5. PARTICIPANTS MUST NOT SPEAK TO EACH OTHER ABOUT THE CONTENT.



This page  
 "Side Effects" in Grenoble, 2014. Photo: Laura Kuusk

Laura Kuusk (b. 1982) is an artist. Since 2015 she lives in Tallinn and works as an Assistant Professor at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

Pascale Riou (b. 1984) is a PhD student in History of Contemporary Art at Grenoble Alpes University in Grenoble, France.

Laura Kuusk & Pascale Riou

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Translations by Pille Ruus and Mari Volens  
Based on extracts from the book *Side Effects*

# From, To, By, For and With

Some impulses are stronger than we are. I don't mean the need to eat, sleep or—if danger looms—run, and so on, but something that is not directly associated with survival yet which still seems very vital, such as slashing through seemingly impassable, pathless brush armed with only the certainty that precisely this is the right way; intuition is essential in (an artist's) work, and often—in the best case—it's where it all begins. As Gaston Bachelard has noted “an intuition cannot be proven, it has to be experienced,” in *Intuition of the Instant*.<sup>1</sup> Here intuition tells us that the secondary effects of an artistic activity, the by-products, the externalities, can be crucial for a work process or the work of art itself.

Another intuition concerns the fact that banality or daily life are surely more than secondary but they are part of writing the game rules, sometimes forced, sometimes chosen. Yet another concerns the “adventive” (a French term for self-propagating), which, like a weed growing, happens without having been designed, anticipated or intended. The purpose of yet another one is exchange, ricochet as a method of work that gives prominence to the accidental and surprise.

These intuitions feed on assumptions that conditioned invitations to participants of both exhibitions and the working time shared beforehand.

The *Side Effects* project started with an invitation from the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (Eesti Kaasaegse Kunsti Muuseum, EKKM) to donate a work of art to their collection in exchange for a symbolic value. Laura Kuusk was invited to curate an exhibition. From there, the first exhibition in 2013 in EKKM in Tallinn, Estonia was built in collaboration between Pascale Riou, a French art historian and Laura Kuusk, an Estonian artist. They worked together in the Association pour l'Agencement des Activités (AAA, Grenoble). This collective of artists and art historians is committed to the common explorations of artistic activity—an extra job, multiple activities, make-do, choice, the accidental—and *Side Effects* was born out of a willingness to share them with different participants within a personal and informal network.

The first exhibition in EKKM in Tallinn was followed by a second in the former Museum-Library, Showcase

gallery and other venues in Grenoble, France in 2014. In 2015 a book was published as the third part of our project. The book is meant to be a hybrid between a catalogue, a research notebook and an essay; an exhibition space in its own right, as well as a database bringing together around forty participants in the project.

What were the intentions of the project? *Side Effects* was made up of more or less accidental meetings and exchanges. Some of the artists and theorists who were invited to cooperate also participated in the exhibitions, while others were invited especially for the book. Various contributors—art historians, sociologists, critics and artists—were given the opportunity to express themselves through texts, interviews and images. Thus the book includes texts and exhibition outlooks, archives, photographs, plans and notes revealing what we wish to show of the activity. Marten Esko and Anaëlle Taluy return, for example, both in their own way, to the first two parts of the project; Céline Ahond shows some preparatory documents for her performance held in Grenoble; Pierre Courtin's hitherto unpublished drawings that he made alongside his daily activities are shown; Grégory Jérôme speaks of artistic work and its economic aspects, etc.

As an artist and an art historian, the two initiators of the project both had their own methods of working, especially as regards the artists and the making of art. For the artist, the aim was to share some ideas and ways of working alone or in cooperation with colleagues, and feel the points where we connected when it came to work. It was also about trying out various exhibition sites and formats. For the historian, the aim was to experiment with the sensitive and spatial development of hypotheses while working closely with visiting artists and theorists. We wanted to bring together, observe and show artists and ways of doing things, whether modest or demanding, radical or discreet, where work ecology seemed relevant to us in the context of contemporary art. We wanted to give artists an opportunity to work or not work, in shared or private living conditions, in a reduced space-time that could be extended. We wanted to do something together, make-do and let others do.

Even though the project developed within a limited circle, there was no attempt to form a group or a school. The commitment was personal, the “corpus [is] deliberately chosen based on the methods of work that we should value in today's world”, as the

art historian Catherine Strasser claimed for her own research.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it is important to show this side of art, which in many ways seems vital to talk about in the current context. Such issues as work, economics and time are broad, universal themes that emerged from these ways of doing things and the pieces of work shown, through positions of dilettantism, curiosity and discretion, but also collaboration; they help to map the field of contemporary art.

At the beginning of the 21st century, economists are rethinking capitalism and macro- and micro-economic exchanges by integrating the notions of cognitive capitalism and positive externalities. For Yann Moulier Boutang in his *Cognitive Capitalism: A New Great Transformation*, sharing knowledge and skills through Internet networks and new communication technologies helps cognitive capitalism to emerge.<sup>3</sup> The exchange of knowledge and information is faster and more globalized than ever before; moreover, it is free and data sharing is punctual and discreet. In his book, the author focuses on an under-examined component of this system: externalities.

This term refers to the non-premeditated and non-quantified effects of an economic exchange. These effects are either negative externalities or beneficial for both parties, in which case they are called positive externalities. The author concludes with the concept of a pollen society, where nobody is an idle grasshopper or a hard-working ant, as in the fable by La Fontaine, but everyone is a bee who knows how to work and live together, share and act in a way that affects the environment and does so consciously.

*Side Effects* fits comfortably into the context of cognitive capitalism, is an example of positive externalities, tries to facilitate their emergence and examines the relationships between a pollen society and different ways of doing things.

1 Gaston Bachelard. *Intuition of the Instant (L'intuition de l'instant)*. Paris: Gonthier, Bibliothèque Médiations, 1966, p.8.

2 Catherine Strasser. *On Artwork, Observation of Works of Art and Analysis of the Process that Leads Them (Du travail de l'art, Observation des oeuvres et analyse de processus qui les conduit)*. Paris: du Regard, 2006, p.10.

3 Yann Moulier-Boutang. *Cognitive Capitalism: A New Great Transformation (Le capitalisme cognitif, la nouvelle grande transformation)*. Amsterdam: Multitudes/Idées, 2007.



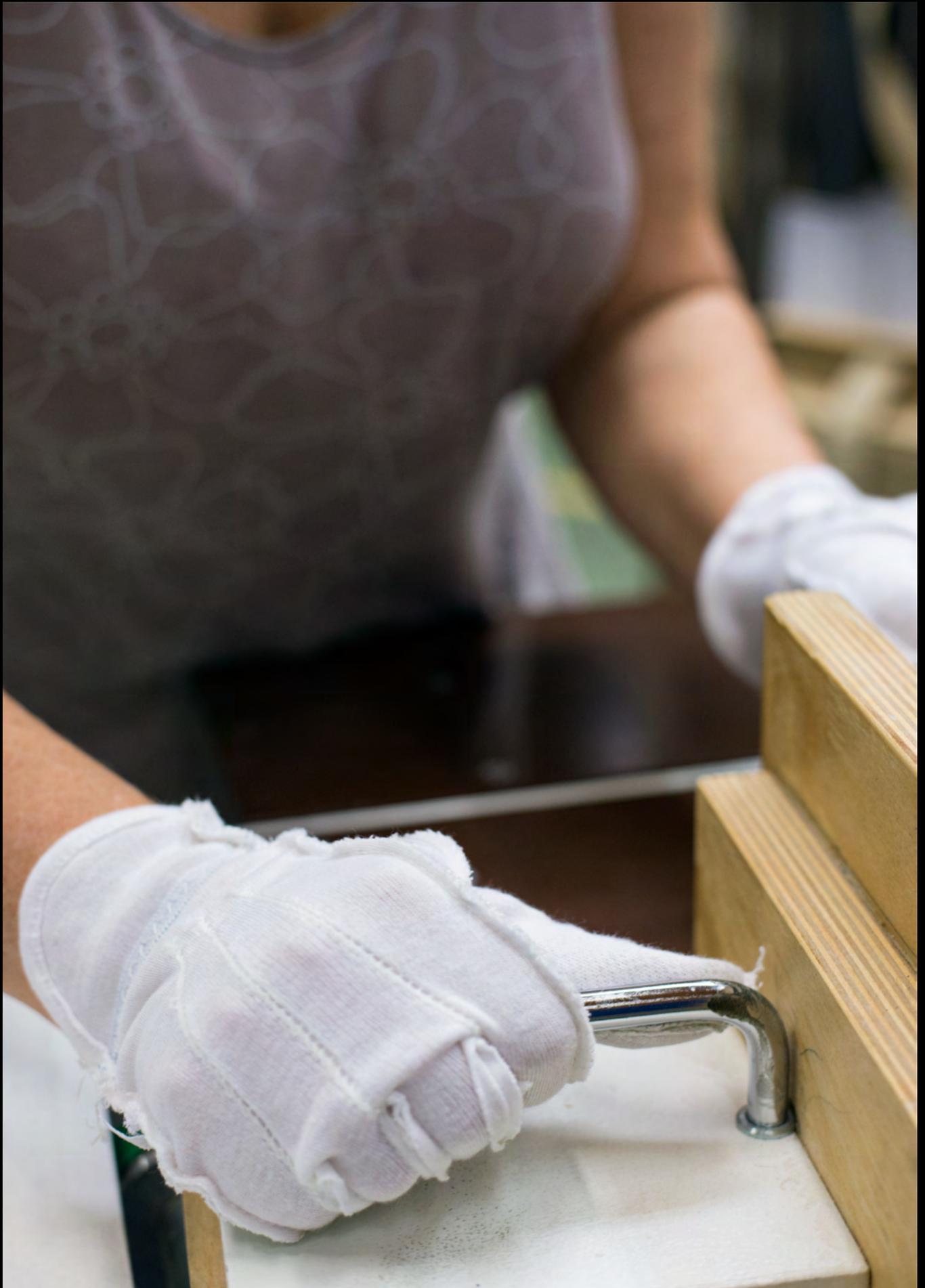
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"Side Effects" in Grenoble, 2014. Photo: Laura Kuusk

# Tallinn Book Printers

Liina Siib (1963) is a visual artist and Professor of Graphic Art at the Estonian Academy of Arts. In 2011 she represented Estonia with "A Woman Takes Little Space" at the 54th Venice Art Biennale.

The building of Tallinn Book Printers (Tallinna Raamatutrükikoda) was finished in 1985 and according to their website it was ‘the first printing house to be built exclusively for printing and binding books’. When I think about them, then the first thing that comes to mind is the people—the always friendly, helpful workers who care about cooperating with publishers and designers. Secondly, the building is always so pristine—not a hint of dust in sight. Also, they have kept their 1980s interior design which has value on its own.

After 1985 when they started their presses there have been several printing turns. In pre-press, printing and post-press. There’s less and less manual labour now. Men stand behind the printing machines, women are mostly in print binding and finishing. You can’t see the long table any more with ladies sitting or standing behind it doing chores that can’t be done with machines. The table is much shorter now and it is used for adding ribbon bookmarks and covers to books.















8 THURSDAY  
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# Petrified Landscapes and Stalinist Impressionism

The exhibition “Romantic and Progressive. Stalinist Impressionism in Painting of the Baltic States in the 1940s–1950s” at KUMU Art Museum was a rare example of a local exhibition focusing fully on art during the Stalinist period.

For a viewer expecting cookie-cutter socialist realist thematic paintings and pompous formal portraits of Soviet leaders and Stakhanovite heroes, the exhibition might have seemed puzzling. Although heavy machinery, factories and red flags were clearly present, a considerable portion of the exhibited works consisted of archetypical, seemingly timeless landscapes and genre paintings carried out in Impressionist techniques and colour schemes. Furthermore, the selection of works and the method of display did not directly imply categories of official vs. non-official art or contradictions.

Therefore, one reviewer seemed genuinely amazed that “The exhibition is surprisingly cheerful /—/ all of those [Stalinist themes] are nearly absent. What we see are flowers blooming in vases, artists painting their loved ones, and seemingly free fishermen on seemingly free

shores.”<sup>1</sup> When I visited the exhibition, I also overheard some visitors sighing “how pretty!” at the paintings, in sheer wonder.

Turning to the margins of a period that has been subject to large generalisations and at times has been ignored is very commendable but does not come without risks. In a review that included the “Stalinist Impressionism” exhibition, Tanel Rander smartly noted that “matter picked out of history’s trash can /—/ can only return in a depoliticized and aestheticized form”.<sup>2</sup> The return of ideologically complex art as purely aestheticized visual material is an apt description of the public reception of “Stalinist Impressionism”.

I would like to change perspectives by turning to the historical context and focusing on the genre of landscape painting, which makes up a big part of the artistic production of the Stalinist time in Estonia. One might imagine that Stalinist Impressionism was a local Baltic or Estonian particularity, indicating a distinct continuation of pre-war traditions. But the acceptable stylistic and thematic “repertoire” during

Richard Uurmaa "Puisse Neemel" (Cape Puisse), 1955



Kristjan Teder "Eesti maastik" (Estonian Landscape), 1947



the 1940s-1950s in Soviet Russia was not that narrow. Also, the common understanding that landscape painting was marginalised due to the officially imposed hierarchy of genres is too simplistic. In the post-war years, Soviet Russian landscape painting was praised as a means of evoking patriotic sentiments and several artists whose works were driven by a kind of rural nostalgia and impressionist colour scheme were accepted and received high honours, such as the Stalin Prize (for example Arkady Plastov in 1946).

Yet throughout the second half of the 1940s the discourse on landscape painting in the local media, the debate over the “landscape issue”, turned extremely vicious. The appropriateness of works of art and artists was decided in reviews published in the press, and in public and closed discussions that accompanied the exhibitions. Art criticism played a crucial role in arguing for or against the ideological and aesthetic appropriateness of works, but was also required to explain the theoretical notions and provide direct guidance to artists. For nearly every strategy used to secure a safe position, a counterargument fitting the same repertoire of Marxist critique could be easily found to undermine or discredit the artist, and thus the critic. An unsettling example is the exhibition of works by Evald Okas, Richard Sagrits and Richard Uutmaa in 1947, and the accompanying discussions. While the artists were accused of depicting agricultural work methods incorrectly, the critics were blamed for subjecting the artworks to unscientific critiques and not giving clear guidelines. That same year, the Estonian artist and professor at the State Applied Art School Boris Lukats, who was gaining influence in the local art-political scene and was soon to become chairman of the Estonian Artists Union, wrote: “It is remarkable that landscape painting is the domain in which the question of Sovietness and non-Sovietness has been treated in the most questionable way up to this very day. /—/ Just recently, during a public discussion in Tartu, someone proclaimed that nowadays landscape is ‘forbidden’(!).”<sup>3</sup>

Local artists implemented a variety of strategies to meet official demands, such as labelling works with ideologically suitable narrative titles, and adding particular elements, such as pylons, machinery, flags and the colour red. Similarly, art criticism employed discursive strategies mainly to find links with the theoretical notions of socialist realism, connecting it with such local pre-war notions as “closeness to nature” or “national (folk) spirit”.

What created growing turmoil and an increasingly paranoid atmosphere was not the narrow or fixed nature of socialist realism and its demands, but the ambiguity and flux inscribed into the system. According to Jaan Undusk, this ambiguity stemmed from the dialectic contradiction evident even in the core formula “truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development” and caused socialist realism to function as a mechanism for the reproduction of constant anxiety and fear in the cultural sphere.<sup>4</sup> According to Boris Groys, the contradictory theoretical notions of socialist realism should be linked with dialectic materialism, which means constantly thinking in terms of the unity of contradiction and paradox.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to acknowledge the absence of a rational logic of suitability, especially in the first part of the 1950s and during the purging “campaigns” (a campaign against formalism and impressionism, and a campaign against anti-patriotic bourgeois nationalists in 1949). From time to time, questionable works somehow “slipped through” and it was possible to prop up positions by using official jargon; in other cases, artists were condemned for no evident reason.

The debate over the “landscape issue” indicates regional differences: the fact that genres, themes and strategies accepted in Moscow or Leningrad were problematic in the peripheral Baltics, where the awareness of the recent territorial occupation was acute. Landscape paintings depicting idyllic rural scenery generated such an anxious response in contemporary criticism because they accurately showed pre-war landscapes, covertly and probably unintentionally pointing to the frailty of the Soviet “presence” in the actual “landscape”.

1 Oll, Sulev. Eesti lill Stalini vaasis. *maaleht.ee*, 04.02.2016 <http://maaleht.delfi.ee/news/lehelood/koik/naitusemulje-est-est-lill-stalini-vaasis?id=73561077>

2 Rander, Tanel. Revisionistid ajaloo prügikasti ümber. *Sirp*, 18.03.2016 <http://www.sirp.ee/s1-artiklid/c6-kunst/revisionistid-ajaloo-prugikasti-umber/>

3 Lukats, Boris. Nõukogude maastikumaalist. *Sirp ja Vasar* 16.08.1947

4 Undusk, Jaan. Sotsialistliku realismi lenduv reaalsus. *Esteetika kui reaalpoliitika riist. – Vikerkaar* 2013, no 6, pp 50–53.

5 Groys, Boris. *The Communist Postscript*. Verso, 2009, p 36.

# Overseas Shopping— A Tale of a Museum Collection

When Jaanus Samma's (b. 1982) exhibition *NSFW—A Chairman's Tale* opened last April at the Museum of Occupations in Tallinn, I had a lengthy discussion about his work with a local journalist who was covering the exhibition for Estonian television. She was curious to know why a Finnish Museum of Contemporary Art (Kiasma) had decided to purchase parts of Samma's large-scale installation, which had premiered at the Estonian Pavilion of the 56th Venice Art Biennale, and what were the main reasons for such a decision. In replying to her question, I found myself stressing the fact that despite the collection policy of my home institution, the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, emphasising the geographical and cultural closeness of Estonia to that of Finland, in the case of the pavilion of Estonia in Venice in 2015, as well as the work of art created for the occasion by Samma, the primary reasons for acquiring the work for Kiasma's collections were related to the high artistic

value and the strength of the content of the work. Despite Samma's work drawing on the incredible history of the relationship between the state and homosexuality in Soviet Estonia, the true strength of the work is still as valid today, as it stresses the brittle position of sexual and gender minorities in contemporary societies.

Although the journalist seemed pleased with my reply, she seemed anxious to ask something more. She started her question by referring to an acquisition that was made some six years earlier, when Kiasma bought Kristina Norman's (b. 1979) large-scale project *After War* (2009) directly after its first presentation at the 53rd Venice Art Biennale. She wanted to know whether it was a custom or a requirement of the museum's acquisition policy to regularly purchase the Estonian presentation at the Venice Biennale for the museum's collection. Feeling tempted to laugh, I told her that, al-



Ene-Liis Semper "Nameless", 2004. Photo: Finnish National Gallery/Petri Virtanen



Jaanus Samma "A Chairman's Tale", 2015. Photo: Reimo Vösa-Tangsoo



Kristina Norman "After-War", 2009. Photo: Finnish National Gallery/Pirje Mykkänen



Tanja Muravskaja "Three Sisters", 2015. Photo: Finnish National Gallery/Pirje Mykkänen

Berit Talpsepp-Jaanisoo "Villu's Portrait", 2015. Photo: Finnish National Gallery/Pirje Mykkänen



though that might seem to be the case, such a rule does not exist in Kiasma's acquisition policy (not even in the case of the Finnish pavilion in Venice), but rather the successive purchases were the result of prominent and successful presentations which managed to convince the museum's acquisition board members and director.

## Expanding Circles, or Sounding the Neighborhood

Though the cases of the acquisitions of the recent works by both Jaanus Samma and Kristina Norman might be a product of serendipity, since the 1990s the acquisition policy of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Finland has focused on the arts of the neighboring areas, namely contemporary art of the Nordic countries, the Baltics and Russia. This was written into the acquisition policy of the museum early on, and it was referred to as "the expanding circles". The new institution, the Museum of Contemporary Art was established in 1990 and the new museum building Kiasma opened eight years later in 1998. It took on the task of contextualizing Finnish contemporary art in its geographical nexus fairly literally. In the 21st century the acquisition policy has become more flexible and better able to meet the needs and transitions of the global and supranational art world.

The collections of the museum are complemented by nearly 100 new art works every year and the international part of the collection is around a fourth of the total number of nearly 8000 works. Though the background institution of the Finnish National Gallery, of which Kiasma is part, along with the Ateneum and Sinebrychoff Art Museums was reformed into a public foundation in 2014. The yearly acquisition budget for the three museums still comes directly from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. Kiasma's share of this sum is annually around 440 000 euros, which clearly does not allow for many purchases of international contemporary art. Most new acquisitions are examples of Finnish contemporary art, but each year a few works by foreign artists are also added to the collections. Acquisitions of foreign art are often made from the museum's temporary exhibitions and its own collection exhibitions or through commissions for new works of art. Decisions are made by the museum's acquisition board, which includes members

of the museum's curatorial team and two external experts. Currently there are two artist members selected by the Finnish Artists' Unions. The board is led by the Museum Director Leevi Haapala, who makes the final decision on all acquisitions.

## Estonian Contemporary Art in Kiasma

Besides Jaanus Samma's and Kristina Norman's recent works, Estonian contemporary art is represented in the collections of Kiasma by examples of 1970s, 80s and 90s works by such artists as Siim-Tanel Annus (b. 1960), Kai Kaljo (b. 1959), Leonhard Lapin (b. 1947), Peeter M. Laurits (b. 1962), Raul Meel (b. 1941), Peeter Mudist (b. 1942), Evald Okas (b. 1915), Jüri Okas (b. 1950) and Tea Tammelaan (b. 1964), and by more recent acquisitions by such artists as Marko Raat (b. 1973), Jaan Toomik (b. 1961), Ene-Liis Semper (b. 1969) and Berit Talpsepp-Jaanisoo (b. 1984). The last time an elaborate search of Estonian and Baltic contemporary art was made was in 2004, when the exhibition project *Faster than History: Contemporary Perspectives on the Future of Art in the Baltic Countries, Finland and Russia* was presented at Kiasma. The project, which was curated by Jari-Pekka Vanhala, was realized in close collaboration with the centres for contemporary art of the target countries (CCA, Tallinn; CAIC, Vilnius; LCCA, Riga; and FRAME, Helsinki), but it never toured through all of them. Invited Estonian artists in the *Faster than History* exhibition were Mari Laanemets & Killu Sukmit (both b. 1975), Herkki-Eric Merila (b. 1964) & Arbo Tammiksaar (b. 1971), Ene-Liis Semper and Mart Viljus (b. 1965). In 2006 Mark Raidpere (b. 1975) took part in the ARS06—Sense of the Real exhibition with his memorable video work *10 Men* (2003). This past winter Tanja Muravskaja's (b. 1978) latest video installation *Three Sisters* (2015) was shown at Kiasma in the *Demonstrating Minds: Disagreements in Contemporary Art* exhibition. In an interview with the Estonian art magazine *Kunst.ee* last year, Kiasma's new Director Leevi Haapala alluded to a coming exhibition project involving all of the Baltic countries. The project is currently in process and the due date is in 2018, so stay tuned!

# A Place Called Home

WiFipedia of Tallinn (2015)\* is a publication that collects, in the manner of a phone book, the names of 23,893 wireless networks located in the capital of Estonia. Using a tool they developed themselves, the artists Varvara Guljajeva (Tartu, 1984) and Mar Canet (Barcelona, 1981) scanned the networks by walking or biking across the city in order to capture, in their own words, “the digital landscape of the city and invisible communication and creativity layer of its inhabitants.” This creativity is expressed in the names of the different Wi-Fi networks, which can be customized by their users, sometimes in order to identify them more easily or simply to make a statement.

In the book, there are names that refer to popular fiction (such as “Skywalker” or “Umbrella\_Corporation”), music (“Pretty\_fly\_for\_WIFI”), brief statements (“Rehab is for quitters” or “Cats are evil... and cute”) and, of course, messages to uninvited users (“NoWifiForYou” or “dontstealmyinternet”). These short but sometimes telling labels provide information about the owners of the networks and also about the neighborhoods where they are located, particularly through the language they use or the presence of Wi-Fi provided by shops, hotels or other businesses. The artists stress that “just by looking at the networks one could say whether it is a business or residential area, a highly populated neighbourhood and/or if there are minority members living there.” By collecting invisible but easily available information from the

streets of Tallinn, Guljajeva and Canet have created an alternative portrait of the city, one that is collectively written by its inhabitants through an unintended use of technology. WiFipedia builds on their previous project Revealing Digital Landscape (2013), in which the artists collected the names and locations of Wi-Fi networks in Seoul (South Korea), producing a similar publication. However, what was then an exploration of a foreign city, motivated by the need to find Wi-Fi spots while away from home, is here an observation of their current place of residence and therefore adopts a different meaning.

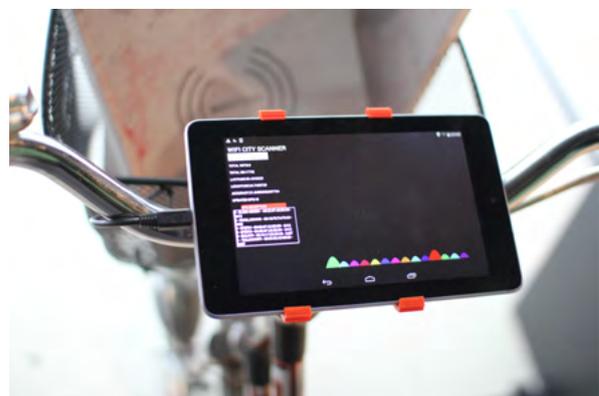
Guljajeva and Canet met in Barcelona (Spain), then moved to Linz (Austria) and have traveled around the world by hopping from one artist-in-residence programme to the next, in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Brazil, South Korea, Poland, Spain and Austria. With such a nomadic lifestyle, it is not surprising that their artistic research has focused on the ubiquity of data networks, the urban space and the constantly shifting sense of place of the individual. The exploration of life in the city is the main subject of artworks such as *The Rhythm of the City* (2011), a set of metronomes that move according to the pace at which content is published on social networks in different cities around the globe; *Binoculars to... Binoculars from...* (2013), an installation produced in the context of the *Connecting Cities* project that lets users watch the streets of a remote city

through a visor that simultaneously projects the image of their eye on a large screen in the city being observed; and Data Tower (2016), a project submitted to the Green Square Library and Plaza of Sydney's public art commission, consisting of a sculpture that displays the current time and the movements of people in the surrounding area. Data flows are used in most of their artworks but are distinctly present and visible in the projects that deal with Wi-Fi networks and those that use data collected from different sources to generate endless rhythmic compositions, as in Speed of Markets (2014), a series of seven metronomes that react to the deals taking place in real time on the main stock markets; as well as The Flux of Sea (2011) and Baltic Sea Radio (2012), two installations that produce a sound score based on the marine traffic in the bays of Palma and Gdansk, respectively. These artworks generate continuous processes that can be understood as visual or auditory renderings of the digital landscape in a certain place. The locative aspect of the artworks is particularly important, since most of them can be considered site-specific or, in a sense, network-specific. While addressing flows of information, locations, people and objects, these projects are also deeply rooted in a sense of place or the concreteness of a solid, static object. This apparent contradiction is actually what defines our being-in-the-world (as Heidegger would put it), in the sense that while we participate in these flows we also need to keep a fixed reference point, whether our current geographical location, the feeling of belonging to a specific place or community, or the identity we have built for ourselves in social networks.

Since they set up their studio in Tallinn, Varvara Guljajeva and Mar Canet have progressively introduced new subjects in their work that focus more specifically on the individual, further exploring direct interaction and self-representation, as well as delving more deeply into the self by addressing emotions. These topics are connected to the main themes that drive their work, as can be seen in Binoculars, where a certain interaction between the person and the city is facilitated. Neuroknitting (2013), a project that transforms brainwave activity into a knitted pattern, introduced their interest in creatively exploring the mind and emotions of the user. This can also be found in Wishing Wall (2014), an interactive installation commissioned by the Google DevArt Project in which visitors can see their wishes transform into butterflies colored by their emotions. Inspired by Dr. Robert Plutchik's wheel of emotions, this form of visualizing

feelings is also applied in the molecular physics experiment Data Drops (2015). Inducing positive emotions, is the goal of Smile (2016), one of the artists' latest projects specifically conceived for Tallinn. This interactive piece consists of a large smiley face icon that lights up when people smile in front of a device that detects the user's facial expression. It was installed in the street during the Tallinn Winter Festival in order to invite passers-by to express happiness on the coldest days of the year. Besides Smile and WiFikipedia, other artworks explore the city life of Tallinn and its architecture, seeking ways of playfully communicating with the citizens. Katusepoisid (2016), an upcoming installation created for the NUKU theater, will allow visitors to interact with the building's façade, while Inside Out (2016) intends to "open" the Pronski 12 building to citizens by reversing its structure in order to make its inner forms visible.

As made evident by WiFikipedia, through the exploration of our own environment in novel ways, we can understand it better and learn to relate to it. For Guljajeva and Canet, establishing a home after being restless nomads has brought to their work a renewed interest in the individual and his/her uncertain location in a world in constant flux. An upcoming project will address these issues from the perspective of nationality, and the flag as a visual symbol of a nation. Certainly, this work will lead to questioning what, or where, this place is we call home.



Varvara & Mar "WiFikipedia", 2015

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WiFikipedia was exhibited at the TL;DR a group exhibition at Tallinna Kunstihoone Gallery, curated by Stacey Koosel, in 2015. <http://www.varvarag.info/wifikipedia/>



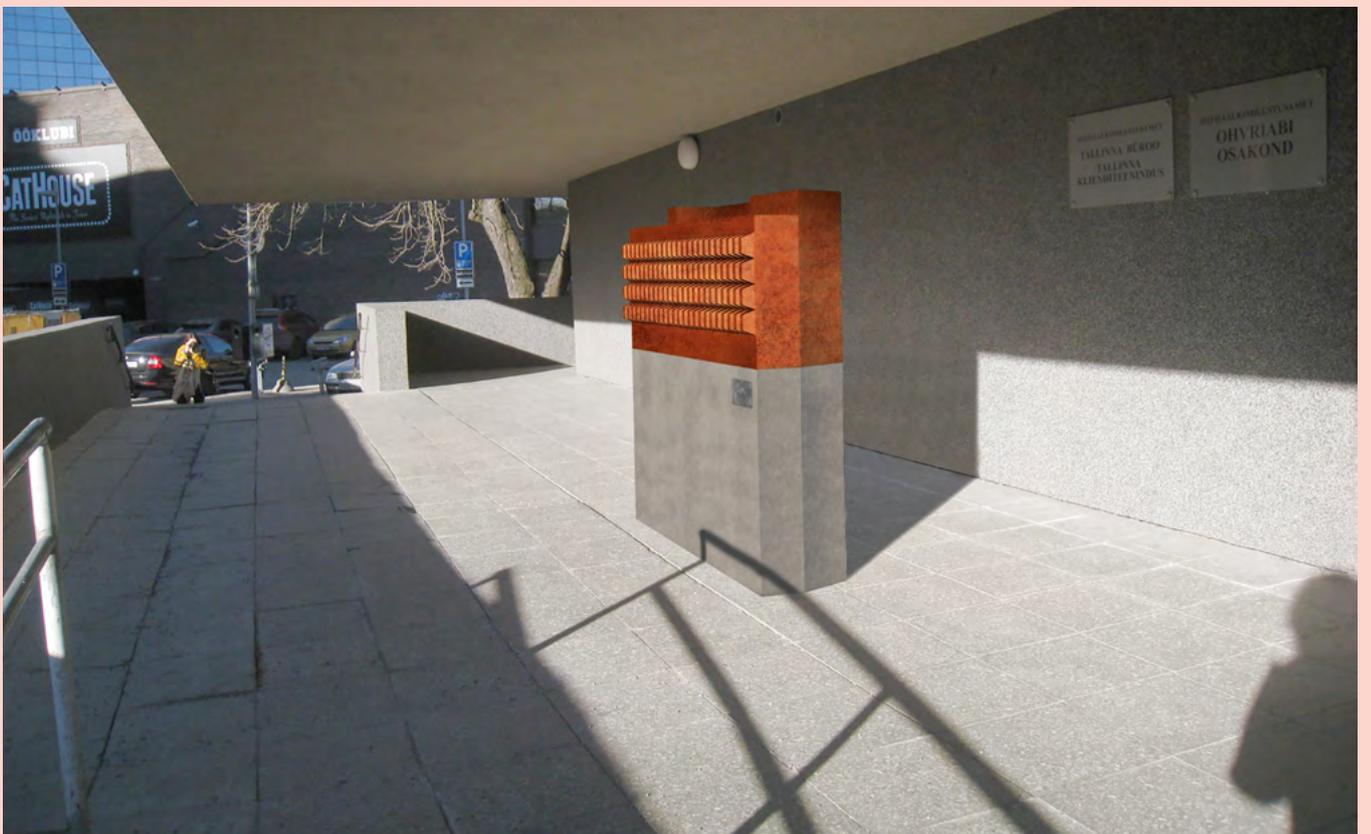
Varvara & Mar "Smile", 2016



Varvara & Mar "Wishing Wall", 2014



Varvara & Mar "Data Tower", 2016



Varvara & Mar "Inside Out", 2016

# Nostalgia in Design

Triin Jerlei PhD (b. 1986) is a design researcher and critic. Currently she is lecturing at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Previously she has worked at the Estonian Museum of Applied Arts and Design.

Since 2010, one of the most popular series on Estonian television has been ENSV (Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic), a comedy set in the late 1980s. Featuring several famous local actors, the series is popular because of a mixture of dark humor and apt retrospective criticism of Soviet society and politics. However, its popularity demonstrates another tendency in 21st century Estonia: a nostalgia for Soviet heritage. Here, Estonia is not alone. In Germany, there is a specific term for fascination with the heritage of the German Democratic Republic: Ostalgie. In highly popular Trabant tours to various museums, remnants of socialist material culture are cherished and marketed to home and foreign audiences.

A certain degree of nostalgia has often been present in Estonian design. During the Soviet period, this nostalgia was often directed towards the pre-Soviet period, through references to either traditional rural culture, such as the popular souvenir dolls by Salvo, or to local architectural heritage, for example the iconic “Old Thomas” lamp. The appeal of symbols pertaining to traditional culture has not disappeared: quite the contrary. Colour combinations adopted from local traditional costumes appear everywhere, from tennis shoes to public transport. In their recognizability, these patterns have acquired a function of national visual identity similar to the plaid patterns of Scotland, going beyond the aspects of nostalgia. While the

popularity of traditional references is easily explained by feelings of national identity and wishes to demonstrate belonging, in recent years there have been new tendencies in nostalgia directed towards more recent history.

Once again, recognizability and ubiquity are the key factors for choosing source materials. Often, nostalgic references are hidden in the use of graphics: characters from Estonian or Soviet pop culture or other easily identifiable elements. A particularly popular motif is a red background with white dots. Originating from pop art, this pattern became famous locally through a design for a tin set for storing food items, manufactured in the Norma factory. Nowadays, its uses range from costume jewelry to examples of product design. Norma dots are the retro equivalent of national costume patterns: easily applicable to any product and immediately recognizable.

A common practice is incorporating found retro elements into new products. In recycling old materials, a fascinating example is Urmas Lüüs’s distinctive brooch made of aluminium. Other designers incorporate entire found objects dating from the Soviet era into new items. A particularly popular retro object for upcycling is the book: old books are used in numerous new products, for example in notebooks by Tartuensis Classic. Once again, they offer an opportunity to



show an ideologically charged item in a new context and to make use of an unwanted product in a sustainable way.

In some cases, the references are not centred only on appearances of objects, but include production methods. For example, in the early 2010s the Estonian product designer Maarja Mõtus restarted the manufacturing of Soviet-era Estonian sports shoes, called *Võru '82* after their town of production and the year they were first launched. While designs had previously been altered to suit contemporary trends, *Võru '82* employed the original production equipment and methods. Sadly, this business venture has ended; however, its popularity demonstrates the appeal of products inspired by objects produced years ago.

Scholars have occasionally interpreted post-Soviet nostalgia as a sign of disappointment in capitalism. For example, Debora Battaglia claimed in 1997 that nostalgia was a way of detaching oneself from the harsh present and asserting positive feelings towards one's own history. However, this theory is far too simplistic. Theories of nostalgia as an escapist practice are often applied too hastily in the post-Soviet context. Serguei Oushakine has written the aptly titled article "We're nostalgic, but we're not crazy," where he suggests that these tendencies should rather be seen as "conscious efforts to restore the lost feeling of col-

lective belonging and to re-establish cultural connections with the past that would be neither horrifying nor humiliating."

A few months ago, Verso published a fascinating book by the British writer Owen Hatherley, *The Ministry of Nostalgia*. Hatherley focuses on the growing nostalgia present in the UK, directed towards post-war austerity. In his view, nostalgia is a conscious and systematically organized practice for distracting citizens from political reality. Hatherley observes that the reference period for British nostalgia is usually the 1950s, as the spirit of austerity is politically suitable for instilling in the public the correct morale. In the Estonian context, however, the nostalgia is directed towards finding new meanings and contexts. Its initiative has not come from above, but rather stems from a general will to reposition the collective past.

While the tendency to politicize certain historical phenomena may be alluring, there is a risk of exaggeration. Although Soviet design carries certain political connotations, post-socialist nostalgia in product design is a peaceful and voluntary phenomenon. It is not orchestrated from above, but rather stems from reactions to the general desire to recontextualize the past.

# *In Search of Meaning*

Contemporary graphic design moves in mysterious ways. The paradoxical holy trinity of graphic design consists of design, art and business. How they fit together is a mystery, but somehow they form the entity known as graphic design. Some designers lean towards business and some towards art, but one of the biggest existential questions for a conscious designer is how to fit these two notions together. What is the right balance between making money and expressing oneself?

Such existential matters formed the starting point of a design project initiated at the Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA) Department of Graphic Design by two students Maria Muuk and myself. The whole project was process oriented, a journey of two designers trying to find meaning in graphic design, but the general aim of the project was simple enough: to establish a platform where such 'philosophical' design problems could be discussed.

The first step in this process was starting a graphic design reading group at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

The group functioned as a platform for digesting various ideas and clarifying the general aims of the whole project. The focus of the project became clear through the realization that the perfect platform for discussion was the most mundane situation. Interestingly, the hot debates took place not in speciality magazines, but in school among fellow students, in a studio among colleagues, or in a bar with friends. Hence the aim of the project was to initiate those daily discussions.

Six of these discussions were recorded and published in the form of a newspaper, a temporary format emphasizing the perishable nature of a conversation. The size of the newspaper was deliberately large (A1), and the paper was text-heavy and thus a bit uncomfortable to read and handle. The idea was to make the reader browse through the discussions and jump in at random moments. Just like in a real discussion! Later on the newspaper was exhibited as part of a reading corner, together with a selection of books, articles and magazines discussed in the newspaper. The number of copies of the newspaper are limited, but one can



Identity for Baltic Circle 2015, which won GRMMXI the Best of the Year Award in Branding and Visual Identity in Grafia's Vuoden Huiput competition



Identity for Kunstverein Toronto by Laura Pappa

This should be an ongoing...  
 Without a concrete output.  
 It should be like a super experimental—  
 a dialogue as a magazine. Like, the first  
 edition was when we were doing it with  
 friends and now this is the fourth edition  
 while we're doing it here and it's like a  
 situationistic...  
 This is the real self publishing. We're  
 publishing our own thoughts to ourselves!

The newspaper was set in a custom made font by Andree Paat, Maria Muuk and Aimur Takk



Cover design for the graphic design section 2002, no 3, by Kristjan Mändmaa. The article "Shit..." was also published in this number

obtain it from the Department of Graphic Design at the Estonian Academy of Arts, or directly from the authors. The following is a brief overview of the six recorded discussions.

The first two of these discussions took place among fellow students. One of the main concerns of these debates was trying to figure out the value of graphic design education in Estonia. The ideology of the Graphic Design department leans strongly towards art, seeing graphic design as an independent practice which borrows methods from contemporary art. While this approach provides a necessary alternative to the general notion of business-oriented graphic design, students educated in this manner often feel when trying to start their own practices that the two worlds are somewhat incompatible. While these debates did not provide any final solutions to the clash of business and art in graphic design, they did refine the view of the problem(s) and thus opened the way for future discussions.

One of the conversations, the third discussion in the newspaper, was conducted with two influential figures in Estonian graphic design education: Kristjan Mändmaa and Ivar Sakk. In 2001–2008, Ivar Sakk published a graphic design section in the Estonian art magazine KUNST.EE. It is still the only publication close to a graphic design speciality magazine in Estonia. In 2002 Kristjan Mändmaa published an article in it entitled “Shit, or something interesting in Estonian graphic design”. This article caused a revolution in the Graphic Design Department and is responsible for the educational approach now prevailing there.

The main question of interest was the poor state of discussions in speciality magazines. Why is this so at the moment, when only 10 years ago magazines were important contributors to design discussions? Why are magazines and the design scene in general modest in declaring their opinions nowadays? Why do we lack a radical voice? Again, no simple answers were provided, but two hours of hot debate was valuable and lacking in most design magazines today.

The following discussions summed up all the previous questions and asked them on an international scale. For that reason two discussions were organized. We

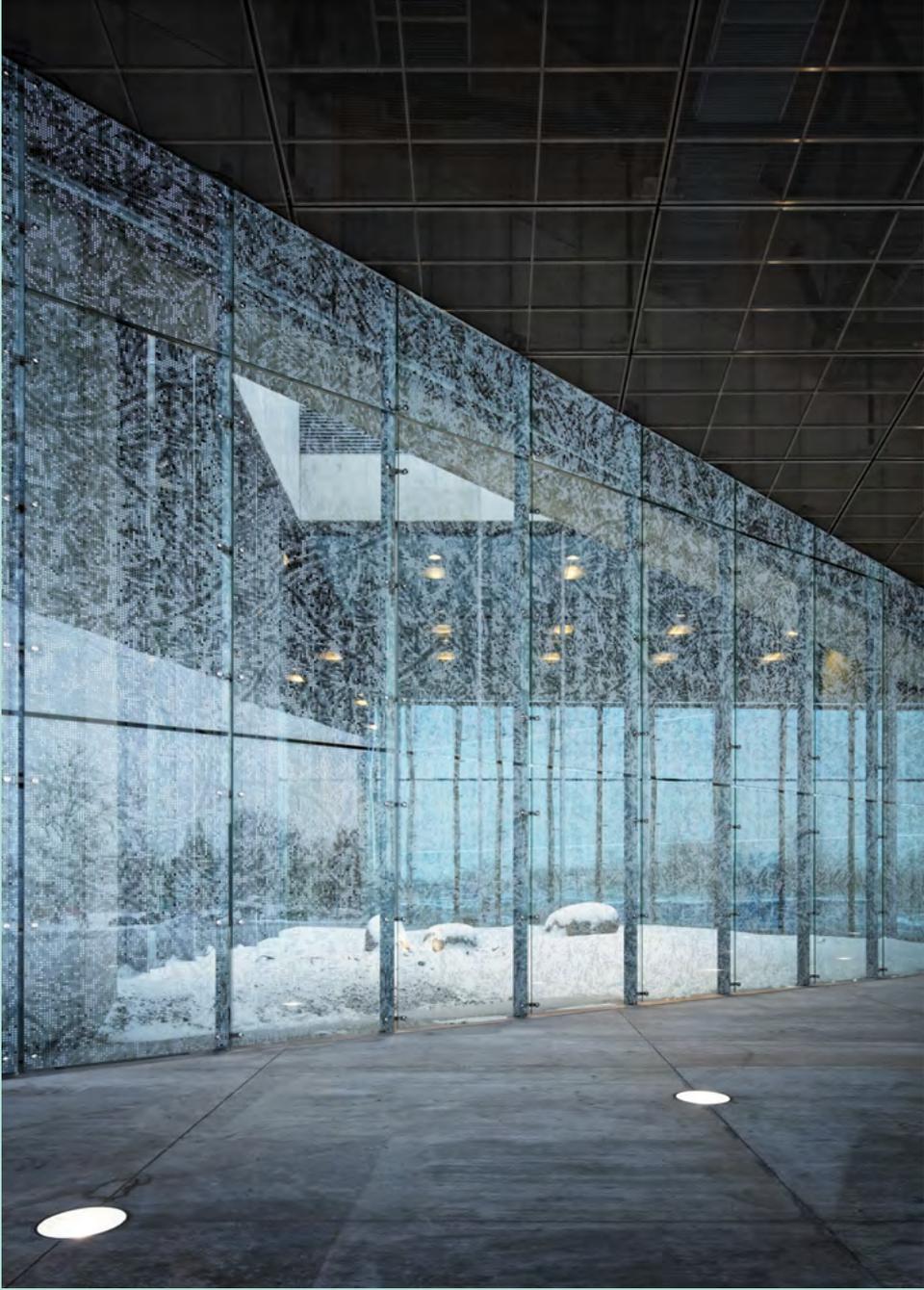
conversed with Elisabeth Klement and Laura Pappa, two Estonian graphic designers who have studied in various design schools in the Netherlands (Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Sandberg Institute and Werkplaats Typografie) and who live and work in Amsterdam, and with GRMMXI, a Finnish design collective, who are design students with various national and educational backgrounds.

The outcomes of these debates were somewhat surprising. They showed that most of our educational and professional concerns seemed to be of a local nature. For instance, Klement and Pappa stated that in the Netherlands the division between art, culture oriented design and commercial design is not that evident. And for GRMMXI, the doubts concerning educational matters were of a completely different nature. For them, their education was too technical, superficial and a bit out-dated and thus the approach of our department seemed like a good alternative.

While we, on the other hand, were concerned with the problematic aspects of this particular approach.

This led to the sixth discussion, which was with Indrek Sirkel, the head of the Graphic Design Department at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Among other topics, we briefly touched upon the problem of taking a stance as designers in the current neoliberal world: for example, how being ecologically conscious and supportive of “green” values has become a necessary, but relatively empty brand element for global companies. Should graphic design address these issues directly or veil them in cool and slick covers?

Taking all this into consideration, one has to keep in mind that publishing a newspaper was not the aim of the project, but a means for generating discussions. Further initiatives of the project include starting a new graphic design reading group at the Arts Academy and exhibiting the project in Helsinki, at the Myymälä Gallery, in October. Thus the goal of the project is not a particular event or a publication, but keeping the process of initiating discussions alive.



# The Story of Memory Field

The Estonian National Museum is a site-specific project, which uses an existing military runway from the Soviet past. What makes this location meaningful is its physical and mental landscape. It is an emotional project for the Estonian people, that has developed during the last ten years. Starting with the architectural competition in 2005, through the whole building process, up to the public opening ceremony in September 2016 in Tartu. The museum building was designed by the DGT architects, which is a Paris-based international partnership founded in 2006 and led by the architects Dan Dorell, Lina Ghotmeh (LG) and Tsuyoshi Tane.

Spatial intelligence includes the ability to solve problems or create products that are valued in a particular culture. It is defined as a human computational capacity that involves the ability or mental skill to solve spatial problems of human navigation, visualization of objects from different angles and space, face or scene recognition, and noticing fine details.

## TÜÜNE-KRISTIN VAIKLA

**What were your emotions when you, three young architects with different backgrounds, started the architectural competition process?**

## LINA GHOTMEH

**In 2005, we had met in London while working at important architectural offices—Ateliers**

**Jean Nouvel, Fosters & Partners and Adjaye Associates. At this same time, the Estonian National Museum competition project was published. The brief for the competition suggested an architecture that would cross disciplines, one that was able to intersect with the history, the ethnography and the sociology of the place. It included the aspirations of a nation, the desire to create a “public” place, a landscape of memories, a place that would not only bring Estonian voices together but would be open to the continuous making of identity.**

**Passionate about Architecture and aspiring to challenge ourselves, working on such a motivating competition was inevitable. We worked through the nights, after office hours, during vacation time. Researching, questioning and discovering Estonia’s history and the stories that the site of Raadi held within it. The aerial movies published on the competition site reflected on the dramatic history of the site, where there was a wide scar, an element that seemed to have caused the alienation of this site from the city centre. We felt the responsibility to question the site, its traces, and it became more and more obvious that this museum should play an urban and mental role. It could not simply be an iconic object set in Raadi; it had to have the potential to regenerate the sur-**





rounding area, to transform the past into a new vision of a constructive and productive future.

As for myself, born and raised in Beirut, I lived through the war and occupations in my childhood. I know what it means to live with the memories of painful times, the contradictions that these traces leave on our landscape. I have also learned that it is through contradictions that we can instil change, that new unique spaces can emerge. There is an amazing poetic realm that can emerge while dealing with the genius loci of a place. The idea of making this new museum rise from the existing runway became evident. The new building had to transform the site and to do so it had to deal with the large traces of military occupation, to appropriate it into its own space. Through linking to this platform-airfield, the building became urban, it opened up the past to the future, and the national boundary expanded into an infinite space, that of the runway, a space in which the naked eye could not distinguish the limits.

**TK-V** The Estonian National Museum building won the AFEX (French Architects abroad) Grand Prix, which was awarded at the opening ceremony of the Venice Biennale in May 2016. The award seems to be proof that the best decisions have been made during the long process from the starting point of the project up to the final realization. What is the main concept of your project and how has the building changed during the long preparation and building process?

**LG** The museum gained a whole public meaning, creating different qualities of public spaces. It intersected and reacted to the landscape, to the existing site. I was keen on this dialogue between the outside and the inside, keen on questioning the limits. So, in encountering the lake, it became a bridge, filled with views of the lake. Reaching Rooski street, or the city side, it welcomed its visitors through a large canopy space, inviting one to experience the inner spaces as orchestrated by the slanted roof.

The initial concept of the project remained unchanged: the emergence from the site traces, the opening to the runway, the relationship to the landscape, and the entrance canopy.

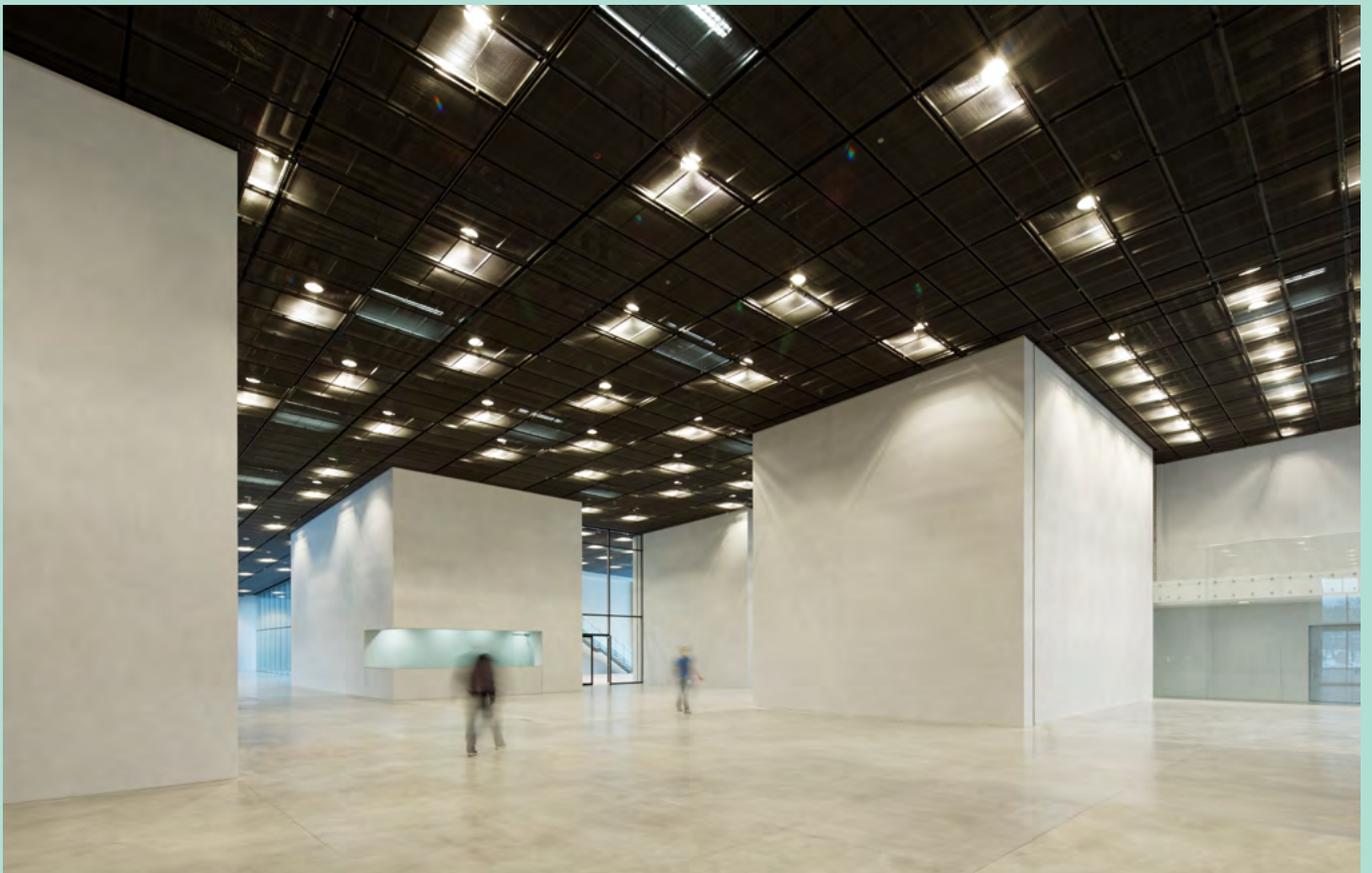
During the process, we also discovered that the ground-water level of the area was quite high; this made us raise the building a few meters so that it would not sink. To meet the airfield, we had to augment the slope, starting at 14 m at the entrance side and dropping into the landscape at a height of 3 m.

I think these developments reinforced the project and the only thing that I think changed from the initial concept was the fact that the roof of the building was not walkable any more. Our initial idea was to make it accessible, a place for the public to stroll, but it was technically impossible. The building would have become structurally more complex and hence more expensive. So we had to abandon this idea... But we avoided creating all kinds of handrails and technical elements on the roof, and the project became even purer. What also developed during the process was mainly the programme, the articulation of the interior spaces, which was normal as we got to know the museum team, and had to integrate their demands.

The Afex Award's jury voted unanimously to give the award to the museum. They saw in it a project that could not be placed elsewhere, that belonged to its place, that revealed the original beauty of the land. It is a great honor to receive this award.

**TK-V** What about the dynamics between the architectural language of the building and the museum exhibition at the Tartu Raadi runway? Somehow I remember the feeling of some variance—as in visiting the Jewish Museum in Berlin (by Daniel Libeskind) or the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw (by Lahdelma and Mahlamäki)—between the strong language of the architecture of the building and the history, which is retold through the exposition?

There is a tension between the building and the exhibition design. Both dialogue in different ways, and at times this tension is positive. I like the "parallel worlds" of exhibition parts, where the structures force us into narrow passages. 3+1 Architects designed the exhibition spaces with lots of objects to exhibit, and voices to represent and narrate: the synthesis of all those was not easy. The building was also challenging



*This page and previous spread*  
Estonian National Museum. Photos: Takuji Shimmura





because it has two entrances, inviting visitors to read the exhibitions from two directions. The design had to accommodate that as well... After ten years of work, of travels, and of visits to Tartu, it is such an amazing feeling to see our project built! We ourselves have grown with this building, learned through it, and I am very thankful to all the people that believed in this vision.

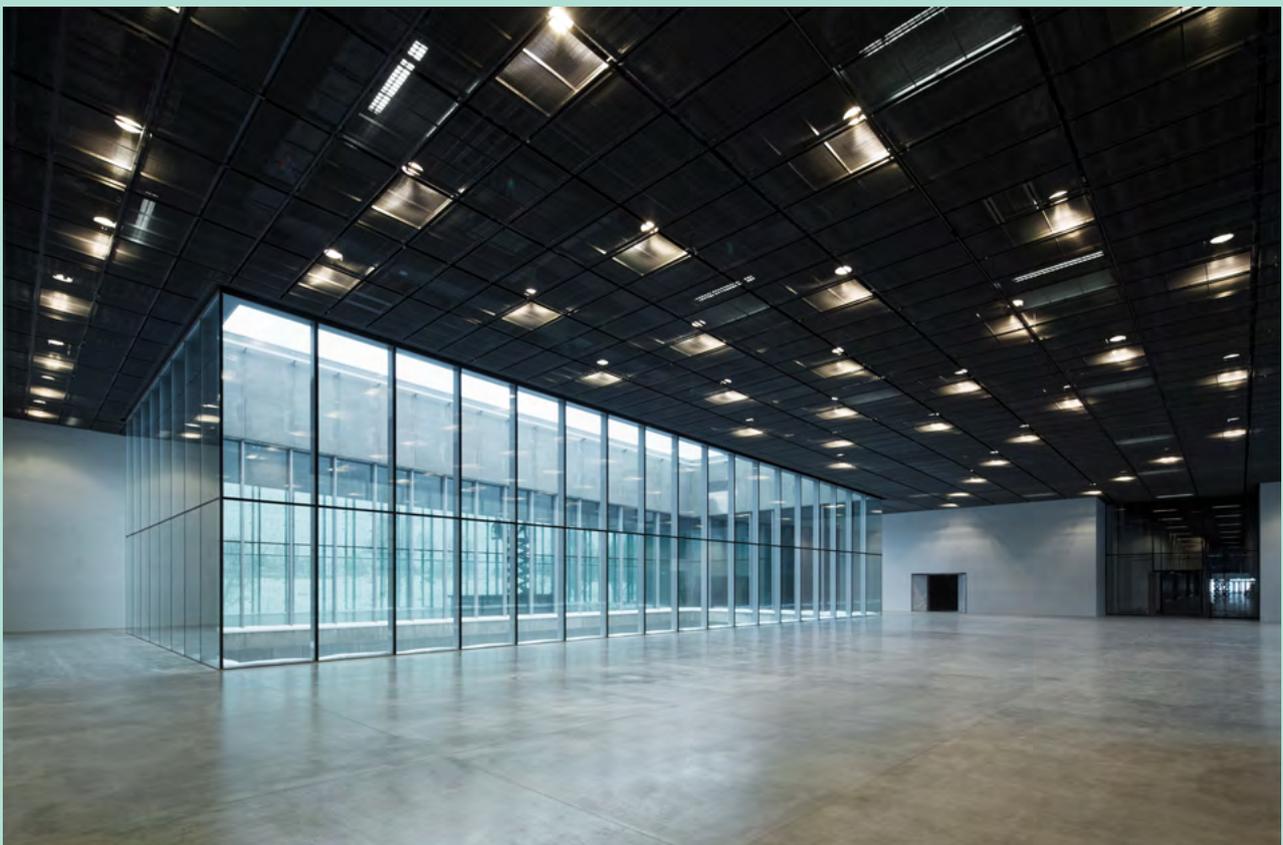
**TK-V** How do you see the interaction between the building and visitors? Is there perhaps some kind of contradiction between the location and the wider context?

**LG** The museum could not have been placed in a different context or in a different location; it is tightly linked to the site, and to the city of Tartu's meanings and cultural role in Estonia. Its poetics and strength are drawn from this situation. The museum and its site constitute an escape, a place where one can feel disconnected from dense city life, and a place that invites visitors into another temporality. One travels through history, through the present and through the future: the history of Estonia, the

presence of the landscape and the future that the museum gesture symbolizes. I think the fact that we wouldn't expect such a large museum in Tartu or in this location indicates the whole strength of the project, as well as its poetics.

**TK-V** And finally, something more personal: what inspires and surprises you in art, in architecture and in life?

**LG** I feel that last century drew us far from the essence of time, from relating to instinct, intuition, irrationalities and traditions, and all these are essential in balanced living. I am always inspired and touched by artworks that are able to transport us into a strong emotional experience, especially when they call on us to get in touch with our humanity and its relationship with nature. Being inspired by nature and thinking that architecture should tightly link us to earth has the capacity to draw the outside inside and dialogue with its context to create special and sustainable experiences. I am also passionate about history, about archeology as a way of connecting history and architecture. I consider architecture to be an archeological process.





examining how pastness is perceived in the present through unintended compositions (conglomerates, amalgamations, coral striations, intervals etc.). Materials are not entirely reducible to the contexts in which human activity sets them. They have a mounting quality, revealing transmission and reception, what survives and what is forgotten, turning the cityscape into a sort of stage. The study of amalgamations says something about what has been accumulating and piling up, producing a new perceptual significance and an open-ended assemblage. It reveals a decayed composition and second or third uses of materials, which show successive stages of development, renewal and decadence. The aesthetics of amalgamation portray processes of change and review the meaning of what is residual, of what is left behind by attempts at modernisation: as a remainder, but also as an aesthetic assemblage. In it, different kinds of elements create a particular texture, an unforeseen composition and whole beyond the separated parts that form it. In museums, however, objects are not commonly thrown together but systematically displayed and removed from their original time and space.

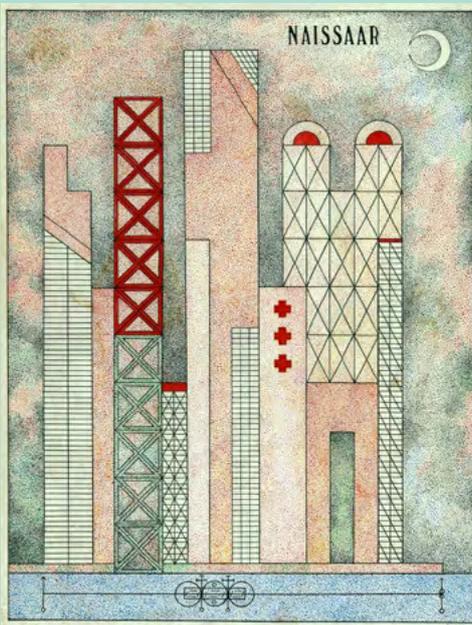
Short term adaptations and long term patterns become apparent in the external aestheticised forms of material culture, creating a fragmented, as well as aesthetically and historically diverse, urban landscape. Gaps and interruptions can also be understood as material expressions of the past that remain in the cityscape. From previously existing practices and forms, new ones are generated in a way similar to the process of rewriting: adding and deleting. This process can be partly described as hybrid, since transformations are mediated through local configurations of legacy, institution and power. But, in some cases, the degree of contradiction between the elements forming the cityscape is high enough or the process of reception-translation is parallel enough (instead of mixing) that we have to talk about a Frankenstein formation rather than a hybrid one.

Amalgamations recall what is absent, as a tension between history, memory and decay. They are dense and intense, bringing dissimilar elements into co-existence. They indicate a lack of contextual fit and symbolic saturation, which reveals social inequalities, radical ruptures and systemic failures. The historian Karl Schlögel<sup>5</sup> has tried to explain the hybridity of processes of change by distinguishing between “hot” and “cold” locations in urban spaces. Hot places are those in the making, while cold ones appear already consolidated. Hot locations act as a suture; they con-

nect, alleviate and bridge, providing terrain for inclusiveness and communication. The study of sutures, amalgamation and repair has to therefore be sensitive to the eventfulness and in-betweenness of social transformations. These phenomena remind us that change is rather contingent and multidirectional; it always faces obduracy and alters our relation to the things and ideas of the past as it unfolds. Likewise, the accumulation of changeless elements and unfinished projects in the cityscape conditions any process of adaptation and testifies to failures.

For example, in examining material traces and gaps in Tallinn we recognise a redundant melange of elements and processes that confirm that the Estonian capital is not simply a post-socialist city, but an urban archipelago produced by the cumulative effects of unfinished projects of modernisation. This is manifested in a peculiar abundance of threshold experiences and in a sense of jumping from one island to another when traversing neighbourhoods in the city. The study of amalgamations brings to light diverse temporalities, as well as a lack of contextual fit and saturation, outlined in how materials were entropically brought and held together.<sup>6</sup> Social transformations produce conglomerates, which eventually generate a particular apprehension and a certain type of aesthetic and spatial regime. In post-socialist cities, this is perceived as a lack of contextual fit, a symbolic saturation, and a need for (material and social) sutures.

My last example is from the project “Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia”,<sup>7</sup> in which the curator Marika Agu and I proposed to reflect on those arrangements that constituted finality without being finished in Tbilisi (in a constant oscillation between aspiration and the possible). Drawing on this assumption, we put the emphasis on the radical processes of construction and deconstruction in which Georgia has been immersed, expressed in a state of unstable equilibria and low-key engagements. This compelled us to ethnographically explore micro-works of adaptation and a sense of distributed creativity: the way that people make use of what is around them in order to cope with abrupt social changes. Existentially, and relying on material culture studies, our project called attention to the arts of combining and fixing up. We discovered in Georgia a paradoxical interplay between innovation and tradition, which generates a particular indigenous curation and vernacular solutions. There, every person seems to be a master, capable of actively making a world of his own, and at



- 1 Victor Buchli. *An Anthropology of Architecture*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- 2 Anca Pusca. "The Aesthetics of Change. Exploring Post-Communist Spaces". *Global Society* 22, 3: 369-386, 2008.
- 3 Victor Buchli. "Astana: materiality and the city". In C. Alexander, V. Buchli & C. Humphrey (eds.) *Urban Life in Post-Soviet Asia*. London: UCL Press, 2007. pp 40-69.
- 4 Laurent Olivier. 'Duration, memory and the nature of the archaeological record'. In H. Karlsson (ed.) *It's About Time: The Concept of Time in Archaeology*. Gothenburg: Bricoleur, 2001.
- 5 Karl Schlögel. *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit*. München: Hanser, 2003.
- 6 Francisco Martínez. 'Tallinn as a city of thresholds'. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 2015 46 (2), 127-155. And A. Kurg and M. Laanemets. *A User's Guide to Tallinn*. Tallinn: Estonian Academy of Arts, 2002.
- 7 F. Martínez and M. Agu, (eds.). *Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia*. Tartu: Tartu Art Museum, 2016.
- 8 Jacques Rancière. *Politics and Aesthetics*. London: Continuum, 2006.

# *The Pleasurable Aspects of Breakdown*

Angela Wheeler holds an MSc from Columbia University's historic preservation programme. She has worked in the Republic of Georgia's heritage sector in various capacities since 2010.

A review of *Remont: Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia*, edited by Francisco Martínez and Marika Agu. Tartu Art Museum hosted the accompanying exhibition between 24 March and 29 May 2016.

“You’re better off getting a new bike,” the mechanic said, spinning the front wheel to produce an emphatic rattle. My bicycle, its front end slightly bent in a recent accident, did look somewhat pathetic surrounded by the shop’s sleek new models. Concealing his disdain for both my rust-flecked bicycle and my attachment to it, the bike shop mechanic continued: “You could try to find a replacement part, but honestly it’s not worth fixing.”

Not worth fixing? The implication that a bicycle was as disposable as a bruised apple baffled me. My offense was perhaps intensified by the fact that I had recently returned from the Republic of Georgia, a country where the thought of throwing away a perfectly serviceable bicycle would have been absurd. In Georgia, everything is worth fixing.

The contributors to *Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia* seek to explore this country’s culture

of “remont,” or repair, not only as a practice but also as a broader cultural and aesthetic phenomenon. This book, which accompanied an exhibition held at the Tartu Art Museum in Spring 2016, recruits scholars from across a range of disciplines, as well as Georgian contemporary artists who employ ideas and imagery of repair in their work. The editor and exhibition organizer, Francisco Martínez, situates remont at the intersection of three factors: “the human desire to improve one’s situation, the suffering resulting from not being able to do so, and the oscillation between anxiety and the possibility of trying to bridge that gap.”<sup>1</sup>

The exhibition sought to balance an analysis of remont’s aesthetic possibilities with an awareness of the underlying social conditions that foster it. This careful balance gets somewhat lost in the book as contributors misjudge the timing, cause and nature of remont. Significant political and economic factors get overlooked by the authors in favor of celebrating



Describing them as a “slum,” an American press photo from 1966 shows several dilapidated houses in Tbilisi covered in homebuilt extensions as a new hotel looms in the background. Photo: Associated Press

with Casablanca’s impoverished bidonvilles (“tin-can towns”) due to their informal ingenuity. The situation divided the International Congress of Modern Architecture between those espousing rational, top-down planning and those eager to explore more “organic” ways of urban living.<sup>4</sup>

Outsiders’ celebration of urban improvisation eventually came in for repeated criticism amid concerns that it romanticized poverty in distant lands. Recall, for example, the Harvard Project on the City research led by Rem Koolhaas in Lagos, Nigeria between 1998–2001. Just as *Aesthetics of Repair* frames remont as a response to the lawlessness of post-Soviet transition and delights in the emancipatory potential of individual actors, Koolhaas lauded the “unbelievable proliferation of individual agency” that occurs “when the state is absent.”<sup>5</sup> The project was widely faulted for orienting Lagos as an aestheticized urban fantasy disconnected from its history and politics.<sup>6</sup>

Far from a unique phenomenon, the free-floating DIY sensibility the contributors perceive in Georgia is just one of many examples of urban informality, from Dharavi to Detroit, repeatedly discovered and

urban informality as an aesthetic construct. This lack of both historical and contemporary comparative context prevents *Aesthetics of Repair* from fully engaging with the broad concept of remont in the way it intends.

*Aesthetics of Repair* treats Georgia’s culture of remont primarily as a reaction to post-independence contact with Western capitalism, but this interpretation neglects a longer and more complicated legacy. The do-it-yourself remont culture prevalent in the “lawless ‘90s” was hardly new. The practice of “individual construction,” in fact, has a long tradition in Georgia; it was legally permitted in the postwar Georgian SSR up through the mid-1960s, and—to party leaders’ consternation—continued to flourish illegally well into the 1970s.<sup>2</sup> Even formally trained Georgian architects engaged in their own form of remont, complaining that Moscow’s standardized housing plans ill-suited balmy Tbilisi and modifying original plans to include loggias and balconies.<sup>3</sup> Such improvisation flies in the face of received notions about Soviet-era planning and suggests that remont is less a response to the particulars of capitalism than to the failings of any socio-economic system.

Remont as a practice has been widespread both historically and geographically, and so too has its fetishization by outsiders. Western scholars have long seen in improvisational urbanism—from DIY architecture to spontaneous marketplaces—a reservoir of liberating primitivism that can provide an alternative to sterile, hyper-regulated Western cities. In 1953, a team of Western architects, for example, became enamored



These building extensions in Old Tbilisi are an architectural record of local ingenuity and DIY aesthetics, but they also speak to less romantic realities of poverty, overcrowding and dangerously neglected infrastructure. Credit: Lumley & Koller Architects

rediscovered by “urban explorers.” Knowledge of other studies and comparative cases might have greatly enriched Aesthetics of Repair, enabling the contributors to sidestep longstanding critiques and more clearly identify what is distinctive in Georgian remont.

In the book’s introduction, the authors propose to escape Western orientalism, but then undermine their own initial critical impulse by recasting urban decay as creative emancipation, or simply as a consumable aesthetic. The contributors Rene Mäe and Juuli Nava deploy the concept of “post-tourism” to describe their stint in Tbilisi, presenting themselves as latter-day flâneurs better equipped to appreciate remont than Georgians (who are busy getting by) and traditional tourists (who want only to see headline attractions). The capital is, for them, “a wonderland in which to experience the material dimensions of repair and the pleasurable aspects of breakdown in the process of urban mobility.”<sup>7</sup> This depiction of Tbilisi as “a city whereby the everyday is not to be lived but rather performed,”<sup>8</sup> reduces daily realities to a kind of theater for outsider consumption. That the observer admires the performance makes the observation no less objectifying.

Despite such lapses, Aesthetics of Repair fills an important gap in recent scholarship by attempting to provide a cultural context for Georgia’s contemporary art scene, ultimately proposing that context as Georgia’s unique culture of remont. Mäe and Nava usefully deploy the distinction between static and dynamic repair to explain remont’s creative potential: whereas static repair seeks to return an object or site exactly to its previous state, dynamic repair takes the previous state as mere inspiration, altering form or even function in the process of repair to craft something new.



A standardized Tbilisi apartment block is now home to endless non-standard variations. Photo: Corneliu Cazacu

- 1 Kaljula, L. (2016). “Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia: Tartu Art Museum, Estonia, March 24-May 29 2016.” *ArtMargins*. <<http://artmargins.com/index.php/exhibitions-sp-132736512/780-aesthetics-of-repair-in-contemporary-georgia-tartu-art-museum-estonia-march-24-may-29-2017>> Accessed 20 August 2016.
- 2 Smith, M. (2008). “Individual Forms of Ownership in the Urban Housing Fund of the USSR, 1944-64,” *The Slavonic and East European Review*. 86 (2): 283-305.
- 3 Asabashvili, L. (2012). “Post War Housing in Georgia.” *Urban Reactor*. <<http://urbanreactor.blogspot.com/2012/04/post-war-housing-in-georgia.html>> Accessed 15 August 2016.
- 4 Avermaete, T. (2005). *Another Modern: the Post-War Architecture and Urbanism of Candilis-Josic-Woods*. Rotterdam: Nai Publishers.
- 5 Koolhaas, R. (2002). “Fragments of a Lecture on Lagos,” in O. Enwezor et al., *Under Siege: Four African Cities - Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos: Documenta 11, Platform 4 (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hate Cantz)*.
- 6 Godlewski, J. (2010). “Alien and Distant: Rem Koolhaas on Film in Lagos, Nigeria.” *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*. 21(2): 7-19.
- 7 Mäe, R. and J. Nava (2016). “Exploring Tbilisi as a Post-Tourist,” in F. Martínez et. al., *Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia (Tartu: Tartu Art Museum)*.
- 8 Martínez, F. (2016). “Doing Nothing in Tbilisi,” in F. Martínez et. al., *Aesthetics of Repair in Contemporary Georgia (Tartu: Tartu Art Museum)*.

# The Baltic Exchange

Carl-Dag Lige (b.1982) is an architecture critic and historian. He currently works as a Curator at the Museum of Estonian Architecture.

The central piece of the pediment represents Goddess Britannia, a mythical female personification of the British Isles. Photo: Anu Vahtra







**FACE-TO-FACE: The Story of the Baltic Exchange (exhibition)**

6 May – 5 June 2016, Museum of Estonian Architecture (Tallinn)

Exhibition concept: Maarja Kask, Ralf Lööke (Salto Architects) & Neeme Külm

Project team: Carl-Dag Lige, Triin Ojari, Indrek Sirkel, Anu Vahtra & Kadri Kütt

Organiser: Museum of Estonian Architecture

**FACE-TO-FACE: The Story of the Baltic Exchange (book)**

Editors: Triin Ojari, Carl-Dag Lige & Indrek Sirkel

Contributors: Sam Jacob, Stuart Burch, Jake MacSiacais, Michael Corr, Heiti Hääl, Triin Ojari et. al.

Graphic design: Indrek Sirkel

Photography: Anu Vahtra

Publishers: Museum of Estonian Architecture & Lugemik



Book cover. Photo: Anu Vahtra

The Museum of Estonian Architecture in Tallinn recently hosted a monumental kinetic installation by Maarja Kask and Ralf Lööke of Salto Architects and the artist Neeme Külm, telling the story of a building that has lost its place. The installation “FACE-TO-FACE: The Story of the Baltic Exchange” explored the bizarre and unusual migration of a historical building since it was deprived of its location in London following a terrorist attack by the Irish Republican Army in 1992.

After the bomb attack, valuable fragments of the neo-classical Baltic Exchange were stored with the intention of restoring the building to its historical form. However, an assessment by English Heritage in 1996 determined that the damage to the Exchange building was far more severe than had previously been

thought, and they dropped their insistence on restoration. One of London’s current landmark buildings, also known as the Gherkin and designed by Foster + Partners, was opened at the site in 2004.

The salvaged remnants of the Baltic Exchange changed owners many times until the building became the most sizeable object to be sold at SalvoWeb, the Internet platform of the largest architectural antiques and salvage fair in the UK. There was an unlikely intervention by Estonian businessmen, who bought the fragments in 2007 with the hope of integrating them into a real estate development in Tallinn. The integration failed after several attempts and debates, leaving the pieces stacked in shipping containers for nearly 10 years until the authors of the installation began a new chapter this spring.

“For different reasons, the remnants of the Baltic Exchange have stirred controversy and differences of opinion in both the British and Estonian public. Having addressed the issues of site specificity before, for example with their “Gas Pipe” exposition at the Venice Architecture Biennale, the creators of the installation continue to ask challenging questions about the meaning, value and relocation of architectural objects,” explained Triin Ojari, Director of the Museum of Estonian Architecture.

“We were intrigued with the strange story of this historic building deprived of its context, an important part of its spatial identity. In addition to physical relocation, a number of visions and proposals have been produced regarding where and how to place the building. The more we learned about the chain of events, the more interesting questions came up” explained Ralf Lõoke of Salto Architects, one of the authors of the installation. How to integrate existing buildings in a new setting, who should pass judgement on the value of a piece of architecture, what value there is in salvaging a building, how we develop emotional ties with architectural symbols and what role such ties play as a means of exerting influence in society and politics were the questions the authors wanted to address with their installation.

In the exhibition at the Museum of Estonian Architecture, fragments of the Baltic Exchange building made their first appearance in Estonia. Visitors were able to stand face-to-face with the historic building’s pediment, which had been displaced by terrorists, businessmen, architects and artists. At the exhibition, this fragment of the building was at the disposal of anyone who wished to subject it to their will: a simple red button allowed visitors to move the central piece of the pediment.

The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue exploring the temperamental fate and context of the Exchange building in depth. The catalogue features photography by the artist Anu Vahtra and design by the graphic designer Indrek Sirkel. The catalogue was published by the Museum of Estonian Architecture in cooperation with the publishing house Lugemik.

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Established in 2004, Salto Architects (Maarja Kask and Ralf Lõoke) takes a particular interest in the intersections of architecture, landscape design and art. A contextual approach to architecture implies an awareness of social, cultural and

natural contexts, all of which have a direct influence on Salto’s working methods. Buildings with public functions make up a significant part of the architectural work of Salto: the Viljandi State High School, the Baltic Film and Media School, the Estonian Road Museum, the Pärnu Environmental Education Centre, the Sõmeru Community Centre, the Sports Hall at the Estonian University of Life Sciences and others. During its 12 years Salto has gained international attention and received awards for their installations; for example, the Estonian exposition “Gas Pipe” (with Ingrid Ruudi and Neeme Külm, 2008) at the 11th Venice Architecture Biennale; the Straw Theatre (2011), a temporary, site-specific building for the NO99 theatre built on the occasion of Tallinn acting as European Capital of Culture; and the project “Fast Track” (2012) for the Archstoyanie festival in Russia.

The artist Neeme Külm is one of the founders and board members of the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia. His works typically consist of large and time-consuming but visually minimalist installations. He has created monumental installations for group shows in Estonia and abroad. His solo exhibitions include “if” (Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn, 2004), “Fountain” (Draakon Gallery, Tallinn, 2006), “ideal.total” with Dénes Farkas (Tallinn City Gallery, 2007), “Tomorrow comes today” (Draakon Gallery, 2010), “3 Seas” with Dénes Farkas (Labor Gallery, Budapest, 2011) and “Shimmer on the Surface” (Hobusepea Gallery, 2012). Külm has participated in several group exhibitions and has also designed several exhibitions.

The Museum of Estonian Architecture is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Housed in the historic Rotermann Salt Storage, this national museum is the only memory institution in Estonia that collects, conserves and exhibits architectural heritage. The Museum’s primary focus is studying and popularising 20th-century and contemporary Estonian architecture. The Museum aims to increase awareness of the historical and cultural significance of the built environment and to introduce the public to contemporary architectural thought.

# Baltic Exchange: Chronology\*

- 1744 The Virginia and Maryland coffee house in Thread-needle Street changes its name to Virginia and Baltick, reflecting the business of the merchants and ship-owners who regularly gather there.
- 1900 The Baltic Mercantile and Shipping Exchange Limited is created.
- 1903 The Baltic Exchange moves to a new purpose-built exchange in St Mary Axe. The lavishly decorated Edwardian building is designed by the architects Smith and Wimble.
- 1955 Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill visits the Baltic Exchange in order to lay the foundation stone for the extension of the building.
- 1956 HRH Queen Elizabeth II visits the Baltic Exchange and opens its extension.
- 1972 The Baltic Exchange's building gets a Grade II listing, becoming a heritage site.
- 1992 An IRA bomb destroys the Baltic Exchange. Three people die and many more are injured. During the next four years most of the remaining structure and finishing materials of the damaged building are catalogued, carefully dismantled and stored.
- 1994 The Baltic celebrates its 250th anniversary; a decision is made to sell the site with the remnants of the exchange hall.
- 1995 The city grants planning permission to GMW architects, who design an office building around the remnants of the hall and main façade. The project is not realised.
- 1996 An assessment by English Heritage determines that the damage to the Exchange building is far more severe than had previously been thought, and they drop their insistence on restoration. After that decision, Sir Norman Foster's office starts working on a new high-rise, the Millennium Tower.
- 1997 Swiss Re buys the site on condition that planning permission to knock down the Baltic Exchange is granted. The company hints that unless it is allowed to realise Foster and Partners' new design, it will take its jobs and its investment back to mainland Europe.
- 2001 Construction of the 30 St Mary Axe, a distinctive circular tower also known as The Gherkin, by Foster and Partners begins. The last remnants of the Baltic Exchange are demolished.
- 2006 The majority of salvaged material from the Baltic Exchange is sold via SalvoWEB, an online platform for salvaged building materials, to the Estonian entrepreneurs Heiti Hääl and Eerik-Niiles Kross for £800,000 (then worth € 1,183,000), who had established a company called OÜ Baltic Exchange.
- 2007 Shipping containers full of salvaged building materials are shipped from the UK to the port of Paldiski in north-western Estonia. OÜ Baltic Exchange submits a proposal to the Tallinn city government and the National Heritage Board to re-erect the Baltic Exchange building as part of a new office block, to be designed by Toomas Rank, near Vabaduse (Freedom) Square, Tallinn. The Tallinn Board of Cultural Property and the National Heritage Board find the location unsuitable and recommend erecting the structure in the harbour area.
- 2008 OÜ Baltic Exchange and the Port of Tallinn sign a protocol of intent outlining their cooperation in erecting the Baltic Exchange building in the harbour area. The project is not realised.
- 2011 OÜ Baltic Exchange commissions Meelis Press Architects to draw up a plan to erect the Exchange building as part of a new business complex at 4 Ahtri Street, Tallinn. The site turns out to be too small and the search for a new location begins.
- 2012 OÜ Baltic Exchange commissions Meelis Press Architects to draw up another plan to erect the Exchange building as part of a new business, hotel and residential complex at 3 Ahtri Street, Tallinn. The project is also not realised.
- 2015 Salto Architects proposes to the Museum of Estonian Architecture and Heiti Hääl the idea of organising an exhibition related to the historic Baltic Exchange building at the Museum of Estonian Architecture.



The main building of the Baltic Exchange after its completion in 1903



The Gherkin designed by architects Foster and Partners opened in 2004. Photo: Wikipedia Commons



View of the Exchange Hall before the 1992 bombing



Pediment of the Baltic Exchange at the Salvo Fair in Knebworth in 2006. Photo: Salvo News



Facade of the Baltic Exchange around 1990



First proposal for re-erecting the building in Tallinn. Schematic design by architect Toomas Rank, 2007

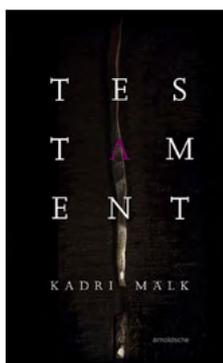


Dismantling the Baltic Exchange after the 1992 bombing

\* For a detailed history and chronology of the Baltic Exchange, see the book **FACE-TO-FACE: The Story of the Baltic Exchange**, published by the Museum of Estonian Architecture and Lugemik (2016). The book can be ordered from the museum or from the Lugemik online store [www.lugemik.ee/en](http://www.lugemik.ee/en).

# New Books

## Kadri Mälk. Testament



Texts by Kadri Mälk, Tamara Luuk and Tanel Veenre

Designed by Asko Künnap and Andres Rõhu

Photos by Tiit Rammul

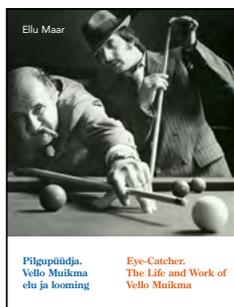
*Tallinna Raamatutrükikoda, 2016*  
328 pages, in English and Estonian

Testament is a book by and about Kadri Mälk, one of the most unique and renowned Estonian jewellery artists, which features jewellery from the last ten years and is framed by her illustrated life story. The latter is written in a non-orthodox way, to reveal Mälk's inner motivation, the pains, trials and exaltations of an artist, that can help guide the reader – or rather the viewer – through her life journey so far. The book is text light and image heavy, however the selected images have been used strategically and powerfully to bridge people and landscapes, drawings and jewels, to demonstrate the complexity of what being a creative talent means and the otherworldly dimensions of

Mälk's artistic realm. The quality of the visuals, the photos of jewellery and the close-up images are spell-binding and haunting, the content is intriguing and brimming with life with full consideration of death and afterlife. Testament is Mälk's way of thanking all the people who she met along this path, an expression of gratitude.

As curator Tamara Luuk aptly describes Mälk's work: Graceful and subtle, yet wild and independent, is what encapsulates the work of Kadri Mälk, the founder of an internationally-renowned Estonian school of jewellery. For Mälk, an item of jewellery is perfectly sufficient in itself, she does not strive to be outside its intimacy, its value or its closeness. Everything which could be called a tradition allows her to skilfully manipulate uncontrollable power, desperate passions and the will to live with all its acceptances and refusals, subjections and sovereignties.

## Eye-Catcher. The Life and Work of Vello Muikma



Texts by Ellu Maar

Designed by Liina Siib

*Toronto: Estonian Studies Centre, 2016*  
256 pages, in Estonian and English

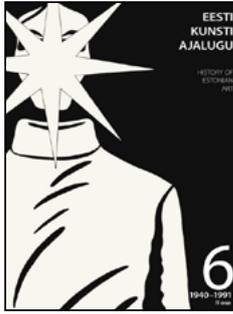
Eye-Catcher. The Life and Work of Vello Muikma, written by the art historian Ellu Maar, follows the

Estonian-born photographer Vello Muikma's (1920–2008) story of emigration to Canada, his finding a place and an occupation in the new society and his subsequent successful career as a commercial photographer and university teacher. The book is richly illustrated with photos from his family albums and his professional portfolio, giving a visual overview of his life and times. The seductive imagery he shot for the booming advertising industry of the Sixties makes it evident how much life in the West differed from that in Soviet Estonia.

The book is a follow-up to the Estonian Museum of Art exhibition Photography from the Estonian Diaspora, which Ellu Maar organized together with Eha Komissarov in 2010, and which was motivated by interest in the photographic legacy of Estonian émigrés in Canada, Sweden and elsewhere in the Estonian diaspora. Another interesting result of this project was Marko Raat's 2015 documentary Fast Eddy's Old News, about the life and slow death of the freelance cinematographer Ed Vaar, which gruesomely dwelt on the lingering moments before his death.

Canada was one of the main destinations for those Estonians who decided to emigrate in the face of Soviet occupation after the Second World War. With the current refugee crisis looming over Europe, it's worth the effort to think back on the past and what it meant to build a life in a new country. The story of Muikma, who was one of the central figures in the Toronto Estonian community, gives us a better understanding of Estonian émigré culture and adds another piece to the visual legacy of the post-war Estonians living in exile.

# History of Estonian Art 6/II



Editor **Krista Kodres**

Texts by **Anu Allas, Sirje Helme, Jaak Kangilaski, Anu Kannike, Juta Kivimäe, Krista Kodres, Andres Kurg, Peeter Linnap, Kai Lobjakas, Karin Nugis, Virve Sarapik, Gregor Taul, Mari Vallikivi**

Designed by **Andres Tali**

*Tallinn: Estonian Academy of Arts, 2016  
528 pages, in Estonian with English summary*

**History of Estonian Art 6/II is the second part of the sixth volume of the History of Estonian Art series, that consists of two parts. The first part is entitled 'The development of art from the late 1960s to the regaining of independence' and it examines the development of Estonian art both at home and in exile. This is a direct continuation of the developments described in the first part of the sixth volume, History of Estonian Art 6/I. Following in the same fashion as the first part, fields of art are delineated in the way they were by the Estonian art public in the course of the half century.**

The second half of the book 'Other fields of art life from 1940 to 1991', is dedicated to fields that were mostly ignored or not considered to be 'real art' during these decades. These forgotten fields have nevertheless managed to establish themselves as art by the end of the

examined period (for example photography), supported the functioning of art (for example: art history, restoration and heritage conservation) or expanded the field of art in general with for example amateur art and popular art.

## Exhibitions

### A-Gallery

*Hobusepea 2, Tallinn*

*Open: Mon–Fri 10am–6pm, Sat 11am–4pm*  
[agalerii.ee](http://agalerii.ee)

**14.10.16–07.11.16** Anu Paal  
**11.11.16–05.12.16** Caius Kull  
**09.12.16–02.01.17** Kätrin Beljaev

### Adamson-Eric Museum

*Lühike jalg 3, Tallinn*

*Open: May–Sept Tue–Sun 11am–6pm  
Oct–Apr Wed–Sun 11am–6pm*  
[adamson-eric.ekm.ee](http://adamson-eric.ekm.ee)

**Permanent exhibition:** Adamson-Eric (1902–1968)

**19.08.16–01.11.17** Juhan Kuus *The Measure of Humanity. 45 Years of Documentary Photography in South Africa*

### Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia

*Põhja 35, Tallinn*

*Open: Apr–Dec, Tue–Sun 1pm–7pm*  
[ekkm.ee](http://ekkm.ee)

**22.09.16–30.10.16** Pseudo

**11.11.16–11.12.16** Paul Kuimet

### Draakon Gallery

*Pikk 18, Tallinn*

*Open: Mon–Fri 11am–6pm, Sat 11am–5pm*  
[eaa.ee/draakon](http://eaa.ee/draakon)

**10.10.16–29.10.16** Hanna Piksarv  
**31.10.16–19.11.16** Maria Sidljarevitš  
**21.11.16–10.12.16** Rene Reinumäe  
**12.12.16–07.01.17** Karel Koplímets  
**09.01.17–28.01.17** Britta Benno  
**30.01.17–18.02.17** Danel Kahar  
**20.02.17–11.03.17** Kaja Kann  
**13.03.17–01.04.17** 7 Personal Exhibitions: Alina Orav, Jenny Grönholm, Liisa Kruusmägi, Liisi Küla, Ragne Uutsalu, Heinrich Sepp, Katarina Meister  
**03.04.17–22.04.17** Art Allmägi  
**24.04.17–13.05.17** Maxim Mjödov

### EKA Gallery

*Vabaduse väljak 6/8, Tallinn*

*Open: Tue–Sat 12pm–6pm*  
[artun.ee/ekagalerii](http://artun.ee/ekagalerii)

**6.10.16–29.10.16** Darja Popolitova, Merlin Meremaa, Hanna-Maria Vanaküla, Sofja Hallik  
**3.11.16–26.11.16** Here we are! #fomo. Curated by Pille-Riin Jaik and Liina Pääsuke  
**30.11.16–10.12.16** Hannah Harkes, Kirill Tulin, Rachel Kinbar, Jonas Van den Bossche  
**15.12.16–17.01.17** Laivi Suurväli  
**13.01.17–04.02.17** Norman Orro  
**9.02.17–04.03.17** Egle Lillemäe and Triin Loosaar

### Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design

*Lai 17, Tallinn*

*Open: Wed–Sun 11am–6pm*  
[etdm.ee](http://etdm.ee)

**Permanent exhibition:** Story of

Estonian Design

**16.09.16–06.11.16** Vicious Circle

**08.10.16–08.01.17** Classics. Ivi Laas

**08.10.16–28.12.16** Roundabout Baltic

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### Hobusepea Gallery

*Hobusepea 2, Tallinn*

*Open: Wed–Mon 11am–6pm*

[eaa.ee/hobusepea](http://eaa.ee/hobusepea)

**21.09.16–10.10.16** Erno Enkenberg,

Matti Vainio, Kari Vehosalo (FIN)

**12.10.16–31.10.16** Jass Kaselaan

**02.11.16–21.11.16** Kristi Kongi

**23.11.16–12.12.16** Paul Rodgers

**14.12.16–09.01.17** Karel Kopliments

**11.01.17–30.01.17** Taavi Suisalu

**01.02.17–20.02.17** Dada Sada Pada.

Curator Margit Säde Lehni

**22.02.17–13.03.17** Alissa Nirgi

**15.03.17–03.04.17** Perro. Curator

Javier Galan (ES)

**05.04.17–24.04.17** Keiu Maasik

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### Haapsalu City Gallery

*Posti 3, Haapsalu*

*Open: Wed–Sat 12pm–6pm*

[galerii.kultuurimaja.ee](http://galerii.kultuurimaja.ee)

**October** Jaan Toomik

**November** Ulla Juske

**December** Pille-Riin Jaik

**January** Karl Christoph Rebane

**February** Läänemaa Ühisgümnaasium

**March** Ede Raadik

**April** The Estonian Academy of Arts

Fashion department show

**May** Kristin Reiman

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### HOP Gallery

*Hobusepea 2, Tallinn*

*Open: Thu–Tue 11am–6pm*

[eaa.ee/hop](http://eaa.ee/hop)

**23.09.16–11.10.16** Estonian

Leatherwork Artists' Union

**14.10.16–01.11.16** Merle Kasonen /

Pilleriin Jürisoo

**04.11.16–22.11.16** Kärt Ojavee /

Johanna Ulfsak

**25.11.16–13.12.16** Merike Hallik

**16.12.16–03.01.17** Anneli Oppar /

Moonika Kase

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### Kadriori Art Museum

*Weizenbergi 37, Tallinn*

*Open: May–Sept Tue, Thu–Sun*

*10am–6pm, Wed 10am–8pm*

*Oct–April Wed 10am–8pm, Thu–Sun*

*10am–5pm*

[kadriorumuuseum.ekm.ee](http://kadriorumuuseum.ekm.ee)

**Permanent exhibition:** Paintings from the 16th–18th century. Dutch, German, Italian and Russian masters. Western European and Russian applied art and sculpture from the 18th–20th century.

**03.09.16–08.01.17** With a Burin,

a Brush and a Pencil. Russian

Graphic Art from the 19th–20th

Centuries in Estonian Museums

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### Kumu Art Museum

*Weizenbergi 34 / Valge 1*

*Open: April–Sept Tue–Sun 10am–*

*6pm, Wed 10am–8pm*

*Oct–Mar Wed 10am–8pm, Thu–Sun*

*10am–6pm*

[kumu.ekm.ee](http://kumu.ekm.ee)

**Permanent exhibition: 17.02.06–31.12.17** Treasury Classics of Estonian Art from the Beginning of the 18th Century until the End of the Second World War

**17.02.16–19.02.20** Conflicts and Adaptations. Estonian Art of the Soviet Era (1940–1991)

**02.07.16–30.10.16** Poetry and Spleen. The Victorian Female Image and Fashion from Alexandre Vassiliev's Collection

**08.07.16–06.11.16** Marcel Lefrancq and Belgian Surrealist Photography

**09.09.16–30.10.16** Mare Balticum.

An artistic exploration of the underwater soundscape of the Baltic Sea

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**16.09.16–02.04.17** Soviet Midnight.

Raul Rajangu

**17.09.16–19.02.17** Between the

Archive and Architecture. Neeme Külm, Krista Mölder and Taavi Talve

**21.10.16–11.02.17** Water Music and Other Pictures of Sound. Vladimir Tarasov

**18.11.16–27.08.17** Conductors of Colour. Music and Modernity in Estonian Art.

**25.11.16–12.03.17** Paul Delvaux. A Waking Dreamer

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### Mikkel Museum

*Weizenbergi 28, Tallinn*

*Open: May–Sept Tue, Thu–Sun*

*10am–6pm, Wed 10am–8pm*

*Oct–April Thu–Sun 10am–5pm, Wed 10am–8pm*

[mikkelimuuseum.ekm.ee](http://mikkelimuuseum.ekm.ee)

**Permanent exhibition:** Collection of Johannes Mikkel: the Art of Western Europe, Russia, and China from 16th to 20th centuries

**09.04.16–02.10.16** Patrons of Narva.

The Art Collection of the Lavretsovs

**22.10.16–03.17** Might and Pain.

Works from Margus Punab's

Collection

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### Museum of Estonian Architecture

*Rotermann's Salt Storage*

*Abtri 2, Tallinn*

*Open: Wed–Fri 11am–6pm, Sat–Sun*

*10am–6pm*

[arhitektuurimuuseum.ee](http://arhitektuurimuuseum.ee)

**Permanent exhibition:** Space in Motion. A Century of Estonian Architecture is the Museum of Estonian Architecture's permanent exhibition, which acquaints visitors with the development of professional Estonian spatial and architectural culture. The exhibition encompasses the most important segments of 20th century Estonian architectural

history, as well as the more intriguing phenomena of today.

**17.06.16–25.09.16** Genesis. The History of Architectural Design  
**15.09.16–02.10.16** Modern Finnish Poster  
**15.09.16–30.10.16** Peter Skubic. Mirrors are Invisible

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### **Niguliste Museum**

*Niguliste 3, Tallinn*  
*Open: May–Sept Tue–Sun 10am–5pm*  
*Oct–Apr Wed–Sun 10am–5pm*  
[nigulistemuuseum.ekm.ee](http://nigulistemuuseum.ekm.ee)

**Permanent exhibition:** The Art Museum of Estonia's collection of medieval and early modern ecclesiastical art is exhibited at the Niguliste Museum

**01.01.13–31.12.16** Interactive Rode altarpiece  
**28.09.16–27.10.16** Kadri Mälk. Testament.

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### **Tallinn Art Hall**

*Vabaduse väljak 8, Tallinn*  
*Open: Wed–Sun 12am–6pm*  
[kunstihoone.ee](http://kunstihoone.ee)

**27.08.16–09.10.16** Silence, Darkness. Curator Anneli Porri  
**22.10.16–04.12.16** Random Rapid Heartbeats. Curator Kęstutis Kuizinas (LT)  
**17.12.16–05.02.17** Kaido Ole. Nogank Hoparniis.

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### **Tallinn Art Hall Gallery**

*Vabaduse väljak 6, Tallinn*  
*Open: Wed–Sun 12am–6 pm*  
[kunstihoone.ee](http://kunstihoone.ee)

**19.08.16–09.10.16** Tanel Veenre. Dried, Dehydrated, Dessicated  
**22.10.16–04.12.16** Random Rapid Heartbeats. Curator Kęstutis Kuizinas (LT)

**16.12.16–15.01.17** Raul Keller / Kaarel Kurismaa / Mari-Liis Rebane / Karl Saks. Timer.

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### **Tallinn City Gallery**

*Harju 13, Tallinn*  
*Open: Wed–Sun 12am–6pm*  
[kunstihoone.ee](http://kunstihoone.ee)

**23.09.16–16.10.16** Infinite Lives. Curators Camille Laurelli (FR / EE) and Nicolas Audureau (FR/RU)  
**22.10.16–04.12.16** Random Rapid Heartbeats. Curator Kęstutis Kuizinas (LT)  
**09.12.16–08.01.17** Herkki-Erich Merila

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### **Tartu Art House**

*Vanemuise 26, Tartu*  
*Open: Wed–Mon 12pm–6pm*  
[kunstimaja.ee](http://kunstimaja.ee)

*Big hall*  
**20.10.16–13.11.16** Light Festival Exhibition. Curator Tanel Rander  
**17.11.16–11.12.16** Elmar Kits 1966. Curator Peeter Talvistu  
**16.12.16–08.01.17** Annual exhibition  
*Small hall*  
**20.10.16–13.11.16** Lea Liblik  
**17.11.16–11.12.16** Evi Tihemets  
**16.12.16–08.01.17** Annual exhibition  
*Monument Gallery*  
**20.10.16–13.11.16** Maanus Mikkel  
**17.11.16–11.12.16** Margit Lõhmus  
**16.12.16–08.01.17** Annual exhibition

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### **Tartu Art Museum**

*Raekoja Square 18, Tartu*  
*Open Wed, Fri–Sun 11am–7pm, Thu 11am–9pm*  
[tartmus.ee](http://tartmus.ee)

**05.03.16–30.10.16** The River Runs Through Here... Chapters from the Art History of Tartu  
**29.09.16–01.01.17** Encounter Estonian Design. An Introduction

**29.09.16–04.12.16** Who Creates the City?

**10.11.16–19.02.17** Four Views on Changing Tartu  
**08.12.16–05.03.17** Solo show of Anna-Stina Treumund

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### **Vabaduse Gallery**

*Vabaduse 6, Tallinn*  
*Open: Mon–Fri 11am–6pm, Sat 11am–5pm*  
[eaa.ee/vabadusegallery](http://eaa.ee/vabadusegallery)

**13.10.16–01.11.16** Jüri Arrak  
**03.11.16–22.11.16** Aarne Mesikäpp  
**24.11.16–13.12.16** Pille Lehis, Pille Ernesaks  
**15.12.16–03.01.17** Kersti Vaks  
**05.10.16–24.01.17** Liis Koger

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### **Vaal Gallery**

*Tartu mnt 80d, Tallinn*  
*Open Tue–Fri 12pm–6pm, Sat 12pm–4pm*  
[vaal.ee](http://vaal.ee)

**11.10.16–15.10.16** Jüri Arrak  
**20.10.16–05.11.16** 1082  
**10.11.16–10.12.16** Lola Liivat

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