

A GUIDE TO CONTEMPORARY
ARCHITECTURE IN TALLINN



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Tallinn 2012



EESTI KULTUURKAPITAL



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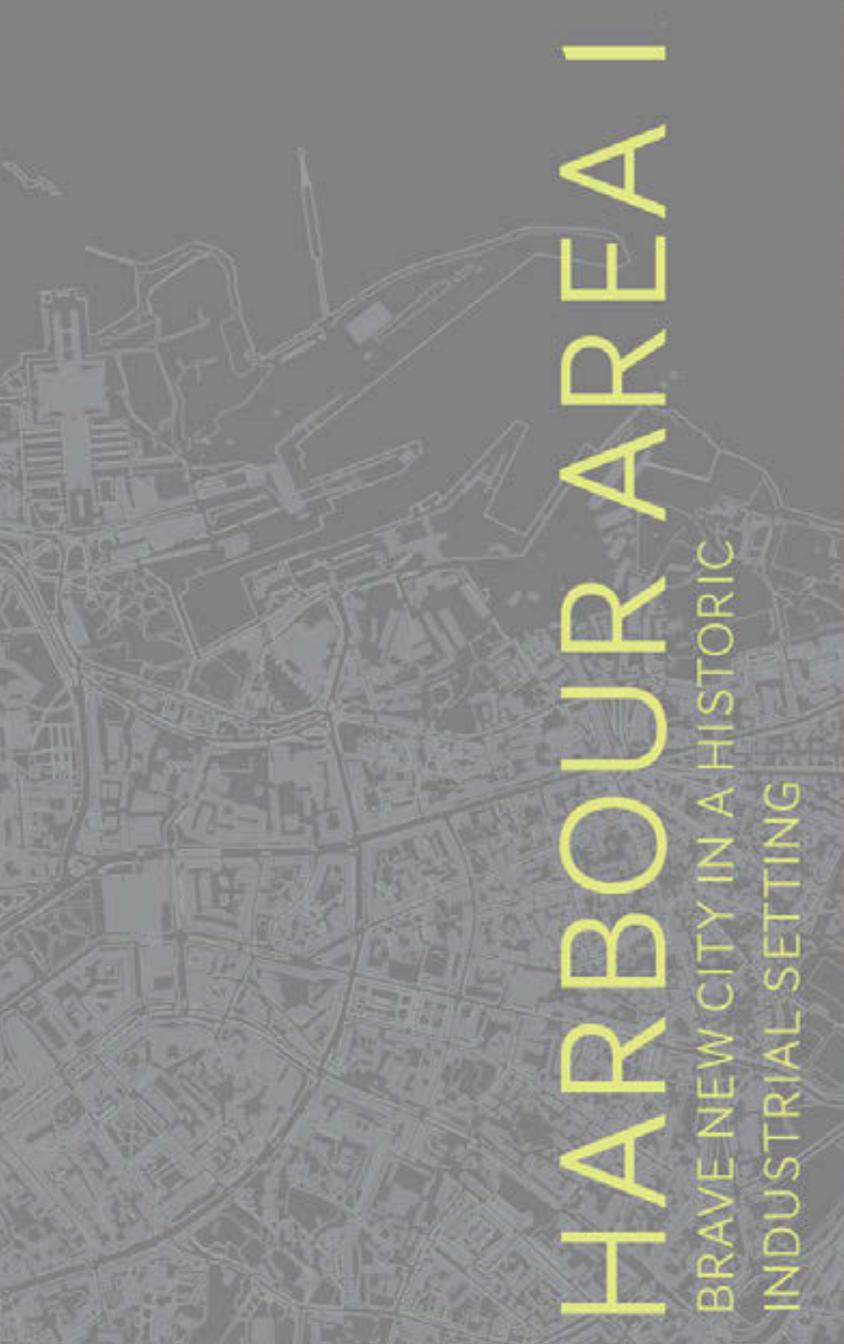
EESTI KULTUURKAPITAL

Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, is a city with a remarkable historic urban heritage as well as a vibrant scene of contemporary architecture. The core of the city to this day is its Old Town: a UNESCO-listed heritage site with an intricate medieval street network and a great number of houses that testify to the city's golden age as part of the Hanseatic League. Time has added its succession of layers: from Classicist palaces to functionalist town houses to Soviet experimentation. The period of Estonia's regained independence, i.e. the last twenty years, have seen a remarkable building boom with a number of noteworthy new public, commercial and private structures designed by Estonian architects. A unique phenomenon compared with the European context is the fact that many design commissions have gone to the youngest generation of architects, mainly by winning open competitions. This has often resulted in architecture that is bold and experimental, testing diverse possibilities of contemporary design strategies. Another phenomenon specific to Tallinn is its great diversity and contrasting elements compressed to a tight scale – within easy walking distances, one can get a glimpse of local controversial history as embodied by buildings from different historical periods that stand closely side by side.

The guidebook you are holding tries to provide an easily accessible grasp of contemporary Tallinn, focusing on architecture of the last twenty years but occasionally directing your attention towards important landmarks of the 20th century that you will pass. You will get to know both the highlights of the contemporary architecture as well as acquire some understanding of their setting and surrounding context, be it in the form of urban environments reflecting the 1930's, new Stalinist alleys, or reconstructions made for the 1980 Olympics. The guidebook is divided into seven trips, each highlighting ten objects, with the exact length of each trip provided. The trips are organized more or less thematically and try to lead you along the tracks where the urban fabric reveals itself most diversely. An extra bonus is a selection of places of interest and necessity such as museums, galleries, theatres, cafés and restaurants as well as children's playgrounds, public saunas, markets and many more locations.

-  ARCHITECTURAL OBJECT
-  MUSEUM
-  GALLERY
-  THEATRE
-  CINEMA
-  CAFÉ
-  RESTAURANT
-  FOOD MARKET
-  FISH MARKET
-  CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS
-  PUBLIC SAUNAS
-  BOTANICAL GARDEN
-  SWIMMING BEACH

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17

An aerial map of an industrial area, showing a dense network of streets, buildings, and infrastructure. The map is rendered in a light gray color against a darker gray background.

HARBOUR AREA I

BRAVE NEW CITY IN A HISTORIC
INDUSTRIAL SETTING





1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

140 m
Trip length 2,1 km

The Rotermann Quarter and harbour area, situated in a strategic location between the urban core and the sea, is one of the most nodal points in Tallinn's contemporary urban development. The structure and feeling of the area are defined by the interplay of different factors: historical architecture of the Rotermann industries, the grandest of its kind in central Tallinn, and the fact that the area was restricted during the Soviet era, generating a disjunction in normal urban development. The existential, haunting lure of the place was captured in Tarkovski's 1979 film "Stalker", as parts of it were shot here. Efforts have been made since the 1990's to reincorporate the area into the everyday urban fabric and establish connections with the centre and seaside without losing its specific character and separate historical strata. Most of the industrial buildings have been renovated, and the added contemporary layer adheres to the existing dense structure and historical references. The district is growing into a showcase of the city's best contemporary architecture, designed mainly by young offices, and with due attention also given to quality public space. The area in the harbour and around Admiralty Basin are largely waiting their turn for equally good development, with an apartment building on the corner of Lootsi St. setting the trend. In-between the Rotermann quarter and the harbour is also the Museum of Estonian Architecture, which is located in a historic salt storage and features exhibitions and archives reflecting the developments of 20th-century architecture.

Length of the trip is 2,1 km



APARTMENT BUILDING WITH SHOPS, AB KOSMOS, 2003 – 2009
13 Vana-Viru / 4 Aia

1

Aia St is part of Tallinn bastional belt and has also been a location of 19th-century wooden workshops, which by today are barely detectable within the urban fabric. It is in this transitional area on the verge of the Old Town that architects designed one of the most controversial buildings in central Tallinn. On its western face, the building is concealed behind a historical facade; on the southern side, the building's highly articulated, boldly angular forms open towards the courtyard and the street. Black slate cladding and light wooden decks add to the overall drama. The main idea of the project was to find a shape for the contemporary comprehension of luxury, combining the city's most desirable downtown location with individualistic suburban qualities such as an abundance of space, privacy, outdoor living and terraces. Each of the apartments has a different, often unconventional floor plan.



13

NORDIC HOTEL FORUM, AB PLUSS, 2005 – 2007
3 Viru Sq

2

Nordic Hotel Forum is one of several new hotels in Tallinn, reflecting the booming economy at the beginning of the new millennium, based largely on tourism. The building had to conform to an existing detailed plan and fit into quite a tight budget. One of the driving forces on an urban scale was to improve the street level of this central area, where hopes for developing a human-centered square had died when the space was filled by a major shopping centre. Thus, the building tries to achieve maximum integration of street level- and indoor spaces by full glazing of the lobby and restaurant areas and elevation of the structure's main area on stilts. The slightly purple facade is printed with graphic images of Estonian forests, stylised animals and birds according to the designs of Andres Rohtla and Anne Pikkov; the same motifs are utilised throughout the interior design and corporate images. A row of fir trees on the edge of the roof progresses the theme, putting the longing for and alienation of nature into imagological use.



3

COMMERCIAL AND OFFICE BUILDING (FORMER ROTERMANN CARPENTRY SHOP), KOKO ARHITEKTID, 2007 – 2008
7 Roseni

Contemporary projects in the Rotermanni Quarter feature a number of different strategies for reconstructing historical buildings. The reconstruction of a former carpentry has been one project relying most on contrasting the old with the new, and on stressing the imagological power of architecture. When approaching from the city side, the building functions somewhat as an introduction to the quarter and features three added towers on the roof, nicknamed “lighthouses” by the architects themselves. The architectural approach – with its respectful renovation of the old structure, avoiding visible alterations, and clearly separate, strikingly contemporary portion – harks back to KOKO’s internationally renowned renovation of the Fahlé factory. Each small tower houses a single, exclusive office.

14



4

OLD AND NEW FLOUR STORAGE, HG ARHITEKTUUR, 2006 – 2008
8 Rotermanni

Whereas reconstruction principles, choice of materials and other aspects of new additions in the Old Town are strictly regulated, guidelines in the Rotermanni quarter focus mainly on the structure of urban fabric. Thus, the architects have more freedom to rethink and redefine what is worthy and dignified in architecture in a historic context. In this case, an old flour storage acquired two extra floors and a new addition in front of it, connected with a gallery and forming an atrium in-between. Contrasting Cor-Ten steel speaks to the roughness of historic industrial buildings; the unusual proportions of openings in the facade are a reworking of former industrial window patterns. At the front of the building, an urban square is formed as the main public gathering space. Creating a fully pedestrian, contemporary public space has been one of the strongest ideas of the district’s developers.



BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX, AB KOSMOS, 2004 – 2007
5 Rotermanni / 10 Roseni

5

This complex of four interconnected buildings was the first to be built in the Rotermanni district, and its concern for distinctiveness, strong character and a specific interpretation of historical architecture has set the tone for the entire area. The buildings also try to define urbane and dense living in the context of mostly heterogeneous, fragmentary and sparse Tallinn. Each of the four buildings has an individuality of its own, yet in unison they form a clearly coherent whole due to their overall layout and characteristic outdoor spaces with distinctly paved, inclined walkways. Special attention has been paid to detailing: from the design of entrances and occasional use of handmade bricks to the treatment of railings, street lamps, benches and other design elements.



15

MUSEUM OF ESTONIAN ARCHITECTURE (FORMER SALT STORAGE)
ERNST BOUSTEDT 1907-1908, ÜLO PEIL 1995-1996
2 Ahtri

6

The salt storage was part of the Rotermanni district – an industrial complex that included a department store, food-processing plants, and workshops for treating wood. The complex began as a trading business in 1830's with factories soon to follow, and belonged to the Rotermanni family for several generations. The district, which grew rapidly in its time, stands as compact historical evidence of a period of industrial expansion in Tallinn that changed the city's economic and urban circumstances as well as residents' everyday lives and habits. As industrial architecture also had to conform to stylistic principles of the day, the Rotermanni buildings also reflect the aesthetic ideas of that particular era in history. Having been used for various industrial purposes during Soviet times, left largely underappreciated and also briefly designated for demolition, buildings in the Rotermanni district were more or less abandoned during the 1990's. The salt storage was put to a good use as the Museum of Estonian Architecture.



7 APARTMENT BUILDING WITH SHOPS, HG ARHITEKTUUR, 2003 – 2005
3a Lootsi

This building was the first proper urbane structure to be erected in the harbour area, setting the trend for bold and elegant solutions. The Y-shaped layout stems from the triangular plot and the aim to avoid large, stuffy volume. The plot's location could be described as problematic: set amidst the harbour area and next to a major traffic junction with not much urban fabric around for support. Young and mainly childless individuals were seen as the target group in such a context, and thus the apartments are compact and efficient with one or two rooms. The light and airy feel emanates from the overall form as well as from the unusual facade materials, which include timber veneer and printed glass.



8 OFFICE BUILDING AND PARKING, URMAS LÖÖKESE AB, 2005 - 2006
4a Jõe

In a rather anonymous landscape of office buildings, this polished black cubic structure on a corner plot catches the eye immediately. It seems like a piece of elitist design rather than one of architecture. The building reveals little of its introverted character to passersby, focusing mainly on the interplay between rigorous geometrical forms on the facade. The lobby leads to a spacious atrium in the centre of the building. The interior public spaces bear a distinct style: at once both luxurious and minimal. The office portion is complemented by an unusually decorative car park, testing the typology's ability to remain an equal player on the street. The two structures together are the most impressive during night time, when they create a dreamscape of big-city life.



SYNAGOGUE, KOKO ARHITEKTID, 2005 – 2007
16 Karu

9

Tallinn Synagogue is perhaps the only such Jewish place of worship in Europe that features bold contemporary architecture. All synagogues and Jewish prayer houses in Tallinn were destroyed during World War II, and religious life was practically prohibited during Soviet rule. This synagogue, the first one constructed in many years, was built as an annex to a 1920's Jewish school. Its architecture unites non-traditional modern form and important symbolic connotations, radiating a light, airy and welcoming feel. The structure is based on the idea of a single vault, an archetypal religious form, hovering above a colonnade. The interior organization strictly follows old customs and liturgical demands. The main hall is located in the rear part of the building, up to which leads a wide flight of stairs that can also be used as seating. The structure's dominant symbol is a pomegranate, an ancient sign of unity, which is cut into the main door as well as featured in details throughout the entire space. Dignified mahogany and warm brick contrast with clear glass and pure concrete. The building also houses a kosher café and a shop.

17



FOORUM COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL
COMPLEX, HG ARHITEKTUUR, 2004 - 2007
5 Narva Rd

10

The Foorum mixed-use complex houses a shopping arcade, offices, service areas, cafés and, on the upper floors, apartments. Quite a large volume of the building has been divided into four separate parts organized with the aid of longitudinal passages and quiet inner courtyards. Due to such a spatial layout, the massive building feels unexpectedly light; an impression that grows even stronger due to the inclined, stepped facades and glazed, undulating balconies towering above the street. Detailing, materials and a whimsical interior design by Kohvi add to its high-end character. The entire complex has a decidedly urbane feel, with the main facade stepping back generously to create a lively triangular plaza in front and thus compensate for the filling in of the formerly adjacent Viru Square.

MUSEUMS:

Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design, Lai 17 (Art)
www.etdm.ee

GALLERIES:

Design and Architecture Gallery, Pärnu road 6
Draakoni Gallery, Pikk 18 www.eaa.ee/697
Haus Gallery, Uus 17 www.haus.ee
Hobusepea Gallery, Hobusepea 2 www.eaa.ee/698
HOP Gallery, Hobusepea 2 www.eaa.ee/hop
US Art Gallery, Roseni 8 (Rotermanni Quarter) www.usart.ee

THEATRES:

Estonian Drama Theatre, Pärnu road 5 www.draamateater.ee
Estonian National Opera, Estonia avenue 4 www.opera.ee
St Canute's Guild Hall, Pikk 20 www.saal.ee
Theatrum, Vene 14 www.theatrum.ee

CINEMAS:

Coca-Cola Plaza, Hobujaama 5 www.forumcinemas.ee
Kinomaja, Uus 3 www.kinomaja.ee
Sõprus, Vana-Posti 8 kinosoprus.ee

CAFÉS:

Energia kohvik, Kaubamaja 4
Kloostri Ait, Vene 14 www.kloostriait.ee
Must Puudel, Müürivahe 20 et-ee.facebook.com/pages/KOHVIK-MUST-PUUDEL/111264345624930
Narva kohvik, Narva road 10 www.kohviknarva.ee

RESTAURANTS:

Alter Ego, Roseni 8 www.alterego.ee
City Marina, Kuunari www.citymarina.ee
N.9, Rävala avenue 4 / 9th floor www.number9.ee
NEH, Lootsi 4 www.neh.ee
Sfäär, Mere avenue 6e www.sfaar.ee
Šeš-Beš, Gonsiori 9 www.aserikook.ee

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Kanut garden / Gonsiori 3a / Politseiaed

PUBLIC SAUNAS:

Raua saun, Raua 23

THE PROMINENT CENTRE OF TALLINN 2





22

The heart of Tallinn is still its Old Town – a unique urban environment enclosed by a medieval city wall with towers and a street structure dating from the same era. The golden age of the city was the Hanseatic era in the 15th century, and churches and dwellings of that time have been preserved to a great degree with the exception of a district on Harju Street that was bombed in World War II. Thus, each new addition to this urban fabric is an event in itself: design issues are approached with the utmost care and attention, being subject to specific regulations. The buildings recently added to Old Town avoid copying and instead offer different contemporary interpretations in terms of structure, volumetric distribution, materials and form. The same holds true for Vabaduse (Freedom) Square on the edge of Old Town. This public urban space has perhaps the strongest symbolic presence in the town and must embody the needs of very different uses: from military parades held on Estonian Independence Day to performances, protests and street sports. Bordered by some of the most remarkable buildings of the country's pre-war legacy, the current design was implemented after a very long process of design and building. The streets radiating from Vabaduse Square are lined by prominent business buildings and valued apartments, where structures best representing the 1930's exist side by side with monumental Soviet-era architecture such as, for instance, the National Library, or contemporary public buildings like the Museum of Occupations. The fact that the whole Old Town is surrounded by a "green belt" resulting from historical bastions and other defensive earthworks makes for a very humane urban environment.

Length of the trip is 2,5 km



HOTEL TELEGRAAF, EA RENG /MARTIN AUNIN, 2004 – 2007
g Vene

1

The Old Town of Tallinn is listed as a UNESCO heritage site both for its Hanseatic architecture and the network of streets and plots that has remained intact to a large extent. Thus, empty lots in the Old Town are scarce and building regulations strict. Hotel Telegraaf is one of the rare examples of a contemporary addition to this dense historical urban fabric. The main part is located in a former Neo-Baroque post office with a new wing that houses more hotel rooms, a restaurant and a spa. This wing was added to the garden side, but is clearly visible from Apteegi St. The architectural solution contrasts with the old, but is solid and respectable. Conforming to its high-end location, the hotel is a luxurious resort built according to all proper rules of the experience economy.



23

DE LA GARDIE SHOPPING CENTRE, ALVER TRUMMAL ARHITEKTID, 1994 – 2000
13/15 Viru

2

De la Gardie shopping centre was the first remarkable contemporary addition to the urban environment of Tallinn's Old Town and takes an explicit stance on the question of the language of infill in an historic setting. It is built on the site of three medieval houses destroyed in World War II, and the division of the facade clearly marks the historic plot division. The structure's volume conforms to neighbouring building lines and roof heights along the street. The medieval foundations are exposed in the basement, and historic references are also visible by way of lines on the limestone facade. One of the main principles when building in the Old Town is the requirement to use natural building materials, and De la Gardie tests almost all of them – limestone, glass, wood and copper – in a highly articulate way. The original interior was a generous single space with boldly exposed concrete, trussed staircases and a transparent feel. Regrettably, some of the atmosphere has been destroyed by dividing the space into various small shops.



3 4

VABADUSE [FREEDOM] SQUARE, ALVER TRUMMAL ARHITEKTID 1998 - 2009

Vabaduse Square is the main representative plaza in Tallinn and is the site of activities ranging from military parades to street art and skaters' events. The square was initially formed as a marketplace just outside the inner city wall, and was called 'Haymarket'. From the end of the 19th century until 1923, it was known as Peter's Square and featured a monument to Peter the Great in the centre. The square started to take its present shape in the 1920's with the eclectic Gloria Palace cinema (1926) by Latvian architect Fridrihs Skujins being the first of the new buildings erected. During the second half of the 1930's, designing a grand, prominent square was an increasingly weighty issue with the state having turned towards more nationalistic politics during Estonia's so-called "Silent Era". Works entered into a 1937 competition featured stark, uniform architecture and called for the demolition of St. James' Church in addition to erecting a liberty statue in the centre of the square; however, these plans remained unrealized.

Nevertheless, most of the buildings defining the northern and southern sides of the square were erected during the 1930's in styles ranging from the elegant functionalism of the Art Hall (1934, Anton Soans & Edgar Johan Kuusik) to the belated expressionism of an insurance company (currently Tallinn Municipality, 1931, Robert Natus) and the decorative poise of a bank and apartment building (1937, Elmar Lohk).

Vabaduse Square was renamed Victory Square during the Soviet era, but the new powers' representative ambitions were carried out elsewhere in the city. The 1990's finally heralded the beginning of redeveloping the square into a contemporary urban space able to accommodate both representative functions and everyday street life. After a ten-year process of negotiations and development, the first phase was completed in 2009 with re-exposed bastion walls, inclined planes, pavement marking the historical underground layers, adjustable greenery, lighting and other urban design elements. The overall impression is compromised by a monument to the war of independence added separately, which expresses unabashed political will and national anguish over the issues of representing memory.





ENGLISH COLLEGE GYMNASIUM, KOKO ARHITEKTID, 2004 – 2007
10 Estonia Blvd

5

A structure raised onto tree-like concrete stilts catches the eye along Pärnu Rd. On one hand, the gymnasium – in part privately funded by the board of trustees of the elite English College – reflects the desire for spectacular, symbolic architecture. On the other hand, it is situated in an urban district that originally followed a 19th-century Viennese pattern of noble townhouses set in greenery, resisting the formation of continuous street walls with perimetrical buildings. The concrete “tree trunks” create a similar pause in the street’s rhythm, while at the same time forming a canopy conveniently used by pedestrians waiting at the bus stop. The gym overlooks the street, while a swimming pool is set underground. An impressive staircase leads up between the gym and the neo-classicist schoolhouse itself, which was completed by St. Petersburg architect Aleksander Rosenberg in 1916.



ROOSIKRANTSI
STREET

6

This quietish street in the heart of the city has a remarkably different feel than the rest of diverse Tallinn. It was originally the path from the town centre towards the gallows on a nearby hill and later bordered on a cemetery for victims of plague and other diseases. Nevertheless, you would guess nothing of this from the street’s present appearance, as it includes some of the most highly priced apartments in Tallinn. The street seems like a cutout from the aspiring city during the first Estonian Republic, featuring refined apartment buildings that house shops with spacious display windows below. With a few rare exceptions such as Art Nouveau or 1980’s postmodernism, the architecture mainly reflects the aesthetics of upper-middle class during the second half of the 1930’s – the transformation of functionalist ideals into something more solid, more representative, with a hint of decorativeness. It is also one of the most compact outcomes of the Estonian state’s firm initiative in the 1930’s to make central Tallinn appear more uniform and stately: a time, when President Päts personally oversaw urban plans and facade designs.



7

NATIONAL LIBRARY, RAINE KARP, 1984 – 1992
2 Tõnismägi

Raine Karp has been an architect with one of the most original handwriting and the most controversial reception over time in Estonia. During Soviet times, he received several substantial state-commissioned projects and completed them in a highly unique manner, at the time attracting criticism for his position, but later on being highly appreciated for his work. This building was designed as Estonia's main public library, with underground floors for a huge book depository. The formal solution aims towards grand monumentality and a ceremonial, solemn interior atmosphere. Limestone, adopted for both exterior and interior use, relates to the locality and Estonian nation; rose window adds a touch of the sacred. The black ceiling harks back to a well-known national poem. Similar to Linnahall, the building features stairs and accesses all over the structure, adding a clearly urban dimension.

26



8

MUSEUM OF OCCUPATIONS, HEAD ARHITEKTID, 2001 – 2003
8 Toompea

The Museum of Occupations was established by a private foundation with the aim to research and commemorate the Russian and German occupations of Estonia. A competition for the museum's architecture was won by Siiri Vallner and Indrek Peil, for whom the building was their first realised in actuality. The structure reflects the relatively small budget as well as the architects' conscious choices in regards to the urban fabric. The building does not conform to the classical urban principle of forming homogenous street walls, but rather accentuates the corner plot with an unexpectedly light structure. The idea continues with a very sensitive spatial layout and features a small courtyard in front of the entrance, which is meant for a momentary pause and adjustment of the mood. The museum is earnest and solemn, but avoids a sense of oppression or revenge.



APARTMENT BUILDING, AB OKAS & LÖÖKE, 2003 – 2004
8 Kaarli Blvd

9

This elegant yet modest apartment building opposite to St. Charles' Church is by Jüri Okas and Marika Lööke – architects with a heroic background as some of the leading artists-architects of 1970's resistance culture. In the last decades, they have earned a reputation for their minimalist buildings executed with an attitude of perfectionism. In a similar vein, this building does not cry out for special attention; but rather defines itself as an equal, neutral player within the urban whole. The eight-storeyed building houses 92 apartments, and those facing the street have balconies with sliding glass shutters – carefully isolating street noise.



27

HOTEL L'ERMITAGE, AB PLUSS, 2003 - 2004
19 Toompuiestee

10

The hotel occupies a lot between two historic buildings, conforming to its neighbours in height and volume but speaking a strikingly different language. The building's main eye-catching elements are its main entrance – set in a broken, "caved-in" corner – and the overall vertical rhythm of the hotel's windows and patinated copper cladding. The architect claims that inspiration was drawn, in a highly abstract manner, from the short-film compilation "Animatrix": mainly, the idea that reality might be simulated. This is reflected in some optical distortions on the facade as well as in the general idea of a hotel as a dreamscape. In contrast with the building's bold, solid main outer front, the courtyard-facing side is unexpectedly colourful. Inside, very thin ceilings housing built-in heating was an innovation not used before in the Baltics.

MUSEUMS:

AHHA Science Centre, Vabaduse square 9 (Natural Science)

www.ahhaa.ee

Bastion Tunnels, Komandandi 2 (History) linnamuuseum.ee/kok/en/passages-under-the-bastions

Museum of Occupations, Toompea 8 (History) www.okupatsioon.ee

GALLERIES:

Atrium Gallery, Harju 6 www.galeriiaatrium.ee

Design and Architecture Gallery, Pärnu road 6

Linnagalerii, Vabaduse square 6 www.kunstihoone.ee

National Library of Estonia Gallery, Tõnismägi 2 www.nlib.ee

Tallinn Art Hall Gallery, Vabaduse square 6 www.kunstihoone.ee

Vabaduse Gallery, Vabaduse square 6

THEATRES:

Cabaret Rhizome, Kaarli avenue 9-19 www.cabaretrhizome.ee

Estonian Drama Theatre, Pärnu road 5 www.draamateater.ee

Theatrum, Vene 14 www.theatrum.ee

Von Krahl, Rataskaevu 10 www.vonkrahl.ee

CINEMAS:

Sõprus, Vana-Posti 8 www.kinosoprus.ee

Kosmos, Pärnu road 45 www.forumcinemas.ee

CAFÉS:

Kloostri Ait, Vene 14 www.kloostriait.ee

Must Puudel, Müüri vahe 20 et-ee.facebook.com/pages/KOHVIK-MUST-PUUDEL/111264345624930

RESTAURANTS:

Restoran AED, Rataskaevu 8 www.vonkrahl.ee/restoranaed

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Hirve park (Wismari 2)

Falgi park (Wismari 4)

KALAMAJA 3

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN A
ROMANTIC SHANTYTOWN



Kalamaja, situated to the west of the harbour, is the oldest settlement around the city core, with a street structure dating back to 15th century and the most extensive and coherent surviving building stock of wooden tenement houses in Tallinn. Originally a fishermen's village, Kalamaja acquired its present appearance mainly during the second half of the 19th century with a population burst that accompanied the Industrial Revolution. At the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th centuries, the streets of Kalamaja were filled with two-storeyed wooden tenement houses for the workers. In the 1930's, another building boom brought along a second layer of wooden houses with apartments rented out to the lower-middle classes, petty bourgeoisie or intelligentsia. Kalamaja also houses some of the most imposing examples of historical industrial architecture; a number of which have, during recent years, undergone a transformation into creative hubs of interdisciplinary culture. The most notable of these include the Culture Cauldron, currently under construction, and the small but avant-garde Museum of Contemporary Art on one side of Kalamaja as well as the Telliskivi creative city on the other. Towards the seaside, one finds a massive marine fortifications building later used as the city's main prison, seaplane hangars with their unique engineering architecture, and one of the most imposing landmarks along the whole coastal area – Tallinn's Linnahall, built for the 1980's Olympics. All this makes for a very diverse urban environment with a distinct, slightly nonchalant identity.

Length of the trip is 4,5 km



LINNAHALL, RAINE KARP, RIINA ALTMÄE, 1976 – 1980
20 Mere Blvd

1

It's impossible to miss this massive, enigmatic building at the seaside, and it is almost equally impossible to resist the urge to climb up its stairs and get a magnificent view over the city and the sea. Linnahall ('city hall', not to be confused with the city government building) was among the structures erected for the 1980 Moscow Olympics, the yachting regatta of which was held in Tallinn. Most of the seafront was a restricted area during the Soviet times, and a railway track broke up the plot as well. As a result, the building forms a bridge over the railway (now removed) and provides a highly desired connection between the city and the sea. The architectural solution is highly original, stemming partly from the notoriously limited choice of building materials at the time. Local limestone is used in both the exterior and interior. The most striking feature of the interior is the main hall, which seats 3,000 and is in the form of an amphitheatre that features completely removable walls to form a continuous space throughout the building overlooking the sea.



33

CULTURE CAULDRON AND CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM OF ESTONIA (FORMER TALLINN ELECTRICITY PLANT, 1934 – 1948)
27-35 Põhja Blvd

2

Tallinn Electricity Plant was established in 1912 as the successor to a former gas factory. The impressive boiler house was built in 1934, and the landmark chimney after World War II. The plant operated until the 1990's. The empty building then found a group of activists to turn it into a cultural centre. Due to its size and poor conditions, the process has taken longer than expected and changed from a grassroots initiative to an official undertaking. For the last ten years, the main hall has functioned as a venue for temporary cultural events. When complete, the complex will house the Von Krahl Theatre and the Centre for Estonian Architecture, among other organisations. Meanwhile, a group of artists and curators squatted in a smaller building of the plant and started an exhibition programme under the name of the Estonian Museum of Contemporary Art. In spite of unauthorized use, its activities attained a great deal of attention and respect, and by now the museum has been recognized officially.



3

ARTDEPOO APARTMENT BUILDING, ON ARHITEKTID, 2003 – 2004 12 Jahu

Artdepo was the first actual factory conversion development in Tallinn. The former tin factory consisted of numerous smallish Soviet-era buildings. The developers conformed to the surrounding context, waiving their right to demolish the old and build a new, up to 4-storey structure in its place. The resulting complex features an inner street and a closed courtyard. The structure is highly articulated, with facades of historic limestone, perforated steel sheets, metal lamellas and carmine red paint. Interior solutions within the 51 lofts were left up to inhabitants to decide: common areas feature bright colours and exposed building blocks. Despite the fact that the complex originally also housed a contemporary art gallery, its nature verges on 'suburban' and features fences, a playground and a closed gate.

34



4

PATAREI (THE BATTERY, 1829 – 1840) 2 Kalaranna

Patarei, an imposing building directly along the seaside, was originally Tallinn's main marine fortification, built according to 1820's general defence plans inspired by Prussian defence systems. The complex was meant to hold 2,000 people and consisted of a curved gorge building, a lunette with living spaces for the officers, an infirmary and soldiers' barracks, and a caponier (cannon house). During the Estonian War of Independence (1919-20) the building was converted into a prison and served as such until 2005. Since then, Patarei has been the subject of numerous redevelopment plans, planning competitions and workshops. The most serious of these, albeit dropped, was perhaps an idea for it to accommodate the Estonian Academy of Arts. Currently, the building is open as a museum with cultural events and parties organized in the courtyard and along the seafront in summer.



SEAPLANE HANGARS, CHRISTIANI & NIELSEN, 1916-17
KOKO ARHITEKTID 2009-2011
17 Kalaranna

5

The seaplane hangars, a structure with three interconnected concrete cupolas, were a world-pioneering feat of engineering. A plan for six hangars in two rows was designed by Danish engineering company Christiani & Nielsen at the time of World War I as part of a newly-outlined marine defence complex; however, only half of the design – one row with three hangars – was completed. The concrete shells are only 8-12 cm thick and supported by 36 columns, covering an area of 36 x 116 m. This type of concrete shell found wider use only in the 1930's and especially in the 1950's. The area remained in military use during Soviet times. Since 2006, the complex has belonged to the Estonian Maritime Museum and is being delicately reconstructed. The exposition design by KOKO architects features a fascinating display, with the historic submarine Lembit as its star exhibit.

35



APARTMENT BUILDING, AB EEK & MUTSO, 2006 – 2007
4 Noole

6

This apartment building is one example of negotiating contemporary architecture with an environment under heritage protection. The outer appearance of the unusually long building was largely determined by a historic military structure, the outer limestone walls of which form the ground floor. The first floor with its yellow cladding references local wooden houses; the uppermost floor adds diversity with Cor-Ten steel. Nearly all apartments have generous outdoor areas and different floor plans, with sizes varying from one to five rooms per apartment. The ground floor features studio apartments and small offices with separate entrances from the street, making for greater mixed use of space in the neighbourhood. The building was conceived as the first of an entirely new quarter, but the developers decided to carry on with a different scheme.



7

TENEMENT HOUSES ON SALME AND KALEVI STREETS, 1930's

There are more than 500 so-called Tallinn-type houses from the second half of the 1930's in the city. This is a certain type of wooden house with a symmetrical facade, a stone staircase in the centre, high limestone or rendered plinth, and two storeys with an attic. Meant for workers and lesser intelligentsia, the houses are a local equivalent to European cities' rental blocks. The formal solution was equally determined at the time of construction by an economic recession and the decline of timber prices, coinciding with new fire-safety regulations that demanded a stone or brick staircase. Their appearance expresses the aesthetic ideals of 1930's middle class – designed by engineers and master builders, the buildings feature details harking back to late Art Nouveau and historicism. Inside, one finds apartments with two to three small rooms and very basic conveniences. Yet with their orderly yards and sometimes elaborate facades, the Tallinn-type houses were an upgrade from the slum environment, and render these streets a distinct 1930's atmosphere.

36



8

APARTMENT BUILDING, KOKO ARHITEKTID, 2005
33 Vabriku

Upon completion, this modest building received the Tallinn Cultural Heritage Department's prize as best new addition to a historical milieu. Built on the foundations of an early 20th-century tenement house, the building is barely, yet at the same time significantly distinguishable from the rest of the row. It has a somewhat rough-looking unfinished vertical wood cladding, French windows and a symmetrical facade with rectangular dormer windows. A traditional look is reinterpreted in a delicately modern way and without any unnecessary details. The building's modest volume houses ten apartments with full contemporary conveniences, while the southern side faces a yard and even features spacious balconies and a terrace.



TELLISKIVI CREATIVE CITY

60a Telliskivi

9

Telliskivi Creative City occupies the former railway factories between the central railway station and Kopli freight train depot. One of many former industrial clusters in Tallinn, it has been redeveloped along a different model than the Culture Cauldron – occupying the spaces gradually, on a self-organized basis until the process of drawing up an actual detailed plan follows its course. The strategy has proven itself, and the present activities are taken into consideration in developers' plans as well. Telliskivi works as a hub, renting spaces to various players in the cultural field including the organizers of the main local film festival, music promoters, urbanists and designers, while several spaces are also used as workshops. Concerts, performances and a Saturday flea market are additionally held. The atmosphere of a creative community can be felt.



APARTMENT BUILDING, AB PLUS

2005 – 2006

27 Kotzebue

10

This apartment building has to contextualize itself on two levels: on one hand, within the general heritage area of Kalamaja; and on the other, along Kotzebue street, which carries a markedly different character with its rows of grey, decorated Stalinist classicist townhouses. In this situation, the building speaks rather to the latter: ending the row with its equal dimensions, seven apartments per floor, retail facilities and parking on the ground level. The end facade and its row of balconies is the only eye-catching feature of the building, the main aim of which is to enhance the urban quality of the environment with its modest presence. Nevertheless, it would have taken more than a single retail space to achieve interaction with the street.

MUSEUMS:

Children's Museum, Kotzebue 16 (Other)

linnamuseum.ee/lastemuuseum

Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, Põhja avenue 35 (Art)

ekkm-came.blogspot.com

Discovery Centre Energy, Põhja avenue 29 (Natural Science)

www.energiakeskus.ee

Estonian Museum of Natural History, Lai 29a (Natural Science)

www.loodusmuuseum.ee

Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design, Lai 17 (Art)

www.etdm.ee

Maritime Museum (from 12th of May, 2012), Küti 17a

www.lennusadam.eu/en

Museum of Puppet Arts, Lai 1, (Ohter) www.nuku.ee/muuseum

GALLERIES:

SooSoo Gallery, Telliskivi 60a www.soo-soo.ee

CAFÉS:

Boheem, Kopli 18 www.boheem.ee

F-Hoone, Telliskivi 58

www.facebook.com/pages/Fhoone/146165262101253

Moon, Võrgu 3 www.kohvikmoon.ee

RESTAURANTS:

Kukeke, Telliskivi 57 www.kukeke.ee

MARKETS:

Balti Jaama Market, Kopli 1

Fish Market at Kalaranna, Kalaranna 1 (only on Saturdays)

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Lennusadama, Küti 17a

Tornide väljak

Vana-Kalamaja tn 15

PUBLIC SAUNAS:

Kalma saun, Vana-Kalamaja 9 www.kalmasaun.ee

THE NEW CITY 4

A BUSY AND OPPORTUNISTIC BUSINESS DISTRICT





1



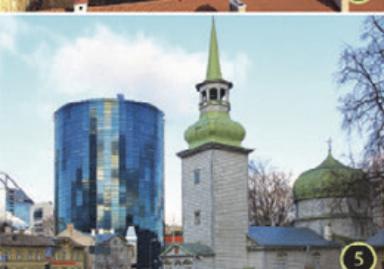
2



3



4



5



THE NEW CITY 4



6



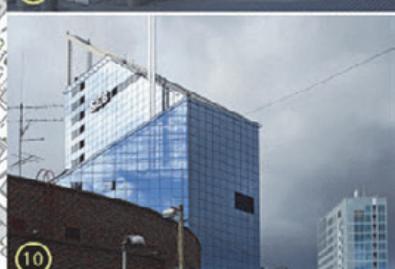
7



8



9



10

120 m
Trip length 1,7 km

42

With Estonia regaining its independence and successive new governments having taken a decisive liberal-capitalist stance, business shot upwards remarkably from the mid-1990's. A big factor behind this rise was the building and real estate sector, with a great number of families wanting to improve their living conditions after decades of depressing housing shortage. A similar demand was influencing the corporate real estate market, with countless new office buildings being erected especially during the first half of the 2000's. In central Tallinn, this resulted in a booming new city area that grew south from Viru Square. The first landmark banking tower by Raivo Puusepp was soon followed by a number of others. Rapid development was also fostered by the completion of a new road breaking through a historically multi-layered district of small industries and wooden dwellings, as well as by the city government's overall laissez-faire planning politics. As a result, the area was either slammed by local critics for its unjustified Manhattanism or researched by foreign theoreticians as a laboratory of self-regulatory urban processes. However, a thematic planning project that delineates the possible areas for high-rises in Tallinn has been approved by now, and the city and professional unions are gradually regaining their authority in planning processes.

Length of the trip is 1,7 km



ICELAND SQUARE AND THEATRE SQUARE

1

Iceland Square, named in honour of the country that first recognized Estonia's re-established independence in 1991, is actually a part of a Stalinist urban planning scheme that devised an ensemble of cultural buildings here at the crossing of two boulevards. A ceremonial axis is formed, starting from the opera and ballet theatre "Estonia" built according to the designs of Finnish national romanticist architects Armas Lindgren and Wivi Lönn. The axis was to be lined by cultural buildings on two sides, of which only the structures housing the Academy of Sciences were completed on the eastern row. The other side acquired a congress centre by Raine Karp in the 1980's, parts of which have been integrated into the recent exorbitant shopping centre by Raivo Puusepp (2009). The axis terminates with the elegant white modernist Communist Party building by Uno Tõlpus and Mart Port (1963-68), currently in use as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



43

VIRU HOTEL AND SHOPPING CENTRE, HENNO SEPMANN, MART PORT (1972), KÜNNAPU & PADRIK 2004 4 Viru Sq

2

The 22-storey Viru Hotel was the first proper modernist tower in Tallinn, built at a time of heated discussions about high-rise building in the central area. The hotel employed a classic form with a slender slab topping a horizontal block of public spaces such as restaurant, café and conference facilities. The hotel also defined the western side of the main central square, which in itself remained largely undeveloped. An open competition for improvement was held in 1997 to find a design solution for the square that also allowed modest new structures along its northern side. However, the entire square was instead filled with a new shopping centre during the subsequent design and building process.



3

CITY PLAZA, ALVER TRUMMAL ARHITEKTID, 2001 – 2004, 2006
2 Tartu Rd / 4 Rävala Blvd

The City Plaza office building and business centre has a nodal location in the new downtown area, and its design solution comments both on the urban situation and the general syntax of the surrounding high-rises of the 1990's and 2000's. The architects, who are some of the main proponents of the urban turn in architecture in Estonia, have created something of an "urban stage" on the corner of the traffic intersection – a dramatically top-lit raised surface under a massive cantilever. They are also known for their precise attitude towards architectural materials, here visible in the interplay of sheer, layered and printed glass, dark slates, and unfinished concrete. The slender tower houses offices and a car park in its lower section, with a restaurant in the middle. The other building features upper-class retail spaces and some public institutions.

44



4

HOTEL RADISSON SAS, KÜNNAPU & PADRIK ARHITEKTID, 2000
3 Rävala Blvd

The hotel, which upon completion was the tallest in Tallinn, is located carefully on the sightline of Laikmaa Street and ends one of the main commercial arteries with an eye-catching vertical accent. Designed by architects with a conceptual past in the 1970's, the building bears some traces of admiration for constructivist architecture: this is especially evident in the playful geometric roofscape, but also in the overall distribution of volumes and geometric references on the facade. Belonging to an international chain, the hotel was the first one in Tallinn with rooms thematized according to different narratives and decoration styles. The top floor features a public café with panoramic views.



OFFICE BUILDING
AB EMIL URBEL 2006 – 2009
45/47 Liivalaia

5

A walk along Maakri Street provides a characteristic view of Tallinn, showing the different layers that exist side by side: from wooden tenement houses, Art Nouveau factory buildings and a spectacular private residence of the same era to starkly different glass skyscrapers testifying to the ambitions and desires of late capitalism. According to municipal plans, Maakri will be the main focus of present and future high-rises in Tallinn. One of the most recent of these is a bank building with a completely round floor plan that attempts to reinterpret this quite normative typology. The central core contains all necessary communications infrastructure, and thus office areas are open to a variety of planning solutions.



45

STALINIST APARTMENT HOUSES, N. KOMKOVA, A. VLASSOV, 1947 – 1956
24 – 34 Tartu Rd

6

Although aesthetic Soviet principles and regulations were officially introduced when Estonia was incorporated into the Soviet Union after World War II, Tallinn did not get many new buildings that would manifest victorious Stalinism in a very pompous way. One of those that came close was a block of apartment buildings for workers of the Dvigatel military factory. The classical perimetric urban block is dominated by a tower in the form of an open pavilion that accentuates the corner and ubiquitous stucco ornamentation displaying common Soviet symbols. In spite of the monumental imagery, buildings of this type featured communal flats with families foreign to each other having to share a kitchen and other facilities.



- 7 BANK AND OFFICE BUILDING
AB KÜNNAPU & PADRIK, 1998
19 Pronksi

This bank and office building, defining a corner plot of an important traffic intersection, stands on the verge of playful metaphors and serious ambitions for being high-tech, testifying to the necessity of the young republic's 1990's architecture to make up for the previous decades and catch up with the rest of the world. The southern end, which resembles an ocean liner, houses a bank hall and auxiliary rooms; the northern end, executed in a minimalist manner, has more conventional office spaces. This latter part of the building is set on columns in a classically modernist way, lending a more airy look and enabling the creation of a car park beneath.



- 8 "TOURIST" SHOP, PEEP JÄNES, 1982
17 Tartu Rd

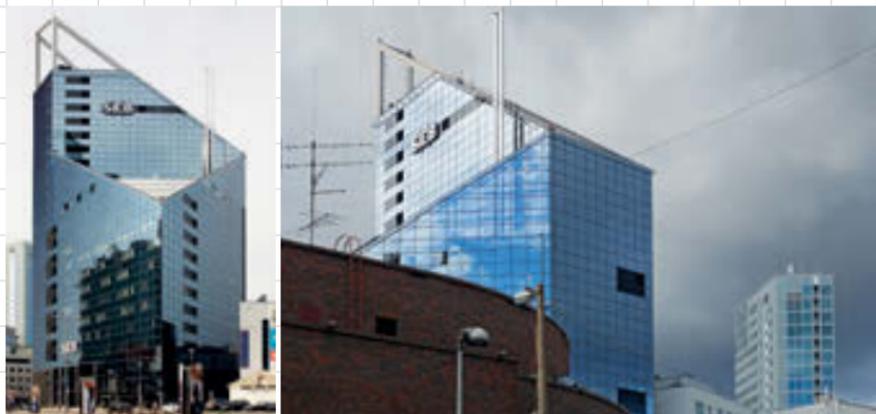
This mysterious-looking building represents a peculiarly Soviet typology, having been built as a shop for foreign tourists and off-limits to locals. This accounts for its completely introverted appeal due to its closed form and dark bricks, as well as the quality of construction resulting from the use of a Finnish construction enterprise. The fan-shaped layout with a central hall and double balconies in the interior, along with the use of stepping and rounded forms on the exterior also bear some influences of the Finnish master Alvar Aalto. Since Estonian re-independence, it has served as a bank, a shop and a succession of nightclubs. However, in spite of being a highly original testament to a specific architectural heritage, it is legally impossible to prevent substantial future reconstruction or demolition.



ST JOHN'S ALMSHOUSE RUINS PAVILION, AD ANSAMBEL, 2003
5 Väike-Pääsukese

9

During the course of constructing a major new road in central Tallinn, the ruins of a 13th-century almshouse were discovered underground. The almshouse belonged to St John's church which is still preserved nearby, a lovely small baroque edifice oddly stuck in between glass office buildings. To expose the findings, the road had to be slightly realigned. The ruins pavilion had to fit into quite a tight budget, so the solution – which was based on an open competition – was simple and minimalist: like the surface of the road itself turning slightly upwards to reveal the historic layer underneath. The illuminated glass facade was meant to enliven the pedestrian area and bring along to the buildings opposite the structure the creation of some kind of public front; however, this has not quite happened and the pavilion might feel slightly out of place in the middle of traffic.



47

BANK BUILDING, AB RAIVO PUUSEPP, 1999
2 Tornimäe

10

This bank building, currently the SEB headquarters, was the very first high-rise of newly-independent Estonia. The initial slightly controversial reception has long been overshadowed by its landmark status within an entire new business district developing nearby. The crystalline total form, topped by an empty frame for purely compositional purposes, together with facades of bluish reflecting glass render an overall impression that is both expressive and abstract, at the same time harking back to and mocking of the City Crown (Die Stadtkrone) idea. The interior features a bank hall in a three-storey atrium; upper floors are standard office spaces with corporate headquarters on the top levels.

GALLERIES:

Design and Architecture Gallery, Pärnu road 6
Gallery 008, Rävåla avenue 7 www.008galerii.ee

THEATRES:

Estonian Drama Theatre, Pärnu road 5 www.draamateater.ee
Estonian National Opera, Estonia avenue 4 www.opera.ee
NO99, Sakala 3 www.nog9.ee

CINEMAS:

Solaris Cinema, Estonia avenue 9 (Solaris Centre) solariskino.ee;
www.kino.ee

CAFÉS:

Energia kohvik, Kaubamaja 4
Narva kohvik, Narva road 10 www.kohviknarva.ee
Teatri puhvet, Teatri square 3 www.puhvet.ee

RESTAURANTS:

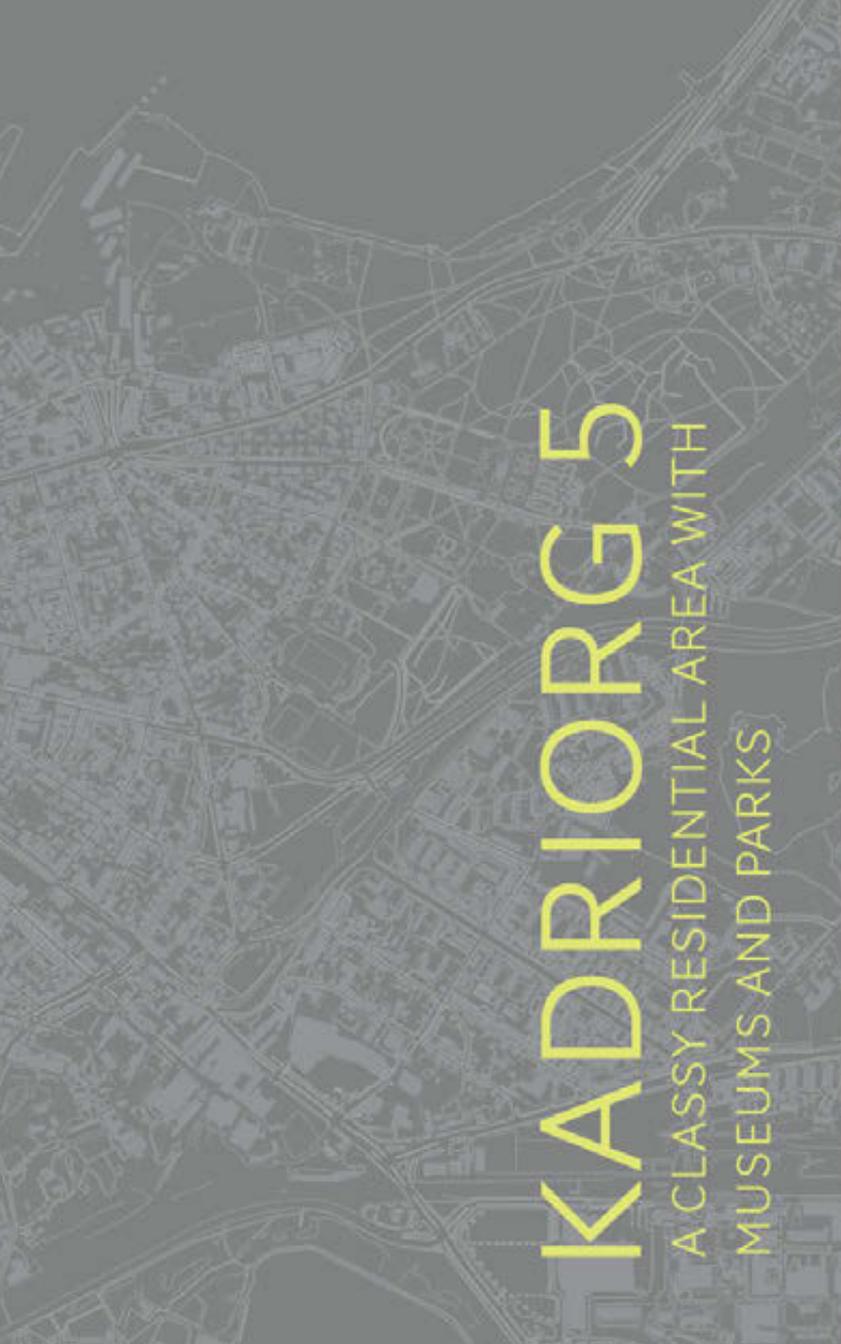
N.9, Rävåla avenue 4 / 9th floor www.number9.ee
Šeš-Beš, Gonsiori 9 www.aserikook.ee

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Gonsiori 3a
Lembitu park
Politseiaed

PUBLIC SAUNAS:

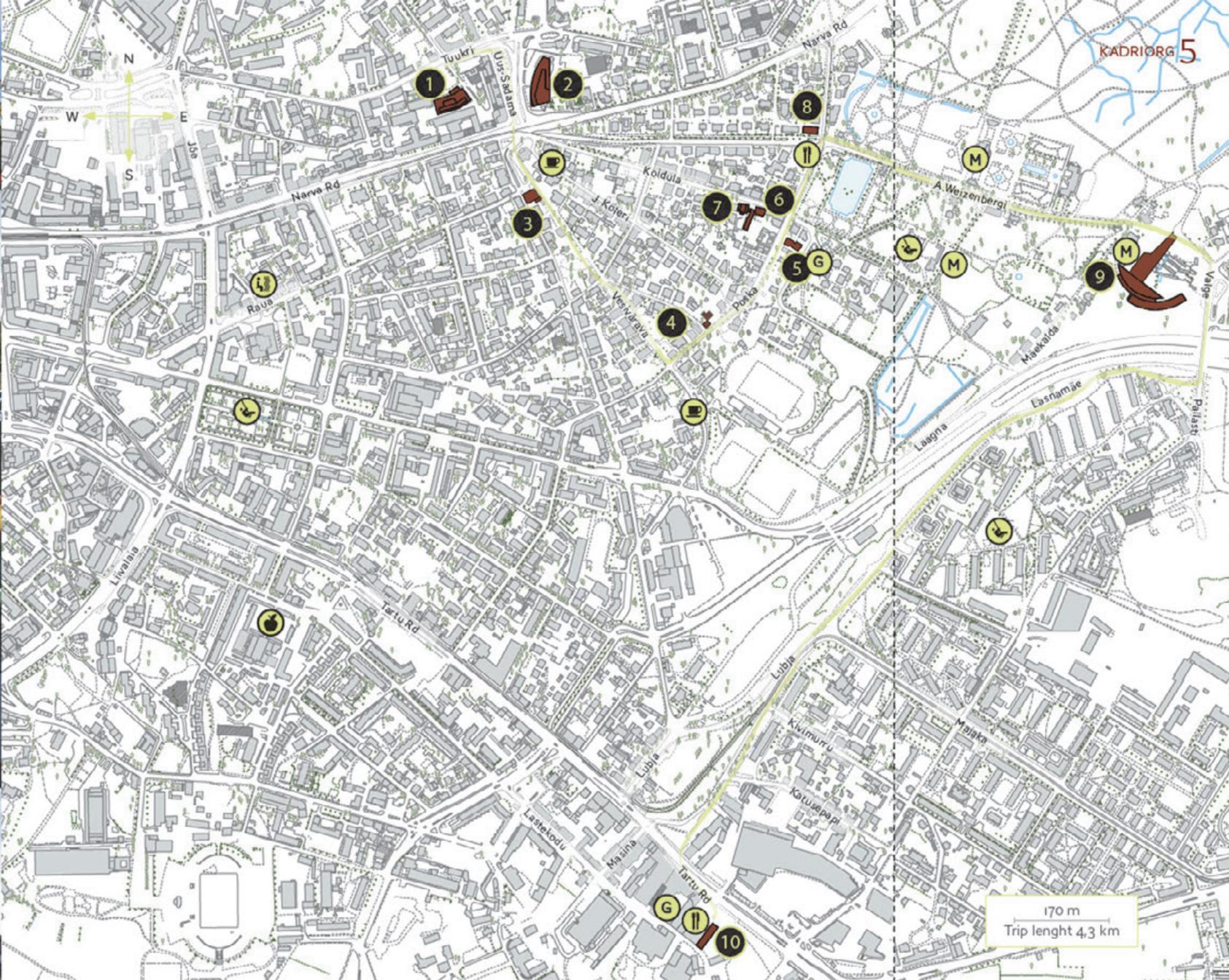
Raua saun, Raua 23

An aerial map of the Kadriorg 5 area in Tallinn, Estonia, showing a dense urban grid with various buildings and streets. The map is rendered in a light grey tone against a dark grey background.

KADRIORG 5

A CLASSY RESIDENTIAL AREA WITH
MUSEUMS AND PARKS





Kadriorg has a remarkable wooden heritage just like several other areas around the city core, but it has an entirely different character and development story. Situated on the seaside to the east of the city, it was the location of summer cottages and villas from already the 17th century. The area was given a boost by the building of a baroque summer residence, complete with a park and annexes, for Peter the Great in the beginning of 18th century, and the vicinity began to turn into a nearby resort for Tallinn nobility. Several wooden villas in the midst of lush gardens have been preserved; some have later been integrated into the expanding city fabric. At the same time, a settlement of palace servants – the so-called sloboda – took shape around Poska Street and contains some of the oldest preserved wooden buildings in Tallinn. Towards the south, dense streets of dwellings for workers and the middle class were added at the end of 19th and beginning of the 20th century: the period of Tallinn's greatest industrial expansion. The 1930's saw the addition of a number of functionalist and traditionalist apartment buildings with comfortable and spacious living premises highly valued up to this day. With sports gaining popularity as a noble way to keep one's body healthy, a stadium and tennis courts were established. Certain streets of Kadriorg have always been home to a dense populace of Jews in Tallinn. With all the abovementioned heritage, a cluster of museums and the city's most prominent park, it is no wonder that contemporary additions to the urban fabric of Kadriorg have also reflected wealth and ambition. While this occasionally had to surrender to the desire to maximise profits in the 1990's, using up entire plots without considering traditional density rates, this has given way during the 2000's to self-conscious expressions of respectful, if slightly conservative, good taste.

The tour ends with a completely different environment- crossing Laagna Road enables a magnificent view down the massive entrenched highway, the backbone of the major modernist housing area of Soviet times that is still a home to almost one third of Tallinn's inhabitants. Further on, one reaches the highest point in Tallinn with a historic industrial complex, now renovated into classy lofts and creative industries.

Length of the trip is 4,3 km



TALLINN UNIVERSITY MAIN BUILDING, AET ARHITEKTID, 2006
5 Uus-Sadama

1

The Tallinn University complex, which includes an imposing 1930's schoolhouse by Alar Kotli and Erika Nõva, has evolved over time and never actually formed a coherent whole. Some years ago, the university decided to start organizing a campus: the main building by AET was the first to be completed, in 2006, and the Baltic Film and Media School by Salto will be ready in 2012. The main building turns its back on the earlier buildings and faces North instead, taking into account the planning of a major northern highway. The most striking feature is its large auditorium, which forms a massive cantilever hanging over the entrance area. Inside, the rooms are organized around a central skylit atrium. Classrooms on the lower floors have semitransparent glass walls to make use of natural light.



53

METHODIST CHURCH, AB KÜNNAPU & PADRIK, 1994 – 2000
51 Narva Rd

2

After the atheist policies of the Soviet Union, the beginning of the era of regained independence saw a marked rise in religious life and the building of a number of new churches. One of these was Tallinn Methodist Church, built upon a landmark location on the border of Kadriorg and the city centre. Vilen Künnapu opted for a somewhat deconstructed form, with tension between the curved main body and its angular tower. The tower encloses the entire main hall; the lower part houses a library, accommodations and auxiliary rooms. Besides religious ceremonies, the hall is often used for concerts as well.



3 APARTMENT AND OFFICE BUILDING, AB RAIVO PUUSEPP, 1997
36 Raua

This was one of the most controversial new additions to Kadriorg upon completion, given its cubic shape, shiny metal cladding and an unprecedented six floors. At the time, the building was clearly testing the principles of infill in heritage areas; but simultaneously, its form was also related to a much higher and urbane apartment building opposite to it – along Narva Road – and the general atmosphere of a high-traffic intersection in front. Rough realism characterizes all works by Puusepp, also the author of Tallinn's first skyscraper. The Raua St. apartment building has a character of its own, but unfortunately it also inspired a series of far poorer followers on much more delicate locations in surrounding Kadriorg.



4 APARTMENT BUILDING, CELANDER PROJEKT, 2011
19 Poska

Poska Street has historically been the settlement of servants at Kadriorg Palace. The area's nickname *sloboda*, meaning 'slum' in Russian, testifies that a great deal of them were of Russian origin. Hence, elaborate specifically Russian-style woodcarvings feature on a great number of the small wooden dwellings here. The buildings at 19 Poska Street are probably the oldest wooden houses in Tallinn, dating from the baroque era, and many of the period details have been preserved. One of the recently reconstructed dwellings also acquired a contemporary annex housing eight apartments. While visibly contemporary, the overall structural volume and dark wood cladding also respect the historical context.



APARTMENT BUILDING, ALVER TRUMMAL ARHITEKTID, 2002
28 Poska

5

This apartment building with only nine flats was another example of “softened” modernism: a tasteful blending of contemporary development into a wooden heritage milieu. On the side of Poska Street, the third floor steps back to diminish the visual impression. The facade emphasizes horizontality, while the bold black wooden cladding is enlivened by orange strips. Large windows ensure plenty of sunlight, and the interior features some unusual light openings as well.



55

APARTMENT BUILDING, ALVER TRUMMAL ARHITEKTID, 2006
26 Koidula

6

In a way somewhat similar to the 3+1 apartment building beside it, this house reveals quite little of its character towards the street. Its presence on this quiet bourgeois street is actually even more modest, with a simple geometry of openings in the white cubic facade and one window protruding like an eye watching over the neighbourhood. A different character unfolds from the yard side – a world of comfortable privacy and airy luxury. Instead of a multi-apartment building that would definitely have been possible on the plot, the architect and developer opted for an urban villa-type structure with just two apartments – one on each upper floor – and a beauty parlour downstairs. In its own restrained manner, the building testifies a trend encompassing the whole area: on its way towards a distinctly upper-middle-class environment.



7

APARTMENT BUILDING, 3+1 ARHITEKTID, 2004 – 2005
24 Koidula

This development in one of the most prestigious living areas in Tallinn consists of a renovated 19th-century townhouse on the street and a new wing in the courtyard. The old building fully retained its appearance but the interior structure was greatly altered, creating new connections between the floors. The historical building acquired a striking metal-clad addition next to it, although a passageway leading between the two offers a glimpse into a totally different environment in the yard. The new wing is light and airy with a facade marked by the rhythm of entrance galleries, terraces and stairs. The interior features strict functional division – an entrance area first, followed by living space in the middle and service areas on the furthestmost side. The overall layout of the complex resulted from the idea to preserve the garden, which was transformed by Berlin-based landscape architecture office le balto.

56



8

APARTMENT BUILDING, ALVER TRUMMAL ARHITEKTID, 2000
29 Weizenbergi

For quite some time at the beginning of the 2000's, this building set the standard for contemporary additions to a wooden heritage area. Pioneering in its combination of modern appearance and a symmetrical facade, unfinished concrete and soft natural wood, spacious terraces and overhanging eaves, this building seemed to embody the essence of tactful good taste among the highly valued historical setting and attracted a number of followers in terms of architectural syntax. Yet at that point in time, the originality of the building actually lay within internal spatial organization. With all of the necessary communication infrastructure set within in situ concrete floors, inhabitants were free to choose the locations of their partition walls – a freedom they regrettably seldom used, preferring to ask the architects for standard layouts.



KUMU ART MUSEUM, PEKKA VAPAAVUORI et al, 2005
34 Weizenbergi / I Valge

9

After an architectural competition in 1993 – the biggest in Estonia – and a prolonged building process, this art museum, which was the first in Estonia intentionally built for such a purpose, opened its doors in 2004. The competition was won by a young Finnish architect, for whom this was his first major commission. The main idea was not to build a structure dominating the historical park, but rather for it to blend into the limestone cliff, with a closed inner courtyard as the main focus and curving exhibition halls in a flanking wing. While there has been some criticism on the museum's peripheral location outside the city centre and its introverted character, denying the controversies of where bourgeois Kadriorg and blue-collar Lasnamäe meet, the museum has nevertheless begun to work well in ensemble with the other museum branches in Kadriorg Palace and the vicinity.

57



FAHLE BUILDING, KOKO ARHITEKTID 2006
84a Tartu Rd

10

This landmark building is one of the most remarkable examples of industrial heritage reconstructed and put to a new use. The former pulp and paper factory built in 1926 was part of a larger complex that was established gradually over time but with most of the buildings dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. During the course of reconstruction, both historical construction details and industrial equipment was preserved as much as possible, integrating it into the present spatial solution. The main structural volume acquired an uncompromising glass box at the top, simultaneously contrasting with and continuing the original structure. The lower floors house a restaurant and offices, while apartments with magnificent views are on the upper storeys.

MUSEUMS:

Art Museum of Estonia, Weizenbergi 34 / Valge 1 (Art)

www.ekm.ee/eng

Kadriorg Art Museum, A.Weizenbergi 37 (Art) www.ekm.ee

Museum Miia-Milla-Manda, L.Koidula 21c (Other)

linnamuseum.ee/miiamillamanda

GALLERIES:

Kastellaanimaja Gallery, Roheline aas 3 linnamuseum.ee/vilde

Vaal Gallery, Tartu road 80d www.vaal.ee

CAFÉS:

NOP, Kõleri 1 www.nop.ee

Vesivärava kohvik, Vesivärava 42 www.vesivarava.ee

MARKETS:

Central Market, Keldrimäe 9

RESTAURANTS:

Cantina Carramba, A. Weizenbergi 20A www.carramba.ee

Fahle, Tartu road 84 www.fahlerestoran.ee

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Asunduse 7h

Kadrioru park

Politseiaed

PUBLIC SAUNAS:

Raua tn saun, Raua 23

TRANSFORMATIONS OF
HISTORICAL
SLUMS 6



One of the most unique characteristics of Tallinn is its dense and compact mixture of buildings and environments from different eras – no regime or trend has had the opportunity to play itself out on a grand scale, but has been quickly challenged by a new ideology or competing trend. Prosperous times have alternated with meagre ones, local and logical developments with imported or forced principles. To count formally, there have been eight different regimes during the 20th century alone, and each one left its traces. Another easily visible characteristic is the city's clearly concentric development, moving outwards from a single centre. All these aspects combined with Tallinn's relatively small scale enable one to pass several such trends and developments and easily grasp its contrasts during just one walk. This walk starts from the heart of the city centre and leads quickly through a prestigious residential area of the early 20th century to a former wooden slum, characteristic of the period of industrialization. Passing Magasini Street, where hens could be seen in the yards only some decades ago, one reaches a very compact traditionalist living area of the 1920's on Puhke and Kodu streets, with uniform two-storey dwellings and a park in the middle. In close proximity is the oldest cemetery in town, a hospital complex and further away, a prison. Further to the south, one can find industrial complexes recently converted into creative environments for industries and lofts. The tour ends back on mainstream trends with some office buildings along Pärnu Road.

Length of the trip is 2,7 km



APARTMENT BUILDING, AB JVR, 2004 – 2005
9/11 Tatari / 20 Sakala

1

Due to its desirable location, the intersection of Tatari and Sakala streets has recently attracted a number of new apartment buildings. This structure's expressive form with its two protruding uppermost stories speaks of the widespread practice of valuing floors with a view. It is also an overcoming and a critique of the tendency, exemplified by the opposite building by Eek & Mutso, to retreat and visually diminish the upper floors in order to look smaller and blend in with the context, whereas profits are, in reality, still maximised. The building has 27 medium-sized apartments and commercial spaces on the lower level.



APARTMENT BUILDING, AB OKAS & LÖÖKE, 2004-2005
19 Rävala Blvd

2

This quite massive building relates more to the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre across from it than to the overall image of the Süda-Tatari heritage area. This is partly due to the fact that at the time of its design, there were plans to build a major road in front of the building to complete the adjacent Rävala Blvd and establish an east-west traffic corridor in the city centre – a solution that to this date has an unclear fate. This was also the reason for treating one side of the building as the main facade and the other as the rear. The overall solution stresses horizontality. The building houses relatively small apartments on seven floors: due to their location and design, the apartments have proven to be successful investments as rental apartments.



3 APARTMENT BUILDING, AD ANSAMBEL, 2007
18/22 Tatari

These two apartment buildings were an attempt to hybridize the historical and the new – utilizing old existing foundations and limestone plinths and conforming to the overall cornice height along the street, but filling the spaces with a completely new spatial layout. The configuration of the historical structures has resulted in buildings with floor plans heavily stretched towards the yard, and these create a somewhat gate-like composition due to a central passageway. The rectangular dormers clad in painted steel represent a common way to maximise space without adding an extra floor.



4 APARTMENT BUILDING, KARL BURMAN, 1912
21b Tatari

This was the first major building to be completed by the first professional Estonian architect Karl Burman. Reflecting his education in St. Petersburg and the Finnish-inspired national romantic trends, this Art Nouveau masterpiece has elaborate floor plans, flexible configuration of spaces and romantic facades on rustic plinth. The four- to five-room apartments are spacious, high ceilinged and well lit, featuring servants' quarters as was customary during the time. The top floor housed the studio of painter Ants Laikmaa and also functioned as a small art school. Towards the yard are foundations for a more private extension that was regrettably never completed.



APARTMENT BUILDING, EA RENG / MARTIN AUNIN, 2009
30 Tatari

5

This apartment building, which was actually built quite a number of years later than planned, is one of the true attempts to reinterpret the Süda-Tatari heritage area in a modern way. As in the case of Koidula 24, the development consisted of reconstructing a historical dwelling and adding a contemporary wing to the depths of the plot. The latter consists of two slightly shifted volumes covered in rusted Cor-Ten steel, treated concrete and light veneer plates. Continuing the tradition of the district, its four- to five-room apartments are far more spacious and luxurious than common in new buildings. Every apartment has a large balcony or roof terrace. A spacious front yard separates the buildings from the hustle and bustle on the street.



PRIVATE HOUSE, 3+1 ARHITEKTID, 2005
3 Naeri

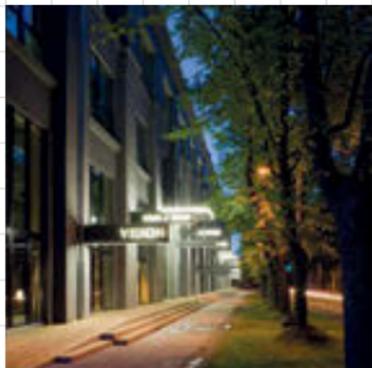
6

Even though Naeri Street is a cul-de-sac in a very quiet area largely occupied by 2-storey wooden dwellings, this building still stands as the rare occasion of a private residence in an urban context. The architects, authors of many remarkable private houses, are well known for their considerate cooperation with clients, fastidious detailing and strong structural layouts. The layout of the building is based on module strips, each housing a separate function and all opening towards the west. The mute eastern side and high fences common to the district separate this private universe from the neighbours. Much attention has also been paid to its garden and landscaping.



7 TWO-FAMILY BUILDING, FRONT ARHITEKTID, 2003
g Herne

This is a noticeable and sensitive example of a modern building blending seamlessly into the historical context. The building, which consists of two mirrored apartments that each cut through all three floors, has been built on pre-existing foundations and limestone plinth; however, the main body is barely distinguishable as being new. Windows wider than those of neighbouring houses have been camouflaged with wooden strips to maintain a uniform facade; the colour is only slightly more reddish than that characteristic of the area. The yard-side façade is more elaborate and betrays the modern living conditions found within.



8 BALTIKA QUARTER, 3 + 1 ARHITEKTID & STUDIO 3, 2007 – 2009
24 Veerenni

Similar to several other former industrial complexes, this Soviet-era sewing factory was recently converted and rebranded. The architectural solution was found through an invitation-based competition and involved the cooperation of all participants. The concept had a very clear focus, aimed at gathering together Tallinn's fashion design enterprises and creative industries. On the ground floor are public areas with a so-called fashion street, trying to make a seamless connection between the street environment and the "public square" inside. The upper floors house design- and agencies' offices, a hall/showroom and a creative incubator. All interiors are bare and simple and use upcycled furniture as much as possible. A second development stage is soon to follow, featuring new office and retail spaces and a black box hall.



LUTHERI FACTORY COMPLEX, ARS PROJEKT, 2004 – 2008
39 Vana-Lõuna

9

At the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, Tallinn industrialised rapidly and numerous large factories were erected. The Lutheri complex was built for processing timber – it was a pioneering developer of veneer in Europe and a producer of bentwood furniture. In addition to the factory buildings, prosperity was reflected in an expressive workers' club (Gesellius, Lindgren & Saarinen, 1904 – 1905) and Christian Luther's villa (Vassilyev & Bubyř, 1909 – 1910); both commissioned by internationally renowned architects of the era and featuring nuanced, decorative takes on Northern Art Nouveau. A number of the factory buildings have now been renovated into airy and spacious lofts with a solution that accentuates its industrial past. Even the complex's car park, built into a former top-lit machine hall, is probably the most glamorous in Tallinn.

67



OFFICE BUILDING, AB KÜNNAPU & PADRIK, 1998
105 Pärnu Rd

10

This eye-catching red office building marked the beginning of the development of a new office area along Pärnu Rd at the end of the 1990's. It marked a deliberately industrial-romantic, constructivist approach to designing offices in this particular location, which is dense with all types of traffic and former industries. Purely utilitarian elements such as advertisement stands have been markedly aestheticised; the same applies to all elements connected with movement like concrete parking ramps or the attractive staircase on the building's side. The majority of the building is occupied by a main business newspaper's headquarters.

GALLERIES:

National Library of Estonia Gallery, Tõnismägi 2 www.nlib.ee

CAFÉS:

Café Liberty, Tatari 1

Koifik, Veerenni 24

Mamo, Liivalaia 14 www.mamo.ee

Pagaripoisid, Kari 1/Sõle 59 www.pagaripoisid.ee

Reval Café, Pärnu Rd 27 www.revalcafe.ee/kohvikud/parnu-mnt

CINEMAS:

Kosmos, Pärnu road 45 www.forumcinemas.ee/Movies/Kosmos

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Koidu tn 112 (Koidu park)

Vaikne park (Kodu 14)

PIRITA – MERIVÄLJÄ 7

ALONG THE OLYMPIC ROAD TO ELITE SUBURBIA





72

In 1980, the yachting regatta of the Moscow Summer Olympics was held in Tallinn. One of the clearest traces of this event is Pirita Road, which was built for the occasion and runs along the coast from the city centre towards the main beach and the most prestigious suburbs in Eastern Tallinn. The coastline along Pirita Road is in itself a place beloved for leisure and open-air sports, but there are also several signature architectural objects along it. The Song Festival stage designed by Alar Kotli and inaugurated in 1960 symbolized the breakthrough of Modernism in architecture; but even more so, it was a limited opportunity to express national sentiments. Maarjamäe Memorial, the construction of which began at the same time, follows the same aesthetics but has a far stronger ideological burden to carry – established upon a soldiers' cemetery, it commemorates the Soviet soldiers that fought in World War II. Next to it is a branch of Estonian History Museum with a collection of unused and broken-down Soviet monuments in the backyard. Further on, one reaches the Olympic complex itself: an all-encompassing environment complete with a harbour, a hotel and a conference centre. Starting from the other side of the river is a suburban area that continues in the same direction well into the tip of the peninsula. The region characterizes Estonians' widespread desire for private living, with an unusually high percentage of people commissioning their residence from an architect instead of choosing a type design. Thus, one can find various examples of private houses from Pirita and Merivälja as well as from Viimsi further along: starting with cottages of the 1920's, moving forward to 1950's homes that feature high-pitched roofs and an extremely limited room programme, continuing on to postmodernist and neo-functional houses of the 1970's, minimalist white villas of the 1990's and ultimately experimentations of the 2000's. A private residence is a token of status as well as a setting for traditional lifestyle and home culture.

Length of the trip is 21,3 km



SONG FESTIVAL STAGE, ALAR KOTLI et al, 1960
95 Pirita Rd

1 1a

The song festival stage is one of the most unique architectural objects of the Soviet era, both for its engineering innovation as well as cultural content. Song festivals had an important role in Estonia's national awakening at the end of the 19th century and the event has remained a living tradition up to today, with tens of thousands of participants from all over the country gathering every four years. This stage has carried the symbolic national significance through the Soviet years. Its design is based on a concrete shell in hyperbolic parabolical shape with a risen, cantilevered arc holding up to 30,000 singers beneath and the lower side accommodating exhibition spaces and auxiliary rooms. At its two sides are a fire tower and a media building, while a large landscaped area surrounds it. In the surrounding park there is also installation Cromatico by a German architect Lukas Kühne (2011) – a structure with rooms where echoes sound like different musical notes.

73



THE FLOWER PAVILION AND CAFÉ „TULJAK“, VALVE PORMEISTER, 1960, 1966
26/26a Pirita Rd

2

These two modest buildings along Pirita Road have been important landmarks in the development of Estonian architecture in the Soviet era. Designed by the period's most talented woman architect, who had a background in landscaping, the Flower Pavilion is an airy, light structure that blends sensitively into the landscape with its sloping "tail". Influenced by Finnish organicism, the idea was to create a continuous space with nature flowing through the building. Café Tuljak, added a couple of years later, speaks of a different trend of expressive geometricity in contrast to the natural. After a dramatic entrance "through" the slope, one would find him- or herself in a cosy garden café. The Flower Pavilion is still in use as exhibition venue, whereas "Tuljak" awaits reconstruction.



3 MAARJAMÄE MEMORIAL, ALLAN MURDMAA, MATTI VARIK et al, 1975
80 Pirita Rd

This memorial was the best example of modernist landscaping and the main commemorative object in Tallinn during the Soviet-era. The high artistic standard and emotional power are ensured by its highly abstract solution. Two intersecting ceremonial lines are cut into the ground, playing on the contrast between seemingly infinite sightlines of light dolomite and the softness of green grassy slopes. The sculpture includes two palms placed together, avoiding direct ideological references in form and conveying rather a universal feeling of loss. Sculptor Lembit Tolle and architect Mart Port erected the classic obelisk at the site already earlier, in 1960, to commemorate the Ice Cruise of 1918.



4 OLYMPIC YACHTING CENTRE
AVO-HIMM LOOVEER, PEEP JÄNES et al, 1980
1 Regati Blvd

This complex was built on the occasion of the 1980 Moscow Olympics, of which the yachting regatta was held in Tallinn. The open competition in 1973 was won by a group of some of the youngest architects of the time that were inspired by some fresh postmodernist ideas; however, some members of the older generation of architects were added to the team during the design process. The initial design ideas still remained – a complex following a single axis that strongly resembles a ship, and spectators watching the regatta and the ceremonies placed on the other side of the river. The complex consisted of a harbour area, a hotel with sports facilities and an ecumenical chapel. The buildings had unique original interior design solutions as well, but most of these have not been preserved.



PIRITA CONVENT, AB LUHSE & TUHAL, 2001
18 Merivälja Rd

5

While the ruins of the 15th-century Birgittine nuns' convent have always been the landmark for Pirita, the issue was taken up in 1997 to re-establish the institution and an invitation-only design competition was held. The result is a modern interpretation of the building type, which is determined by the specific rules of liturgy and cohabitation. The rooms are organized around a central atrium and there is direct access from private areas to the small and ascetic public church. The addition of an open guesthouse is also a sign of the times. A slender bell tower ensures a modest vertical accent, while the limestone finishing of all facades relates to the adjacent historical ruins.



KINDERGARTEN NABA, TEIGAR SOVA ARHITEKTID, 2005
24a Metsavahi Rd / 29 Kloostrimetsa Rd

6

With suburbs booming in the Pirita area and further in the same direction, building a private kindergarten was a logical solution. The wooden building spread out among pine trees is subtly colourful and friendly-looking. The rooms, which accommodate children aged three to seven, are organized around a central hall. The separate wings house children's rooms, a small swimming pool and teachers' rooms, while small courtyards are formed in between the wings. Much attention has been paid to detailing; the environment is scaled according to children's needs, the windows are set lower than usual, etc. Colourful pastels dominate inside the structures, where most of the furniture is custom-made as well. The building was awarded the prize for Best Wooden Building and was nominated for the annual Cultural Endowment Prize.



7

TV TOWER, DAVID BASILADZE
1975 – 1980
KOKO ARHITEKTID, 2009 – 2012
58a Kloostrimetsa Rd

Tallinn TV tower was built to be ready by the 1980 Olympic Games and with its 314 metres is the highest building in Estonia. The structure consists of a concrete trunk and a steel mast, with a conference centre down on the ground and a renowned café and viewing platform up in the “egg”. In 2009, reconstruction work began in order to renovate the tower and turn it into a touristic attraction featuring an open terrace, exhibition premises focusing on creative innovation in Estonia and the history of the TV tower itself, multimedia displays to interpret the panoramic view, a minor TV studio, café, etc. The entrance building and public space around the tower will also get a facelift.

76



8

PRIVATE HOUSES, AB KOSMOS, 2004 – 2007
14, 16, 18 Põdrakanepi Rd

A row of two-family houses near the TV tower follows the experimental and sharply angular design approach that is characteristic of the Kosmos bureau – constantly challenging the usual concepts of context and good taste. Built within a new development that includes on the same street many other residences designed by renowned Estonian architects, these houses stand out for combining simple and relatively cheap living premises with a bold and interesting formal solution. Each of the two wings contains one two-storey apartment; a folding roof separates the properties, forms a shelter for cars or covers an outdoor terrace area. All three have been carefully positioned among the trees to avoid unnecessary logging.



PRIVATE RESIDENCE, ARHITEKTUURIAGENTUUR, 2002 – 2005
13 Viimsi Rd

9

This luxurious villa was built in the older section of Merivälja, where the majority of private houses date from 1920's-1970's. Nevertheless, instead of trying to relate formally to the existing context, the design solution stems directly from a functional diagram. With a plot located on a slope, the rooms and openings on the garden facade are distributed according to the best views opening towards the sea. The middle storey (the ground floor from the street) is the main living level; sleeping quarters with separate wings for the parents and children are on the upper floor, and the base level houses a sauna and pool. Smooth concrete on the facades as well as inside is contrasted with dark veneer, which lends the building a somewhat weighty, solid and warm feeling.



77

OFFICE BUILDING, AB MEELIS PRESS 2005 – 2006
1 Mähe rd

10

A rare office building in an otherwise monofunctional area of private houses, this structure stands out for its expressive, if somehow formalist take on minimal neomodernism. The composition, which consists of a two- and three-storey wing, a unifying roof terrace and a small inner courtyard, is based on the play of orthogonal lines and the contrast between smooth concrete and sheer glass. Commissioned by a real estate development and construction company, the design has been executed with utmost care. Upon completion, the building also received the prize for Best Concrete Building of 2005.

MUSEUMS:

Estonian History Museum – Maarjamäe Palace, Pirita road 56
(History) www.ajaloomuuseum.ee

RESTAURANTS:

Ecoland, Randvere road 115

www.tallinnhistoricalhotels.com/index.php?id=11145

Teletorn, Kloostrimetsa road 58 A www.teletorn.ee

CHILDREN PLAYGROUNDS:

Aianduse 70a

Kesktee 65

Lehise 4a (Maarjamäe haljasala)

Merivälja road 3

Väina road 29 (Merivälja park)

PIRITA SWIMMING BEACH

TALLINN BOTANICAL GARDEN

Kloostrimetsa road 52 www.tba.ee