ESTONIAN ART

2_2014

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News

EKA GALLERY (EAA GALLERY)

The Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA), in cooperation with the Estonian Artists' Association, opened a new gallery space in the inner courtyard of the Tallinn Art Hall on 8 November 2014. According to the gallerist Merilin Talumaa, the new gallery helps to maintain the academy's sense of belonging together and on the other hand it offers young artists a chance to participate in the long tradition of the Art Hall. The gallery primarily functions as a springboard for art students and recent graduates, for whom this is often the first opportunity to develop a relationship with a gallery space, where they can exhibit their works to a broader public.

The term and final projects, joint and solo exhibitions, as well as the students' experimental projects exhibited at EAA gallery should provide an excellent survey of the programmes taught at the academy and the level of the teaching. Works by other Estonian and foreign artists are also displayed. The gallery has good contacts with other schools of higher art education in the Nordic and Baltic countries. The gallery is at the disposal of the EAA for three years to start with, until the academy's new building should be completed.

Vabaduse väljak 6/8, Tallinn 10146
Wed–Sun 12–18
www.artun.ee/ekagalerii

KuFF - Kumu Art Film Festival 4-7 June 2015

The Kumu Art Film festival on 4–7 June happens for the first time. It is the first and only cultural event in Estonia focusing on relations between visual art and film. Four days of the festival present documentaries, performative and experimental art and artist's films by people who are connected with visual art and make this relationship visible in their work.

More detailed programme available at Kumu homepage from the end of May.

www.kumu.ee

Köler Prize 2015 nominees

Köler Prize was established in 2011 by the EKKM (Contemporary Art Museum Estonia), with the aim of popularise contemporary art and introduce important artists and groups in local art field.

Each year, five artists of Estonian origin or artists residing permanently in Estonia or groups are nominated for Köler Prize on the basis of their work over the last three years. Köler Prize 2015 nominees are: Kristiina Hansen, Edith Karlson, Tanel Rander, Ivar Veermäe and Anu Vahtra.

The artists choose two works for the display: one previously exhibited, preferably from the work of three last years and which could in a sense be viewed as an artist's defining work; the other work should be made for the Köler Prize or it can be something that has not been displayed in Estonia before.

The winner of the Köler Prize is selected by an international jury on the basis of the exhibition works and the artists' portfolio; the audience prize is determined by the visitors.

The main prize is 7000 euros given by Smarten Logistics, the audience prize by the Salto Architects.

Köler Prize 2015. Exhibition of Nominees
EKKM, 25 April–14 June 2015
www.ekkm.ee

TAB 2015 *Self-Driven City*

Tallinn Architecture Biennale (TAB) will take place from 9 September to 5 October 2015. TAB is an international architecture festival which introduces local architectural culture, current issues concerning architecture, and looks at the future of the architectural profession. TAB offers a programme of events for both professionals and everyone interested in architecture.

The third TAB *Self-Driven City* will look into the changes, challenges and opportunities that our cities and their inhabitants will be facing once the third industrial revolution is implemented in full scale and we all start using self-driving cars. What will this mean for architects, designers, urban planners? TAB will turn Tallinn into a test site for the cities of the future, visualising ideas and conceptualising the way cities are built.

Curatorial team of TAB 2015: Marten Kaevats, Alvin Järving, Kristiina Sipelgas.

Tallinn Architecture Biennale is organised by the Estonian Centre of Architecture and creatively led by TAB Advisory Board.

www.tab.ee/index.php?lang=EN

Pavilion of Estonia. World EXPO 2015, Milan

The winner of the interior decoration competition for the Estonian pavilion at EXPO in Milano 2015 was a team who presented a work titled *Gallery of _*, i.e Kadarik Tüür Architects OÜ: Ott Kadarik, Mihkel Tüür; team: Tanel Trepp, Kristi Tuurmann, Kadri Tamme, Uku-Kristjan Küttis, Kaarel Kala, Alari Orav, Karlo Funk, Ants Uustalu and Kerli Kehman. The winning entry wants the Estonian pavilion to be as open as possible, made of wooden boxes where people can swing. The pavilion represents themes that are common to and admirable about Estonia. The visitor is part of a multifunctional and interactive environment, a gallery of positive experiences. The leading motive is harmony with nature and traditions regenerating hand in hand with technology.

The pavilion presents relevant displays, cultural programmes and events in the course of 6 months from May to October 2015.

Estonia has taken part in the event three times: once before the Soviet occupation (in 1933) and twice since it regained its independence (in 2000 and 2010). Participation in the EXPO 2015 will cost Estonia an estimated €3.7 million. The pavilion is built by the Italian company Redaelli Costruzioni S.p.A.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECkB6KKOUIg
http://kta.ee/expo-milan-201

New Material

In November 2014 the new experimental art project-journal *New Material* was launched at the EKKM, plus the relevant exhibition. Experimental journal *New Material* tries to find precise harmony between form and content and is presented in a concrete box, which contains text booklets, a memory stick with sound design of exhibitions and video works, photos, a 3D-printed screw and a marmoleum-painting by Merike Estna who received the Konrad Mägi award in 2014. The box weighs about 6 kilos and can be taken home in geotextile bag.

The focus of the first issue is on the theme of neo-materialism. Niekolaas Johannes Lekkerkerk, Kati Ilves, Eik Hermann, Marten Esko, Jaak Kikas, Jaak Tomberg, Liisa Kaljula, Kalev Rajangu and many others write about the return of the material, the pleasure of material, seeking for new materials and qualities, the materialisation/dematerialisation of exhibitions.

The album that comes together with the journal constitutes a collage of sound design of Estonian exhibitions of the last decade. The album introduces, among others, Kiwa, Andres Lõo, Taavi Tulev, Mihkel Kleis, Barthol Lo Mejor and Raul Keller. The introductory essay is by Maria Juur, an art-educated musician.

New Material is only published with a numbered print run of 111. This is the first part in a series of non-periodical publications and events.

www.facebook.com/uusmaterjal

THE PERCENTAGE ACT

The Commissioning of Artworks Act (CAA), also known as the 'percentage act', which regulates the commissioning of artworks for new public buildings or public buildings being renovated, took effect in Estonia in 2011. According to the act, 1% of the cost of construction is designated for commissioning artworks, thus enriching the public space with art.

In four years, 25 artworks have been commissioned by various institutions, including the Vocational Training Centre, health organisations and schools; most competitions were organised by State Real Estate Ltd (RKAS), through which art has mainly been commissioned for educational institutions. The costs have varied from 7000 euros to the maximum of 65 000 euros. The commissioned art includes exterior sculptures, installations, paintings and photography. The state monitoring is carried out by the Ministry of Culture.

Raul Järg, architect, Chairman of the Estonian Centre of Architecture, sculptural group *PeaAsi* (the main thing/ the head thing) in Järva County Vocational Training Centre:

Experience as an artist

Our sculptural group *PeaAsi* (by Priit Pent, Raul Järg and Raul Erdel) was among the first objects made as a result of the CAA. It was quite an inspiring experience. We were very happy with our sculpture and managed to keep it within the budget. The attitude from the commissioning people was constructive and understanding. In such undertakings, you must be both the artist and the project manager. An old classical pattern emerged, where the architect was the master builder as well as the designer. The sculptural group *PeaAsi* occasionally turns a somersault: sometimes there is a head above a head, or the head can be stuck between the legs. We want to indicate that it is essential to pay attention to the 'main/head thing' and define what it actually is, encouraging young people to think about it. It is interesting to know how a work of art continues its life in a new place. When the architect is no longer there to explain things, does the sculpture evoke excitement and ideas? We also discussed with the school how the sculptural group could be used in their visual identity.

On the other hand, there are several items in the competition conditions that make artists face strong dilemmas. For example, something truly splendid can turn out to be more expensive than planned. What to do then? One answer is to try to economise, and somehow do it. Depending on the object, it is not always possible to predict production.

Documents necessary for competition

The necessary documents for competition were not a problem for us, because as architects we are used to dealing with public procurement papers. An altogether different experience was the project of the Ida-Viru central hospital, where the commissioner was extremely unprofessional, and the terms and conditions were so confusing that it was almost impossible to tender an offer. We were used to bureaucracy, but still struggled to understand what was actually needed: a simple process can be presented in a very complicated manner. Besides, the way they handled the whole process was totally inadequate. The competition consisted of several parts, and we were awarded the outside sculpture. And then we were essentially disqualified because we did not have a certificate regarding local taxes [other competitors were also disqualified for the same reason – Ed]. We consulted lawyers and it turned out that they could have qualified us and we could have submitted the document afterwards. They obviously used this excuse so that they would not have to commission this work, to save money etc. We took the matter to the disputes committee of the public procurement office and unfortunately we lost the battle in this bureaucracy. This was a negative experience. We have not been involved in any competition projects since then.

Priit Pent, Raul Järg and Raul Erdel. *PeaAsi*. Järva County Vocational Training Centre

Integration of art or the thing in itself

It is wise to approach an art commission carefully, when the building is still being planned and designed. When everything is ready, it is too late to figure out where to hang a picture. It is sensible to create integration between the building, the interior and the author of the artwork. The architect, sculptor and designer all have the interdisciplinary training to take part in such competitions. There should be more trust in architects and interior decorators. Should a competition really be so independent that the architect and interior architect are basically excluded? At the moment, they can only take part in anonymous general competitions. A line has been drawn in the competition format and a conscious connection, the cooperation between the architect and the author of the idea, cannot be made.

It is good from time to time to produce something independently. This works with smaller objects. With bigger objects (such as the Ida-Viru hospital), where the sum to be spent is huge, the commission is split into pieces and then trouble looms. The problem is that all commissioned works are separate, and there is no integration. I think that in large-scale projects the initial cooperation between the architect and the interior architect or landscape architect yields a more integrated result. The commissioning format is quite rigid at the moment. Perhaps people are afraid that the commission will be messed up in some way. The artists and the architects have to do some convincing in order to bring about any changes.

Edith Karlson. *Lennula*. Läänemaa Gymnasium, Haapsalu

Per William Petersen. *XO Kiviõli*. Virumaa College of the Tallinn University of Technology, Oil Shale Competence Center, Kohtla-Järve

Competition terms

Architects have a rather good tradition of compiling the terms and conditions for a competition. I have no idea who compiles them in commissioning artworks. In the case of Järvamaa and Ida-Viru, the terms were not compiled by the Artists' Association, but by a consultant. Paide had a professional consultant who had provided architectural competitions with terms before. The Ida-Viru case was an example of unprofessional terms: the institution that commissioned the work threw them together itself, and made a mess of it. The Artists' Association should work together with the commissioning institutions and make an effort to work out these terms itself. If the association can't or won't, it should cooperate with the Union of Estonian Architects, who can help put such terms together. This would certainly mean some extra resources, but would also help to avoid all manner of misunderstandings and also save the time of professional people. There are several ways to economise in bureaucracy as well. Now, everybody who tenders an offer must immediately present all of the paperwork. As far as I know, this is not actually obligatory. The law stipulates that only the winner has to do this. There is no need to be stricter than the existing legislation: we can organise things much better ourselves, using people's knowhow. It may seem that the competition is too bureaucratic, and many never try again.

The client and the jury

The jury, of course, has the decisive role. The client matters too, as he, after all, needs to work within limitations and his task in this process is to describe his requirements. In that sense, art is naturally more abstract, because it is not linked to requirements and can be more taste-based. Architectural decisions are not usually taste-based; there are very specific principles which lead to decisions and they can be verified. Artistic decisions rely on artistic taste and contemporary art education. Environmental awareness in a broader sense is fairly low. In both architecture and visual arts, we are not in the position we would like to be in. The Centre of Architecture aims to reconquer or explain that position. If we are not satisfied with the situation we are in, we must make an effort to make ourselves visible. I think people on the whole do want to be more aware of art and the environment. Society needs to be constantly educated as far as space is concerned.

The meaning of law for an architect

For an architect who designs a house, commissioning an artwork is a way to give additional value to the building. It often happens that towards the end of the construction work, there is an increasing need to cut back and even cancel various things. We are not yet in a situation where construction projects and procurements are properly compiled. One reason is that an architect has no time to work on a project thoroughly. The whole designing context is not perfect either: the landscape architecture is always the last to be completed, and it usually gets the least money. The same goes for the things to be hung on the walls or the installations in the garden. The CAA guarantees added value to a building. I think the architect would be happy if the process were not like a meteorite that simply crashed into your back garden; it should be more well-managed and directed. However, for an architect who has sat on a meteorite, it is certainly an exciting and inspiring experience, an opportunity for excellent creative freedom. When you make buildings, you get caught up in extremely practical matters.

COMMENTS ON THE PERCENTAGE ACT

Maria-Kristiina Soomre, art adviser, Estonian Ministry of Culture:
The Act is working pretty well. The first procurements revealed some major problems,

but now all sides have acquired more experience, and the cooperation between artists and clients is smoother. Due to initial shortcomings, the act was considerably amended in 2014; the version in force since 2 February 2015 should be much clearer to all sides and more consistently interpreted.

The most debated issue so far has been clients' wish to commission inventory and pass it off as 'art' (because even the most insipid construction calculators have learned that 'everything is art'); the new wording more clearly defines art. According to the current act, art is primarily the author's site-specific original work which has no decisive effect on the functioning of the building (an artwork cannot provide lighting or heating of a room or replace essential furniture, although artworks can certainly have functional and interactive elements which respond to the needs of the user and the room). Clients need more information about visual identity: an artwork for a public space is not meant to advertise the client's logo or mascot; an artwork can be a landmark, but what should mostly strike the viewer and produce an emotional reaction are the fruits of free creation.

Mari Emmus, State Real Estate Ltd:
State Real Estate Ltd (RKAS), as a state-owned company, has to follow CAA very closely. RKAS has announced and completed nine idea competitions, and one is currently underway. We plan to announce seven competitions this year.

Although we have good experience in organising procurements, we often seek help from the Ministry of Culture, professional associations and art experts in order to learn more about the specifics of the art field. It is probably impossible to harmonise the commissioning of art with norms and standards: it is more like a tailored suit. It is also clear that good things are not born without cooperation and asking questions. We therefore encourage competition participants to ask us questions if something is confusing, and also to make suggestions about how to supplement or simplify the competition documents.

On the basis of realised procurements, RKAS can summarise the process as follows: good things take time and quality is ensured by close communication between all of those involved. There should be more discussion of the fact that good art is not mediocre and liked by everybody.

RKAS is delighted to say that artists who have taken part in a competition return for future competions: they overcome their initial fear that the competition 'paperwork' is too complicated. When the Ministry of Culture was putting together the new CAA, they asked for RKAS's feedback. The ministry took some of our suggestions into consideration for the new act.

From 1 February 2015, an art competition where a jury selects the best work no longer involves a procurement. From now on, competitions will be organised only according to the CAA. I think the commissioning of artworks is moving in the right direction: towards cooperation. Involving creative associations and experts before a competition assures the client that art commissioned for a public space is aesthetically enriching.

Merike Estna, artist, project *Sphere* in Viljandi Gymnasium:
I participated in the competition to provide the Viljandi Gymnasium with artworks because I found the building by the Salto Architects highly inspiring. The idea of having an artwork with parts inside and parts outside appealed to me too.

When I worked on the project, I relied on the building itself and its function. The most tense factor in the whole process was time. Deadlines loomed and I just hope that in future such projects will be afforded more time. I realised the project together with the Temnikova & Kasela gallery, who were a great help; Salto and the Viljandi school were also very pleasant to work with.

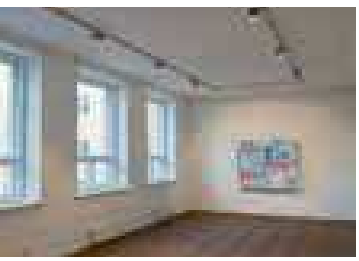
Ülle Luisk, headmistress of Viljandi Gymnasium:
Merike Estna's paintings and sculpture group are partly inside and partly outside of our school. Of the four monumental paintings inside, two add bright colours and two others allow one's thoughts to flow peacefully. These works are part of our school. The two paintings focusing on colour in the centre of the building create a relaxed mood, which is important because right underneath is the area where students can lie down on cushions and read or study. The colourful concrete spheres outside are really lively. They already have a role in the traditions of our school: on 'refreshing day', the first-year students wash them, and we have photographed our teacher at these spheres.

See more: www.kul.ee/et/galeriid/kunstiteoste-tellimise-seaduse-raames-tellitud-kunstiteosed

Merike Estna. *Sphere*. Viljandi Gymnasium

I am a painting / Can't go on

Eha Komissarov, Maria-Kristiina Soomre, Marten Esko and Liina Siib discussing the exhibitions *Merike Estna and I'm a Painting* at the Kumu Art Museum and *Can't go on, must go on* at the Tallinn Art Hall*
29 November 2014



Eha Komissarov (EK): A heated discussion recently took place on Facebook about young artists and their paintings. Some remarks were really harsh and we should look at them more closely. Here are some of the more colourful opinions: the art of today's youth is totally pointless, it does not address any problems, painting has been reduced to a decorative splotch, do we want this kind of art, we miss the social stuff, etc.

Maria-Kristiina Soomre (MKS): The main issue on Facebook was that all young artists seemed to have been 'forced' to produce trend art; trend art is defined by these exhibitions at Kumu and at the Art Hall. There is no longer any social art with some sense to it (which at some point in the past was of course accused of being a trend). I have to admit that when I read Katrin Koskaru's text in the catalogue [*Can't go on* – Ed] about her own work, it seemed the most social painting project of the past ten years.

EK: The same goes for Anna Škodenko. But they stand out from the general scene. I am intrigued by why they came together in the Art Hall in the first place. *Can't go on* aimed to replace pictorial painting with site-specific painting installations. They wished to get rid of the rhetoric of the supremacy of painting, separate themselves from the Art Hall previous art policy that valued painting and tirelessly demanded paintings above all else hanging over the Art Hall like a political axe and claimed that we no longer have curators, only painters**. The *Can't go on* project we are now talking about was started under conditions prevalent two years ago. As everybody wrote in their texts, they were dissatisfied and tried to make their own move. The task of the curators (Elin Kard and Mihkel Ilus) was basically to direct the process.

MKS: I had exactly the same question when I pondered the topic of painting, for example on the basis of the *Can't go on* exhibition: the Art Hall as an institution currently displays only paintings (besides *Can't go on*, there is Kristi Kongi in the City gallery and Kaido Ole in the Art Hall gallery). Painting is declared programmatically. This seems to be a counter-wave, and the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. The previous equally declarative painting exhibition within the paradigm of contemporary art was *No Painting!*, curated by Anders Härm (Tallinn Art Hall, 2005). These two are the extremes on the scale. I am slightly annoyed by focusing on the medium in art as an exhibition practice and also as a kind of form of organisation. Until we get rid of these internal borders, we cannot really talk about art. We sit in our separate rooms and talk about 'and what are the painters getting up to now' and, inevitably, such exhibitions organised 'between ourselves' are in danger of discounting and creating a collegial bubble.

Marten Esko (ME): As an example from the *Can't go on* exhibition, we should mention the work of Mihkel Ilus, who has claimed that he wishes to explore the features of materials and that he is tired of all allegories and depicting only surfaces, which can be more broadly linked with the entire previous discourse of painting. Opposing the previous discourse characterises the entire exhibition at the Art Hall.

EK: In our context, we are interested in painters who are in dialogue with their medium and see potential in themselves to develop a narrow and more exclusive trend of painting. *Can't go on* represents such a painter's position and if we have to criticise the participants for something we could mention instability. Two painting exhibitions happened to

Mihkel Ilus. *First Method*. 2014. *Can't go on, must go on*. Tallinn Art Hall

coincide, both realising the hotter trends in painting, although only one managed not to leave loose ends and carried out the principle of installation very clearly. *Can't go on* would certainly have had a much bigger resonance if *Estna*'s exhibition at the Kumu Art Museum had not interfered with its totally different art experience. The initial idea of this exhibition was of a collective project. Merike Estna would arrive with a group of other artists and her Goldsmiths friends in order to create a kind of communication project, and the installations would develop a more contemporary form of symbiosis: all this she managed remarkably well. For them, organising an exhibition of the paintings of the new generation was an easy and jolly cooperation, where nobody fought against anything at all and all simply enjoyed themselves. The artists did not seek a key to new art; instead, they were in dialogue amongst themselves, creating bridges of ideas. However, it makes no sense to use *Estna* to punch the *Can't go on* in the face. The opportunities and experience are far too different for that.

MKS: The only thing that moved me about *Estna*'s exhibition was the total deep cleansing of the room accomplished by simply splashing it with pink foam, something which *Can't go on* did not do.

EK: There was no cooperation at the *Can't go on* exhibition: everybody sat quietly in his/her corner, doing his/her own thing. Here, art innovation had a different focus. Still, I do not deny the necessity of such a manner of doing things. One of the weak points of the *Can't go on* was that artists aspired to renewal in their own agenda, without thinking that in this place innovation is often not really newsworthy. Maybe I am influenced by the recent 80th anniversary of the Art Hall but the possibilities of its spatial programmes are exhausted; e.g the 'altar', with Kristi Kongi's installation in front of it, routinely designs the solutions. The young painter Kristi Kongi wishes to transform the two-dimensional picture format into a three-dimensional spatial installation; she has worked out a system that starts repeating various stamps of other works produced for this place. During the fifty years of the modernist Art Hall and the subsequent postmodernist Art Hall, all possibilities have already been played through. Since the planned renovation work has not yet started, I advise the new Art Hall management to undertake a project that will deconstruct some rooms, which would then eliminate the traces of conventional exhibitions that have been held there.

MKS: At that exhibition Mart Vainre in fact took a step in that direction.

EK: His work is truly excellent, showing the tensions between the artist's aspirations and reality. Like the rest of the group, Vainre relied on installation, but his starting point is an ironic relationship between himself and the house, which points to the opposition between real and simulated places.

ME: For me, both exhibitions pose the essential questions of a painter's position. *Estna*'s exhibition evokes questions and constructions, such as 'I' as a painting, the borders of painting, space as a painting, floor as a painting, everything as a painting. At the same time, the *Can't go on*'s title says it all: cannot go on, but must go on. Once you have reached a certain position as a painter, where painting is the most valued medium in the market, but still secondary within the art field itself, then you wonder how to proceed or how to return. Return is not a good word, but painting seems to be in eternal return; it returns every year, as if this was a natural part of this medium. Renewal may be the only way forward. Renewing the local art field happens, although by adopting some Western tendencies.

EK: I really hope this is a dialogue matured inside a culture that was tested here. We could find various explanations; firstly, we continue the fight against the usual picture format, which began in the 1990s. Secondly, as the Estonian new painting of the last decade considered the market demands, an interest in creating more conceptual painting projects involving the whole room is most welcome.

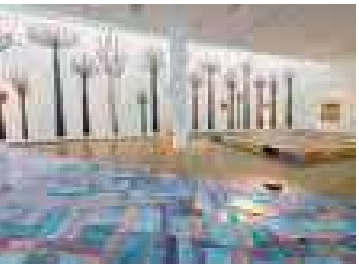
Anna Škodenko. *Prisoner's Cinema*. 2014. *Can't go on, must go on*. Tallinn Art Hall

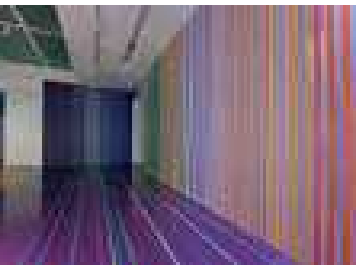
Kristi Kongi. *I am there and I feel that fragrance.Thoughts from the room*. 2014. *Can't go on, must go on*. Tallinn Art Hall

Mihkel Maripuu. *Liquefied Presence (of the Ubiquitous Content)*. 2014. *Can't go on, must go on*. Tallinn Art Hall

Katrin Koskaru. *The Perpetual Motion Machine.Traumgesicht*. 2013-2014. *Can't go on, must go on*. Tallinn Art Hall

Mart Vainre. *Seeing myself looking*. 2014. *Can't go on, must go on*. Tallinn Art Hall





Exhibition project Merike Estna and *I'm a Painting* at the Kumu Art Museum

ME: Kongi, Ilus and Vainre have tackled this theme for years, and have increased the format.

EK: In that sense, Koskaru is quite fascinating because she is producing Western minimalism, which is romantic and cool.

Liina Siib (LS): One participant of the *Can't go on,* Mihkel Maripuu declares that he no longer wants to paint in a realistic or figural manner, as he is totally fed up with that. He is trying to find anonymous images on the internet, which he then enlarges, assembles and prints digitally; he is a representative of post-internet art.

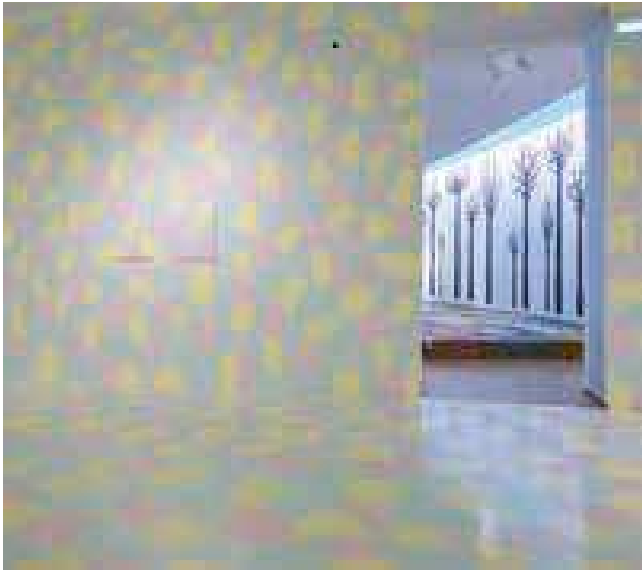
EK: I have nothing against this personally, but he should pay a little attention to how he formats the result. If the work is in the usual vinyl banner format and he displays it according to the rules of a painting gallery, he ends up creating a super-decorative pointless blotch. For me, painting on the theme of post-internet art in 2014 does not seem a very convincing concept: the 21st century is quite picture-focused thanks to the internet. I cannot imagine how anyone can differentiate whether this is my image or an internet image.

MKS: The public is largely glued to the internet. The painters I know use the internet perhaps once a day. Parallel worlds exist today as well.

EK: Katja Novitskova works actively in graphic design. Her art is design-based, but Maripuu comes with a painting-based attitude, which seems a sort of brainwashing through internet images, and then the banners are printed. This is all very nice, but he should find more visual solutions, and move towards spatial thinking.

ME: In that sense, Katja is quite similar to Mihkel, as she also deals with photographs from the internet, although they are printed on aluminium. It is important here what the artist calls himself: a painter or a post-internet artist. Katja does not consider herself a painter. I assume Mihkel Maripuu tried to create a spatial environment full of internet noise through the painting discourse. The thing is that the traditional environment of the Art Hall resists this; it is impossible to produce noise there, because the room will still dominate. All that parquet, skirting boards and of course the history of the building.

EK: I know several internet people for whom it is easy and natural to read Maripuu's discourse at that exhibition.



ME: For me it is not easy or natural. In a sense I understand its confusion, as the internet is by no means curated either.

EK: Noise is a hugely fascinating topic. What does it mean? Noise operates in the form of error; it is an error, the result of a mistake or chance, and I would really like to see a painter tackle such things. Painting, after all, is essentially orderly, organising and decorative, and it would be fantastic to move from that into noise!

ME: This also implies that the artist should be critical. The drawback of this exhibition is perhaps that it has more poetry than criticism.

EK: Škodenko and Koskaru, characterised at the exhibition by an ability to generalise, took the much more fascinating position of observer or critic. The currently prevailing conservative time appreciates the discourse of formal beauty. Lyrical and metaphysical subjectivity, pushed aside in painting in the 1990s, has reappeared. I quite liked that pretty and poetic painting was opposed on Facebook by social art. The voice of this kind of public was a totally new experience for experience for me.

LS: Strange that people suddenly demanded social art.

MKS: It is thus true that the people's voice opposes something new and unknown arriving en masse, seeing it as dangerous.

EK: I was completely overwhelmed by this. A tradition exists and has proved itself magnificently, so that no target group can think about Estonian art without thinking about the social or critical author's position.

MKS: Although content was crucial there, we assume that people were looking for an opinion, a stand, but perhaps they were looking for a narrative. When an artist does not take a pick, but a scalpel to the supporting

pillars of his medium and asks significant questions for another painter, it may simply not be evident to the public.

EK: It is not easy to use a scalpel in a field where there is a huge amount of whatever you intend to tackle. Every housewife today is an abstract artist. "I don't want flowers; I want colours like Estna had. There is a lot of talk about blotches, and these blotches are important to me." I can quite understand why some avoid painting, because you are inevitably in dialogue with wallpaper, dress patterns, colour programmes etc.

LS: For me *Estna*'s exhibition included design as well.

EK: Yes, it is the broader theme of how to establish yourself with various means of painting. *At Estna*'s exhibition, one large general overview prevailed, and heaven knows what happened within, how many dialogues and weird absurd moves, such as fruit painted on stones. The large number and strangeness of visuals produced a strong impression, experiences and messages. In the catalogue, Merike Estna says that today's painting is no longer exceptional and special.

"*/.../ And, anyway, contemporary painting has been redefined on the basis that it is no longer in a secluded position, which also means that the media are mixing in ways that are also determined by the individual approaches of other kinds of artists. Whatever it is that defines painting it has moved beyond being defined by any pre-conceived ideas about what art is, or what painting means in any traditional art historical sense...*

But actually I was even more focused on the question of how painting is interpreted or given a cultural value once it establishes a new ground or at least a less secluded position in this world. /.../" (From the text *Dear I'm a Painting / Always yours, Blue Lagoon* by Merike Estna).

ME: At the *Can't go on* exhibition all works seem separate from others, independent or solitary. At *Estna*'s exhibition, works were even on top of one another, relating to one another physically.

MKS: I like the notion of a dialogue. There is a huge mass together, a buzz; a kind of communication seems to be taking place, but it is not observed, and it is difficult for the viewer to notice scraps of conversation.

EK: *Estna*'s works were like impressionist paintings in the context of the 21st century, with a special level, and liberated from the tensions of the local school. Colours and intrigue were appreciated, the general visual impression, saturated with all manner of experience, was guaranteed from start to finish. *Can't go on* did not aim to achieve synergy; we see intellectual aspirations and a wish to get something done, some kind of laboratories are operating that as a rule do not support one another.

ME: You could feel at *Estna*'s exhibition that they were all friends, with a certain synergy. People knew one another. It is not so noticeable at the Art Hall. As professional painters they discuss matters, but might not communicate much outside this platform. Everybody is doing his own thing.

EK: The topic of synergy is fascinating, and it worked for Estna. Why does this matter to curators, and why do curators commission such things? The form of cooperation where the group members address one another and together try to find suitable solutions seems to be the most productive one in terms of succeeding in place-specific art. This kind of working form is by no means available to friends only; the synergy must be produced by suppressing oneself to some extent and relating to others.

MKS: I agree. This experience is a bit missing in the field or it is artificially provided. On the other hand, speaking in a kind of apocalyptic sense, it does not really matter any more. But, pragmatically, somewhere the ordinary art life is ticking away; in art politics we increasingly aspire outward and want our artists to get two steps ahead of the Cultural Endowment's project-based normality. As for the Art Hall, I have thought that this might be the only area where an artist could work so that he produced the bulk of his works and filled a big room, just him alone. This is the biggest problem for even the strongest Estonian artists. They could have a large-scale personal exhibition in a prestigious European exhibition house, but they would not have enough works to fill one floor. The art-political task of the Art Hall could be – as indeed it used to be – to organise personal exhibitions even if an artist has not quite finished or is not celebrating a major anniversary.

* The exhibitions *Merike Estna and I'm a Painting* at the Kumu Art Museum, 27.06.–02.11.2014 (henceforth *Estna*), and *Can't go on, must go on,* 25.10.–30.11.2014 at the Tallinn Art Hall (henceforth *Can't go on*).

** The Tallinn Art Hall politics is about to change under the new direction led by Taaniel Raudsepp.

Eha Komissarov
(1947) is a curator at the Kumu Art Museum and an art critic, specialising in modern and contemporary art.

Maria-Kristiina Soomre
(1978), an adviser on visual arts at the Estonian Ministry of Culture and a PhD candidate in art history. She has worked at Kumu Art Museum as project manager and curator. Studied art history at the Estonian Academy of Arts and arts management in Turku Art Academy in Finland.

Marten Esko
(1990) has a BA in art history from the Estonian Academy of Arts and continues with his MA. He is a freelance curator, currently assistant curator at the Contemporary Art Museum.

Liina Siib
(1963) is a visual artist.

LONG CIRCUITS FOR THE PRE-INTERNET BRAIN

A correspondence between
Niekolaas Johannes Lekkerkerk and Katja Novitskova

Katja Novitskova.
Post Internet Survival Guide 2010. Revolver Publishing, 2011

Niekolaas Johannes Lekkerkerk (NJL): The term 'post-internet' is rather ambiguous and slippery in terms of its generalised application. It seems to me that the term lacks specificity and rests somewhat too comfortably within its category: one that – quite rightfully perhaps, and at least expectedly – has avoided and resisted attempts at summation and definition, due to the vastness and diversity of the subjects at hand, and its differing approaches to culture as a whole, as addressed in and by a multitude of artistic practices. Thus, as a mode of enquiry, should we perhaps underline the term 'post-internet', move away from skirting on the surface of the category-as-container and come to terms with some of its specific workings instead?

Post Internet Survival Guide 2010. 2011. Book spread

Katja Novitskova.
Pattern of Activation. 2014. Mixed media. Installation presented for Art Basel Statements

Katja Novitskova.
Pattern of Activation (on Mars). 2014. Installation, mixed media

Katja Novitskova (KN): Yeah, although I see the vastness and vagueness of it, for me the term has very concrete origins that I witnessed, with concrete people involved in a specific moment in time. The time was late 2009, and the place was Gene's blog Post Internet in which he tried to outline certain emerging artistic practices that addressed the internet as an element in artistic production, structuring the art works in relation to or with it; the people were Gene McHugh and many artists that were addressed in his often loosely written essays: Marisa Olson, AIDS-3D, Harm van den Dorpel, Kari Altman, Martin Kohout and others. Gene was witnessing a network of young contemporary artists (who often knew each other from participating in the same online surf clubs, or IRL collaborations) branching from what was known as 'net art' into new territories of digital paintings, web-inspired sculpture, conceptual browser art that played with 'contemporary art proper' aesthetics, video art that was compiled out of visual blogs, etc. By 2011 the term became a catch phrase (not without the help of my editorial artist book project *Post Internet Survival Guide* 2010), and was picked up by the 'cool' surfing pop culture magazines, galleries and curators. A monster was born. I'm curious: how and when did you hear about it and what do you think are the most interesting sensibilities that the term is able to capture?

NJL: Although we are both from a generation that disposed of a 'pre-internet brain' in maintaining our daily living and working practices, one that has gradually dissolved into an internet of things, I must admit that my engagements with the field – this 'collective entity' of dispersed and diverging practices, unified by the common denominator of 'post-internet' – have been less gradual and smooth, and more distantly observed from the outside of the discussion proper. In other words, in my curatorial practice I have foregrounded several artistic positions – among your work, but also those of Xavier Antin, David Raymond Conroy, Oliver Laric, Silvio Lorusso and Artie Vierkant – in order to grapple with and address specific present conditions and tendencies.

What fascinates and interest me here, most of all, is the capacity of some of these artistic practices to establish material, physical and concrete analogies of essentially dematerialised substances, or data if you like. That is to say, a pooling and bridging of resources, pieces and traces of information, and materials that hover between and make us aware of the various dimensions we are both being responsive and subjected to as humans. In that, my current interest goes to the intersection of 'the post-internet' and 'the posthuman': the idea of our human indebtedness to the internet, and how that reservoir – as a boundless but not necessarily limitless expanse – has become an extension of our memory, or rather collective memory. The internet finding its inscription as an external hard-drive, so to speak, and moreover as a cognitive extension; not so much revolving around the posthuman in the sci-fi sense, with its physical body enhancements. Am I right to say that in parts of your work you also treat the subject of the posthuman? And in that, how do you perceive the linkages between the posthuman and post-internet art practice?

KN: Of course these terms are related, at least by their speculative declaration of a new state of being. Since I've started to make my own digital artistic experiments in conversation with my peers (before post-internet became a word) I've been dwelling on the relationship between technological advancement of certain human groups (like the military-industrial sector in the USA) and how those technologies reach and transform the rest of the world, both people and non-human organisms. Looking at iPad apps for cats or cute gif animations in a browser, it's hard to remember that the computer originated as a military machine, as did the internet. Perhaps it's even more interesting to be reminded that in the 1990s it was hoped that the World Wide Web would become a radical democratic tool that could provide an alternative space away from the structures of capitalist societies. Today when almost half of the world is online, we see war memes on our Facebook feeds, mixed with cute images, activism, advertisement, contemporary and vernacular art — all in one stream. The democratic potential never separated from the capitalist or military-industrial ones. There is a raw, actual material economy, history and reality to all the billions of data-orientated products, such as screen-based media, and all the signals we send through them: from universities and rare earth mineral mines, to shipping containers, Chinese mega factories, MediaMarkts and server farm buildings. I'm inspired by the visual and cultural ripple effects that are enabled by and that can be observed in these, if not 'post-human', then maybe mega-human extensions and 'enhancements' for networked communication. My work is almost a case-by-case aesthetic study of these effects I identify and then materialise, as sculptures or digital collages (in the end, they're almost the same). What maybe then unites the 'post-human' and 'post-internet' is the necessity for ecological understanding of data and human culture, and their relationship to the non-human world.

Katja Novitskova.
Expo 2020. Tchotcho women going to the market to sell their hi-tech goods. 2010. Digital collage

Katja Novitskova.
Bright Starts Ingenuity Smoothe Glide. 2014.
Electronic baby swing, polyurethane resin, digital model of protein molecule foldings, display clamps, hair extensions, power magnets.
RijksakademieOPEN 2014

Katja Novitskova.
A DAY IN A LIFE with THINGS I REGRET BUYING. 2014.
Electronic baby swings, polyurethane resin, polyurethane rubber, aluminium, digital models of protein molecule foldings, found digital images, Facebook stickers, display clamps, silicone fishing baits, hair extensions, cable hose, power magnets, etc. Installation view.
RijksakademieOPEN 2014.

NJL: As you say, both the richness of resources and the utter saturation of the internet – as a reservoir of attention-seeking materials and informations, on the cognitive trading floor, so to speak – are interesting foundations for any 'post-internet' practice and the works that might develop from that. Here we might observe a certain movement in 'post-internet' practice: to take certain information that is external to an art context, and embed it within the framework of artistic practice – through appropriation, displacement and manipulation – and to let the work reference and point towards an outside world. In other words, to go outside of artistic practice by means of artistic practice – by deploying that state of mind. To me it seems that 'post-internet' has value and critical potential in that area: not as the description of a movement, but in terms of what makes it turn, even spin, by what means and how it can slice through an often hermetic art world and move elsewhere. This makes me wonder: how do you proceed in establishing certain analogies in your work? What are your starting points and methods?

KN: I very much agree about the significance of embedding the 'outside world' in the contemporary art context. One of the anthropological explanations of art is that it is a practice that captures human attention and provides thrilling experiences of certain patterns to our socially activated brains (in numerous multiple ways). Online content and economies are fuelled by the attention of billions of people, and the dynamics of attention are at the frontier of content competition online. So maybe 'post-internet' as a mode of art-making began at the moment these things began to merge on a large scale, when screens became the main way for people to experience art or the documentation of it. One of the effects that I've dealt with in my work is the flattening of images and their origins that occurs within the constant flow of visual information. Images of art online co-exist and are materially equal to memes, nature, fashion, friends, rappers, ISIS, parties, products, protests, food, babies, pets, HD, low resolution, CGI, amateurs, advertisements, viral campaigns, Kim Kardashian, ebola, Mars rover landings etc. When I bring a widely-shared image of an animal into a gallery space, I physically connect what is already close online. The documentation of the installation becomes another online image, but hybrid and self-aware. Being internet- and attention-aware as an artist, gives access to new kinds of knowledge about human beings, new kinds of aesthetic tools and new kinds of ideas of what art is or can be, all in 'the age of the social internet' (prior to the internet of things... or whatever comes next).

Niekolaas Johannes Lekkerkerk

(1988) works as a curator and a writer. In 2012 he founded The Office for Curating, which currently operates in and from Rotterdam. The Office for Curating acts as an assembler of a growing programme of exhibitions (including publications, texts and speech acts) and as a support structure for initiating exhibitions for particular occasions: presented in different shapes and configurations, along different temporal structures and rhythms, and hosted by different institutes.
www.theofficeforcurating.com

Katja Novitskova

(1984) is an artist. She was born in Estonia, and now lives and works in Amsterdam and Berlin. Novitskova researches ongoing evolutionary transformations of matter, and social and informational processes in the present globalized world, developing personal strategies to render its future forms. With a background in visual semiotics, graphic design and new media, her works range from digital collages to sculpture and installation, collaborative projects and artist publications. In 2013–2014 Novitskova was a resident at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam.
www.katjanovi.net

SKATKA (Rainar Aasrand, Mikk Madisson). *State of Cloud* at the Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn. 2014

Post-internet art in the time of e-residency in Estonia

Rebeka Põldsam

SKATKA. Still from the video *State of Cloud*. 2014

An Estonian Russian artist living in Germany, Katja Novitskova, is one of the pathfinders of post-internet art. She is known as an Estonian artist despite the fact that she studied elsewhere and her art has practically nothing Estonian-specific in it, or does it? The statistics say that young Estonian Russians – a third of Estonians are Russian-speakers and non-citizens – wish to leave Estonia after high school as they do not see cultural and social roles for them in Estonia. It may be that a post-national internet identity is a way to ESCape from humiliations and the nation-state's general network of lies, which seeks to maintain the integrity of the national identity and political system under the umbrella of military security. The internet was born out of warfare and post-internet art reflects this. Thus, there really is no longer an escape from the internet.

Unfortunately, post-internet art's profile is that of a superficial aesthetic pretentiousness and it has largely succeeded in maintaining an apolitical status by putting its emphasis on self-marketing for original visual language, despite the fact that it resembles sci-fi movies from the final years of the Cold War, with its own extra touch. 2014 saw a turn in post-internet art in Estonia. Some of the artists and groups are widely known, such as Music For Your Plants, but most of them have yet to arrive. It could be said that the turn was brought about first by Hobusepea Gallery in Tallinn and then by the semi-online gallery Konstanet, which showed the new video *State of Cloud* by the artist duo SKATKA (Mikk Madisson and Rainar Aasrand).

SKATKA's video *State of Cloud* (2014) deals with post-internet issues and aesthetics in an Estonian-specific manner. It plays with English and Estonian computer language, 1990s pop songs and Estonia's current comeback through the widely popular Face Show (*Your Face Looks Familiar*, in the vernacular), Estonia's reputation for e-success and the pride that the nation takes in this and myths of greasy pony-tailed IT-men; on the other hand, the video reflects on the world-wide increase in esoteric practices and beliefs. For example, the video shows that pony-tailed CERT-men form such an old myth that nobody even thinks of them any more because what they do is too intangible for most people.

Estonia's e-image kicked off when Estonia survived a cyber attack from Russia in 2007 as part of the Bronze Night Riots, when many government and media servers were down and a lot of data went missing. In November 2014, Estonia introduced e-residency, which allows a person from anywhere to virtually move to Estonia, have an ID-card for banking and taxes, give digital signatures etc. Estonian IT developers, with the e-governance advocate and spokesman President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, have invested heavily, showing their high hopes that Estonia will have an international success with ID-card-based business.

There has not yet been a wider discussion of the internet of things and its culture in Estonia, much less post-internet art practices and their foundations. As long as there is no access to the technological resources for ordinary computer users and culture makers that are available in wealthier countries, post-internet art will not be able to reach the new audiences it desires. In contrast to technological development, which mostly takes place at international conferences for defence, economics and politics, there is no real access to tech wonders in public spaces; as a result, real discussions of internet technology can not start. Instead, many people are trying to escape the post-human state of being and are moving towards a spiritual connection with the four elements of the universe in order to become independent of wired energy, the free-masons' third eye and constant CCTV stream. This is where post-internet art stems from with its ironical sense of humour making fun of the IT-dream, esoteric beliefs and ever-frustrating military politics.

SKATKA's video *State of Cloud* is online at vimeo.com/112312573

Rebeka Põldsam
(1989), studied contemporary art theory at Goldsmiths, London. Her research interests are feminist and queer art practices in Eastern Europe and contemporary ethics. She works as a curator-project manager at the Center for Contemporary Arts, Estonia.

Platform: *Experimenta!*

Tomaž Zupančič

"We wanted to give young people a chance to speak about what matters to them."

Annely Köster, the director of *Experimenta!*[1]

The contemporary art triennial for students *Experimenta!* was designed in 2011, when Tallinn was the European Capital of Culture. Today, it is one of the most noted European events intended for the presentation of artwork by students aged 14 to 19, and it is undoubtedly the one most devoted to contemporary art practices. *Experimenta!* unites young artists from different countries with curators and art educators, different types of general and art schools, educational and art institutions, etc. *Experimenta!* is designed as *an open, sustainable platform for the interchange of ideas and best practice in the fields of contemporary art and art education*[2]. The second *Experimenta!* on the topic of *Art & Science*, which took place in October and November 2014, provided a platform for deliberations on the role of contemporary art in art education, on the relationship between the educational and the artistic in students' artwork, on differences between students' art and the art of adult artists, on relations between science and art, etc.

Stina-Maria Lusti, Lota Marie Aaliste, Elo Vahtrik, Merili Kärk (Estonia). *Acclimatization.* 2014. Video

Experimenta! and contemporary art

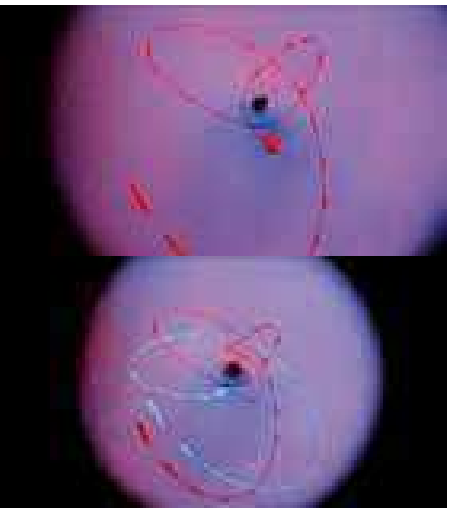
Deputy Mayor of Tallinn Mihhail Kõlvart admitted after visiting the exhibition that he had been hoping to experience aesthetic enjoyment, as art is supposed to be beautiful, but his hope was in vain… Instead, he got something much more important.[3]

Experimenta! does not provide a dichotomous platform, where pros and cons of using contemporary art in art education are discussed. Installation art, video art, computer art, interactivity, critical discourse, social relations, conceptual art, interculturalism, sustainability, juxtaposing etc are terms that in one way or another describe all of the artwork at *Experimenta!*. *Experimenta!* is not just another place for exhibiting students' artwork but also has an important educational role. It does not reflect the current situation in art education but actively intervenes and develops it.

Contemporary art education theories have emphasised the importance of contemporary art in art education since the 1990s. The main task of the post-modern art curriculum is to train students to widen and deepen their understanding of the cultural landscape they inhabit[4].

Contemporary art practices are important in the educational sense, as they reflect the current status of culture and are thus close to the comprehension of youth. Contemporary artists and young students breathe the same air and live the same oversaturated and digitalised lives.

Art education practices in schools unfortunately lag behind. Updated national art curricula (especially in countries that changed their political systems when the Iron Curtain fell in 1991) extensively mention contemporary art, but it takes longer for changes to be implemented in practice. The conventional school environment is rather



Dünya Aydos (Turkey). *Lasting Tracks*. 2014. Video. www.youtube.com/watch?v=kalQ3cFmNYc

rigid and reacts slowly to changes. Art educators who are dedicated to contemporary art practices are still in the minority and are breaking new ground. With its dedication to contemporary art practices, *Experimenta!* is more advanced than many school art education practices and even presents a type of avant-garde approach.

Educational – artistic

Experimenta! faces another challenge with its focus on teenager art. The artistic expression of 14- to 19-year-old students is complicated by the fact that during secondary school they are the main subjects of the educational process but also young people with rather unique views of the world. If we agree with Joseph Beuys[5] that everyone who sees the problems of the world and feels the desire to express them, regardless of their formally attained knowledge and education, is an artist, then *Experimenta!* is also an artistic and not just an educational exhibition. At the secondary school level, art education mostly emphasises the educational part of the process rather than the artistic. Educational work is directed towards the individual student and the result of the educational process is the development of the individual and not artwork[6].

Works that were exhibited at *Experimenta!* may be the result of educational processes, but many of them also came to life as independent autonomous artworks. This is due to the fact that many of them have emerged as projects outside of regular school work, in art workshops, art schools (e.g the Vantaa Art School for Children and Young People) and other institutions (e.g International Munich Art Lab) or in cooperation with professional artists (e.g in Latvia, Slovenia etc). Speaking of works of art made by teenagers as artwork is considered almost blasphemous in the educational environment, but standing in *Experimenta!*'s exhibition space, it becomes quite natural. Works exhibited at *Experimenta!* are art even if they are the result of the educational process. As such, they offer the ideal field for deliberations on the relationship between these works and artwork created by adult professional artists. Here, *Experimenta!* again achieves what it set out to do, i.e *bringing art and art education closer to each other*. When things are brought closer together, they become easier to compare and to contrast. Let us try. Unlike adult art, teenager art:

(a) deals with different topics. The world of teenagers is plagued by different problems than those of the adult world. Identity and values are being shaped. Teenagers fall in love for the first time and search for soul mates. Who is with whom and who will be with whom is very important. In Līga Holodņikova's (from Latvia) *True Love* interactive installation, the light shines only once the viewer brings the right people together. Interpersonal relationships are joined by the topics of environmental protection, equality, loneliness, consumerism, virtual reality (a Canadian series of digitalised multimedia images) and body obsession (Karola Kaugema, Estonia: *Competition*).

(b) approaches its topics playfully and awkwardly. This is evident when mentors are aware of their role and do not excessively intervene in the process when the idea is being developed and the presentation prepared. This is clearly evident in the Estonian video prepared by Stina-Maria Lusti, Lota Marie Aaliste, Elo Vahtrik and Merili Kärk called *Acclimatization*, where one of the authors is walking through the town wearing an elk mask and trying to find her place in the sun, and it is also evident in the entire Latvian presentation.

Līga Holodņikova (Latvia). *True Love*. 2014. Interactive installation

Karola Kaugema (Estonia). *Competition*. 2014

Canadian exhibition at *Experimenta!*

Eva Smrekar (Slovenia). *Poetry is the rhytmical creation of beauty in words* (Edgar Allan Poe). 2014. Installation

Julius Ertelt (Germany). *Spotted*. 2014. Installation

Elza Anna Zagorska, Diāna Jakimaviča, Andris Kreicburgs, Rihards Taranda (Latvia). *SPICE*. 2014. Object

(c) has a simpler technical implementation but is thus often more expressive[7]. A video (Dünya Aydos, Turkey: *Lasting Tracks*) unintentionally shows the hands throwing coloured balls into a funnel, which does not diminish the expressive power of the artwork, nor does it affect the maturity of the idea or the imaginative symbolism (the funnel as a black hole in the universe).

The *Experimenta!* platform requires more space and time to cover all the issues that it deals with. We are convinced that this will end up being only one of many texts. There is time for reflection, as we look forward to the next *Experimenta!* in three years.

Tomaž Zupančič,
PhD, University of Maribor, Slovenia is an art educator, painter and crime novel writer. His research is oriented toward involving contemporary art in art educational processes. He was a guest lecturer at the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2013/14. He is a member of InSEA.

1 http://www.eksperimenta.net/post/7419/
2 http://www.eksperimenta.net/about-e/
3 http://www.eksperimenta.net/post/7419/
4 Efland, A. (1992). Curriculum Problems at Century's End: Art Education and Postmodernism. In: Piironen, L. (Ed). Power of Images – A Selection of Papers presented at the European Regional Congress of INSEA in Helsinki 9-13 August 1992 and at the INSEA Research Conference in Tampere 6-8 August 1992. Helsinki: INSEA Finland, The Association of Art Teachers in Finland. Pp 114-120.
5 Schneede, Uwe M. (1994). Joseph Beuys – Die Aktionen. Ostfildern-Ruit. Verlag Gerd Hatje.
6 At IDEAlaboratory, at the conference within the framework of *Experimenta!*, Heie Treier similarly justified the difference between teachers' orientation and that of curators.
7 A similar aspect was emphasised by James Elkins in regard to video, using the example of Ieva Dzelde Mierkalne's (Latvia) *Moment of Thought*. http://www.eksperimenta.net/cat/newsletter/november2014/

Prof. James Elkins discusses the video *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi* with the author Anna-Maria Jams at *Experimenta!*
See more at www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBV4FfXOkCI&list=PLMbULzRgnUipEp0I94eIDIWfkRCDIzPD7

Anna-Maria Jams
Sic Transit Gloria Mundi
2014
video, 3 min.

Anna-Maria Jams (a graduate of the Sally art studio):
Contemporary art is like one big test. There are so many opportunities today to make art out of anything, from rubbish to high tech. I really like this freedom. At *Experimenta!* the works ranged from wall to wall, and I think it's good for young people to be able to participate in such undertakings, without any major restrictions on anything. There is only the theme. Freedom, which contemporary art contains, is the most important aspect for the young when they decide what to present as their competition work, especially since the school is already beginning to establish some restrictions and specific tasks.

I am a country girl myself and have often driven to Tallinn through the Lasnamäe residential district. The huge blocks of flats there have always reminded me of ant hills or termite mounds, because there is so much commotion. So I imagined a block of flats as a home for ants. Sugar was the only way to link ants with a block of flats. People are indeed like ants: they work, scuttle around, eat and sleep. Up early and late to bed, and all of them so close together. For me, video is the most fascinating outlet and the wood near my home is an ideal place to work. It took me ten days to produce a three-minute time-lapse video about an ant hill, which will one day be destroyed, just like everything in the world of people.

See more at
www.eksperimenta.net

Raul Keller's exhibition *What You Hear Is What You Get (Mostly)* at EKKM

Andrus Laansalu

Is it possible to define the current Estonian sound art situation? It exists, but it's hard to find. It seldom appears, and it is occasionally unclear whether there is a dividing line between experimental music and sound art, or whether it is a kind of morph, smoothly blending from one form into another. If I had to define sound art simply and clearly, I would not even mention the morph concept. I would point to Raul Keller and his works. Sound art is what Raul Keller does. This is my definition.

The relations of a sound artist with sound are like the relations of a glass-blower with a liquid glass bubble. The material resists and you have to get through it somehow. You often do not know what the aim of your work is; it is not located on a fingerboard or in tablature lines. A musician mostly has his common work methods and a kind of scale. A sound artist has nothing but a bit of vibrating air. And from that he has to wring out an object that no one has ever seen or heard before. Keller works with precisely such objects.

He draws his ideas meticulously many times so that finally his objects constitute assemblages of the necessary minimal. The form of the object producing vibrations cannot often be separated from the character of the sound, but the object of sound art does not tell you I am a horn, I am blown. Keller once made a whole cluster of torpedoes with hard disc engines in order to get the sound he needed. The torpedoes swam around in water and shouted: "Pharaoh! Pharaoh!". You never know in which cultural or technical heap of rubbish you will find the thing you need. You are simultaneously a musician and constructor-inventor.

Raul Keller. *What You Hear Is What You Get (Mostly)*. EKKM, Contemporary Art Museum Estonia, 18 September–27 October 2014.

There is also a problem at the other end of the axis: who should research sound art? Let us suppose the person doing this is an art historian/art critic. But what kind of a toolbox must he use to access his object? Art history is dominated by trends dealing with the conceptual, the visual and the social, but the central object of sound art is air vibration and the mechanisms that cause it. This does not fit into any of the mentioned categories (although there are points of contact). Besides, tackling acoustic problems requires a certain knowledge of the physics of sound. And preferably some technical experience with constructions and electronics. Alas, there are no relevant courses in the national curricula. Any art history student is of course welcome to further his knowledge in the field. I am simply pointing out that sound art is one of the many art segments that is left out of the focused framework of the scientific approach.

On the other hand, students of the music academy could tackle sound art well. Their knowledge of acoustics is sufficient for them to think theoretically about the audible part of sound art. Still, sound is not the only material of sound art. The whole art field is involved. And if a sound artist decides to make an empty house his object, it would be quite useful to have read Vitruvius. Keller's works, too, clearly demonstrate that the basic course of minimalism actually begins in kindergarten.

There are other worries as well. The object of sound art is not taken out of the catalogue box of standard solutions. This is the general problem of technological performative arts and technological theatre: for every exhibition, a new technical solution is invented; it is often the very first model on which testing begins to establish what can be done with it. Art with a technical basis indeed survives based on the concept of constant testing. The possible dysfunctionality of the result is part of the technological arts, and it often becomes the very focus of the work.

Keller, however, is not too attracted to this kind of processuality. Instead, he focuses on minimising the solution. His sound objects are sharpened and cleaned instruments. In addition, sounds have such a physical and direct effect on us that they do not at all depend on theoretical knowledge and preparations, which clash with sound. We do not need to realise where the source of the sound actually is. We need not have any knowledge of acoustics or physics. A crackle behind us produces an immediate reaction. If you react, it has worked. If you don't, you are eaten or hit over the head with something. This link has been polished by hundreds of millions of years of evolution. This mechanism certainly works. And works long before any understanding based on employing linguistic mechanisms can even begin to emerge. We are always in unavoidable physical contact with sound art, and the character of this contact largely depends on extra-cultural biological mechanisms (although of course there is more). If the sound repels us, it is difficult to argue it into something else. If it pleases us, the association is the same.

Rumour has it that at Raul Keller's exhibition *What You Hear Is What You Get (Mostly),* one of the girls guarding the hall was traumatised by what she was listening to: for her, the low-frequency noise of Keller's sound installations was dreadful. It is difficult to argue with this: this field cannot be accessed via argumentation. The sounds of the exhibition had exactly the opposite effect on me: I could have stayed there forever; I couldn't get enough of it during the time I spent at the exhibition. Due to an inborn preference, I am extremely susceptible to low-frequency vibrations. What I expected of those objects was precisely what they produced. The audible low-frequency sound is physically perceptible beyond the audible. A sound always has an object-body,

Raul Keller

(1973), sound artist, musician and head of the New Media Department at the Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA) since 2014. Studied art education at Tallinn University, received his MA in interactive multimedia in 2002 at the EAA. Focuses on site-specific sound installations, sound performances, musical improvisations and radiophonic experiments. www.raul.kuuratsanikud.ee/index.php/en/

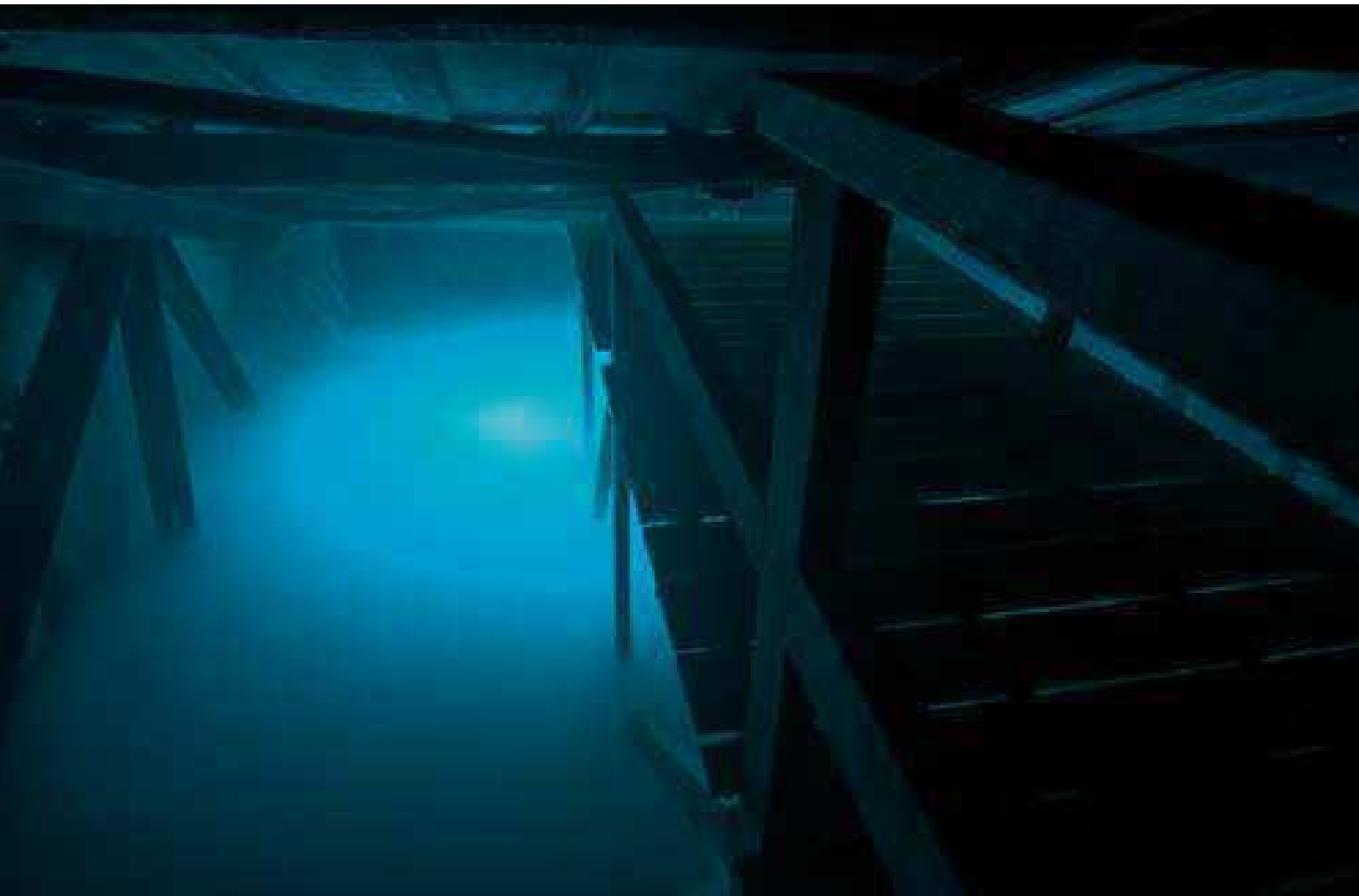
Andrus Laansalu

(1969) has studied biology, classical singing and photography. He is currently working on his MA at the Academy of Arts in biosemiotics and art theory based on materials. He has produced sound design for theatre productions and technological theatre with Erik Alalooga. He is a member of the MIM project and the author of the book *The Gatling Gun*.

but how strongly it can be felt physically depends on the technical solutions chosen by the artist.

My initial intention was to analyse the constructions of Keller's sound aggregates, but this plan was discarded. Construction drawings and engineering-technical methods certainly constitute a fascinating part of sound art. However, the more I reflect on Keller's exhibition, the more I recall it, the more clearly one dominant factor emerges that suppresses all other aspects: total bass. It blends many different bass layers, many different corporeal bass materialisations.

It is much more difficult to establish the location of the source of a low-frequency sound than the location of the source of a high-frequency sound. At least part of this is directly caused by evolution: listening to medium and high frequencies has been more essential for survival. As our hearing system cannot manage to determine the direction of a low-frequency vibration very well, visitors to Keller's exhibition feel as if the sound is everywhere. Even when the sources of the sound hiding in the dark occasionally come to light, the sound does not have a clear direction. As it is dark anyway, vision is not useful. You thus find yourself in the pre-conscious world of membranes and vibrations. As if you were in a dream where you are wielding a dagger, trying to cut through a door-sized mass of dense darkness. Or you're lying inside a dark hot stone and are a dark hot stone yourself. Rational consciousness has no place in such an environment. It is needed elsewhere. Here is an experience of a way of existence which we tend to switch off or over-romanticise. In fact, it is merely a dark intermediate area between two vibration crests. A place where reality happens.



Critic talk with Pauls Bankovskis at the opening of *Untitled* by Jass Kaselaan.

WILD BISCUITS

Jana Kukaine

In 2014, thanks to the duet of art critics and curators Šelda Puķīte and Indrek Grigor, the Artishok Biennale for the first time took place outside its land of origin, namely in Latvia. Since its foundation in 2008 the Biennale has been marked by a peculiar magic of numbers – 10 artists, 10 critics and 100 texts – which inevitably necessitates explaining its format to a newcomer. However, this time the structure was even more advanced, since the novelty introduced by its organizers involved supplementing the ten newly made artworks with the same number of counterparts from the private collection of Janis Zuzāns, in whose art space – the Mūkusala art salon in Riga – the event took place.

Obviously, this involved an agreement between the organizers of the Biennale and the host, who could not resist the temptation to show off his own stuff. We should perhaps rejoice, since this made the event possible and no other independent space for an innovative art initiative could be found in Riga. This shift of the programme in the interest of the art salon is, of course, an easy target for institutional criticism, which, by the way, had already been offered by at least one of the invited authors. The actual impact of this change was an unexpectedly acquired balance between the visual and text. I believe that this was not how it was meant to be, that the main point of the Biennale was to stress the critical discourse, revealing its diverse multiplicity and artistic stance. The obviously unfair proportion 'ten to one' (morally unacceptable, critically challenging!) guaranteed this outcome. So it seems that at this year's show the Biennale's conceptual purity was somehow compromised.

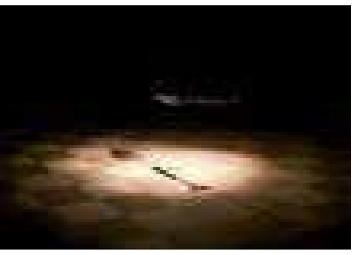
However it seems that there is no reason for regret since, even packed in the fashionable glamour of the Mūkusala art salon (look at those guards at the entrance and the leather armchairs, the polished door handles and modern tubes of hanging lamps!), the Biennale was in a way marginalized. Of course, its very structure dooms it to fragmentation, since apart from the organizers I doubt there were many visitors who made their way to all of the openings during the ten evenings. The event received some attention, but was not honoured with any critical reviews or any reflections in the Latvian art media and, needless to say, there were no long rows of enthusiasts outside the building. Typical? Abnormal? Dear friends, this is the situation we are facing now: we do not receive much feedback and we don't have many platforms to talk from; the whole situation can be seen as an emergency that we have gotten used to. Therefore, incorporating some 'vegetables' in our everyday diet seemed valuable in order to both promote digestion and discover new taste sensations.

The critical reflections provided by the ten authors are what makes this Biennale so exceptional, revealing a wide range of writing possibilities and revealing the scope of answers to the eternal question "What to say about art?". The choice of the authors was remarkable as well – the organizers apparently were interested in the ones whose visions might differ from the highly predictable slang of academic writing, which – at least in Latvia – often happens to oscillate from stating that the artist is between 'promising' and 'un/convincing', including a short or extended biography and a formal description of the work on display. And although in some cases the texts worked in a rather traditional manner – attempting to approach the artwork in a certain historical and aesthetic perspective, thus fulfilling their time-honoured duty as art's servant – mostly the written contributions related to their objects in a sort of detached manner, thus calling into question their referential function.

I tend to see these critical reflections as more likely to be artistic gestures: expressions of various styles and forms of particular textuality within the context of given circumstances (let me guess): little time, little money and – in some cases – also little clarity about what the artwork was eventually going to be. With notable wit and efficiency, each author demonstrated a particular way to deal with the assignment: a chart (as in the case of Pauls Bankovskis), a fictional story about a person

Kristi Kongi. *Bright Light*. 2014

AB14, the 4th Artishok Biennale at Mūkusala Art Salon, Riga



Margus Tamm. *YOU AND ME*. 2014

Ivars Grāvlejs. *Untitled*. 2014

Jana Briķe. *The day when time stood still*. 2014

Martiini. *View 2*. 2014

"standing on the edge of an early mid-life crisis" (Elena Šmakova), a laconic and somehow puzzled utterance (Maija Rudovska), a dialogue with someone whose existence was doubtful (Jānis Taurens), an ironic self-reflection (Peeter Talvistu), a collage of juxtapositions (Valts Miķelsons), or opinions expressed by others (Anna Salmane). By the way, the list suggests – and I am risking approbation from the Estonian audience – that the authors from Latvia demonstrated a higher degree of creativity and unconventionality.

I can imagine that the artworks presented at the show prompted the desire to experiment: the dark-coloured window aisle by Martiini, the howling of the wolves by Krišs Salmanis, a hanging spade by Margus Tamm or a piece of written text by Ivars Grāvlejs. In addition, every artist at the Biennale was presented in a rather miniature way (each one had only one work on display), and even though this abstinent and minimal style gave little idea of whether a particular artwork illuminated or obscured the creative history of the artist, it stimulated the imagination and provided room for a lot of critical independence. (I must confess that the diachronic aspect of an artwork is not my primary interest.) Of course, the modern era provides instruments to cast away all mystery, using an iPad and other devices, but when it comes to equipment I prefer the old-fashioned wooden frame, as in the work of Jana Briķe, whose use of this anachronism was nicely discussed by Paul Kerey-Kent, an art writer invited by Anna Salmane.

The selected 'dream team' of artists (as one of the organizers, Šelda Puķīte, called it in a private message), and the critics too, worked very well, yet I was surprised by one thing: no matter how much experimentation the critics were willing to accept, their critiques were presented in a rather customary way; each text was put into a solid frame resembling a traditional painting, as if attempting to turn it into an adorable object. This was well-suited to the style of the Mūkusala salon, but contradicted the open and flexible structure of textuality that the Biennale offered. I don't know why such a decision was made. I also noticed that the authors clung to the well-known forms of graphic expressions, i.e none of them offered criticism, for example, as a dance performance, audible text, accumulation of three dimensional objects or a prepared meal. This, I hope, will be further developed by the critics invited to take part in the next Artishok, because I think while the *Estonian Art* magazine would not appreciate greatly if instead of this review I sent them a box of Latvian Selga biscuits (too complicated to distribute them among the readers), I believe the Artishok Biennale – since there the criticism takes place in real time – is a rare chance for the critic to go wildly into the unknown.

The 4th Artishok Biennale A+B=AB14

took place from 17 September to 11 October 2014 in Riga, Latvia. Participating artists from Estonia: Kristi Kongi, Laura Kuusk, Jass Kaselaan, Martiini and Margus Tamm. From Latvia: Kristīne Alksne, Jana Briķe, Krišs Salmanis, Arturs Bērziņš and Ivars Grāvlejs. Participating art critics from Estonia: Tanel Rander, andreas w, Peeter Talvistu, Mari Kartau and Elena Šmakova. From Latvia: Maija Rudovska, Jānis Taurens, Valts Miķelsons, Pauls Bankovskis and Anna Salmane.
Curated by Šelda Puķīte (LV) and Indrek Grigor (EST). See more at www.artishokbiennale.org/AB14/

Jana Kukaine
(1983), an art critic, feminist, mother and wife: If the artists could do whatever they wanted and call it art, I could do what I wanted and call it criticism (Lucy Lippard).

Engineer Herman Reier's technical drawing class at the School of Arts and Crafts (now the Estonian Academy of Arts). 1914

Practical anatomy class at the ERKI (State Art Institute of the Estonian SSR, now the Estonian Academy of Arts). 1963

Meeting of ERKI ÜTÜ (Student Research Union) and the cyberneticists at the Computing Centre of the Cybernetics Institute on Sakala Street, Tallinn. 1966. On the right: works by Tõnis Vint.

Margarita Teeääre, Head of Sewing workshop of the Fashion Design Department, and Professor emeritus Jaan Vares, sculptor and long-time rector of the EAA, celebrating EAA's 100th anniversary at the Kumu Art Museum on 3 November 2014.

Exhibition *From the School of Arts and Crafts to the Academy of Arts. A Hundred Years of Art Education in Tallinn*. Kumu Art Museum, 5 November 2014–22 February 2015. Curated by Mart Kalm.

IN TARTU ROAD
THE APPLIED ART SCHOOL
TOOK THE ARTIST UNDER ITS WING
IN COOPERATION WITH INDUSTRY
AND THE NEW ESTONIAN STATE
IN ORDER TO TAKE
OUR ART
INTO EUROPE
WAVING THE
BLUE BLACK WHITE FLAG
PÄTS* BECAME THE STATE ELDER
ANOTHER PÄTS THE HEAD OF THE SCHOOL
TWO BIG BEARS
WHO OFTEN
DID NOT UNDERSTAND
WHAT WAS GOING ON
THEY PURSUED THEIR OWN THING
UNTIL UNCLE VASJA TURNED UP

ONE SPRING DAY
THE SCHOOL ABANDONED INDUSTRY
NAMING ITSELF
A HIGHER ART SCHOOL
THE ESTONIAN STATE WAS
SO KEEN ON THE SCHOOL
THAT AN ARTIST
WHO HAD SO FAR BEEN
THE LOWEST OF ALL
BECAME
A GURU FOR ESTONIANS /.../

Excerpt from *100 TARTU ROAD*
by Leonhard Lapin

ESTONIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS 100

Leonhard Lapin

I started at the Estonian State Art Institute in 1966, when the old neo-Jugendstil building was still standing. The entrance was via the grand main staircase, with artistic bas-reliefs above it. These were demolished in 1971 just when I was defending my diploma thesis. At the foot of the main staircase in the entrance hall, a woman sat in a glass cubicle dressed in white. She was the porter and switchboard operator who checked everyone coming in and connected the internal phones with the school's main line. When I entered the school for the first time, a student, a friend of my sister's, took me to the third floor to draw a plaster copy of the Venus de Milo, as I needed to prepare for entrance exams. Everything was very exciting, especially seeing my first nude in the drawing class.

The curricula at the institute at that time were neo-Stalinist, based on the art concept of socialist realism. Lecturers had to attend courses every now and then at a leading art school in Moscow. In addition, specialists from the Soviet capital arrived during every five-year plan period to check the standard of teaching. Today's academy is being evaluated, i.e checked, by specialists from Europe – which rings a bell, somehow.

In order to avoid the strong ideological control in most art fields, I was advised to opt for architecture, where several architects from the period of Estonian independence (1920s and 30s) were still teaching. These professors not only taught excellent architecture, but the customs of pre-war intelligentsia and broader attitudes towards the art of building: a good architect of the 1930s was not merely a specialist in a narrow field, but an intellectual who understood and influenced the whole cultural sphere. Architects had to learn realist painting and drawing, and our attempts at modernism were not totally suppressed. Drawing skills certainly came in handy later both in art and in architecture: the level of today's young architects and artists is not exactly overwhelming. There have been plans to abandon all drawing in architectural studies, although it is particularly through drawing that an architect learns man's proportions and understands that architecture is, after all, meant for living creatures. However, drawing lessons need not be quite so dry, boring and narrow as in my time.

Much more harrowing than the long drawing lessons, where only a few teachers were able to teach realism, were the numerous political lectures and on top of that two years of physical education – *mens sana in corpore sano.* All this was not taken too seriously, but the subjects had to be taken anyway, for example swimming 25 m in a pool and the totally absurd 'scientific communism'. It was clear by the 1970s that the communist country, socialist camp and people's prison had reached a dead end in its development, but this dramatic period lasted for another 15 years and demanded many victims. If anyone wonders why today's Russia is so aggressive and brain-dead, governed by former KGB officers, we should think back to the Soviet Union that ruled half of Europe. It hid its militarism and nuclear weapons behind its supposed active fight for world peace, and behind the label of friendship between nations sneaked its agents and terrorists into Western countries.

Studying at the Art Institute would have been dismal without our inner freedom and without the Student Research Union. Beginning in 1964, it displayed work free of socialist realism, organised exhibitions of independent works, evenings of discussions, and performances with musicians from the conservatory. I took an active part in such undertakings, as indeed did the Komsomol committee, who were not keen on the institute's communist ideals. The former Stalinist rector F. Leht had been sent back to Russia and replaced by the young sculptor Jaan Vares, who supported the students' aspirations for free creativity. He described the students' experiments to the Communist Party bosses as temporary childish play. After the Prague Spring of 1968 Estonian students organised protest demonstrations against its brutal suppression in the autumn of 1968 and 1969, called the 'processions with torches'. More serious pressure on universities began in 1970, gradually gathering force until the period now called the 'stagnation'.

In 1995 when I entered the low vestibule of the annex of the modernist, newly named Tallinn Art University, with its rather inadequate architecture, everything had been 'revamped'. I was invited back from Finland to teach by the new rector, Ando Keskküla, who undertook a serious renovation of the barely alive, still neo-Stalinist university. He made a shrewd move by retiring all Soviet-era professors, bestowing on them the grand title of professor emeritus, and inviting a new generation to teach instead. As the lecturers from the Republic of Estonia had long departed from this world, this mainly involved those who had gained power after WW II as 'Stalinist youth', whether they were really qualified or not. Architecture was taught by graduates of the Tallinn Polytechnic Institute from the 1950s, several of whom held important jobs, but none of them were established architects.

Ando Keskküla's plans were typically bigger than he was ever able to realise, but the new professors were at liberty to reform their respective areas and thus completely new specialities were introduced, e.g interdisciplinary art and new media. The school acquired

computers, video projectors and other modern technology. International relations were pursued; seminars, workshops, conferences and exhibitions were organised, directed at the newest art. The rector began actively searching for a new location. Ando Keskküla, whose term ended in a scandal, achieved a great deal in terms of innovating the school and the study process; in Estonian terms his efforts were revolutionary, and the school, renamed an academy, managed to restore its authority in society by the early 21st century.

In 1995 I was appointed a professor of general composition, I managed to establish a special chair of composition and colour study, and tried to include them in every speciality. In the symbolic room no 312A, a centre of general subjects was established. The artists-professors from the centre later curated, now through different chairs, drawing, plastic anatomy, composition, colour study, painting and sculpture in all specialities. When the academy joined the Bologna declaration 3+2, the academic council decided that these subjects, together with art history and language studies, would continue in all specialities, with a few concessions only in art history. The idea was that everyone – architects, ceramicists and later also restorers – would know the main art subjects at more or less the same level. In practice, different fields of art are, after all, intertwined and supplement one another. A uniform aesthetic and intellectual level of artists is very important. In recent years, this principle has been abandoned. The academic council has so far failed to change previously taken decisions, and now the heads of every subject can invite anyone to teach these subjects, regardless of the lecturer's abilities and creative standards.

The chaos at the academy began immediately after Ando Keskküla left: thoroughly worked-out study programmes were gradually forsaken. New ones were developed, but these were more like documents than plans to enhance creativity. The school has developed towards *academic capitalism*, where the only things that matter are formal documentation, and accounting to the ministry and to the institutions at home and abroad who finance the school; the number of officials has grown, the number of professors has fallen and the emphasis is on occasional low-paid lecturers. I have found that during the reign of Rector Signe Kivi over the last nine years, about 40 people have either been sacked, forced out or demoted! The directorate seems to think that the academy does not really need prominent people in various fields, but instead diligent pedagogues who follow the instructions of the management and who are virtually unknown in art circles. One exception is perhaps the Institute of Art History, a fiercely independent unit that has not fallen apart. I list myself among the demoted as well, as the moment I became emeritus, the chair of composition and colour study was at once closed down. And my 13-year systematic work, including four books and one collection of articles, crumbled into dust. Professors emeriti were allocated ridiculous fees, four to five times lower than their salaries had been. The academy thus brought all former professors, the best in their fields in the country, to an economic level that does not correspond to their actual needs or their contribution to Estonian art education. Some professors emeriti occasionally lecture, and not because of the modest extra income, but out of their good will and wish to keep their specialities afloat. This attitude towards the pillars of the academy has certainly damaged its reputation.

And that was not all – a few years ago the academy building itself was demolished, and a new one has not even been started! Careless thinking led to the end of the traditional integration of different specialities, an end to creative communication of students, often lasting a lifetime, from various fields of art. The link between the fine and decorative arts and architecture, which had been a characteristic feature of our school internationally and had been realised in cooperation, was disrupted. No wonder that the University of Technology, well aware of our problems, wants to grab control of all architecture teaching! The academy is now spending a fortune on rented premises, whereas money is lacking to pay deserved salaries to the lecturers.

The academy is currently going through dramatic times and celebrating its 100th anniversary seems like a feast during a plague. In 2015 the rector and hopefully most of the administration will be new [In January 2015 Professor Mart Kalm was elected as the new Rector of the EAA – Ed]. I hope the new team will analyse what has happened over the last two decades in the light of joining the Bologna declaration, consider the academy's development options and restore its authority. The paradigm of Estonian art education has of course changed: there are several successful higher education art, design and architecture schools, which means that there is no longer any reason to enlarge the Academy of Arts into a huge establishment; it should rather be a smaller international first-rate university with excellent lecturers, offering mainly art and architecture courses: a genuine academy at the higher education level. No self-respecting nation today can manage without high culture, which we need in our art and architecture. The communists were afraid of the elite, declaring that people were equal, even in terms of being uneducated, at the same time being the most equal of all whilst in power on the *Animal Farm*. In order to survive as a nation, we ought to aspire to be at the very top in fine arts!

* Konstantin Päts (1874–1956), President of Estonia. His brother Voldemar Päts (1878–1956), was an artist and Director of the School of Arts and Crafts (now the Estonian Academy of Arts) from 1914 to 1934. Päts also means a brown bear in Estonian.

Estonian Academy of Arts,
see more at www.artun.ee

Leonhard Lapin
(1947) is Prof. emeritus, architect, artist and poet.

AN EDUCATION

Laura Põld

As I try to reflect on the topic of (art) education, I actually end up stressing the importance of what one does when the academy is breaking up with you and it is time to move out to the first bachelor pad and begin dealing with reality.

It is no secret that I never officially studied in Vienna. I went there after graduating from the University of Tartu and my studies at the Estonian Academy of Arts were also behind me. Things often fall into my hands when somebody has to cancel and this is how I ended up being invited to Vienna. Ten days after hearing the news I was in my private apartment and sharing a studio, almost in the woods on the edge of Vienna, with a Polish guy and a totally lovable Montenegrian girl.

From then on it didn't matter much if it was Tallinn or Tartu, ceramics or painting. When no one around you knows or cares about any of that, sooner or later you rethink, question or reinvent your everyday rhythm, your practice and standpoints. I couldn't take myself too seriously anyhow as most people couldn't tell Estonia from Lithuania.

I think this empty stage is pretty much the scariest thing about moving to a new city with just two hands in your pocket because it is so easy to cool out and go into this fake Zen-state for months and never leave the house. But if you are bored with the old labels attached to artists in your home country – 'painter', 'applied arts', 'periphery' etc – then this lonely and out-of-sight status can be rather liberating.

What artists sometimes list as a part of 'education' in their CVs is residency experience. My stays in Vienna, Linz, Salzburg etc have allowed me to witness how my peers from Hamburg, Berlin, Podgorica, Vienna etc materialize their ideas in a given period of time. I depend very much on my environment and the first thing I started working on after relocating to a new country and culture was my living conditions and the concept of home. No matter how much of human communication is said to be visual, I must admit being unable to speak German put me in a totally unexpected locked-out situation in Austria and I believe this has influenced my work. Especially in Vienna, where you see so many immigrants, being suddenly counted as one of them puts things into a different perspective. Long story short, this alien status has provided roots for my works, such as *A Made-up Family History* (2014) – part of the exhibition *Castle* – where I used found family photos with people hiking in the mountains, and a series of objects resembling stage maquettes or community buildings titled *A Study of Homes* (2011–2013).

Of course I never really cut my ties and still most of my bigger shows have taken place in Estonia, but the works were often partly seeded and realized in Vienna. That leads to the next characteristic aspect of my work. Although I painted museum-sized canvases in the painting dept. in Tartu, the reality is that while working independently on several shows with tight finances the works have to be easily (i.e cheaply) transportable. I have been pleasantly surprised to see how young painters in Vienna work with very small formats but have the ability to execute shows in big spaces with the help of flexible and ephemeral media. I totally fell in love with this approach and abandoned my six-meter wide paintings for a while. Even if I make such large works again, they will be dismountable.

Since reality and my surroundings have directed me towards different topics and accessible materials that I integrate into my installations, some critics seem to be confused when they look too closely at my CV. For a painter, I clearly don't work in the medium often enough for them and it irritates me when what I do is labelled as innovative painting (and that label becomes too important) and not as something mainly guided by a situation, problem or story. But clearly material objects speak to me and I like 'making'. I have to touch, especially when I see something intriguing (a beautiful colour, objects well-situated in space etc). Maybe a quote that is almost 100 years old (nothing 'innovative' here) would explain how I see things and what the different media can do. Vladimir Tatlin: 'Let us place the eye under the control of touch.'

1. Laura Põld. *Walks In Schönbrunn*. 2014

2. Laura Põld. *Castle*. 2014. Installation. Vaal Gallery, Tallinn

3. Laura Põld. *Castle*. 2014. Detail. Installation, Vaal Gallery, Tallinn

4. Laura Põld. *Himmelbau*. 2013. Detail. Showroom Gallery Ulrike Hrobsky, Vienna

5. Laura Põld. *Two Landscape Patterns*. 2014. Painting-installation. Tartu Art House, Monumental gallery

6. Laura Põld. *Attempts To Stage A Landscape*. 2013. Tallinn Art Hall Gallery

7. -8. Laura Põld. *Attempts To Stage A Landscape*. 2013. Tallinn Art Hall Gallery

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Laura Põld. *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life. 2014.* Exhibition *The Night Your Mate Danced Like A Tree*. Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn

Laura Põld. *And Then Man Created Heaven. 2014.* Exhibition *The Night Your Mate Danced Like A Tree*. Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn

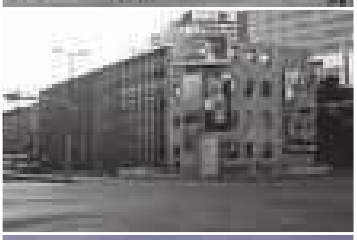
Laura Põld

(1984) received her BA in Ceramics from the Estonian Academy of Arts (2007) and her MA in Painting from the University of Tartu (2010). Põld's recent solo exhibitions were held at the Showroom Gallery Ulrike Hrobsky in Vienna, the Kunstkabinett Altes Rathaus in Bayreuth and the Hobusepea Gallery in Tallinn. Over the last five years she has been included in numerous group exhibitions in Vienna, Moscow, Berlin, Carcassonne, Frankfurt, Warsaw etc. Põld is currently living and working in Vienna and Tallinn.

WHEN AMBITIONS TURNED INTO CAUTION

Carl-Dag Lige

The Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA) was celebrating its one hundredth anniversary in 2014. In recent years, the Academy has attracted wider attention not because it is the most important art educational establishment in the country, but mainly because of the saga of its new building.



The main building of ERKI (State Art Institute of the Estonian SSR, now the Estonian Academy of Arts) at 1 Tartu Road. Late 1950s.

The main building of the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2006.

Art Plaza. The winning entry of the 2008 architecture competition of the new building of the Estonian Academy of Arts by the SEA and EFFEKT, Denmark.

EAA's plot of land at Tartu Road 1 in 2010.

EAA's former plot of land in central Tallinn has now been turned into the most banal form of everyday urban life: a car park. The absence of something significant is palpable. It is perhaps not too excessive to compare this to the void characteristic to the heart of Tallinn for years after WW II. The cultural layer of the plot both in a material and intellectual sense is – or rather was – dense. Thorough archaeological excavations revealed plenty of material information about the history of Tallinn's neighbourhoods. The art school building managed to stay put on these cultural grounds for nearly one hundred years.

Although the building was repeatedly reconstructed in the course of the 20th century, it nevertheless remained one of the supporting pillars of Estonian art and cultural life.

Today, everything at Tartu Road 1 has vanished. The plot of land is waiting to be sold, probably becoming some sort of business, another shopping centre or office block. EAA's ambitious and bold plans to erect a new building with strikingly fresh architecture have failed.

Architectural competitions as a mirror of development in society

EAA's saga vividly reflects the developments in Estonian society during the last decade. The social whirlwind caused by economic and financial crises generated radical decisions, forced many to change their minds, retreat from their previous decisions and make compromises.

During the past six years, there have been two architectural competitions for the new home of EAA. In 2008 a brilliant, extremely modern, but expensive entry was chosen. The cooperation of two Danish companies, SEA and EFFEKT*, envisaged a high building with strikingly fresh architecture, plus a public square in front of it. It was an ambitious plan to manifest the presence of new Estonian culture in public space. It would also have been a strong signal to the outside world that Estonian society values and appreciates both its new culture and the continuity of art education.

However, it was decided in 2013 that EAA would forever bid farewell to its historical site and move to the other side of the Old Town, into an old industrial complex at the edge of the Kalamaja district. The recently finished new architectural competition sought to adapt the existing industrial building for educational purposes. Compared with the 2008 competition, this is interference at the micro-level. As money is scarce, changes will be minimal and the opportunities offered by the existing building will be used to the maximum. The winning entry of the KUU architects, completed in cooperation with the philosopher Eik Hermann, reflects the capability and social reality of our country in AD 2014. In 2014 very little has survived of the ambitions of 2008. Society as a whole seems to have realised that we lack the ability, people, competence and financial means for grand gestures and powerful manifestations.

Still, moving to the edge of Kalamaja is not necessarily a bad choice. The Academy will definitely enliven the urban space there and forge links between the Old Town, city centre and the Kalamaja area by attracting more visitors, both locals and tourists. It is crucial for the EAA that after years of operating all over town it can finally gather all

departments, lecturers and students into one building. Contacts between specialities and people will be properly restored. Moving everyone in together will not only be practical, but will convey a strong imagological message to society: once again, EAA has a home of its own, one building, one location.

A missed opportunity

Despite all that, I still cannot shake off the feeling that the keyword of the EAA saga is 'missed opportunity'. How did it happen that the whole physical legacy and a large part of the intellectual layer of culture connected with the historical site on Tartu Road merely disappeared? Attempts have been made to find the guilty party, but with little success. Responsibility lies with politicians and public servants, and certainly with EAA's own directorate, where internal conflicts lasting for years have hindered making clear, quick and sensible decisions.

However, if we want to point out the biggest culprit, it might well be the entire Estonian public: you and me, us. Why did we fail to protect the continuity of EAA's activity on its historical site? Why did we not demand better decisions from the politicians and EAA's directorate? Why did we allow the historical building of the academy to be demolished so easily? Why did we not demand that the then government protect EAA more forcefully? Or maybe we did all that and nobody listened ...

Let us not moan and groan too much, however – not all has been lost: EAA still exists as an academy and there is a plan to move into a new building. Several specialities have been thoroughly refreshed and an impressive number of our brightest minds are included among the lecturers. EAA is an increasingly appealing destination for foreign students. It is to be hoped that the academy will get a new, energetic rector.

I believe that during the coming decades we will see many positive developments at the edge of the Kalamaja area. In 2016, when hopefully EAA will move into its new premises, the saga of the building will be finally and truly over, and EAA can start its second century with a clean slate. Step by step, cautiously.

* See also *Estonian Art 1/2 2008.*

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Carl-Dag Lige
(1982) is a critic and historian of architecture, and a curator at the Museum of Estonian Architecture. He focuses on the history of the 20th century and modern architecture. He has been a producer, moderator and co-curator of architectural events. His MA thesis in aesthetics at Helsinki University examined Ove Arup's philosophy of architecture and design.

KUU Architects Koit Ojaliiv, Joel Kopli, Juhan Rohtla and philosopher Eik Hermann. The winning entry *Linea* of the 2014 EAA architectural competition for the former stocking factory building on Põhja Boulevard acquired for the school.

Picture in a museum. NIKOLAI TRIIK – SYMBOL OF HYBRID ESTONIAN MODERNISM

Tiina Abel

Nikolai Triik. *Hunt*. 1913. Indian ink, sepia, tempera, varnish on paper. 23 x 42 cm. Tartu Art Museum

Nikolai Triik. *Martyr*. 1913. Indian ink, gouache on paper. 33 x 23 cm. Art Museum of Estonia

Nikolai Triik was among the first generation of Estonian artists, whose task was to carry out the historic mission of modernising Estonian art culture. More thoroughly than other Estonian modernists he was able to make the most of the freedom which local painters enjoyed as the pressure of academic teaching system weakened. There was no academy of arts in Estonia, and thus the modernists had no need to directly fight against local fossilised art institutions, but faith in systematic art teaching as a guarantee of professionalism still influenced the conservative art public. From the start, Triik's self-development seems like an intense mapping of modernism. Having begun his studies (as did almost all Estonian modernists) at the Stieglitz School of Arts and Crafts in St Petersburg, he was expelled because of his participation in the unrest at the school linked to the 1905 revolution. He returned to Tallinn and briefly continued his studies at Ants Laikmaa's studio school[1], but then travelled back to St Petersburg and enrolled at J. Brasz's studio. In summer 1906 Triik worked in the picturesque Aland Islands and in the autumn he reached the ultimate destination of all young artists: Paris. Between 1907 and 1909 Triik managed to study and work at the École des Beaux-Arts, in Paris free academies, in Norway and at the art school of the Society for the Advancement of Arts in St Petersburg under the prominent Russian national romantic Nikolai Roerich. The artist seems to have experimented with basically all of the topical creative strategies of the time, except perhaps for the emerging cubism. The early work of Triik contains pure national romanticism, Art Nouveau-like play with lines, expressive painting à la van Gogh, and anxious disharmony of unexpected colour combinations, which largely resembled the early compositions of Matisse and his followers. Triik's work thus especially vividly reveals the hybrid nature of early Estonian modernism. It includes impulses acquired during his studies, as well as the parallel and coinciding usage of artistic means of expression. The only thing that could have provided this continuing creative hedonism with an additional shade of would have been converting personal life drama into art. Everyday life sharply interfered with the artist's life twice: before WW I and during the first comprehensive overview exhibition of Estonian art in 1919 in the young Republic of Estonia, born directly after the war. Putting it somewhat theatrically, the Berlin years tested the artist's will and emotions, whereas the brutal and totally unjustified criticism connected with the overview exhibition destroyed his self-confidence as a creator.

Nikolai Triik. *Portrait of Erna Villmer.* 1913. Oil on canvas. 185 x 111 cm. Tartu Art Museum

Nikolai Triik. *Portrait of Alviina Hyllestedt*. 1911. Oil on canvas. 93 x 67 cm. Art Museum of Estonia

Nikolai Triik. *Portrait of Einar Hyllestedt*. 1911. Oil on canvas. 85 x 105 cm. Art Museum of Estonia

Triik arrived in Berlin in early 1911 at the latest. This was the last big European art centre he ever got to know. Although the time spent there turned out to be very difficult for Triik, it could also be seen as the final stage in the artist's self-advancement. Before WW I, conquering the European art scene was a serious personal test for Estonian artists in every sense. There was no system in Estonia at that time to support artists (although it gradually emerged after the independent Republic of Estonia was proclaimed in 1918). It's no wonder that the myth of the 'freezing artist', which still survives in Estonian art history, was born then. The hardships of everyday life (shortage of money, starvation, adapting to a new cultural environment without knowing the local language, isolation etc) certainly offered a solid foundation to the stereotype. Triik's everyday life in Berlin was also darkened by constant financial worries, memories of disappointments and misunderstandings about his creative aspirations experienced back home. In Berlin, the artist who was at the summit of his creative powers, accepted any kind of design job that required only basic professional skills in order to survive, e.g designing postcards to be sold in Russia. The artist who had so far fulfilled lofty tasks initiated by the modern breakthrough in art, now felt like a teller of cheap tales, and a cornered animal. There is very little documentary material about the experiences of Estonian artists in big European art capitals. Triik's letter from Berlin to Juhan Luiga asking for a loan thus seems both an outburst of a personal tragedy and a paradigmatic generalisation of an Estonian artist finding himself in a foreign country: "I cannot, my common sense, my whole being are unable to accept that I destroy myself day after day, destroy, suppress, kill everything I have cultivated in myself over the years with great effort and serious aspirations as something right, as something useful."[2] Knowing languages and being more intelligent in many ways than some other artists, Triik seemed to perceive more acutely the conflict between artists' constant need to survive and their intellectual aspirations. However, there was the additional culture conflict. The scope of cultural life in Paris and Berlin evoked culture shock in those coming from the provinces, and it took a long time to recover, often expressed in a creative pause, a momentary halt. Triik produced only one remarkable work during his Berlin period: *Portrait of Ants Laikmaa* (1913). His expressionist drawings *Martyr* and *Hunt*, essential works of Estonian art, were produced a bit later in Estonia primarily as an eruption of the described anxiety.

The Estonian modernists of the first generation fought for their personal creative breakthrough, tried to catch up with the international art scene, and to create the necessary intellectual space at home for their work. In practice this meant that Triik had to work as a civil servant; he organised exhibitions, and taught painting at Pallas, the only higher art school in the country. Such self-destructive labouring on several fronts did not end well for any of the first-generation modernists: Konrad Mägi succumbed to illness in 1925, Nikolai Triik was hit by a serious creative crisis and alcoholism after the 1919 overview exhibition, Aleksander Tassa gave up art entirely and worked in heritage protection and museums, and in the 1920s the sculptor Jaan Koort criticised the national art policy and in 1934 left Estonia altogether, accepting the job of artistic head at the Gžel ceramics factory in Russia.

Nikolai Triik. *Portrait of Ants Laikmaa*. 1913. Oil on canvas. 110 x 84.7 cm. Art Museum of Estonia

The existential crisis in Triik's life was made more acute by the common aspirations for the 'juste milieu' art, open apologia for closeness to nature. After WW I in Europe the avant-garde was suddenly accused of destroying traditional cultural textures. The artist who had made contact with quite a few pre-war radical art trends and who was severely criticised for this in 1919, suddenly found himself in the 1920s face to face with the conservative tastes spreading throughout the international arena, which well suited the pathos of building up the Estonian nation-state. Triik had no choice but to cling to what he had mastered so brilliantly – the skill of capturing the form and character of the depicted. This enabled him to paint some later works that revealed his creative survival.

Nikolai Triik (1884–1940), among most significant Estonian artists in the 20th century, painter, graphic artist and art teacher. In 1933 became professor at the Pallas Art School in Tartu. An exhibition *Nikolai Triik. Classics of the Modernist Era* took place in Kumu Art Museum from 30 May to 28 September 2014, curated by Liis Pählapuu.

Tiina Abel (1951) is an art historian, curator and lecturer at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

[1] The departure of the Estonian artist Ants Laikmaa from the Düsseldorf Art Academy after a brief period of studying there had been among the most significant gestures in Estonian art – the first manifestation of clear creative independence. In 1903 Laikmaa opened his studio school in Tallinn, where hundreds of future professional and amateur artists studied in the course of twenty years or so.

[2] Leo Gens. Nikolai Triik. Tallinn: Kunst, 1969, p 90.

Bach's poster on the corner of Võru and Kastani streets (every spring, a new graffiti of the same size, advertising the hiphop festival, appears on the same spot, the artists change).

NOTES FROM THE CAPITAL OF ESTONIAN STREET ART

Aare Pilv

The reputation of Tartu as Estonia's 'capital of graffiti' gradually emerged in the second half of the last decade, and quietly gathered force so that today it is accepted without hesitation. There are specific reasons for this, of which two are essential: 1) the city authorities have been rather liberal towards street art, and 2) there is no sharp border between street art and other art life in Tartu.

The Tartu Art Museum's exhibition *Typical individuals. Tartu graffiti and street art 1994–2014* is an excellent example of the second reason. It does not even matter that much that a street-art-based exhibition is taking place in the most 'official' art institution (besides, this is not the first time, as graffiti artists have displayed their work there before). What's more significant is the choices the curator, Marika Agu, has made. Only a half-hour film actually deals with street art, where both street artists and others discuss the phenomenon, and there is a small photo showcase with vivid examples (in addition to the jacket and bling of the pioneer of Tartu graffiti art, Bach, who started in the 1990s). The rest of the exhibition consists of videos, paintings, photography and installation art, in which the problems of hidden authorship, lounging and public urban space, significant in urban art, are divided into themes. Thus at this exhibition street art is not an object, but rather a starting point of a set of problems. The fact that such a dialogue between 'museum art' and street art seems so natural is a significant message in itself.

Tartu graffiti began in the mid-1990s, when members of the punk band Nyrok City and the Tartu Hip Hop Club people took it up. At that time it was an area of a narrower subculture, which searched for examples from abroad and followed certain graffiti conventions: sig-

Vabaduse gallery, von Lõngus's *Põhjakonn* and Von Bomb's simple stencil side by side.

MinaJaLydia

Vabaduse gallery after cleaning, reproduction of Wiiralt's *Preacher* in the foreground.

nature centre, certain styles and themes etc. An unfinished building in central Tartu, in a gap between the trajectories of masses of people, became the central gallery of the scene (the gap has now disappeared, replaced by a new courthouse). Towards the end of the decade, new crews emerged, e.g EAS (Eesti Andekad Sodijad – Talented Estonian Doodlers), and grander galleries were established further away from the city centre, some still operating today, such as the long concrete walls along the railway, of which the best known is the Betooni gallery (after a street nearby). These mainly have the classical throw-ups and masterpieces (as the complicated and artistic forms in graffiti art are called), but there's a lot more; in the graffiti culture hierarchy, the galleries are at the top, and there are no simple tags or exercise works in these places.

Compared with Tallinn or other towns, Tartu held no special position (the catalogue of *Typical Individuals* even mentions that the Tartu graffiti scene was more conservative and imitative than that in Tallinn). In the middle of the new decade, Estonian street art went through a short low tide, primarily caused by the anti-graffiti mood of the neo-conservative Res Publica party, which had just come to power. 'Cleaning up' the urban space was ascendant for some time (the authorities in Tallinn are to this day more hostile towards graffiti than in Tartu).

A new high tide in Tartu occurred in 2007–2008, when the emerging street art was not directly connected with the hip-hop-centred scene. Works appeared in the streets, including in the heart of the city, constituting elaborate stencil-technique pictures (sometimes they were even 'reproductions' of art classics, e.g Wiiralt's *Absinthe Drinkers*); new names,

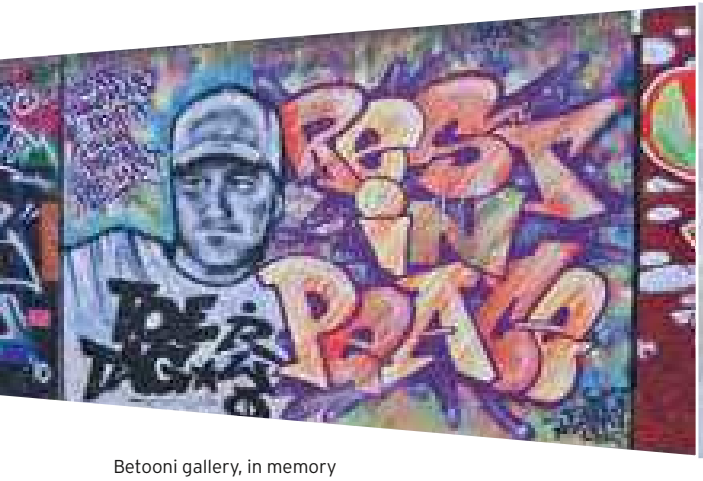
Vabaduse gallery, someone called Noir has adapted his simple signature with Sorro's *Absinth Drinkers* and with von Lõngus's cow.

Vabaduse gallery, one of the most famous works by MinaJaLydia, of which colour versions exist elsewhere.

The work of von Lõngus on Vabaduse bridge.

During the ACTA protests in 2012, von Lõngus covered Erkki Luuk's sentence in Kompanii Street, *Nothing is more important than this* sentence with black paint and added "ACTA, PIPA, SOPA".

Bach's picture on the bank wall.



Betooni gallery, in memory of Toe Tag's rapper Revo who died young, by Faraj.

Superman Jaan Poska (probably von Lõngus), next Satinka's typical style sample.

such as Edward von Lõngus and MinajaLydia, became known (also Von Bomb, with a more straightforward political message, and Kairo, who produced nativist paintings in public places). In any case, this was no longer a game within one subculture, but a less conventional phenomenon that was more jointly presented as art. The reason was, perhaps, that some of the new artists were graduates from the Tartu Art College (although Bach had the same background). A new gallery was established – the Vabaduse gallery under the Vabaduse (Freedom) bridge – and around it numerous works appeared with remarkable speed. In 2010 the Stencibility festival started in Tartu, attracting street artists from elsewhere as well (mostly from Tallinn, but also, for example, Kashink and MTO from France), so that street art is now placed in urban space in a more systematic and organised manner. At the same time there are signs that some artists may have become 'established', e.g the Tartu Art Museum bought templates of a work by Edward von Lõngus, the stencil-pieces familiar in the streets are painted on canvas and they are sold at auctions and shown at exhibitions.

The position of Tartu street art is revealed by a few specific examples. In 2007, as part of an exhibition at the Rael Artel Gallery, a sentence by Erkki Luuk was written in Kompanii Street near the display: "Nothing is more important than this sentence". Back then artists used the means of street art in order to create works placed in the category of 'contemporary art'. This sentence stayed there for a long time and people got used to it, becoming a sort of symbol of literary and artistic eksp (abbreviation from 'experimental') groups operating in Tartu. In January 2012, when protests against ACTA took place, von Lõngus covered the sentence with black paint and added "ACTA, PIPA, SOPA". Using the street art conventions and opportunities, the street artist thus created work with a new political message.This caused quite a furore, evoking discussions of whether this was an act of vandalism against the earlier artwork or whether it should be considered on the basis of another kind of logic, whether the initial work had been destroyed or acquired a new layer of meaning, whether the work followed the rules of street art or not. In any case it was an example of how street art suddenly plunged into the domain of 'true art' and even spoke its language, using the concept of the artwork's singularity, so that the dialogue between 'real art' and street art occurred not only in the form of polite acceptance, and that certainly helped people to more easily interpret and understand street art.

Another case was in summer 2013, when the city authorities decided to 'clean up' the Vabaduse gallery. The news spread and led to fierce opposition, so that the authorities decided to offer a compromise: the cleaning would take place only partially, and the organisers of Stencibility, as experts, could decide what deserved to be preserved. After brief contemplation, Stencibility rejected the offer, as it would have violated the operating principles of street art. In the end, the selection was made randomly by the clean-up team; since then the authorities have not undertaken anything like that again.

The diversity of the current situation is perhaps well demonstrated by the fact that Tartu's biggest work of street art is a picture, covering the whole wall of a bank. The artist is the one-time rebel Bach who was commissioned to decorate the building by the bank itself.

Aare Pilv
(1976) studied literature, semiotics and theatre research in the University of Tartu, works as a researcher in the Under and Tuglas Literature Centre, and is active as a poet, translator, essayist and critic.

NOT ART, BUT THE ART OF LIFE

Joonas Vangonen

Opening of the exhibition *Provisional Government. Forty Years of Punk* at Voronja gallery, 27 June 2014.

"My reaction as a punker to the surroundings was essentially the same as when I was a small boy and was forced to eat greasy sauerkraut soup with bits of hairy and wobbling fat in it; the soup with everything in it was extremely revolting to my digestive system, but the others nevertheless tried to convince me that it was very good, in fact the best food of all: my reaction was screaming and vomiting. The next day I overturned all the kindergarten dustbins. When I grew up I climbed up on the stage and disgorged everything that had been crammed into me."

Ivo Uukkivi on bumping into punk

Punk as subculture began in the first half of the 1970s; Western influences, including punk, arrived in Soviet-occupied Estonia after some delay. The precise date is certainly subjective – punk can be seen in whatever activity, man or event – but the first punk bands in Soviet Estonia emerged in the second half of the 1970s. The movement really took off beginning in the 1980s, and the breakthrough was probably the unrest and brief rebellion of young people in September 1980 in Tallinn, in which punkers also took part. The event indicated the quietly growing dissatisfaction and mutinous mood among the younger generation in society.

In the second half of the 1980s punk became, almost overnight, hugely popular and by the end of the decade a punker could calmly walk across Võidu (Victory) Square in Tallinn to the Moscow café without having to worry about hostile militia. In fact, punk was probably the most popular youth movement-subculture during the days of the Singing Revolution. Hence the strange fact that punkers, generally the enemies of capitalism and nation-states, are regarded in today's Estonia almost as freedom fighters without whose contribution the country would not have regained independence. This is why the first punk song festival took place here, and the president of the country attended.

Restoring independence had exactly the expected impact on punk culture: devastating. The sudden freedom and responsibility, cowboy capitalism and the grey 1990s in Eastern Europe meant that the majority of punkers either stopped being punkers (enemy number one, the Soviet Union, on which punk essentially leaned, collapsed), or found another 'hobby' or disappeared into into garage corners. This situation remained more or less unchanged for about twenty years.

Provisional Government. Forty Years of Punk. Exhibition views at Voronja gallery.

The second wave

We now arrive in 2014, when quite a bit has changed, although some indication of the process has been evident for several years (e.g the aforementioned punk song festival, the poet and musician Tõnu Trubetsky has produced quite a few works on anarchism and punk etc). In June 2014 the most extensive punk art exhibition in independent Estonia was opened in the Voronja boatshed gallery in a village near Lake Peipsi: *Provisional Government. Forty Years of Punk* [curated by Kiwa]. As a co-author, I was privileged to be present at this event and I must confess that at least for me it was the most memorable cultural event of the year. If we interpret art from an elitist and purist point of view, many artists would naturally refuse to associate the Voronja event with an art exhibition at all, although quite clearly the punkers do not give a toss, precisely the reaction of the normal viewer.

The issue of art and non-art is linked with the selection of artists who participated in the exhibition as, with a few exceptions, Voronja displayed works by punkers and not professional artists. Hence the key question: is punk art produced by artists or punkers? The Voronja exhibition took the latter approach, which does not seem such a bad thing to me,

as it makes the display rather more credible. It would be difficult to accept works by professional and educated artists who just call their work punk, whereas there is no need to categorise Villu Tamme's poems and Freddy's artworks. Everything is crystal clear: it is pure punk.

The diversity of works at the punk exhibition is certainly worth mentioning. The Voronja display presented all forms of art: video, readymade, poetry, photographs, installations and even embroidery. As the exhibition was on the whole retrospective, the works included more than the usual number of documentations about punk art created during Soviet Estonia, e.g a photograph of Matti Moguči's simple, but striking scribbling over a winter forest: "*People, be careful, I love you. Moguči*". Mention should also be made of Anders Härm's installation *Three patriotic speeches*: a functioning toilet made of red t-shirts. The writing on the shirts is still visible. Besides visual art, the display contained a lot of reading material, for example the work of various punk poets. I would like to present here just one of Freddy's short and impressive declamations:

"I am a punker
I am cool
I am poison I am vice
I am the will of the Estonian people
I am a hamburger
Come and gobble me up
I am a vibrator
I shag you."

Exhibition as a breath of fresh air

There were several differences from more conventional events. It was decided to have the exhibition in a small rural gallery, near the culturally rich Lake Peipsi. The far-away location did not pose any problems (people were brought by buses from Tallinn and Tartu); the weird location actually worked well, as it provided the event with a free and relaxed atmosphere: something quite rare at Estonian galleries these days. The non-compulsory 'compulsory' opening speech was followed by a noise and culture programme, where the stage was a windowsill in a room without doors. Freddy, Chungin, Kiwa and many others performed there. The charm of the undertaking lay in how free and *punk* everything was because, besides looking at art, the atmosphere and surroundings encouraged various other activities as well. For example, looking for the shop for cigarettes and beer in a small village by Lake Peipsi with Freddy and Villu on a mild summer evening remains one of my most beautiful memories of the year.

Although I did not get back to Voronja this summer, according to the newspapers a surprising number of people visited the gallery. We are all very grateful to Kiwa, who was called the 'star punker' by *Õhtuleht*; he has done a great deal to popularise punk. The pessimists can of course claim that too much exploitation is actually damaging to punk, or that it is nothing but pointless tomfoolery, but at least in my opinion that view is excessively cynical (considering the colourful history of Estonian punk).

We can only hope that the summer exhibition will not be the last of its kind, and that future years will bring other punk art overview exhibitions in some corner of Estonia. By supplementing visual arts with poetry, music, film, workshops and forums, an event can be turned into a punk festival, something that can attract attention worldwide. However, if people cannot be bothered to think about future events, it is worthwhile rummaging around in the past of punk (as happened in Voronja): so much exciting stuff is still waiting to be discovered.

Voronja gallery was established by Kaili Kask and Raul Oreškin as a private initiative. It is located in an abandoned boat shed by Lake Peipsi. According to the owners, over one thousand people visited the first season's punk exhibition, one third of whom were tourists visiting the area. https://et-ee.facebook.com/voronjagalerii

Joonas Vangonen (1992) is doing his BA at the history department at the University of Tartu on the topic *The Punk Movement in Soviet Estonia.* He participated in the art project Die Jung and in the exhibition of the university's MA students in painting. He is involved in the art group Projekt 55.

Read more: Joonas Vangonen. *Kisa ja oksendamine: Punk ENSVs* (Noise and vomiting: Punk in the Estonian SSR). ;paranoia 2014.

FROM BALFRON TOWER TO CRISIS POINT

Aet Ader

The London Festival of Architecture is a four-week long series of events offering a wide choice of various architectural and space-related undertakings: discussions, excursions, lectures, exhibitions, diploma work presentations in universities etc. In summer 2014, one part of the London festival was the International Architecture Showcase, organised by the British Council and partners. It constituted a fortnight's residency programme, where I represented Estonia. My colleague architects came from Chile, Austria, Denmark, Nigeria, South Africa, Taiwan, Latvia, Iran and Uganda. In cooperation with British architects, various concepts for East London were developed.

DK-CM (UK) and Aet Ader, b210 (Estonia). Housing – Bromley by Bow site.

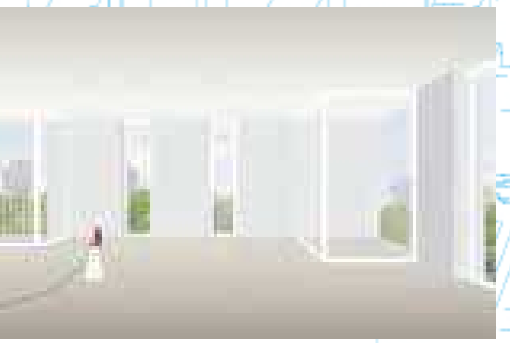
Crisis point

London housing is for several reasons undergoing a crisis. According to the London Building Centre, London needs 42 000 new homes annually, but currently only 20 000 are added each year. Many of the new houses are built with the purpose of investment, and the developer often does not plan to immediately sell or rent the flats, because the value of even an empty building is increasing quickly. In cooperation with the local architecture and research studio DK-CM, we analysed the current situation in the London accommodation market and designed a high-rise solution, where we tried to consider the surrounding environment and social situation, and suggested a business model of a cooperative which offers an alternative to the usual developer-buyer duo. A living space is a home for people – privacy, family, sense of security etc – although in legal terms it is purely a piece of property that can be measured in square metres and in financial terms. Soft values and poetic dreams add financial obligations which people have to take into account every day.

Crisis Point, the title of our project, refers to the existing London high-rise called Centre Point. It is among the first central London modernist office towers, and was established in 1963 for a mere five million pounds, but by 1973 the 32-floor building was already worth 50 million pounds without renting out any offices. After standing empty for eleven years, about 2000 squatters moved in for a short period in 1974, bearing the slogan "Centre Point is the concrete symbol of everything that is rotten in our society." Economic schemes of the neo-liberalist society may not be morally acceptable to people when they involve homes. "If people hoarded food on the basis that its value was sure to go up when others began to starve and would pay anything, we would stop their hoarding. But hoarding is now happening with shelter in the most unequal and affluent parts of the world."[1]

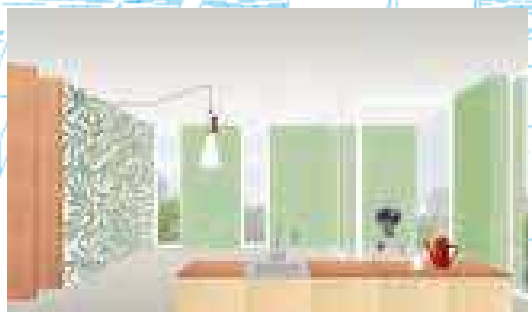
Background to the housing crisis in Great Britain

The accommodation crisis in London is partly due to Margaret Thatcher's policy of 30 years ago. The campaign called 'Right to Buy', launched in 1979, offered any sitting tenant in council houses a chance to buy their flats, which belonged to the local authorities, at up to 50 per cent off the market value.[2]



DK-CM (UK) and Aet Ader, b210 (Estonia). Crisis Point. An unfurnished flat.

DK-CM (UK) and Aet Ader, b210 (Estonia). Crisis Point. A furnished flat.



Aet Ader (second from right) in the workshop.

The subsequent 25 years witnessed the most extensive privatisation process in British history. Today's opinion is that it was wrong to sell all the council housing that had required such an effort to build after WW II. Initially they were sold to their inhabitants, but after a while ownership ended up in the hands of people who ruled the property market. London boroughs did not spend the money received to build new social housing, and in addition the state support for construction fell by two-thirds. The then government probably hoped that the private market would compensate for the problems through the buying and selling of rental flats. As a result, those who suffered most were the less privileged members of society, pensioners, single parents and others, who now had to compete in the shrivelled market of social housing or at the cheapest end of the rental market. By the late 1980s the construction of new council houses shrank to almost nothing. There is a regulation today that in buildings constructed by private capital, about 20% should be affordable housing. However, according to locals (I mainly discussed this with my colleague architects), these are still too expensive for a person with an average income.

A Celebration at Balfron Tower (architect Ernö Goldfinger), London

A cooperative-high-rise

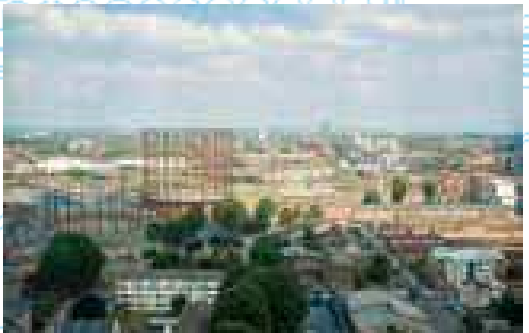
Crisis Point, the high-rise we designed was inspired by examples across the world. At the same time that the afore-mentioned Centre Point was going up in London, the highest building in Porto in Portugal was completed in 1969: Edifício-Torre Miradouro.

The building has mixed usage and belongs to a cooperative of stonemasons. The ground floor and partly the basement accommodate a shop and stonemasons' workshops. There are flats on six floors, hotel rooms on the next six floors, followed by a restaurant with views all over the town and a radio station on the very top. The Miradouro cooperative is partly financed from the income from the hotel, restaurant and shop rentals, which allows the cooperative members to enjoy better living and working quarters. Someone even mentioned that the profits also provide a little extra for the pensions of the stonemasons' widows.

A large number, 230, new high-rise buildings are planned for London. As the population increases, the urban structure can only become denser and grow upwards, as the Green Belt established in the 1930s prevents the city from expanding. According to London's town planning system, higher buildings are possible near the underground stations. The site of our Crisis Point is near the location of the recent Olympic Games; the area is still slightly industrial. For example, the plot accommodates a scaffolding company and its storehouses. As in the case of Porto, we intended to include the industrial function in the programme of our building: a scaffolding company should operate where scaffolding is most needed, i.e in East London, and not out of town.

On the first floor of the new building standing by a noisy motorway we allocated rooms for the scaffolding company; on the other side we planned a café with views of the canal. The uppermost floor has a restaurant with city views and the floors underneath are hotel rooms. Besides rented rooms, the high-rise has a large room for common activities, i.e a library, a joint office or a sports hall, and also a daycare room. The cooperative manages the whole 32-floor building. All functions are on different vertical levels. The flats are not only meant for the inhabitants of the cooperative, as some are sold on the open market in order to earn additional income for the cooperative. The entire business scheme thus stipulates that various functions in the mixed-function 32-floor high-rise provide for one another.

To be sure that the business plan would work, we did a rapid calculation, based on the prices of plots of land, construction and rental.



In London legislation, the cooperative resembles a housing association in form, headed by tenants and cooperative shareholders. We were interested in the cooperative approach where the cooperative is the owner of the building or buildings it manages. Legally, there are three types of cooperatives: co-ownership – every shareholder has a share (it does not have to be equal to others', and if someone leaves, his share is purchased by others); par value – everybody has equal shareholding and voting rights; and fully mutual – every inhabitant is a shareholder, and every inhabitant has one share and one vote. The group Radical Routes[3] recommends the combination of two models: par value + fully mutual, where all inhabitants are shareholders and have voting rights, the property is not divided into real shares, but belongs to the cooperative and if an inhabitant leaves the cooperative, he is not compensated. However, the shareholding can be inherited and the home is secure.

Estonian context

Comparison is possible with what has happened and is happening in Estonia. As a result of restitution and privatisation, about 90% of Estonian people own their own homes. Fortunately, Estonia does not suffer from a lack of space, although the private market logic can often restrict the actions of local governments, because the public sector does not own much property. For example in new residential districts, the local government must buy land from private owners in order to create supporting structures, such as schools, kindergartens, hospitals, parks, car parks etc. The UK and Estonia have similar problems related to renovating modernist spatial heritage; most of our apartment blocks date from the Soviet era, when energy saving was not properly considered. The British, too, are currently renovating their housing of the 1950s–1980s. It is easier with the buildings belonging to the housing associations, because the housing association owns the whole building or even a large complex of buildings (the inhabitants are tenants) and thus the renovation is much simpler to manage. Bigger problems occur when the flats belong to different owners and problems emerge in reaching agreement to manage the renovation process and finance it, as in Estonia. Luckily, self-organised apartment associations in many Estonian apartment buildings have offered solutions to these problems. Unlike London, however, no grassroots cooperatives for building new apartment blocks have developed here.

East London and the Balfron Tower

When I worked in London, I lived in the famous Balfron Tower, designed by the Hungarian born architect Ernö Goldfinger. This masterpiece of brutalist architecture was completed in 1967. The logistics of the building, vertical movements – such as lifts and garbage shafts – are separated from the main apartment block. The idea of modernism – the streets in the air have been fully realised here. A trip from the lift to your flat is like a walk on a bridge or a street in the air, where you can admire views across the whole of London. Living in this 27-floor building was a marvellous opportunity to lose preconceptions and find inspiration.

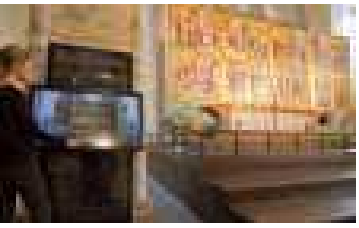
The building used to have a slightly negative reputation: many considered such concrete architecture extremely ugly, while others saw it as an urban district for immigrants. Recently, however, the building has become rather popular, and cultural people have moved in: the young and the successful. The housing association as the owner immediately seized the opportunity and evicted people who had been there for decades from over one hundred rented flats, offered them alternative accommodation elsewhere and planned to renovate the building in order to sell flats to private owners. There is nothing untoward about sorting out a piece of architectural heritage in this way, although the negative side of gentrification involves making property elitist. There are only two buildings like Balfron Tower in London. It is very unlikely that the Soviet concrete residential architecture in Estonia is going to become popular any time soon, as there are just too many similar buildings. Although Kalamaja has been the favourite location of the younger creative people for a long time, I am curious when they will start moving to the Soviet mass housing districts or join forces in a form of cooperative to commission new architecture at sensible prices.

Aet Ader
(1985) is an architect, one of the two editors of *Ehituskunst* and the vice chairman of the Union of Estonian Architects. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts Faculty of Architecture and also studied in Copenhagen. She is one of the founders of the architecture office b210 (www.b210.ee), based in Tallinn. Recently, she was part of the design team of Tallinn University of Technology, tested the tank and laboratories building in Kuressaare and was on the curatorial team of the Tallinn Architecture Biennale 2013: *Recycling Socialism*. She is involved with the topic of public space via various media and scales.

1 Danny Dorling. All That is Solid: The Great Housing Disaster. 2014.
2 James Meek. Where will we live?. London Review of Books (January 2014) Accessed 17.12.2014. http://www.lrb.co.uk/v36/n01/james-meek/where-will-we-live
3 Radical Routes (2010), Accessed 17.12.2014. http://www.radicalroutes.org.uk/images/stories/HowtoHousingCo-op6theditionJuly2011low-res.pdf

Natural sciences and information technology in the service of art: **THE *RODE ALTARPIECE IN CLOSE-UP* PROJECT**

Hilkka Hiiop and Hedi Kard



Retable of the high altar of St. Nicholas Church in half-open position. Workshop of the Lübeck master Hermen Rode. 1478–1481. Niguliste Museum, Tallinn

The project coordinator Hilkka Hiiop introduces the touchscreen set up in the Niguliste Museum, which enables to study the altar's iconography.

In autumn 2013 the Art Museum of Estonia started an extensive project, focusing on investigating and conserving the retable of the high altar of St Nicholas Church. The altar is among the grandest and best preserved late medieval artworks in Europe, and was completed in 1481 in the workshop of the prominent Lübeck master Hermen Rode. In size, it is one of the biggest from the 15th century Hanseatic towns: the width of the open altar is over 6 m and the height over 3.5 m. The double-winged retable has painted outer wings and more than 40 polychrome sculptures in the interior.

The altar is normally displayed in half-open position and is fully revealed in the most festive, third view only three times a year, on St Nicholas' Days (6 December and 9 May) and on All Saints' Day (1 November). For visitors who wish to open and close various views of the altarpiece on their own, the first stage of the project in the Niguliste Museum set up a touchscreen, where modern interactive means enable anyone to enjoy the complex artwork and stories about the saints.[1]

Clean up the saints

The altar was restored in 1975–1992 by experts from the Moscow Research Institute of Restoration under the supervision of Russian conservator Nikolai Bregman. During this period, the painted wings of the retable were cleaned, as were partially the interior décor and sculptures. However, the artwork has still not been fully conserved by today, as the political change disrupted the works. The general outlook of the retable is uneven, and sculptures covered with darkened varnish and overpaint sit like dull disruptions among glittering figures of cleaned saints. The aim of the conservation project, started in 2013, is to finalize the interrupted conservation works of the the most festive view of the altar. The further conservation methodology depends on various complex issues. The restoration of the 1970s based on the application of chemicals which have been later declared carcinogenic. As a contemporary alternative, the aggressive solvents have been replaced by less harmful ones. To intensify their impact, solvent-based gels are employed whereby stronger contact with the surface is achieved but the solvent

cannot penetrate into the original layers. Thus the unwanted effect of the solvent on the interior structure of the object is eliminated, and the desired effect of intensified impact on the secondary layers on the surface is achieved. The method is economical in terms of both the conserved object and the conservator, and has proven effective in complicated three-dimensional structure of the Rode altar.

Even though the work process is quite time consuming and demands great precision, the altar's original colour underneath the later layers has survived remarkably well. Revealing it fully not only means conserving its material and physical form, but also recreating viewers' emotional experience.

Between the layers by means of natural sciences

Besides conservation work in Niguliste museum under the eyes of the visitors, the altar is undergoing large-scale technical investigations of the materials and techniques used in producing the altarpiece. These aim to place the artwork in a wider art historical context: stylistically, the altar was supposedly made in Rode's workshop, but the authorship has not been confirmed either by signature or any document. Comparative researches with other works by Rode's workshop will hopefully confirm this attribution and help to better reveal the creative practices of this prominent Lübeck workshop. Research carried out by Estonian scientists in October 2014 on the only altar signed by Hermen Rode, situated in Lübeck and known as St Luke's retable,[2] yielded fascinating starting information for a broader analysis of the technical means and character of Rode's workshop.

Besides investigating the altar itself, a significant aim of the Rode project is to map, test and develop the capacity and resources of technical art research in Estonia.

Research inside and outside the subject field

The Rode altar research is carried out in collaboration not only with the expected institutions involved in art research (e.g the conservation and digitalisation centre of the Open-Air Museum Kanut, the Department of Heritage and Conservation of the Estonian Academy of Arts, and the Chair of Analytical Chemistry at the University of Tartu), but also seemingly irrelevant institutions. The instruments used in art research are often not primarily aimed at analyzing artworks, and therefore it is reasonable to take a look further from the specific field itself. An example here could be the x-raying of the altarpiece carried out in cooperation with the Estonian Tax and Customs Board. As the most institutions dealing with art investigations in Estonia do not have x-ray instruments, the artworks are usually x-rayed in hospitals. Transporting the monumental altarpiece was, however, quite impossible. Thus a portable x-ray machine used by the Tax and Customs Board at Estonian borders came in handy in our research.

Another example of cooperation outside the art field is with the Estonian Environmental Research Centre. The joint undertaking determined the chemical elements used in creating the artwork by the X-ray fluorescence (XRF) method. This is a portable instrument which detects the elemental composition of each particular area of the artwork. The instrument is primarily effective for consumer protection: it determines the presence of such harmful metals as lead and mercury in, for example, toys or electronic products. The aim of art investigation, however, is not to find out the harmfulness but the existence of the elements and to discover whether gold is really gold, whether dirt is hiding blue or green pigments, which sculptures were later painted over and whether the white colour is chalk or perhaps white lead pigment.

Imaging and information technology in heritage research

Besides natural sciences, the Rode project is launching wide-range innovative imaging and information technologies in the area of cultural heritage. This has an input to the investigation activities, e.g multispectral and raking-light photography are revealing those aspects of objects that ordinary observation does not. Different wavelengths (e.g infrared) of electromagnetic radiation have revealed the hidden world under the paint layer, which offers excitement, humour and different interpretations, as well as comparisons with other works produced in Rode's workshop. Modern information technology also enables to contextualise, visualise and archive the extensive analytical data and to use it both for interpretation and for, communication the results of scientific information. A prototype of the altar's 3D model has been developed,

1. A group of enthusiastic Rode-researchers.

2. Investigations by the Estonian research group of St Luke's retable in St Anne Museum in Lübeck, the only altarpiece signed by Hermen Rode.

3.–4. The ex-raying carried out in cooperation with the Estonian Tax and Customs Board
3. A portable x-ray machine and experts were brought from the Koidula border point.
4. This enabled to take a look inside the artwork and see, for example, all metal parts used for fastening (nails of the baldachin in dark tones visible in the picture).

5. XRF examinations carried out in cooperation with the Estonian Environmental Research Centre helped to establish the materials used to make the artwork, for example pigments. The examination was carried out by Riin Rebane.

6. Microscopic pigment and binder analyses carried out in cooperation with the Chair of Analytical Chemistry at the University of Tartu – chemist Signe Vahur taking samples for microanalyses.

7.–8. Research method using different wavelengths of electromagnetic radiation.
7. Expert of imaging techniques Hembo Pagi conducting ultraviolet investigations.
8. In the photograph, investigations carried out at infrared wavelength that reveal the artist's initial drawing underneath.

9. Imaging specialist Andres Uueni demonstrating the altar in ultraviolet light during the Researchers Night.

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Hilkka Hiiop

(1974) PhD, is a conservation specialist in the Art Museum of Estonia and an assistant professor at the Estonian Academy of Art, Department of Conservation. Her PhD thesis treated conservation management in contemporary art. She has worked as a conservator of mural paintings in Rome, has supervised a number of conservation and technical investigation projects in Estonia, and has curated exhibitions on topics of conservation and technical art history.

Hedi Kard

(1969) works as a conservator of polychrome wood in the Art Museum of Estonia. She studied history at the University of Tartu and had further training in conservation in Sweden and Germany. She is currently studying in the doctoral programme at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

where two- and three-dimensional information can be stored and presented for the broader audience.

The Rode altar as a teaching resource: chemistry can also be studied at an art museum!

A significant part of the project is educational work. Didactic programmes for different age and target groups that combine humanitarian and natural sciences and introduce the heritage from new angles have been developed.

The project includes a series of international workshops for university students and experts in the field. Depending on the focus, workshops were organised together with the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn University, the University of Tartu and the Tallinn University of Technology.

Gymnasium pupils can study organic and inorganic chemistry within the usual school curricula by means of the technical investigation used on the Rode altar. This will help children to better understand the links of chemistry and physics with everyday life and is certainly more enjoyable than the usual chemistry lesson packed full of formulas and numbers in a classroom.

Information connected with the Rode project is conveyed to the wider public via various media, such as film clips, multimedial means and a blog describing the everyday work of the conservators-researchers. All this is accessible in the Niguliste Museum, as well as on the museum homepage: www.niguliste-muuseum.ee

[1] Interactive altar by Rode is accessible at the homepage of Niguliste Museum: www.nigulistemuuseum.ee
[2] St Luke's retable is located in St Anne Museum in Lübeck.

Kriss Soonik. Designer lingerie. 2015.

AN ESTONIAN DESIGNER WITHOUT BLACK BREAD?

Kaarin Kivirähk

Mirja Pitkäärt. *Objects of Enduring Value.* 2014. London College of Fashion final project.

Looking around, it seems that there are Estonians in every harbour of the world. Or at least in every big fashion house. Unlike many other cultural areas, design generally does not need translation. A young designer of a small East European country can thus rejoice about the opportunities offered in today's world: you can work anywhere, including at a big fashion house, as quite a few people have demonstrated. The Internet makes it easy to communicate with family and friends and the postal service is quick,

Kriss Soonik. Designer lingerie. 2015.

Mirja Pitkäärt. *Objects of Enduring Value.* 2014.

Mirja Pitkäärt. *Objects of Enduring Value.* 2014.

so a loaf of black bread from home can be posted every day. Long live the 21st century and the European Union!

The question, however, is what are we supposed to do here in Estonia with the work of these artists scattered around the world. Should we see them as Estonian designers, and in what ways? It is of course naïve to hope that their work reflects granny's mitten patterns or national handicrafts. What links them, besides their country of origin? I will try to point out some common features in the work and work process of Estonian designers operating abroad on the basis of media coverage, and the designers' own opinions and work.

Cinderella story

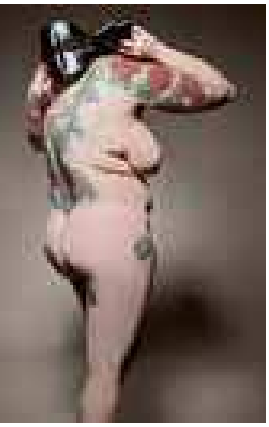
This is a tale of a young and talented East European designer who has been lucky enough to have a career abroad and is now enjoying her dream life, like Cinderella. The Estonian accessory designer Mirja Pitkäärt works at the Louis Vuitton fashion house. "My journey has, in a sense, been rather random; years ago I would never have imagined that I would ever be doing what I am doing now. It has probably been the natural course of events," says Pitkäärt about her magical job in the most haute couture fashion house[1]. The fashion designer Kristian Steinberg, who has his own trademark in London, mainly recalls Estonia as a place where "the dominant colourless-grey shades were somewhat oppressive, and more vibrant ideas had to be kept to yourself."[2] London, however, is a city that seems to ooze inspiration and openness to new ideas; for a designer it is a true Cinderella castle. There are no Estonian designers born, as happens in Italian fashion dynasties, in the midst of luxury fabrics and who inherit the job of fashion designer together with the label.

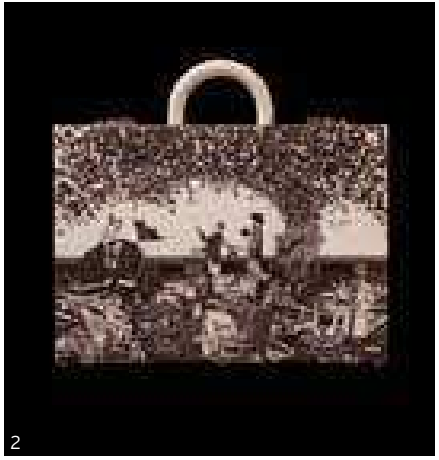
Diligence and dutifulness

Cinderella, of course, was not only lucky, but she also worked very hard and had a sense of responsibility. These characteristics often crop up when talking about Estonian designers. Hans Henrik Vallimäe Schwarz, Roberta Einer and Äli Kargoja, who have all worked in big Parisian fashion houses, mention in interviews that "Estonians are very conscientious and never rebel." Äli Kargoja recently introduced her own brand, *August*. She finds that Estonians take their apprenticeship in famous fashion houses very seriously: "I am grateful every single day to be able to do this. Parisians are more relaxed about it." Estonians turn up at the start of the working day, whereas the French like to sleep longer and enjoy their coffee at leisure.[3] In order to manage in expensive Paris, people often have several jobs and live in cramped flats, but that does not matter: tough Estonians survive.

Good handicraft skills

Tanel Veenre, who organised an exhibition of Estonian fashion called *Kaamos*, said that the common feature of Estonian fashion designers is their "good handicraft skills, which is no longer that relevant in fashion schools elsewhere."[4] He emphasised this when writing about the work of the accessory designer Oliver Ruuger, who works in London, using words such as 'quality' and 'old-fashioned handicraft skills.'[5] Hans Henrik Vallimäe-Schwarz, currently at the Kenzo fashion house, stresses the technical foundation acquired at the Estonian Academy of Arts.[6] The fashion journalist Anu Merila claims that an "Estonian designer does not just produce ideas, but is also able to realise ideas: a skill quite rare in the world of fashion."[7]





1. Oliver Ruuger. *Acts of Faith.* Saddle I. 2011. Calf leather, waxed steel, waxed thread.

2. Oliver Ruuger. *Night at the house of Epicurus.* Briefcase. 2012. Engraved calf leather, brass, nylon, waxed thread.

3. Kristian Steinberg. *Spring/ Summer 2015 Campaign*. Model: Niall (FM model agency London). Stylist: Zadrian Smith. Set design: Alun Davies (Factory London). Hairdresser: Sven Bayerbach. Make-up: Isabell Boettcher. Nail Technician: Roxanne Cambell.

day, and the tranquil and static social media pages of some designers at home.

Dilemma: should clients be offered some black bread?

Some designers operating abroad have turned the above-mentioned Estonian characteristics and Estonia as a whole into a significant part of their brands. The Fashion Innovation Agency in London, for example, writes about Oliver Ruuger's bags and umbrellas, which, besides experimenting with various techniques and form, aesthetics and functionality, are also characterised by 'a high level of multidisciplinary craftsmanship' (translated into Estonian media language: ancient handicraft skills passed on from generation to generation). "Oliver hails from the small island of Hiiumaa (which translates as 'land of the mischievous spirit'), off the coast of Estonia," writes FIA. "This background laid an early foundation for appreciation of craftsmanship and a deep affinity for material, growing up in a fishing village and working with his hands daily."[10] Kriss Soonik, on the other hand, warns that being Estonian is not the only thing needed to conquer the world fashion market: "Think about if you remove the word 'Estonia', what remains. This is what you can sell abroad. It is perfectly fine if you later, at some PR moment, add a bit of Estonian background, but this cannot be the main thing to use when you want to make a hit and capture the world." [11]

So, how can you be an Estonian designer without black bread? Although the work and ideas of all designers operating abroad are highly different, it is nevertheless possible to find some common features. In a cultural programme on Estonian television[12], Kristian Steinberg claimed that being Estonian was, after all, an inner issue. As long as he remains interested in Estonian matters and speaks the language, he hopes to be accepted as an Estonian designer. Why should we argue with that?

Production in Estonia

Several Estonian designers operating abroad with their own brands have proved their trust in local handicraft skills by bringing their production back home. For example, there is Kristian Steinberg, who designs men's clothing, and the lingerie designer Kriss Soonik. Production in Estonia is a significant factor that keeps our citizens of the world of fashion design in touch with their homeland. "I have often said that if I had transferred the lingerie production out of Estonia, I would be elsewhere as well, and who knows how frequently I would come to Estonia," says Kriss Soonik.[8]

Diffidence

A common negative feature of Estonians, according to Kriss Soonik, is diffidence in selling their work. "Promoting and selling their names and products is one of the most difficult things for Estonians. I am not comfortable with this either, as I regard myself as a modest person, not at all pushy,"[9] says the lingerie designer. In order to attract attention, you must however sell, be pushy and make an effort. Soonik advises learning from professional salesmen. Indeed, there is a marked difference between Kriss Soonik's active sales work in social media, where her trademark's Facebook page has new offers almost every

1 Britta Ratas. Eestlanna Pariisis. *MOOD* 12/2014
2 Tanel Veenre. Kolm disainimusketäri maailmakaardil. *Eesti Päevaleht*, 05.07.2011.
3 Urmas Väljaots. Jalg kuulsa moemaja ukse vahel. *Eesti Päevaleht*, 26.10.2013.
4 Kaarin Kivirähk. Moešõu näitusesaalis. *MOOD*, 10/2013.
5 Tanel Veenre. Kolm disainimusketäri maailmakaardil. *Eesti Päevaleht*, 05.07.2011.
6 Urmas Väljaots. Jalg kuulsa moemaja ukse vahel. *Eesti Päevaleht*, 26.10.2013.
7 Anu Merila. Eesti moe mütoloogiad. *Eesti Päevaleht*, 08.10.2013.
8 Kriss Soonik, maailmakodanik. Britt Rosen in an interview with Kriss Soonik, *Postimees*, 15.06.2014.
9 Ibid.
10 Fashion Innovation Agency, www.fialondon.com/designer/oliver-ruuger/.
11 Kriss Soonik, maailmakodanik. Britt Rosen in an interview with Kriss Soonik, *Postimees*, 15.06.2014.
12 *Plekktrumm*, ETV, 08.12.2014.

Kriss Soonik
kriss-soonik.com

Kristian Steinberg
www.kristiansteinberg.com

Oliver Ruuger
www.oliverruuger.com

Mirja Pitkäärt
mirjapitkaart.com

Kaarin Kivirähk
(1993) graduated as a historian from the University of Tartu in 2014. The theme of her diploma work was fashion; she has contributed to the magazine *MOOD* (Fashion). Since autumn 2014 she has been the news editor at the Center for Contemporary Arts, Estonia. She is studying the theory of culture at Tallinn University.

RUNDUM ARTIST-RUN SPACE AND ITS ELUSIVE FORM

Introduction

Hanna Laura Kaljo:

Led by five young artists – Mari-Leen Kiipli, Kulla Laas, Aap Tepper, Mari Volens and Kristina Õllek – Rundum is a rehearsal space, a showcase and a free form educational platform of talks, reading circles and screenings.

Since its conception in 2013 Rundum has been situated within a unique set of circumstances. As one of, if not the first, artist-run spaces in Tallinn, it acts as a counterbalance to two existing commercial galleries in town (Vaal Gallery and Temnikova & Kasela Gallery). Furthermore, the space stands as an alternative to a number of non-commercial galleries (e.g Hobusepea Gallery and Draakoni Gallery), which, due to the small scale of the art field in Estonia, do not provide enough growth opportunities for young artists. In addition to acting as a response to the institutional structures of the non-commercial spaces and almost non-existent commercial sector, Rundum maintains a peculiar relationship to the Estonian Academy of Arts' photography department. As all five founders are students in the MA programme, the latter operates much as a support structure for the project. Situated between an institutional framework and non-institutional flexibility, the platform acts as a stage for different types of knowledge to be exchanged and produced in an open yet critical manner.

Rundum at Manifesta 10 in St Petersburg in 2014. From the left: Mari Volens, Kristina Õllek, Kulla Laas, Aap Tepper and Mari-Leen Kiipli.

'Rundum' means all, (a)round, wrapa-round, orbit or move around in German. As the name suggests, Rundum aims to be nomadic and turn up in a variety of settings. This entails spreading around the city and interfering with public space, different social environments and experimenting with new ways of showing art. Formats such as *Showcase* and *Shoecas*e, as well as Rundum' s various satellite projects, are intended to do just that. Growing out of and responding to a deficit in the local art field, the space acts as an environment in which to address pressing issues such as working conditions, self-employment and life after education, while also being an articulation of the artistic strategies of the artists' practices. Fostering horizontal and non-hierarchical relationships, in terms of both artists and their work, Rundum creates much needed opportunities for visibility, experimentation and contemplation within Tallinn's creative scene.

How do I see Rundum at the moment?

Mari-Leen:

Rundum has defined itself as an artist-run space, which broadly means the artists' initiatives, but does not presume a fixed work method. It is actually good that an artist-run space can mean different things in practice, and thus makes changes possible according to needs or wishes. It is interesting how we play through various identities as Rundum. This often happens when we are applying for financial support or exhibition opportunities. Rundum is sometimes an exhibition space, sometimes a youth association or an educational initiative, and at times we find ourselves in a strange situation where Rundum as a platform represents us as artists. This may cause a bit of confusion, but going through these stages we constantly investigate in which communication network art is being made and shown. By creating a platform for communication, we have secured ourselves a kind of power position, which gives us a right to present or ignore someone. I think it is essential to always ask yourself how well justified these choices are. For me, Rundum is primarily a study process that helps me to interpret whatever is happening in the cultural field at the moment.

The visual identity and the print of the posters of Rundum is made by LÉ 60 – Carl-Robert Kagge and Kert Viiart.

What does a 'Rundum approach' mean?
Kristina:
As our name Rundum refers in German to surrounding and moving around something, then for me the Rundumlike approach means reacting to the surroundings, also being on the move, rotating, both in our activities and in organizational work, as well as in the sense of location. 'Rundumness' includes a certain egoistical freedom, in order to liberate and renew oneself. In the new year we intend to make our 'Rundum' approach more personal, enabling us five artists to use the created platform for more individual displays.

Why do I, a young artist, need Rundum (i.e a collective anti-hierarchic working environment)?
Aap:
As a collective working environment, Rundum offers me a support structure and an open field for experimenting, and helps to expand my social network. As we all have different work methods and skills, the result is that we can learn from one another every day. Although Rundum is a place for experimenting, we nevertheless create real processes, which relate directly to our environment. Hence, I am motivated by a sense of responsibility and its expression in an anti-hierarchical system. Besides the five of us, Rundum is surrounded by a sphere of formal andinformal relations, and as a result I can better understand institutional relations and the everyday reality of people working in art fields. Overall, I can say that it is more interesting and simpler to operate as a collective, because the shared responsibility is encouraging and presents challenges.

In what way is Rundum something more than an art organization producing exhibitions?
Kulla:
The igniting force of Rundum, as with many historical Western artists' initiatives, is a wish to find more suitable working and living conditions in the art field of the moment, a space to come together, communicate and share ideas. It is evident today that several artist-run centres have gradually become more institutionalised and have lost their initial approach to problems, although new trends emerge which again seek closer-to-life and alternative ways to make art. In Rundum, too, the usually ignored everyday topics in art have become central. As a young artist, with many significant decisions still ahead, it is possible to analyse your working environment and chances and create them yourself if need be. In my opinion, Rundum has great potential to be a project that uses both discursive and demonstrative methods and does not regard as most crucial concrete artistic output, instead focusing on the process and opening up general awareness, dialogues and new opportunities in the local context.

Rundum artist-run space at Kotzebue 7, Tallinn.

Rundum photo art fair *Showing/Selling*. Sadamarket, Tallinn, 2014.

Rundum Showcase: Manifesta. St Petersburg, 2014.

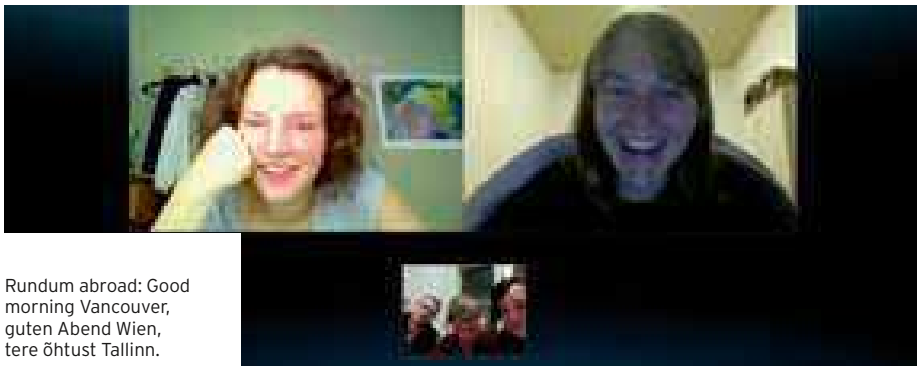
In which direction might Rundum develop?

Mari:

One of the essential points for me concerning Rundum is freedom, an opportunity to operate outside the established framework, acquire different forms and not get stuck in one operational mechanism, to act in the intermediate area between institutions and creative projects. The image of moving around has been the central concept from the beginning; it is expressed in physical moving around and occupying new spaces, and in constantly acquiring a new shape contextually. Rundum's aim is not just to offer exhibition spaces; we as artists are closely connected with Rundum and thus Rundum develops together with us, according to our and the local art scene's needs. This mainly concerns our internal functioning, but in 2015 we plan to divide the time so that everyone is responsible for the programme for one or two months: this will allow us more time to focus on our own creative work, and also lead to a more personal approach in the programmes. We might invite people from outside to organize a few months' programmes. The artist-run format does not close different doors and thus it is possible that in the next few years Rundum will acquire the form of a journal, festival, school, residency or something else. There are plenty of plans and we have no intention of calling it a day in the near future.

Hanna Laura Kaljo
is a young curator living and working in London. She is currently working on her MA in curating at Goldsmiths, University of London and is one of the initiators of the London project space Jupiter Woods, http://jupiterwoods.com.

Rundum Showcase #6: Ats Parve. The lower Lighthouse of Tallinn.



Rundum abroad: Good morning Vancouver, guten Abend Wien, tere õhtust Tallinn.

Rundum's 1st location at Okasroosikese loss, Uus 19, Tallinn.

Exhibitions

Kumu Art Museum

Weizenbergi 34 / Valge 1, Tallinn
http://www.kumu.ee/en/
Open: Oct–Mar Wed 11 am–8 pm, Thu–Sun 11 am–6 pm
Apr–Sep Tue, Thu–Sun 11 am–6 pm, Wed 11 am–8 pm

Permanent exhibitions: *Treasury. Difficult Choices*

26 Sep–15 Mar 2015	Richard Kaljo. *Stories in Prints and Letters*
12 May–5 May	*Art Museum at the Airport.* Sculptor Mati Karmin
31 Oct–22 Feb	*A Hundred Years of Art Education in Tallinn.* Works by the Estonian Academy of Arts
5 Dec–29 Mar	*The Tartu Circle of Friends and Ülo Sooster*
30 Jan–26 Apr	*History of Estonian Printmaking: 1860–1944*
20 Feb–10 May	*Death and Beauty. The Contemporary Gothic in Art and Visual Culture*
13 Mar–7 Jun	Hilma af Klint. *A Pioneer of Abstraction*
20 Mar–9 Aug	*Metamorphoses of the Black Square. Interpretations of Malevich's work in Estonian art*
17 Apr–16 Aug	*Art Revolution 1966*
15 May–30 Aug	*Jaromír Funke and Avant-garde Photography in Czechoslovakia 1922–1950*
29 May–13 Sep	*Home and Away.* Raymond Pettibon. Marko Mäetamm

Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design

Lai Street 17, Tallinn
www.etdm.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 11 am–6 pm

Permanent exhibition of Estonian design

8 Nov–18 Jan 2015	*Words & Works from a World Away*. An exhibition of Australian and Estonian jewellery and objects
22 Nov–25 Jan	*Classics.* Silvia Raudvee
22 Nov–25 Jan	*Finnish Glass Art 2005–2010*
23 Jan–22 Mar	Mare Saare. *Definitions*
13 Feb–10 May	*Scripta Manent V. 'Names, Words, Witch's Symbols' 4x(4+4)x4 = Young Estonian Poetry*
27 Mar–17 May	Annika Teder. *Time Capsules*
23 May–27 Sep	*New Nordic Fashion Illustration 2*

Contemporary Art Museum Estonia

Põhja pst 35, Tallinn
www.ekkm.ee
Open from Apr–Oct: Tue–Sun 1 pm–7 pm

25 Apr–14 Jun 2015	*Köler Prize 2015.* Exhibition of Nominees
19 Jun–26 Jul	*PSYCHEDELIA SUB ZERO*
31 Jul–6 Sep	Exhibition by Surprise Curator

Niguliste Museum

Niguliste 3, Tallinn
http://www.nigulistemuuseum.ee/en/
Open: Oct–Apr Wed–Sun 10 am–5 pm
May–Sep Tue–Sun 10 am–5 pm

Permanent exhibitions:
Ecclesiastical Art from the 14th–20th centuries
The Silver Chamber

Until 31 Dec 2015	*Interactive Rode Altarpiece*

Museum of Estonian Architecture

Rotermann's Salt Storage
Ahtri 2, Tallinn
http://www.arhitektuurimuuseum.ee
Open: Wed–Fri 11 am–6 pm, Sat–Sun 10 am–6 pm

Permanent exhibitions: architectural models from the museum's collection, along with six smaller drawer-exhibitions on Estonian architectural development through the ages.

13 Feb–22 Mar	*The Window and the Mirror. Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos*
18 Feb–8 Mar	*Tallinn's new Courthouse.* Contest entries
27 Feb–5 Apr	*Rail Baltic – The Engine of Progress*

Kadriorg Art Museum

Kadriorg Palace, Weizenbergi 37, Tallinn
http://www.kadriorumuuseum.ee/en/
Open: Oct–Mar Wed 10 am–8 pm, Thu–Sun 10 am–5 pm
Apr–Sep Tue, Thu–Sun 10 am–5 pm, Wed 10 am–8 pm

Permanent exhibition: Paintings from the 16th–18th century. Western European and Russian applied art and sculpture from the 18th–20th century

27 Sep–15 Mar 2015	*Lux Aeterna*. Italian Art from Lithuanian and Estonian Collections
28 Mar–4 Oct	*True Art or a Fake?*

Adamson-Eric Museum

Lühike jalg 3, Tallinn
http://www.adamson-eric.ee/en/
Open: October–Apr Wed–Sun 11 am–6 pm
May–Sep Tue–Sun 11 am–6 pm

Permanent exhibition: Works by Adamson-Eric. Adamson-Eric (1902–1968) is one of the most outstanding Estonian painters of the 20th century. He also devoted much of his time to applied art.

1 Nov–15 Mar 2015	*A Hundred Years of Art Education in Tallinn*. Works by Professors Emeriti of the Estonian Academy of Arts
10 Apr–28 Jun	*A Modern Woman*
10 Jul–25 Oct	Efraim Allsalu. *The Joy and Poetry of Life in Tough Times*

Mikkel Museum

Weizenbergi 28, Tallinn
http://www.mikkelimuuseum.ee/en/
Open: Oct–Apr Wed 10 am–8 pm, Thu–Sun 10 am–5 pm
May–Sep Tue, Thu–Sun 10 am–6 pm, Wed 10 am–8 pm

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

27 Sep–1 Mar 2015	*Lux Aeterna*. Italian Art from Johannes Mikkel's Collection
14 Mar–12 Apr	*The Art of Comedy*. The exhibition on *commedia dell'arte*
28 Mar–4 Oct	*True Art or a Fake?*
25 Apr–11 Oct	*Folded World*. Fans from the collections of the Art Museum of Estonia

Tallinn Art Hall

Vabaduse väljak 6, Tallinn
www.kunstihoone.ee
Open: Wed–Sun 12 am–6 pm

5 Dec–18 Jan 2015	*Artist's Footprint*. Paintings by Aili and Toomas Vint
28 Jan–1 Mar	*One Hundred*. Estonian Textile Art 1915–2015
11 Mar–12 Apr	*Unknown Evald Okas*
22 Apr–24 May	*Body Language.* Sculpture exhibition

Tallinn Art Hall Gallery

Vabaduse väljak 6, Tallinn
www.kunstihoone.ee
Open: Wed–Mon 12 am–6 pm

27 Nov–21 Dec	Kaido Ole. *Bastards*
3 Jan–8 Feb 2015	Peeter Allik. These tomatos won't rotten
13 Feb–15 Mar	Lola Liivat. Music is the ultimate. Paintings
19 Mar–26 Apr	Anne Parmasto. *Indian summer.* Paintings

Tallinn City Gallery

Harju 13, Tallinn
www.kunstihoone.ee
Open: Wed–Mon 12 am–6 pm

28 Dec–25 Jan 2015	Alina Orav, Jenny Grönholm, Katarina Meister, Liisa Kruusmägi. *Copies*
29 Jan–22 Feb	Meiu Münt. *Visions*
27 Feb–22 Mar	Liisi Eelmaa, Minna Hint. *Power*
26 Mar–19 Apr	Urve Küttner, Nils Hint. *Process*

Vabaduse Gallery

Vabaduse Sq 6, Tallinn
http://www.eaa.ee/vabaduse/
Open: Mon–Fri 11 am–6 pm, Sat 11 am–5 pm

11 Dec–6 Jan 2015	Annual exhibition of the Estonian Glass Artists' Union
8 Jan–27 Jan	Kaarel Kurismaa
29 Jan–17 Feb	*Nunavut's Culture on Cloth*. Traditional Inuit Wall Hangings from Baker Lake (CA)
19 Feb–5 Mar	Maasike Maasik
7 Mar–15 Mar	Olev Subbi
18 Mar–7 Apr	Evi Tihemets
9 Apr–28 Apr	Toomas Rein
30 Apr–19 May	Raivo Kelomees. *Interviews*
21 May–9 Jun	Mall Nukke
11 Jun–30 Jun	Enn Põldroos
2 Jul–21 Jul	Tenno Sooster (IL)

Draakon Gallery

Pikk 18, Tallinn
http://www.eaa.ee/draakon/english/eindex.htm
Open: Mon–Fri 11 am–6 pm, Sat 11 am–5 pm

15 Dec–10 Jan 2015	Mari Roosvalt. *Sketchbook*
13 Jan–31 Jan	Holger Loodus. *Walking the Dog*
26 Jan–14 Feb	Karl-Erik Talvet. *Si vis pacem, para bellum*
3 Feb–21 Feb	Maria Ader. *Echo and Silence*
25 Feb–14 Mar	Pille-Riin Jaik. *Halfway*
13 Mar–4 Apr	Maria Generalova
16 Mar–4 Apr	Reimo Võsa-Tangsoo
4 Apr–22 Apr	Maarja Nurk
6 Apr–25 Apr	Kadri Toom
27 Apr–16 May	Lilli-Krõõt Repnau
18 May–6 Jun	Kristiina Hansen & Sigrid Viir
8 Jun–27 Jun	Faculty of Architecture, EAA
29 Jun–18 Jul	EAA Young Artist Prize – Taavi Suisalu

Hobusepea Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn
www.eaa.ee/hobusepea/english/enindex1.htm
Open: Wed–Mon 11 am–6 pm

10 Dec–29 Dec	Anu Hint
7 Jan–26 Jan 2015	Armands Zelchs
28 Jan–16 Feb	Peeter Allik
18 Feb–9 Mar	Ladyfest Tallinn. *Pussy Envy*
11 Mar–30 Mar	Department of Graphic Art, Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA)
1 Apr–20 Apr	Liisa Jugapuu
22 Apr–11 May	Tanja Muravskaja
13 May–1 Jun	Uku Sepsivart
3 Jun–22 Jun	Krista Mölder & Helena Tulve

Vaal Gallery

Tartu mnt 80d, Tallinn
www.vaal.ee
Open: Tue–Fri 12 am–6 pm, Sat 12 am–4 pm

17 Dec–17 Jan 2015	Tracing the Memory. Daniela Krajčová (SK), Jan Nálevka (CZ), Katarína Poliačiková (SK), Laura Toots (EST), Milan Vagač (SK).
30 Jan–28 Feb	Liisa Kruusmägi, Liisi Küla, Johan Henrik Pajupuu. *Journey*
6 Mar–2 Apr	Laurentsius. *The Dark Side of a Poppy*
5 May–6 Jun	Ado Lill
Jun	Maarit Murka

HOP Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn
www.eaa.ee/hop
Open: Thu–Tue 11 am–6 pm

12 Dec–2 Jan 2015	Piret Ellamaa
2 Jan–20 Jan	Aet Ollisaar
23 Jan–10 Feb	Ingrid Allik
13 Feb–3 Mar	Heino Prunsvelt
6 Mar–24 Mar	Kristiina Laurits
27 Mar–14 Apr	Sofi Aršas
17 Apr–5 May	Tanel Veenre, Märta Mattsson (SE)
8 May–26 May	Leather Art of EAA; Textile Design of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (HU), Design at Häme University of Applied Sciences (FI)
29 May–16 Jun	Anu Samarüütel
19 Jun–7 Jul	Sofia Markarova
10 Jul–28 Jul	Pille Kaleviste, Eelike Virve

Tartu Art Museum

Raekoja Square 18, Tartu
www.tartmus.ee
Open: Wed, Fri–Sun 11 am–6 pm, Thu 11 am–9 pm

7 Nov–1 Feb 2015	*Typical Individuals. Graffiti and Street Art in Tartu 1994–2014*
27 Nov–1 Mar	Malle Leis. *Yellow Summer*
7 Feb–29 Mar	*My Poland. On Recalling and Forgetting*
12 Mar–17 May	*Youth Mode*
9 Apr–31 May	*Tartu 88. City of Dreams*
28 May–23 Aug	*The Space Around Me*
3 Jun–14 Jun	University of Tartu Masters of Painting graduation exhibition
19 Jun–30 Aug	Tõnis Saadoja

Tartu Art House

Vanemuise 26, Tartu
kunstimaja.ee
Open: Wed–Mon 12–6 pm

Big hall

19 Dec–11 Jan 2015	End-of-the-year exhibition
16 Jan–8 Feb	Loading... 100%. Exhibition of MA students of the EAA
11 Feb–8 Mar	Jüri Kask
12 Mar–5 Apr	Olev Subbi
9 Apr–3 May	Veiko Klemmer
8 May–31 May	*How to Read in the Dark?* Artists' Association of Lapland
3 Jun–21 Jun	University of Tartu Department of Painting graduation exhibition
2 Jul–26 Jul	Ivar Kaasik

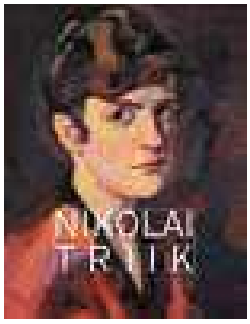
Small hall

16 Jan–8 Feb	*Loading… 100%*. Exhibition of MA students of the EAA
11 Feb–8 Mar	Maria Generalova. *Sunlight*
12 Mar–5 Apr	Andres Sütevaka
9 Apr–3 May	Ausma Šmite
8 May–31 May	*How to Read in the Dark?* Artists' Association of Lapland
1 Jun–21 Jun	University of Tartu Department of Painting graduation exhibition
2 Jul–26 Jul	Egge Edussaar-Harak
30 Jul–23 Aug	Kaisa Eiche

Monumental Gallery

16 Jan–8 Feb	*Loading… 100%*. Exhibition of MA students of the EAA
11 Feb–8 Mar	Jaan Klõšeiko. *Excerpts from Estonian Art and Culture*
12 Mar–5 Apr	Maarja Nurk
9 Apr–3 May	Al Paldrok
5 May–31 May	German and Estonian applied art
1 Jun–21 Jun	University of Tartu Department of Painting graduation exhibition
2 Jul–26 Jul	Sigrid Viir, Johannes Säre, Kristiina Hansen

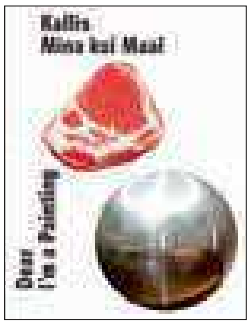
New books



Nikolai Triik

Author: Liis Pählapuu
Design: Angelika Schneider
In Estonian and English
296 pages
Published by the Art Museum of Estonia – Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn 2014

The exhibition at Kumu *Nikolai Triik. Classics of the Modernist Era* (30.05.–28.09.2014) and the accompanying book constitute a homage to the work of one of the most influential and diverse Estonian artists in the first half of the 20th century. Like many of his contemporaries, he began his studies in St Petersburg and then travelled via Finland to the European art centres Paris and Berlin. At the summit of his career, Triik was linked with the literary group *Young-Estonia*; his prints significantly shaped the visual identity of the group's publications. Triik developed his own manner of painting, blending a skill of drawing on the basis of his experience of the Russian school, the awareness of form innovations at the beginning of the century and close contacts with Nordic nature. Triik was among the most talented and singular portrait painters in Estonian history of art.



Dear I'm A Painting / Always Yours, Blue Lagoon

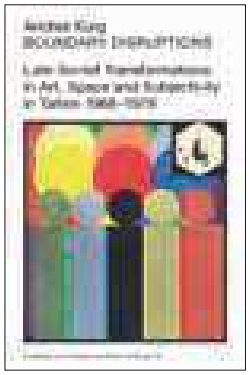
Editors: Kati Ilves and Merike Estna
Texts: Gavin Wade, Merike Estna, Kati Ilves
Design: Indrek Sirkel
In Estonian and English
284 pages
Published by the Art Museum of Estonia – Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn 2014

The publication accompanies the exhibition project *Merike Estna* and *I'm A Painting* at Kumu Art Museum (27.06.–02.11.2014). The book contains a creative dialogue with the works displayed in the exhibition hall, plus an extensive photo documentation of Merike Estna's solo exhibition, *The Blue Lagoo*n (curator Kati Ilves), as well as the works and spatial solutions presented at the international painting exhibition *I'm a Painting* (curators Merike Estna and Kati Ilves), which involved 15 artists.
This is not a traditional exhibition catalogue or an essay collection, as the book is an artwork itself. Large part belongs to photography (Anu Vahtra): the black-and-white section shows how the exhibition was installed, colour photographs depict various displayed works, also spatial views. There is also a photographic series about the opening of the exhibition, Merike Estna's wearable paintings and a scan of Simon Daniel Tegnander's works.
The artists participating in the international painting exhibition *I'm a Painting* included Frank Ammerlaan, Ei Arakawa, Kerstin Brätsch, James Ferris, Annie Hémond Hotte, Juste Kostikovaite, Kristi Kongi, Kris Lemsalu, Nicolas Party, Katinka Pilscheur, Jon Rafman, Dan Rees, Samara Scott, Simon Daniel Tegnander and Taavi Tulev.

From the School of Arts and Crafts to the Academy of Arts. 100 Years of Art Education in Tallinn

Compiler: Mart Kalm
Editor: Eva Näripea
Design and layout: Kaarel Nõmmik, Mikk Heinsoo
In Estonian and English
608 pages
Published by the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn 2014

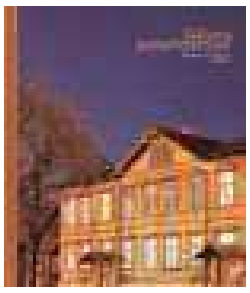
The collection of twenty two research articles was published on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Estonian Academy of Arts. The articles tackle the topics of art and art education, and reflect on how much art can be taught and learned.
Other topics include the activities of the Estonian Art Society in establishing the school, strategies of administering the school and its relations with the state; the Research Society of Students and teaching communist subjects at the Art Institute; challenges of neo-liberal situation to the academy, etc.
The list of authors is diverse, from professors to PhD students, mainly art historians. The articles are richly illustrated. There is also a list of the school's graduates and the current employees.



Boundary Disruptions: Late-Soviet Transformations in Art, Space and Subjectivity in Tallinn 1968–1979

Author: Andres Kurg
Dissertationes Academiae Artium Estoniae 15
Supervisor: Katrin Kivimaa
Editor: Justin Ions
Design: Indrek Sirkel
In English
256 pages
Published by the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn 2014

Andres Kurg's dissertation looks at a group of artists and designers working in Tallinn from the late 1960s onwards, whose work grew out from the new discourses and institutions of the Khruschev Thaw and its aftermath – design, information theory and cybernetics – and who went on to provide a critique of those ideas in the second half of the 1970s. The work examines the relationship between alternative art in the Soviet Union and changes in its spatial context and in the formation of the subject from the late 1960s onwards, and asks whether the notion of unofficial art is adequate for its characterisation. Kurg studies the description of late-Soviet art as divided between the official and unofficial as part of a wider dichotomy between the public and the private, which has structured several existing accounts of everyday life in state-socialist societies.
The book shows that several of the transformations that have gained their full force in the present have a prehistory in the discussions and practices that emerged from the late 1960s onwards and resonated in the work of artists in Tallinn during the 1970s. The themes of problematizing unofficial art, architecture, space and subjectivity are brought together in articles, published between 2009–2012, each considering a different case of artists and architects from the 1970s.



Wooden architecture of Tallinn

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The book was preceded by the exhibition *From Slum to Architecture. Tallinn's Wooden Buildings* in the Museum of Estonian Architecture in summer 2012.
With the last decades, the reputation of the wooden architecture of Tallinn has gone through a change as big as the reputation of the country itself. Areas in decay that were once associated with social degradation are now highly coveted residential districts. Along with the growing respect for these areas as a living environment, there is an increase of interest towards wooden architecture in general and time has come to share the discoveries of architectural historians with a wider public. Views of our perished slums give contrast to contemporary houses, freshly restored buildings indicate the potential not yet realized in many others.

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