

ISSN 2424-5070

2024

02

# echo gone wrong

support



MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF LITHUANIA



LITHUANIAN  
COUNCIL FOR  
CULTURE

**MRF** MEDIJŲ  
RĖMIMO  
FONDAS

# Intuitive curation and the evolving discourse of Baltic contemporary art: A conversation with Šelda Puķīte

February 1, 2024

Author Miglė Markulytė



Šelda Puķīte. Photo: Evelin Lumi

Šelda Puķīte is a Latvian curator, publisher and researcher living in Estonia. She has extensive experience working as a curator with national (Latvian and Estonian), as well as international, projects in contemporary art. 'Emotional Landscapes' is her first exhibition in Lithuania, which involved 15 internationally recognised artists, coming from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Spanning over two floors of the Arka Gallery in the Old Town of Vilnius, the exhibition created an atlas of emotions and topics that are permeating the current discourse in Baltic contemporary art. Besides providing an insight into carefully selected and pressing issues, Šelda did an impressive job as a curator, weaving them into a tight network, spread through the intricate gallery spaces of the former Basilian monastery. Therefore, on the last day of the exhibition, I invited Šelda to talk about the challenges and thrills of curating this exhibition, to contemplate changes in the Baltic contemporary art scene, and to take a look at her future projects.

*Miglė Markulytė: The title of the exhibition 'Emotional Landscapes' is inspired by Björk's song 'Jóga', in which she sings about a state of emergency. What are the emotional landscapes in this exhibition, and why did you decide to call it that?*

Šelda Puķīte: If we talk about the title as such, then the inspiration, as you already pointed out, came directly from Björk's song. I am a huge fan of her music. But in general, many titles for the shows that I make come from pop culture or other seemingly random sources. I like that kind of dynamic, or the clash between the source of inspiration and the project itself, which most of the time addresses

very serious topics. Björk's song is not the biggest clash, I must say. For example, the inspiration for titles in the past has come from eBay T-shirts. In 2018, I did a show for the Riga Photography Biennale 2018, and it was called 'Today I'm a Mermaid. Tomorrow I'll Be a Unicorn', which was dedicated to magical identities. In this case, I liked how Björk works with her lyrics, where she seemingly talks a lot about nature, but it's actually a metaphor for how she feels. This is a straightforward explanation of a title that is hopefully reflected in the exhibition. Although many of the works were in some way referring to landscape, the artists were talking about their concerns, their worries and what intrigues them, or very personal intimate matters.

**MM: What was the incentive to make this exhibition? How did it start?**

The idea for this project, funnily enough, came when I was curating the stand for the Liste Art Fair in Basel. Together with the Kogo Gallery, we decided to showcase works by Laura Pöld and Kristi Kongi, and each of them had projects that define perfectly what an emotional landscape is. Through the metaphor of landscape, they talked about something that concerned them in their state of life, as well as the world at large. In Kristi Kongi's case, she reflects in her series of paintings on the effect of the pandemic. They are like diaries depicting the sky through the different periods of the year during the desperate times of isolation, fear and death. Laura is more interested in the history of the Earth, craftsmanship and environmental issues, which she then reflects on in her sculptures and textile works. On that stand in Basel, putting together the sky and the earth, we were able to create one emotional landscape. After doing it, I got the idea that it would be interesting to expand the topic into a bigger group show, and when I got an invitation to do a show at Arka, I already knew what I wanted to do.



Laura Pöld & Lou Sheppard. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela

*MM: Moving through the exhibition, we notice that each room is like a different zone, where certain topics are grouped. To name a few, there is a futuristic space, a socio-political corridor, a cluster of ecological issues, and a borderline, filled with subtle tension and echoes of past and present wars ... Can you comment on your curatorial strategy, where you started, and how you got to this point where all the works formed an apparent network?*

ŠP: At the beginning, I was inspired by the space itself. The Arka Gallery is a very interesting but tricky exhibition space: it resembles a labyrinth with unconventional spaces. Because of the peculiarity of the space and its history (it was built at the end of the 16th century), I was imagining some kind of atlas of the Middle Ages, where each of the spaces would be an island inhabiting this wonderland. I'm fascinated by maps from the Middle Ages, because not only are factual objects marked, but also mystical creatures, like strange animals, monsters, and people with several heads ... In planning the exhibition, I did not go as far as I imagined. I didn't turn it into a map, but there is still a sense of islands that are more fantastic and others that are more realistic. I did not intend to group the artworks according to particular topics, it just happened spontaneously. I like it when works are exhibited in such a way that they start merging together. It's most prominent when artists go through similar emotions or struggles, and naturally, when put together, their works form a cohesive dialogue. For example, works by Maija Kurševa, Diāna Tamane and Krišs Salmanis are exhibited in one space in such a way that they could be perceived as one artist's extensive, complex work.

If I think about it, only at the opening of the exhibition did I get the idea that these rooms could have subtitles. So, these spaces were formed very intuitively.

*(takes a moment to ponder)*

I call it intuition, but actually, when you get to curate exhibitions often enough, then this intuitive work actually comes from knowledge gained in previous experiences. But I think this is the most poetic exhibition I've done. So I wanted to choose the artworks and to build the space based on what I'm interested in myself, what speaks to me, letting the exhibition be inspired by my emotions and subjectivity.

*MM: The poetic aspect is indeed prevalent in the exhibition, but I have also noticed some very deliberate decisions that created integrity, such as Rūta Spelskytė's pieces of confetti that are placed in each space forming a dialogue with other works according to the theme of the room, and finally joining all the topics, where single pieces drown in the abundance of the collection. Or Alexei's works, which create an impression of extending the rooms to another space.*

ŠP: I like to mix things up, and I like to break up works by one artist throughout the rooms, so that a viewer can revisit them going through the space. I prefer this much more than exhibitions where artworks are separated according to the author. But here I tried not to overdo it, because I did not want to turn the exhibition into a 'student breakfast'. But I felt that Alexei's and Rūta's works could be a thread connecting the whole show. And these were the last choices made, which were also the most thought-through. Gordin's work is dedicated to the Moscow House in Vilnius, and in his video series he travels through that troublesome building. It made sense to scatter the videos through the Arka Gallery, so I could simultaneously play with the spaces in the video and the gallery. In Rūta's case, I wanted to exhibit confetti as she found it: randomly and accidentally. But then, after talking to Rūta, we got the idea to curate them according to the themes presented by different artists, and so we dug out fantastic confetti that related well to the artworks. My favourite one was the embassy work in the borderline exhibition space with Maija Kurševa, Diāna Tamane, Alexei Gordin and Krišs Salmanis, which is all about geopolitical problems in the European Union. And of course, Americans play a big role as support for Europe, so they just had to be in the room, at least as a hint. So it was nice that Rūta had a piece of confetti that was found near the US Embassy.



Maija Kurševa, Diāna Tamane and Krišs Salmanis. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela

*MM: I noticed that most of the works in the exhibition were made quite recently (over the last few years). It is also mentioned in the description that the participants are internationally known and established artists from the Baltic countries. Why haven't you involved the younger generation, or archival material?*

ŠP: For the archives, to be honest, I just did not have enough time to work with them in any meaningful way. I think most Baltic curators can tell you that only on very rare occasions do they have the privilege of just being the curator of exhibitions. In some ways, you are usually also a producer, fundraiser, coordinator, architect, and so on. Not to mention that most of us have a day job. That actually wastes a lot of time that should be devoted to just developing the exhibition, doing research, and working with artists. So it's a serious undertaking, and I'm already working on another big exhibition project and several smaller ones. Also, I am devoting my research muscles as far as possible to Baltic women's history. I also felt that the Arka Gallery wanted it to be a presentation of contemporary Baltic artists, so it didn't feel right to include archives.

And talking about artists of the younger generation, there are so many of them that I could have included, but for this kind of show it was important for me to have already-existing personal relations, if not with the artists, then with their artworks. But like many curators, I feel that I am getting a bit stuck in my own generation, or one generation before me, because they are who I know best, and we have shared the same space for the longest time together. So what I'm working on now is to actually get better acquainted and maybe start working more with younger-generation artists who are still in their twenties. But for this exhibition, I felt it would be artificial to force it, so stay tuned!

*MM: Can you imagine another way this Baltic emotional landscape could be formed? If you had no limits and as much time as you need, what themes would you see existing on the map of the exhibition? Would there be different aspects, or maybe there was something very specific that was deliberately left out that you wanted to include?*

ŠP: I will definitely mention two projects that were originally planned and are not here, and I still think it would be great if they had been here. Each of them has different reasons why they did not end up in the show. First, I invited Inga Meldere, a wonderful Latvian artist living in Finland. She was supposed to make a site-specific wall piece. She is a painter, but her first education is as a conservator, and she uses this skill in her art pieces very cleverly. She creates fake sondages where she recovers layers of paint in a wall, as well as some decoration or old paintings that of course have never really been there. She just does it in such a way that it really looks as if they had been rediscovered. I wanted her work to appear in the context of the Arka Gallery. Just imagine, we open up a layer of a wall, and it turns out that there is some Modernist piece under it, or some fresco from the Middle Ages. And she was planning to use pigment from plants that can be found in Lithuania to make the paint. But while we were planning things, she was invited to go on a residency in the USA, and so we had to cancel it, as it can't be done without her.

Another project I wanted to include was Wasteland (The Phosphorite War) by Laura Pöld. It is a set of sculptures mimicking phosphorite mining sites with water and electrical mist. But there were too many technical difficulties with transport and exhibiting.

If I had all the money in the world, I would maybe play a lot more with space, and hire a set designer or an architect. It would have been fun to change the space. Now, because I could not do it, I decided to embrace the space, to show all the bumps, radiators and leaks on the walls. All these imperfections became part of this emotional landscape. So maybe it turned out even better.

Talking about topics in the exhibition, I would like to delve more into the topics of modern science and artificial intelligence. But I'm still trying to understand my relationship with that, so maybe that's the reason why it's not in the exhibition. Also, feminist topics are very close to me, and there are strong artists in the Baltic countries who are working seriously with gender-related questions. But somehow this time they did not enter the show, and that is something I must admit I regret a bit.

*MM: You have been curating contemporary art in Latvia and Estonia for almost fourteen years now. Also, you are not only a curator, but also an art historian and critic as well, so I have a slightly broader question for you. How can you describe the changes in the Baltic contemporary art scene during the last few decades? Have you noticed new trends or different topics that are becoming more important to artists in the region?*

ŠP: I can only talk about the time after 2004, because that was when I finished school. I remember this 'new Renaissance of painting' in Latvia. In the 2000s, in the second half of the first decade, painting was making a strong comeback. There were a lot of interesting young painters' exhibitions. Some of them are continuing today, expanding into more conceptual forms, using installation and performative elements. They are often still working with paint and brushes, but the work itself seems to be more than just something associated with one medium. So the painting tradition in Latvia is still very strong, but it has its updates. Nowadays, it seems that materiality is again very relevant. Things seem to flow freely from one shape to the next, they pour in and out of each other. So there is a lot of liquidity, and I think it comes with new philosophies, like hydro-feminism and liquid Modernism. I could write a whole essay answering this question.

Queer and feminist art, which used to be pretty marginal, are now much more popular and accepted on the local cultural scene. It used to be cursed by society's false assumptions as an unfortunate Soviet legacy about equality between genders. With newer generations, there are more and more

artists who are not just interested in raising questions, but also who say proudly 'I'm a feminist artist.' A decade ago, at least in Latvia, there were only a few artists who were openly stating that they were feminists, because it was still so stigmatised and misunderstood. Also, it has broadened to a wider branch of queer art: there is a Baltic drag king movement, as well as more artists who are implementing queer topics in their art. Also, a new sensitivity seems to be back. Artists, especially women, don't feel they need to masculinise themselves to be taken seriously. Of course, ecological questions are very prominent. From a more historical perspective, the Baltic countries are experiencing a beautiful women's history movement. The highlight, of course, is the revival and international recognition of the deceased Estonian sculptor Anu Pöder, but there is so much more happening at the moment.

Changes in aesthetics are of course constantly happening. There will be different trends, as it was with post-Internet or new Modernity, or returning to craftsmanship, which is rapidly regaining its popularity. Yet, at the same time, there is 3D printing and AI art. I feel a lot of artists are experimenting with digital art and artificial intelligence. There was this crazed moment with NFTs, but I'm not sure how visible it was in the Baltic countries. And of course, there are more socio-critical aspects present in art now, but also a lightness and playfulness connected with it. But this is slowly changing. I see more and more socio-political or geopolitical questions being addressed through contemporary art. It is the same in this exhibition; there is poetry, but it's not just dreamers dreaming about a beautiful life or the world they would like to live in. They are dreaming in a state of emergency, embracing the storm in them, without obligatorily talking straightforwardly about it. So again, we are coming back to Björk: she does the same. Most of the time it seems she is talking about painful personal experiences, but she does it in a poetic, metaphorical way, using nature as her main language.

***MM: I have heard that you are already working on another exhibition in Lithuania, together with Agn? Narušyt? and Indrek Grigor. Can you tell us more about that project?***

ŠP: Yes, we are preparing the exhibition 'Silver Girls. Retouched History of Baltic Photography' which will take place in 2025 in the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius. In the summer of 2020, at Tartu Art Museum, together with Indrek Grigor, I prepared an exhibition entitled 'Silver Girls. Retouched History of Photography'. The exhibition introduced a selection of works by ten early women photographers from Estonia and Latvia, and placed them in the company of three contemporary European artists whose works contemplate the lost and the neglected in our visual history. The new iteration of the project in Vilnius is expanding the first exhibition by including early Lithuanian photographers, and by increasing the number of artists and photographs featured. The exhibition will introduce seven early women photographers from each country working from the nineteenth century until the end of the Second World War, who this time are in dialogue with three contemporary artists from the Baltic (Marge Monko, Diāna Tamane and Goda Palekaitė), whose art addresses in different ways the topics of the project and the historical material exhibited. Also, we will prepare a new book on the topic, and show all the material we have gathered. I have been interested in women's history for some years now, and I am happy that through this project I can flex my art researcher muscles and contribute to writing new chapters in Baltic art history. It's a bit nerve-wracking, and yet very exciting, to make a show of early women photographers from the Baltic countries for the first time on this scale.

[Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Emotional Landscapes' at Arka gallery](#)

# A Fragile Matter. In conversation with the artist Karlīna Mežecka

February 23, 2024

Author Žanete Liekīte



Karlīna Mežecka at Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Archive of Fragility, 2024. Photo: Filips Smits

The up-and-coming Latvian artist Karlīna Mežecka is based in London, where she made a mark with new techniques following her graduation from the Royal College of Art's Ceramics and Glass Department in 2022. Mežecka's artistic practice centres around ceramics, but her signature style lies in the skill of seamlessly blurring the boundaries of different surface qualities and transforming them into a cohesive whole. This includes different glazes that mimic the qualities of metal, as well as incorporating steel and showcasing a marriage of glass and ceramics, forming distinctly delicate alliances. Through her exploration of materials, Karlīna Mežecka disrupts the tranquil cadence of the time-honoured craft, leaving tradition in her creative wake.

In her debut solo exhibition 'Archive of Fragility' at the Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, the artist delves into the poetics of regional space and human emotional experience within it. The exhibition reflects on the themes of fragility, inspired by the artist's exploration of materiality. A space is showcased as an intangible entity within the contextual framework, serving both as a form and scenography, as well as being a link to regional architecture and a representation of the human body, a home for the soul. Echoing the notions of the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard, his work *Poetics of Space* is implemented into the foundation of the installation.

The exhibition 'Archive of Fragility' at the Kim? Contemporary Art Centre is on view until 25 February. This conversation took place between the artist Karlīna Mežecka and the curator of the exhibition Žanete Liekīte.





Karlīna Mežecka, Archive of Fragility, exhibition view, 2024. Kim Contemporary Art Centre, Riga. Curated by Žanete Liekīte. Photo: Ansis Starks.

**ŽL:** *When I look at your work, I often find myself wondering how you chose to work with ceramics in the first place? Your approach diverges significantly from conventional expectations associated with this medium.*

**KM:** The start of my journey with ceramics is rather amusing. I started studying ceramics for my BA at the Art Academy of Latvia because I failed to get into the Department of Visual Communication, not just once, but twice (*laughs*).

I had no prior experience, nor any real artistic skills. A friend of mine was applying, and encouraged me to join her, just for fun, really. We were kind of joking about it, but then she smirked: 'Are you too lazy to try?' And that somehow stung a little, so I promptly responded: 'No, I'm not lazy, I'm going to apply!' And I didn't get accepted two years in a row.

I enrolled in ceramics because there was less competition for that department. And now, eight years into my practice, I am still devoted to the medium.

**ŽL:** *So you stumbled into ceramics by accident (*laughs*)?*

**KM:** Yes, entirely by accident (*laughs*)!

**ŽL:** *If you've remained committed to the medium for eight years, it must have been a fateful encounter that left a lasting impact, and there must be qualities in it that you truly appreciate.*

**KM:** There are two main aspects that consistently fuel my fascination with ceramics. First, it's an infinite pursuit in material-science. Sometimes, when I feel a bit low on inspiration, the opportunities

for research within the medium keep me going with new experiments, whether it's developing a clay body or working on the subtleties of glazing, trying out various kinds of firing or surface texture.

Second, purely artistically, ceramics is boundless in terms of contextualisation, quite simply because it's rooted in the earth, connecting everything and everyone. Additionally, from a visual perspective, the material is incredibly plastic and versatile. It's both my love of the material itself and a purely artistic pursuit. I find an infinite source of inspiration and references in the medium.



Karlina Mežecka plasma-cutting metallic patterns.  
Photo: Žanete Liekīte.



Glasremis studio in Panevezys. The process of merging ceramics and glass. Photo: Žanete Liekīte.

**ŽL:** *Observing your work processes closely and recalling your hands-on approach, such as creating patterns in steel tubes with a plasma cutter, it becomes apparent that craftsmanship is at the heart of your practice. Yet, simultaneously, contextualisation looms just as large in your creative process. Can you expand on how these twin pillars function in your artistic practice?*

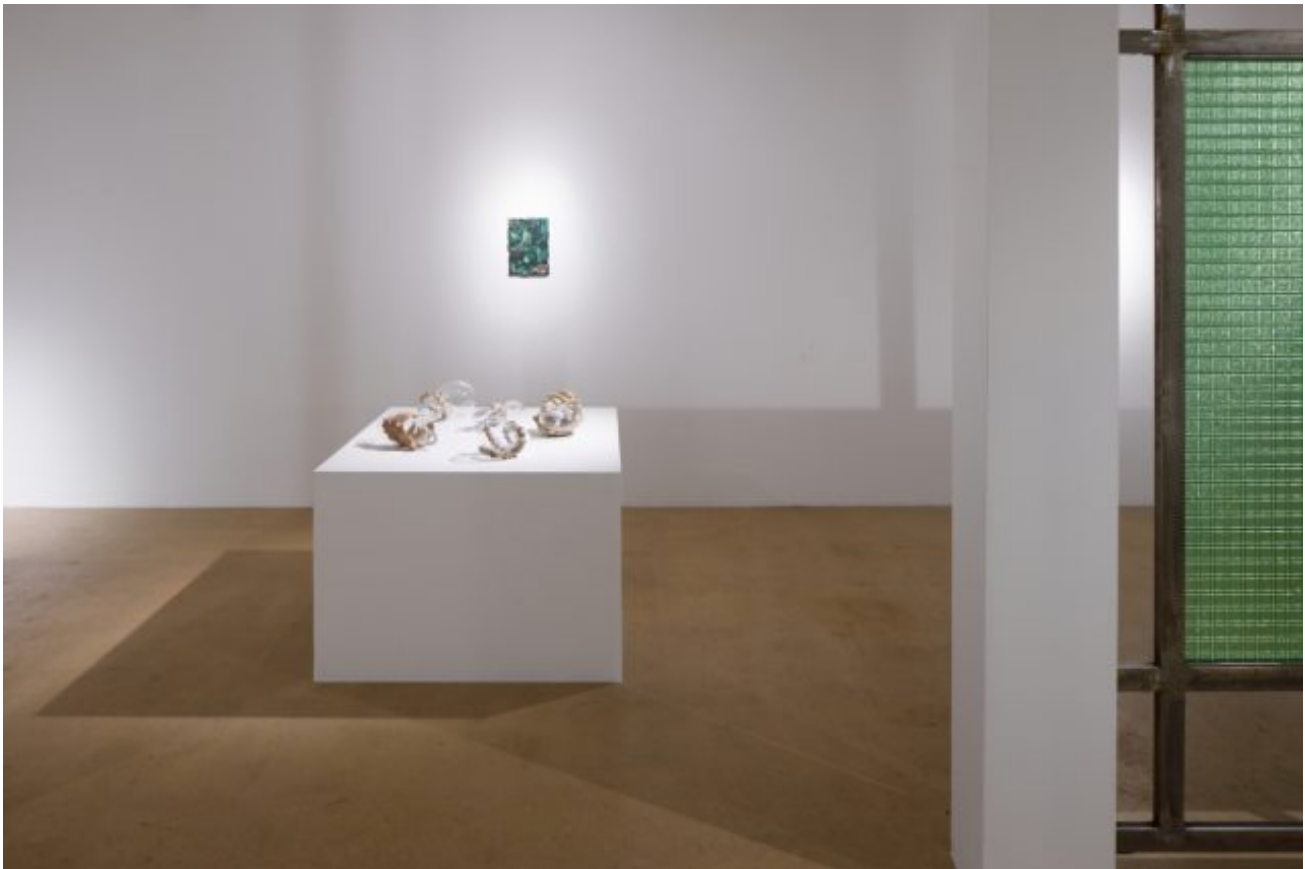
KM: Maintaining a balance between these two elements is extremely important. The technical process through which I work consistently informs the narrative with which I'm working. Therefore, the craft and its meaning are inherently intertwined, and they cannot exist without one another. When I'm thinking about what I want to say, my mind naturally delves into the technical aspects of its execution. And when I'm working on something technically, I automatically start thinking about what it means in a broader context.

**ŽL:** *You've previously said that the size of ceramics is directly influenced by the size of the kiln one has access to, which often results in the prevalence of smaller-size objects in this medium. Can you elaborate on how you navigate this limitation of scale in your artistic practice?*

KM: Yes, it is always a looming obstacle. However, that's when you start to think creatively. Because of it, there are two elements that play an important role in this show and are also significant in my practice. It's the role of light (particularly when working with glass), and the role of the scenography

or architecture of the exhibition. These two elements form an integral part of broadening the context and the perception of the pieces in the show. What I'm most interested in is how the pieces on view collaborate with the space, and enhance their presence in it.

In 'Archive of Fragility', the scenography represents a rigidity inherent to the collective Baltic environment, manifested through Soviet architecture. The steel panels, imposing a strong division of the space, hold window panes that have a similar pattern to the tiered rows of windows on the sides of Soviet-built apartment blocks. And this is the broader context I aim to address regarding culture and society, within which my works reside. In turn, everything I've crafted by hand from ceramics is tactile, sensual, and rather abstract. The coexistence, collaboration and clash between these elements is important to me.



Karlina Mežecka, Archive of Fragility, exhibition view, 2024. Kim Contemporary Art Centre, Riga. Curated by Žanete Liekīte. Photo: Ansis Starks.

**ŽL:** *At the heart of our exhibition lies the concept of fragility, sparked by your 'impossible' technique involving the fusion of glass and ceramics. Despite discouragement from experts in London and in L?v?ni, who claimed it couldn't be done, you persisted with the union of these incredibly delicate materials. Can you talk us through the journey of that process, and what initially led you to explore it?*

KM: I can honestly say, in many moments along the way, I really thought I needed to let it go and just do something else (*laughs*). When you're engaged in a process during which industry professionals tell you straight out that it's a lost cause, that it won't work, just stop it, it messes with your head.

I began this journey during my MA in London. Honestly, it was just an epiphany, and I really wanted to try it. It was a pivotal moment when one of my tutors hinted at a particular clay body to work with. The first try (of many more to come) was unsuccessful, the ceramics broke from the thermal shock of glass blowing. But just seeing how the two materials complemented each other, how the glass

had taken on the form of the ceramic sculpture, was enough to make me realise that this was it. It was love at first sight.



Karlīna Mežecka, Archive of Fragility, 2024, exhibition view, Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga. Curated by Žanete Liekīte. Photo: Ansis Starks.



Karlína Mežecka, Grip I, 2024. Ceramics, glass. Photo: Ansis Starks.

*ŽL: Might it be that this wild idea sprung from the programme Ceramics and Glass? I mean, if they're both in the name, they've got to collaborate, right (laughs)?*

KM: Oh, for sure (*laughs*).

It's funny how in a clay body, you can find silica (glass) and traces of various metals. Yet when you want to combine ceramics with glass and metal, it's incredibly difficult to do.

*ŽL: I find your glazing game intriguing, the way you transform ceramic surfaces to resemble metallic finishes. Additionally, you've recently begun incorporating metal as a secondary material in your work. Have you traced the thought process behind this fusion of materials?*

KM: This game has been around for a while. And my personal fascination with a certain aspect of it has only grown over time.

If we take a look at the historical origins of alchemy, it's somewhat similar: people sought to create gold out of nothing. How can one get endless wealth and gold from mud! That's the gist of it. And if we look at gold lustre ceramics, they did quite well. They couldn't physically recreate gold, but they certainly succeeded in replicating its surface qualities. This is just something I've found quite fascinating. It's an interesting play with value and meaning.

I've spent a lot of time toying with replicating metallic surfaces, but I'm also interested in emulating other materialities, or working on ways to portray the corporeal in ceramics.



Karlina Mežecka, Skin Topography, 2024. Ceramics, glaze. Photo: Ansis Starks.

*ŽL: This part of human representation is particularly exciting. Metaphorically, the shapes and cracks of your abstract objects resonate with bodily mechanics, impulses, and the 'imprints of experience' etched into the skin.*

KM: This notion has existed in my practice for a while. Corporeality and dynamism (in their composition), things which are inherent in the living, are crucial aspects I aim to capture in my work. After all, ceramics, like all fine arts, can often be quite static. There's a focus on materials, on singular forms. I want to push those boundaries a bit, infusing pieces with a sense of vitality, playing God a little, maybe giving them a little soul (*smiles*).



Karlina Mezecka, *Cradling Wail*, 2024. Ceramics, glaze, steel. Photo: Ansis Starks.

**ŽL:** *I vividly remember you explaining to your friends why certain materials represent the human body, by using a porcelain bowl in front of a lamp. They allow light to pass through, just like human skin.*

KM: The porcelain episode was a significant revelation in my practice. The essence of this idea stems from ancient civilisations using marble for sculpture, as it shares a similar light translucency to human flesh. Similarly, being made from minerals, porcelain also has this material resemblance. It's this unity within the spectrum of materials that gives it a sense of familiarity. The first time I heard about it, I was baffled, and realised from that moment on my life wouldn't be the same (*laughs*).

Although I didn't use porcelain in this exhibition, the material relationship with light has always been very important to me. In addition to light, I've always been captivated by the play of shadows and reflections. I think these elements contribute to the spatial experience of a show. These aspects manifest uniquely within the specific space and environment where the works are exhibited.

**ŽL:** *Continuing our discussion on space, the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard's Poetics of Space weaves together the connection between architecture, the body, and the spirit in our exhibition. How do you integrate insights from this theory into your artistic practice?*

In line with what I mentioned about architecture, Gaston Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space* conveys beautifully how individuals perceive space, and their emotional connection with it. This concept serves as one of the main guiding principles for me in the context of the exhibition. While I aim to generalise the space, it remains rooted in the concrete reality of my origins in Riga and the Baltic. The feeling that I sought to evoke on entering the exhibition space is the interplay and rigidity of structure, illuminated by light and reflected off these structures. It's about how light interacts with and permeates the works. That's the poetics of space I aimed to achieve.



Karlīna Mežecka, Archive of Fragility, exhibition view, 2024. Kim Contemporary Art Centre, Riga. Curated by Žanete Liekīte. Photo: Ansis Starks.

*ŽL: As you have just mentioned, our exhibition focuses more on collective patterns rather than a specific space or individual. However, could you perhaps share some hints where the personal is hidden in your works?*

KM: My childhood was dominated by urban landscapes rather than by nature, although I spent time playing among the pines in the countryside and such. It's kind of obvious why people who become attached to a specific landscape are likely to favour nature. This aspect plays a significant role in the exhibition as well, which is why you'll notice a prevalence of green (*laughs*). I also have a personal affinity with the colour green, and at one point, I realised that everything in the exhibition is predominantly green. This connection is also tied to the lush greenery of the Baltic forests.

I remember as a child having this realisation: everyone seems to love nature, but why do I love living in the city? Within cities lies a phenomenon that's a lot less common in nature: the reflection of light that occurs from the glass facades of high-rise buildings. These reflections cast a beautiful play of light and shadow on the streets and facades opposite. This was something I wanted to capture in the exhibition.

*ŽL: Expanding on the discussion of landscape, within 'Archive of Fragility' there are pieces on the walls affectionately dubbed 'landscapes'. We've chosen to interpret them as exhibition windows, or perhaps as a bird's-eye view of the site's topography. Before this interpretation, how did you envision these ceramic works resembling paintings?*

KM: The first iteration of these landscapes was made during my time at the RCA. The work was entitled *Free Flow*, and it essentially depicted a specific landscape, the riverbed of the Thames.



There was an extremely beautiful view of the river near the college, the historical presence of London would often be exposed with the tides coming in and going out.

I vividly recall standing by the riverbank, and there was this moment of another epiphany. The light hit just right, revealing the exposed riverbed after the tide receded, with an anchor chain sprawling along the bank. The metal formed such a beautiful pattern, glistening in the light in a deep, bright silvery hue. I was completely taken by that brief moment, and I decided to recreate it.



Karlina Mežecka, Free Flow, 2022. Ceramics, glaze, tin, glass.

**ŽL:** *The poetic cityscape of London inspired you to create paintings in ceramics.*

KM: Technically, yes. And these works also offer a broad canvas for experimentation, because they can be endlessly varied. There's a piece in the show that has a distinctly painterly quality to its surface. Another is dark and metallic, resembling a stormy sky illuminated by lightning. That's the real beauty of it. As diverse as the landscape can be, I can capture its qualities through various

ceramic techniques.



Karlina Mežecka, Body Electric, 2024. Ceramics, glaze, tin. Photo: Ansis Starks.

*ŽL: Exploring the evolution of another body of work, the piece Cradling Wail takes centre stage in the new exhibition. In terms of its development, it stems from your graduation show piece Wail, which later featured in our group exhibition 'Synchronities'. Recalling the original association of Wail with the depths of the ocean and the unconscious, what significance does 'baby wail' hold for you?*

KM: I managed to create this piece quite intuitively. Right from the start, I envisioned this smaller version as being notably rounder, plumper, and more vital. While working on the previous piece, I had this notion of portraying an alien-like figure. Here, it also has an otherworldly quality to it, as it lacks a reference to a distinguishable shape. What I aimed to achieve with this piece aligns with my earlier thoughts about infusing works with a soul and a dynamic composition.



Karļina Mežecka, Wail, 2022. Ceramics, metal paint, chains. Group exhibition Synchronicities, LOW off-site projects, Riga, Latvia. Curated by Žanete Liekīte. Photo: Filips Smits.



Karļina Mežecka, Cradling Wail, 2024. Ceramics, glaze, steel. Photo: Ansis Starks.

*ŽL: I believe you've got into your stride here. Recalling the opening, visitors mentioned that your works appear like a movement captured still, a frozen moment ... All right, to wrap up 'Archive of Fragility', I have one last question! Now that the exhibition has opened and we've had some time for reflection, what exactly do you think we archived here?*

KM: I've pondered this question quite a bit, trying to pin the essence of what an archive truly represents. Usually, when thinking of an archive, an image of a vast collection of dusty papers and photographs and artefacts comes to mind, documenting a specific time, place and people. But I do think that many different things can serve as this documentation, including materiality. The show serves as an archive not of precise documents, but of various materials that convey profound emotions and experiences. In a way, I think this diversity of materials, all coming together to explore the depths of the human condition, is what defines the essence of our archive.

*ŽL: I suppose that's why we emphasise the poetics, and refer to it as a poetic archive. Despite its abstract nature, it holds a deeply personal essence (smiles).*

KM: Yes (smiles).

# Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Swirling, Twirling, Spinning' at the Draakon Gallery

February 9, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024

The exhibition *Swirling, Twirling, Spinning* unites artists across generations in an empowering context, drawing inspiration from the ideas of Lithuanian-American archaeologist and anthropologist Marija Gimbutas. Her profound research brought attention to the ancient cultures of the Baltic region and the broader Indo-European world, exploring archaeological artefacts, linguistics, ethnography, and folklore. Gimbutas posited a thesis that prehistoric European culture centered around the worship of a Mother Goddess, as the giver of all life. A spiritual sense of connectedness was artfully expressed through a sophisticated symbol system and an abundance of ritual objects. Nature and body were honored in Europe for tens of thousands of years. Whereas women had an especially strong position in societies across Eastern and Central Europe – a tendency no longer necessarily evident today.

*Swirling, Twirling, Spinning* poetically weaves a narrative that bridges ancient myths and beliefs, natural cycles, and the transformative power of feminine energy across different cultures and times. Gimbutas, who having opened the treasure trove of prehistory, inspired a belief in a peaceful existence in our time – to bring back to life suppressed vital elements, such as the earth, the body

(health), the feminine, and the subconscious. Participating artists, through imaginative and fictitious narratives, share personal stories and cultural myths that also reflect the influence of Gimbutas' theories on ancient symbolism. Their works echo these concepts through a contemporary lens, incorporating elements such as spirals, circles, and motifs such as snakes and birds – symbols rooted in ancient European matriarchal cultures that continue to resonate in Baltic art and culture.

The exhibition contemplates on reimagining a world centered around goddess worship, with its emphasis on embracing womanhood, preserving nature, and forsaking warfare. Could this theoretical concept transcend into the tangible reality of our future society? *Swirling, Twirling, Spinning* seamlessly intertwines historical narratives and mythology, immersing us in the themes that Marija Gimbutas ignited: the celebration of life's cycles, constant renewal, the sanctity of the female body, and the spirituality inherent in these concepts. Gimbutas' exploration of the spiritual dimensions of a harmonious Old Europe and her vision for a New Europe free from dominance and warfare, feels remarkably pertinent in our contemporary world.

Exhibition *Swirling, Twirling, Spinning*

Curator: Merilin Talumaa

Artists: Daria Melnikova, Helena Keskküla, Marge Monko, Viktorija Daniliauskaite

Exhibition dates: 24.01.-17.02.2024

Venue: Draakon Gallery

Photography: Anna Mari Liivrand



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Bird Baths (Nests). Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Daria Melnikova, Signs. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Bird Baths (Nests). Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024

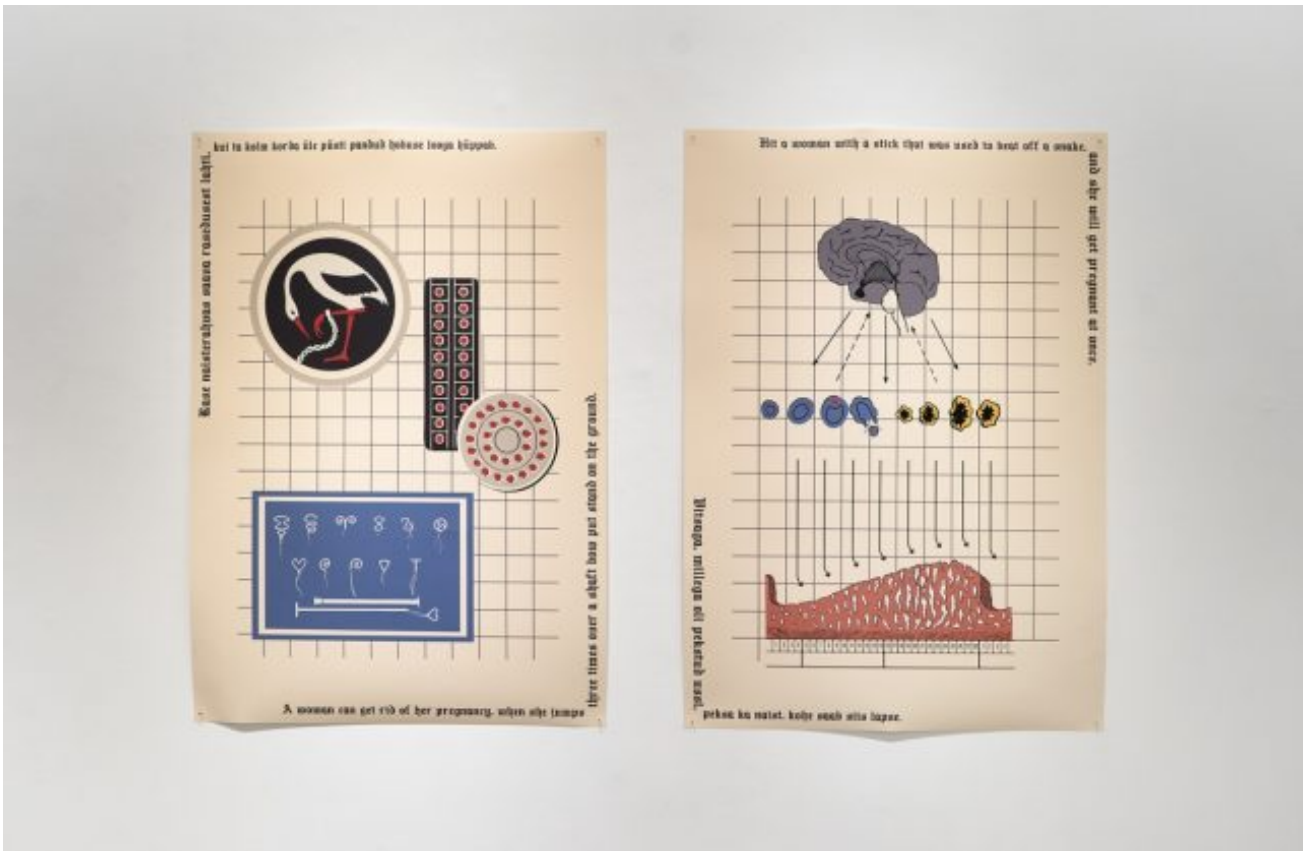


Helena Keskküla Bird Baths (Nests). Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024





Marge Monko. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Marge Monko Repression. Incitement. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Marge Monko Godess zine. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Moss Doesn't Grow II. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Moss Doesn't Grow II. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Moss Doesn't Grow I. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Moss Doesn't Grow I. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskküla Moss Doesn't Grow I. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Helena Keskkula Moss Doesn't Grow II. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Swirling, Twirling, Spinning. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Viktorija Daniliauskaitė Baltai Series I-III. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Viktorija Daniliauskaitė Baltai Series I-III. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



Viktorija Daniliauskaitė, Black Night IV. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand, 2024



# Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Archive of Fragility' by Karli na Mežecka at Kim? Contemporary Art Centre

February 13, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



From January 19 to February 25, Kim? Contemporary Art Centre will be showing three exhibitions by *Open Call 2023* winners. *Kim? Open Call* is an annual competition for emerging artists, artist collectives, and curators, and the winners have the opportunity to realize an exhibition at Kim? exhibition halls.

Opening on January 18, 6 pm-9 pm.

In the exhibition curated by Žanete Liekīte, the artist Karlīna Mežecka reflects on categories of fragility and turns to the poetics of regional space and human emotional experience within it. The images of the space “move in both directions: they are in us as much as we are in them”, initiated Gaston Bachelard. Leaning on this statement, the exhibition *Archive of Fragility* encompasses interior space and the individual's inner world as well as external space and outward bodily experience, becoming a tool for analysis of the human soul.

In the exhibition the human body has assumed an allegorical presence amid the investigation of heightened emotional states. The compromised forms of the artworks bring to mind the physical and emotional fragility of the body, and its delicacy is reflected in the “easily breakable” materials. Since ancient civilizations, ceramics have been symbolically linked with the representation of the body, and in Mežecka's works, they depict the imprints of experiences on a person. These reveal a dual philosophy of life, guided by both aesthetic considerations and the quotidian ones that are essential for survival. On the one hand, beauty is found in these imperfections; on the other, there is the necessity of repairing what is broken. Finding a solution somewhere between the Japanese

*kintsugi* technique and the frugal repair and patching typical of the former Eastern Bloc, the cracks within the works have been filled in with streamlets of molten tin.

The exhibition's associative scenography mirrors the architecture of memory, diverging from the factual layout of elements within the space in question and maybe even containing logical discrepancies and appropriations from other "spaces." Within this archive of memory feelings, one can encounter such "blank spots" and burned-out fields. It is a metaphorical house that reveals contrasting sensations – inside ceramic warmth resides in a mutually inclusive way, while anxiety lurks in the robust metallic cut-outs. These conditions correspond to what is suggested by Elaine Scarry's work *The Body in Pain*, where the same bodily and cognitive processes that cause pleasure can also be linked with pain, illustrating the complex nature of human emotions. There is a lack of specific knowledge about this ambiguous space, yet this is not a form of ignorance. Just like in poetics, where "not knowing is a difficult transcendence of knowledge", this archive operates according to the rules of poetry.

"If we opened people up, we'd find landscapes."

–Agnès Varda

The exhibition's metaphorical window opens to reveal a landscape tinged with shades of brown and grey-green, softened by a light fog. Light has a fundamental meaning in this landscape, as the ambiance of this region's space relies on the way the surface texture is illuminated. The weather is mostly foggy and overcast. This presence of fog also imparts a certain vagueness to the nature of expression in conversation. People speak in riddles, sidestepping straightforward opinions. The surfaces of Karliņa Mežecka's objects assume the mimicking qualities of this landscape. The glazing of the ceramics and the reflection on the glass transform the landscape as the lighting changes.

Archiving collective patterns conveys information about individuals, the enigmatic form of expression, and the region's history. Through the lens of Michel Foucault's archaeology of knowledge and aligned with Robert Smithson's proposition about the "future as reversed past," the *Archive of Fragility* strives to disclose the burned-out spots and write a personal, poetic self-analysis "history of the present."

Text: Žanete Liekīte

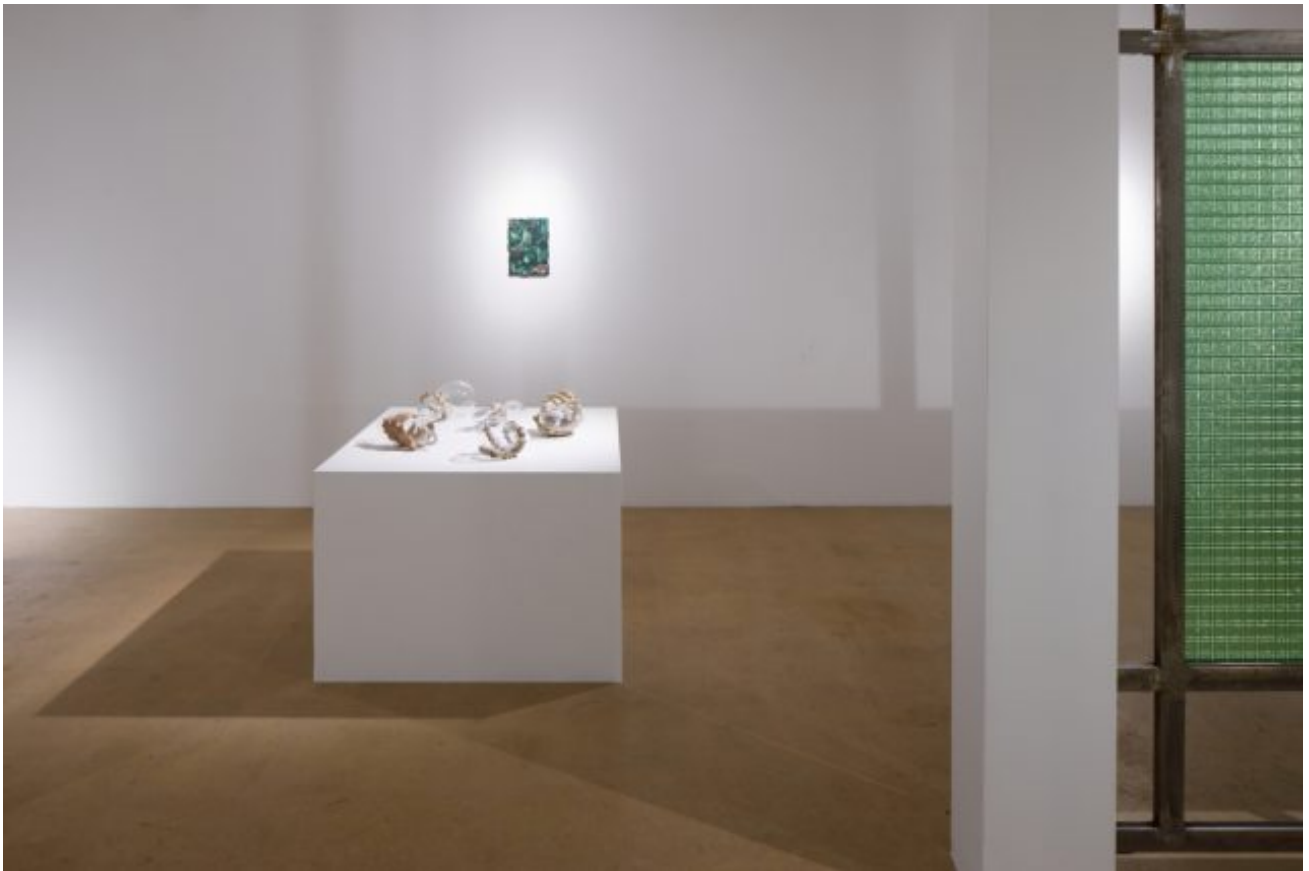
Karliņa Mežecka (1995) is an artist presently living and working in London, UK. She earned her bachelor's degree from the Department of Ceramics at the Art Academy of Latvia (2020) and her MA from the Ceramics & Glass program at the Royal College of Art in London (2022). Her most recent exhibitions include *Martinsons Award*, Mark Rothko Art Centre, Daugavpils, Latvia (2023); *Decentrality Dispersed in One Place*, Padure Manor, Padure, Latvia (2023); *Black Market 3*, Kim? Skolas street 18, Rīga, Latvia (2022); *Synchronicities*, Vagonu street, Rīga, LV (2022); *My Empty Shell*, Candid Gallery, London, UK (2022); *Melting Pot*, London, UK (2022); *Security Patterns*, LOW Gallery, Rīga, Latvia (2022); *Surrender*, PILOT Gallery, Rīga, Latvia (2021); *Wonders of Democracy*, Sculpture Quadrennial, Rīga, Latvia (2020).

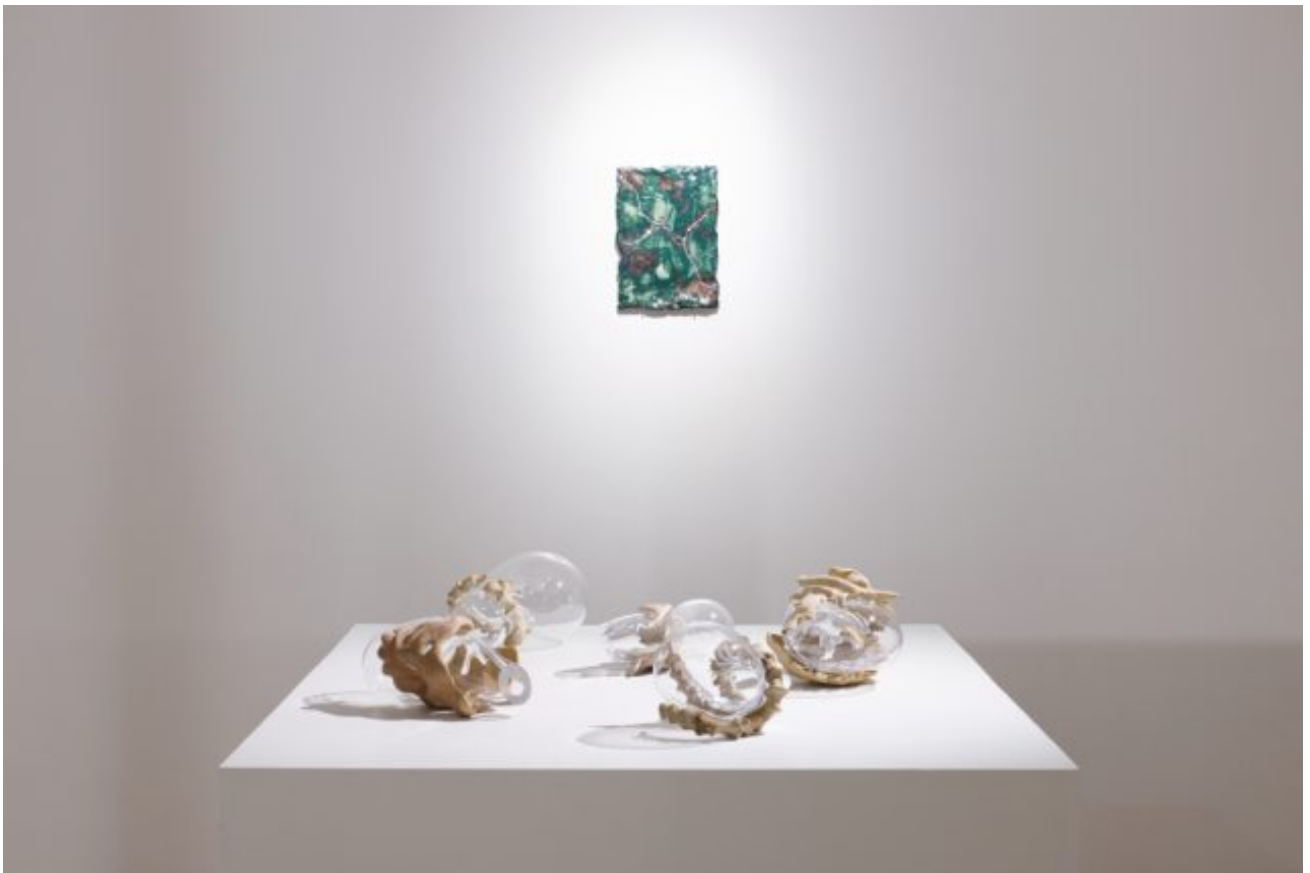
Supported by:

Ministry of Culture, State Culture Capital Foundation, Absolut, Valmiermuižas alus.

Special thank you to Armands Broks and Glasremis Glass Art Studio.

Photography: Ansis Starks

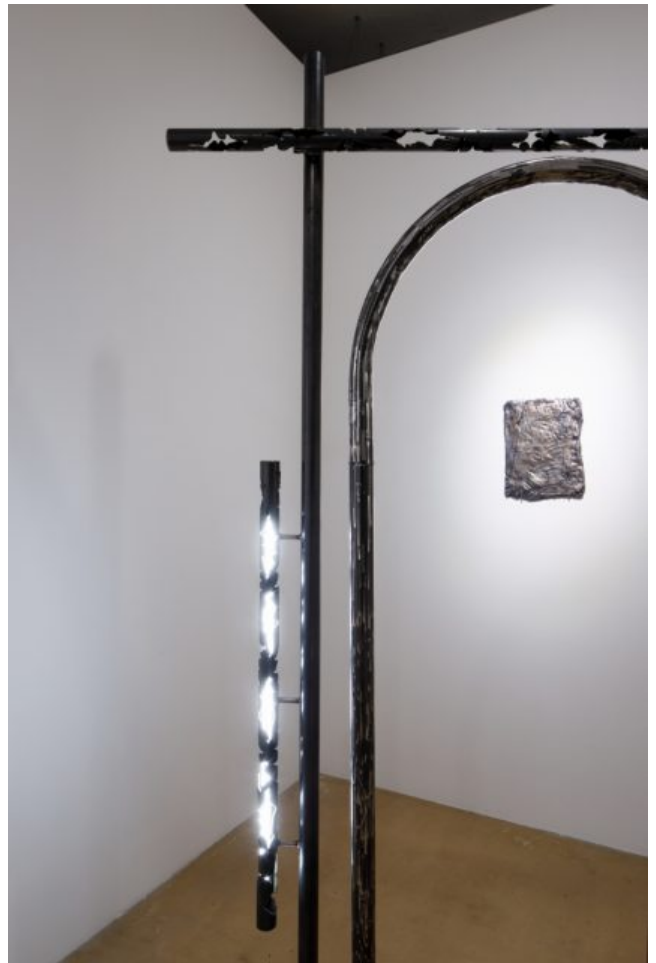
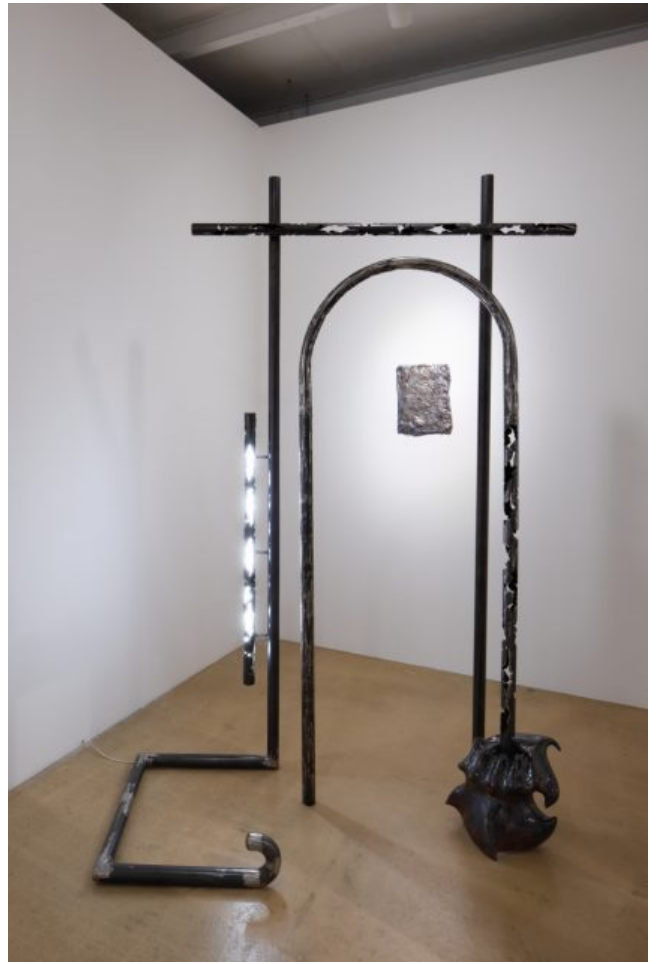






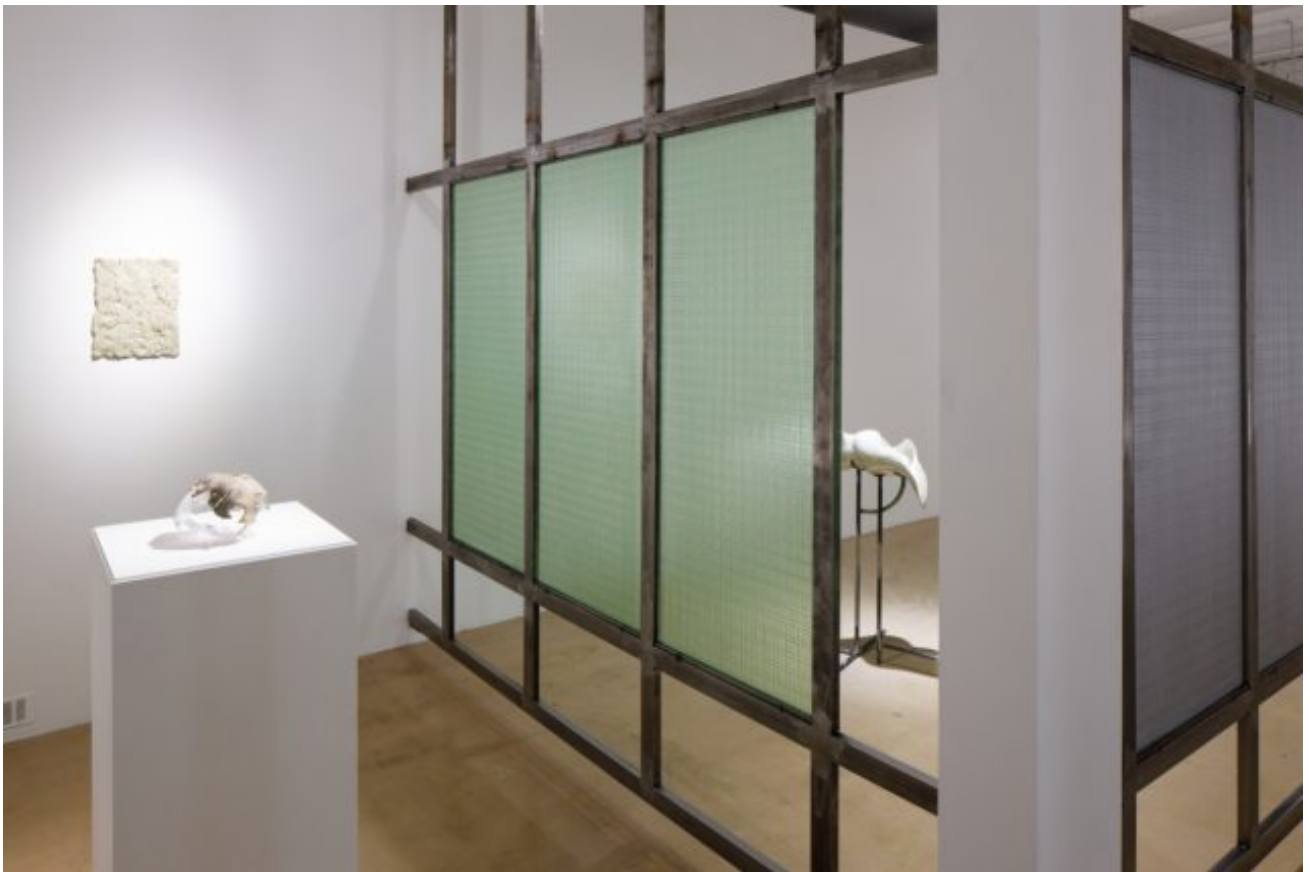


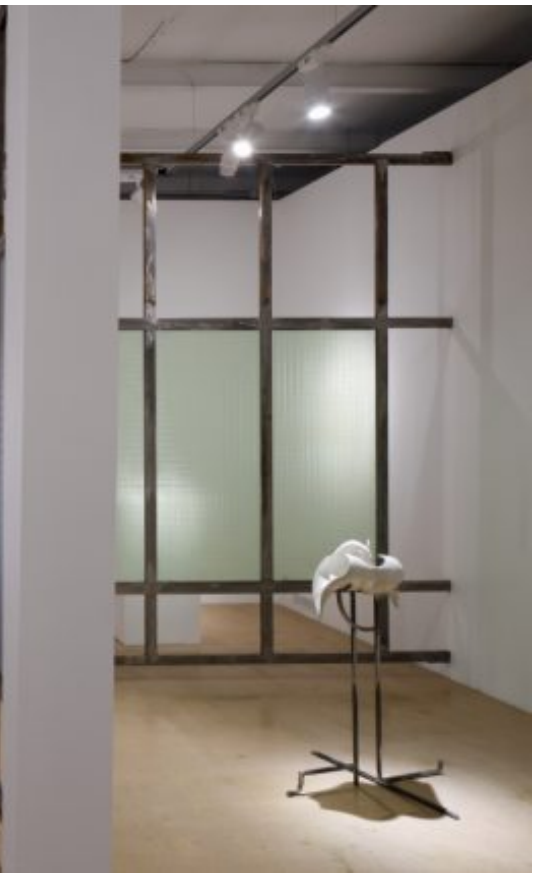
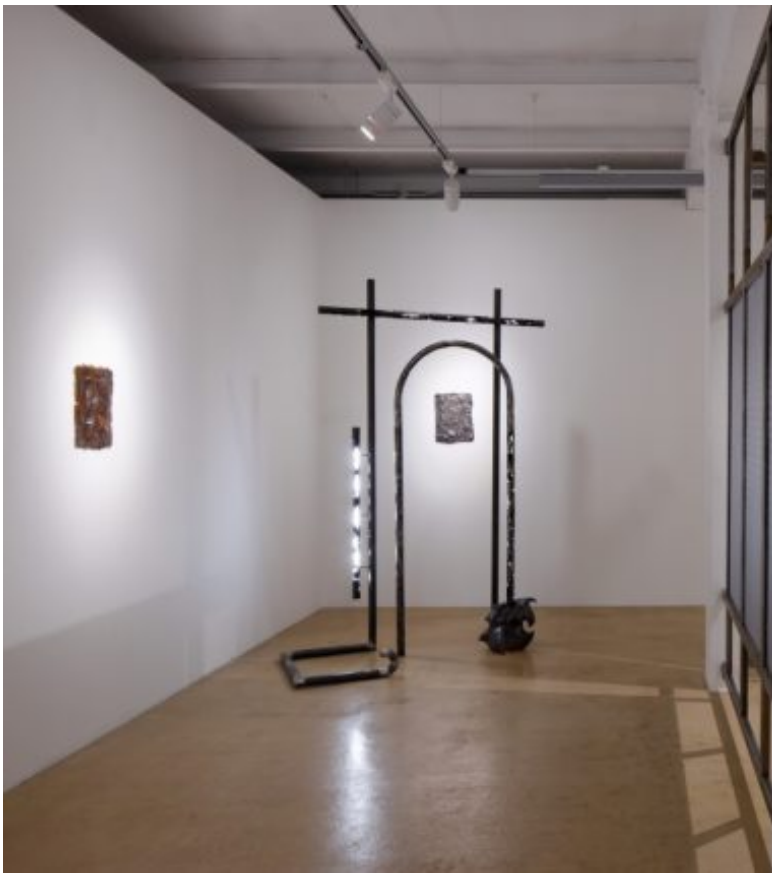












# Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Pedagogical Games 1: Agents and Boundaries' by Viktor Timofeev at 427 Gallery

February 16, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



*“Playing a game is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles.”*

Bernard Suits from his 1978 book *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia*

Over the last several years, I've been teaching experimental computer games classes to both art and non art students at a few universities. On a weekly basis, we play, discuss and make games using some basic programming. My focus is similar to any studio class, encouraging students to let loose with the medium and in the process express themselves and whatever is on their mind. The games we make tend to be simple yet unexpectedly existential – first person cameras that roam blocky, geometric landscapes collecting pointless items, opening an infinite amount of doors and interacting with faceless characters. Time and time again, I have found myself moved by students' games that are able to address topics such as trouble at home or personal anxiety using deceptively simple means. But the most memorable experience from these classes has been watching students present – and play – *their* own games in front of the class. If their games are introspective mirrors, playing through them is a way of inhabiting and cathartically owning them (at least this is what some of the students have told me). Needless to say, these classes have left an impression on me.

The Bernard Suits quote listed above is something we discuss early on. Being able to temporarily construct and inhabit a space where you have absolute agency, however constrained, can be incredibly empowering in a world that often feels outside of your control. This is analogous to my own personal relationship to art-making (as a personal hobby, not necessarily as a public practice). I first started making art as a way to cope with issues surrounding my health. Then it became my

home as I moved to new countries. And recently, as I've spent a lot of my time teaching, I have found it in my curriculum. For example, when introducing a new tool or concept, I share a mini-game that I built using only that tool. These games are usually very simple, or absurdly impossible, in order to demonstrate a possible extremity. This was the start of my "pedagogical games", and the starting point of this exhibition.

*Agents and Boundaries*, the current exhibition at 427, evolved to encompass several overlapping themes. The first comes from one of my mini-games, which covered navigation for AI "bots" and collision detection between objects. The name of that week's class was Agents and Boundaries, which is where the exhibition title came from. I decided the mini-game was odd enough to take out of context and stage an exhibition around, so I expanded it to take place in a virtual version of the 427 gallery. Its goal is to respond to spatial prompts while traversing several labyrinths at once. In the exhibition, the game is presented on a computer terminal that is mirrored to a projector, recreating the classroom dynamic including the awkward, uneven lighting. It can be interpreted as navigating invisible constructs, such as social relationships, national identities and societal norms.

Growing up in Riga speaking both Latvian and Russian languages, my Latvian language was halted when me and my family immigrated to America. Once my grandfather, who always encouraged my Latvian identity, passed away, so too did my closest link to the language. When I made my way back to Riga as an adult, I found myself wanting to blend in. Only recently have I accepted that this will never be the case and that my fractured identities are very common and something I can embrace. This mixing of languages inspired my ongoing work that is a mutating alphabet. The version made for this exhibition takes the first four letters of the Roman alphabet and systematically scrambles them indefinitely. Sometimes new letter-like formations are created; other times, the chimeric foreign characters are pure nonsense.

The gallery radiator is extended to surround the perimeter of the space, creating an illusion of a cradle-like enclosure for the visitor, shrinking them to the size of a child. This effect is compounded by the room-sized projector screen and oversized mural of a window. Taken together with the classroom aesthetics, this play with scale is intended to flip the pedagogical environment – adults are the children here, left to play in its unfamiliar logic.

– Viktor Timofeev

Viktor Timofeev (b. 1984, Riga, Latvia) is an artist based in New York. Timofeev's multidisciplinary practice is informed by personal experiences, speculative imaginings and everything in between. He hosts monthly events that include screenings, performances and sensory deprivation listening sessions at No Moon, an event space in Brooklyn he co-founded in 2018. Recent solo exhibitions include *DOG* at Interstate Projects in New York (2021), *God Objects* at Karlin Studios / Futura in Prague (2020), *God Room* at Alyssa Davis Gallery in New York (2018) and *Stairway to Melon* at Kim? Contemporary Art Center in Riga (2017). Recent group exhibitions include *Tallinn Photomonth* in Tallinn (2023), *Digital Intimacy* at the National Gallery Prague in Prague (2021), the *14th Baltic Triennial* at Contemporary Art Center in Vilnius (2021), *Unexpected Encounters* at the Arsenāls Hall at Latvian National Museum of Art (2019) and *Somewhere in Between* at Bozar in Brussels (2018).

Artist : Viktor Timofeev

Exhibition Title : Pedagogical Games 1: Agents and Boundaries

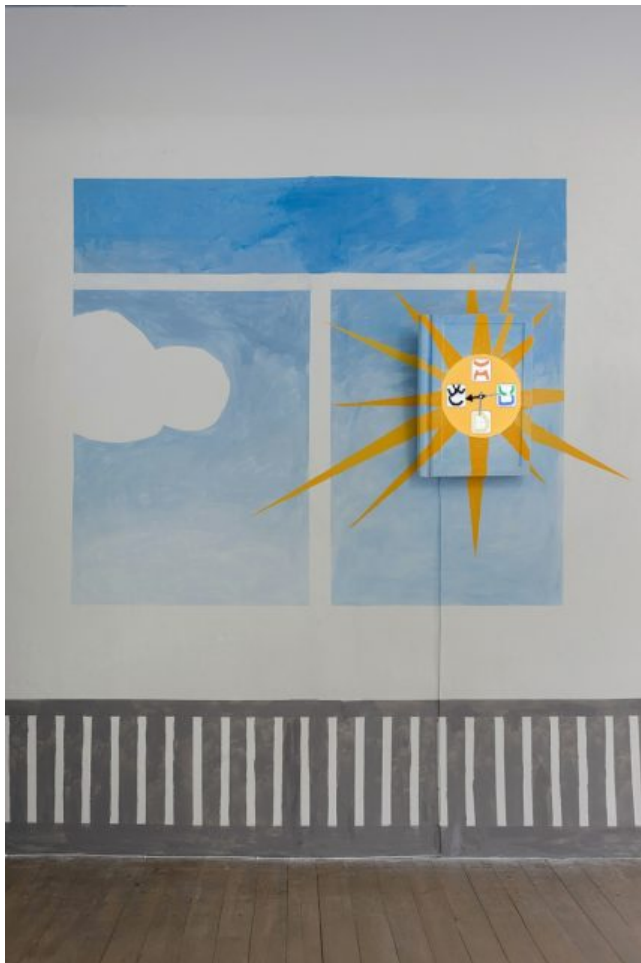
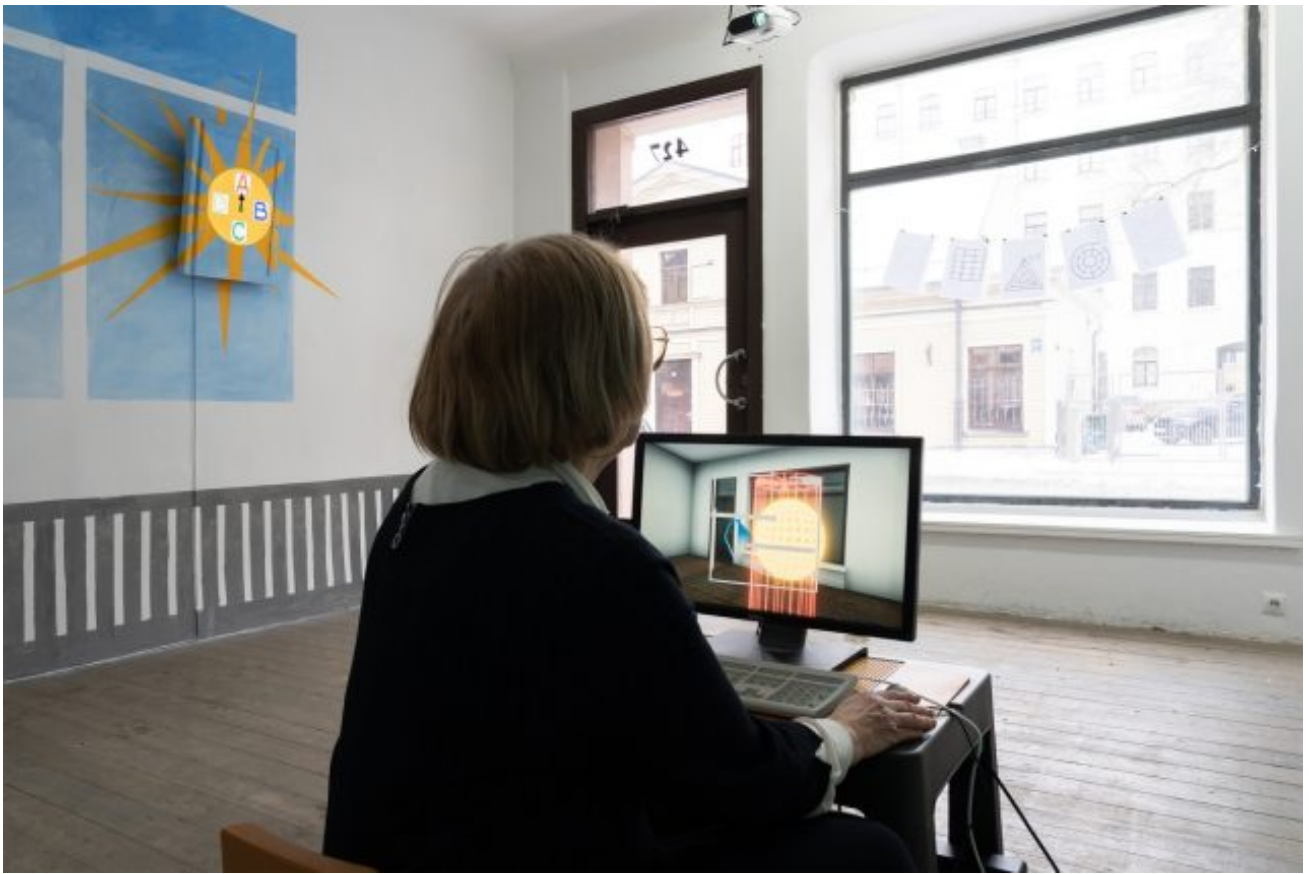
Venue : 427 Gallery, Riga

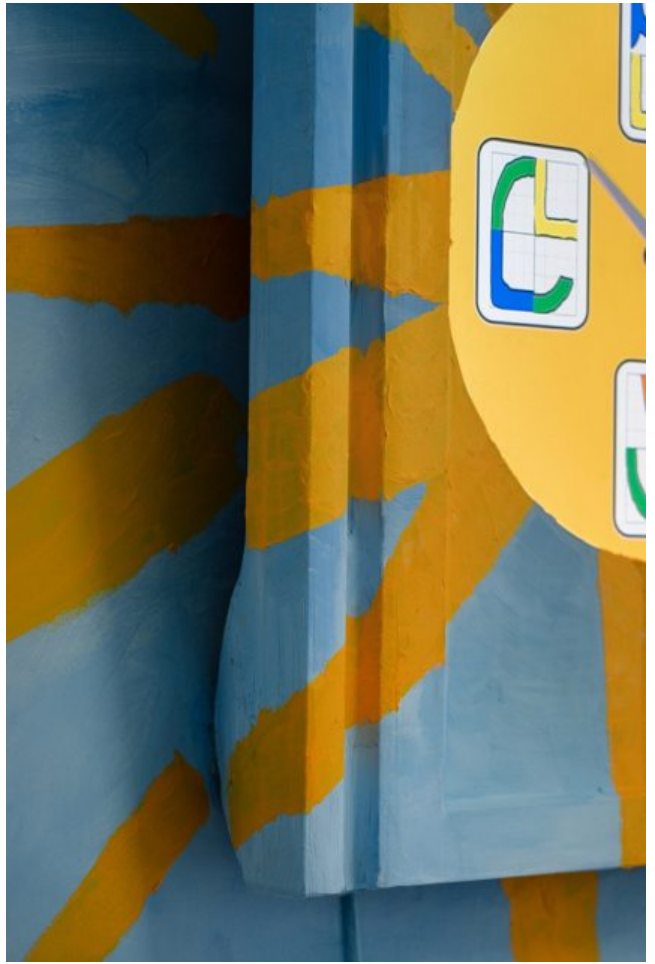
Date : January 12 – February 17 2024

Photography : Līga Spunde

Model: Tatiana Borunova

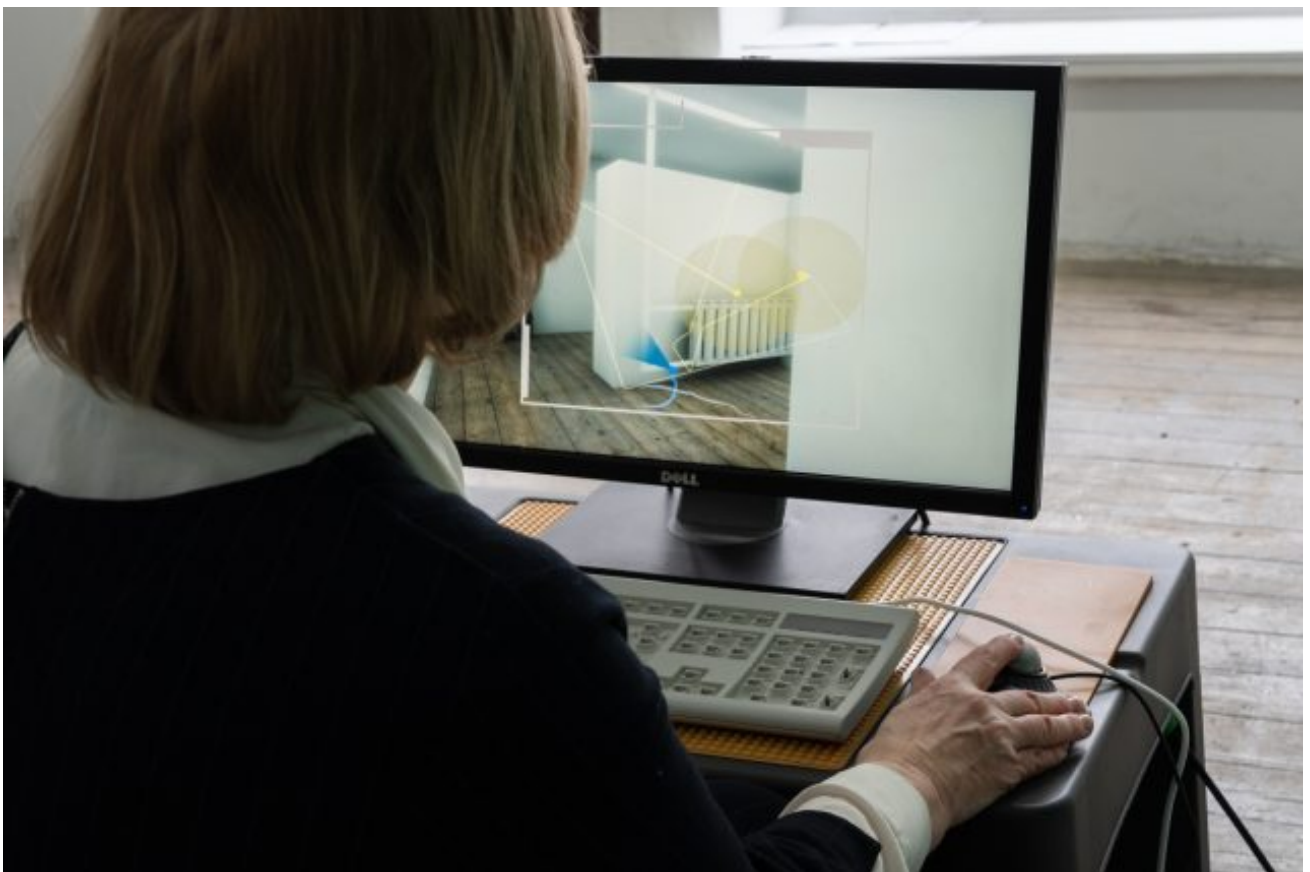






























Agent and Boundaries, 2024. Interactive game, projection screen, children's table and chair, mural, modified keyboard and mouse

Circular Alphabet: Kids Edition, 2024 Generative software, TV, acrylic paint infinite duration

# Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Lipstick' by Gerda Paliušytė at Editorial

February 18, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Gerda Paliušytė, Lipstick, 2024. Exhibition view at Editorial

“There was a star riding through clouds one night, & I said to the star, ‘Consume me’.”  
Virginia Woolf, “The Waves”

Gerda Paliušytė’s solo show “Lipstick” consists of a sculptural installation specially created for the space and images from the photo series “Guys” and “Blue Flowers” which have been ongoing for several years by now. “Lipstick” is the first presentation of the artist’s work in the contemporary art space in Lithuania.

The bodies observed in “Guys” (ongoing since 2021) are abstracted, fragmented, sometimes almost completely blending into their surroundings. The compositions of the photos depend on each situation and time spent with the subjects. The series “Blue Flowers” (ongoing since 2022), developed in parallel, feature macro images of roses and orchids dyed blue. As flowers bloom, the blue pigment gradually disappears and petals turn pale, opening up new and unexpected color combinations. Although the enlarged images of flowers call for a closer look, they refuse to provide the visual sharpness that macro techniques usually promise.

The relations between material bodies captured in the photographs are further developed in a monumental installation that temporarily transforms the “Editorial” space. “Lipstick” encompasses phenomena such as givenness and change, desire and repression, collective being and personal choices. Emphasising materiality of bodies and surfaces, and the tensions between them, the artist explores how aesthetics are conditioned by social circumstances, economics and time.

Gerda Paliušytė (b. 1987) lives and works in Vilnius. She is interested in various documentary practices, historical and popular culture phenomena and characters, and their relationship to social reality. Paliušytė’s work (films, photography) often explore different forms of intimacy, the magic and fragility of collective existence.

Recent exhibitions include “We Live in Places” (together with Gabija Nedzinskaite) at the former Institute of Physics in Vilnius; Lavender Opener Chair Gallery, Tokyo. In 2023, Six Chairs Books published Paliušytė’s photobook “Guys and Blue Flowers”, (edited by Elena Narbutaitė).

Graphic design: Gabija Nedzinskaite.

Colour correction and printing of the photographs in the exhibition: “Aust studio”.

Many thanks go to Vitalija Jasaitė, Neringa Černiauskaitė, Gediminas G. Akstinas, Jurgis Paškevičius, Simonas Mackevičius, Antanas Gerlikas.

The exhibition is funded by the Lithuanian Council for Culture, Vilnius City Municipality.

The exhibition is supported by the metalworking and metal products manufacturing company “Paseta”.

The exhibition is open until the 13th of April.

Artist: Gerda Paliušytė

Exhibition title: Lipstick

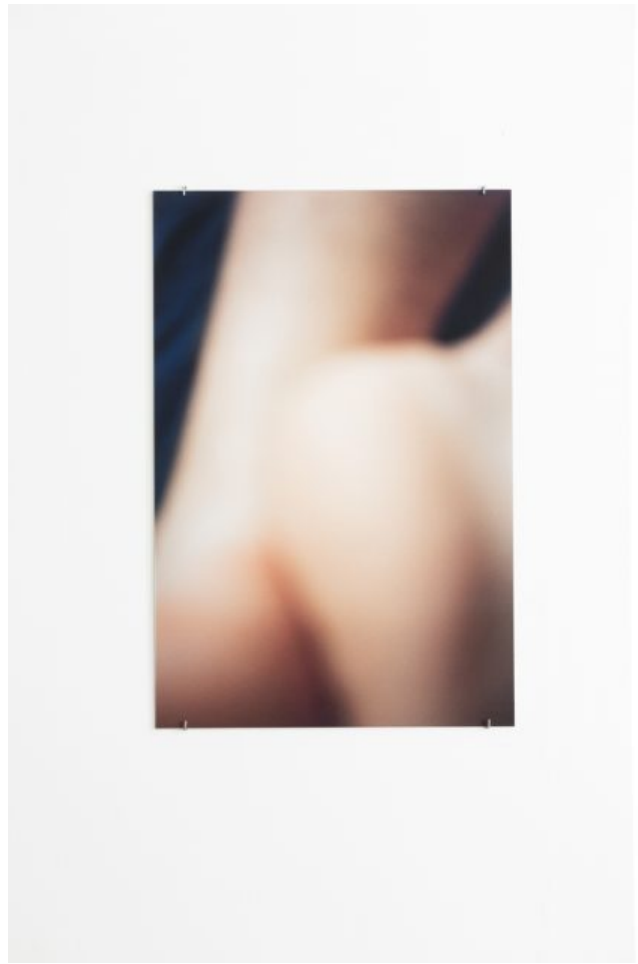
Venue: Editorial, Vilnius

Dates: 09.02.2024 – 13.04.2024

Photography: Editorial



Gerda Paliušytė, Guys, 2023. Giclée print, 50 x 75 cm



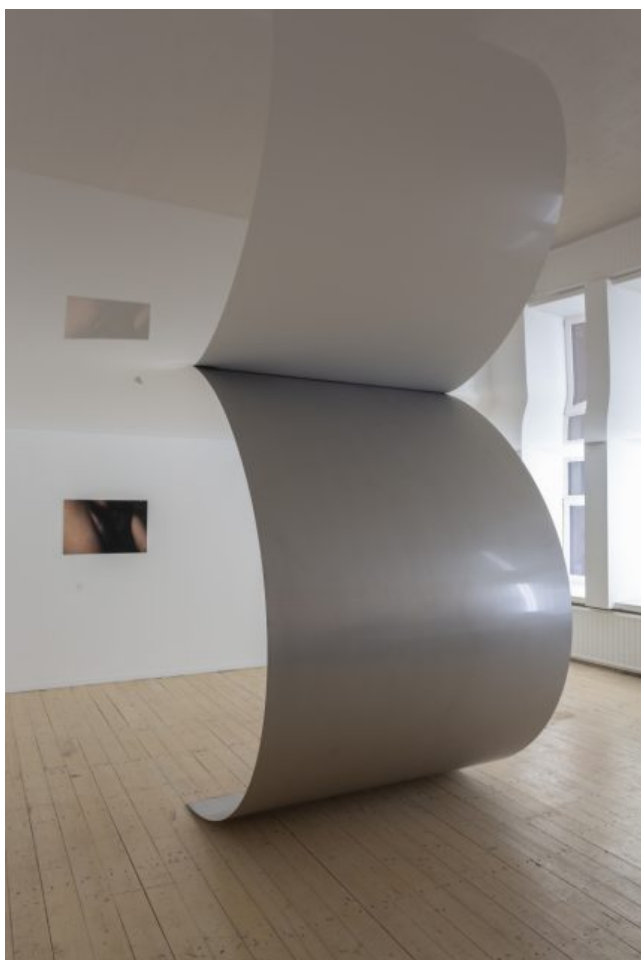
Gerda Paliušytė, Guys, 2023. Giclée print, 50 x 75 cm



Gerda Paliušytė, Guys, 2023. Giclée print, 50 x 75 cm



Gerda Paliušytė, Lipstick, 2024. Exhibition view at Editorial



Gerda Paliušytė, Lipstick, 2024. Exhibition view at Editorial



Gerda Paliušytė, Lipstick, 2024. Exhibition view at Editorial



Gerda Paliušytė, Blue Flowers, 2024. Two flexible OLED screens, 7.8 inches



Gerda Paliušytė, Blue Flowers, 2024. Two flexible OLED screens, 7.8 inches





Gerda Paliušytė, Lipstick, 2024. Exhibition view at Editorial



Gerda Paliušytė, Lipstick, 2024. Exhibition view at Editorial



Gerda Paliušytė, Untitled, 2024. Curved stainless steel panel, 360 x 170 cm, glossy stretch ceiling, 50 m2



Gerda Paliušytė, Untitled, 2024. Curved stainless steel panel, 360 x 170 cm, glossy stretch ceiling, 50 m2



Gerda Paliušytė, Untitled, 2024. Curved stainless steel panel, 360 x 170 cm, glossy stretch ceiling, 50 m2

# 'Magic is sometimes very close to nothing at all' by Hanna Samoson at the Tallinn Art Hall Lasnamäe Pavilion

February 19, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet

Magic is sometimes very close to nothing at all is an exhibition about the loss caused by a great flood, coming to terms with this loss, letting go of the previous world order and building a new world from the ruins of the past life. The curator of the exhibition is Siim Preiman.

How to attain a feather-light existence and shed all excess? Hanna Samoson dedicated the past year to pondering this quest. Through her contemplations, a series of patterns emerged from her experiences, aligning like puzzle pieces with the symbols she encountered. Within the confines of the Lasnamäe Pavilion, visitors are invited to traverse a path crafted by videos, stone sculptures, and installations. This journey captivates, involving us in its narrative, yet maintaining an openness that mirrors the artist's profound realization — that every ending is always the beginning of something new.

Fueled by grief, Samoson unlocks the door to understanding profound human experiences. Curator Siim Preiman emphasizes the impossibility of encapsulating another person's journey in words, stating, "Hanna Samoson is not a suffering artist, but a curious, empathetic and caring person. After her loss she set her sights on reconciliation, deciding to give up everything superfluous and strive for a state where nothing is redundant, but nothing is lacking, either. On her journey Hanna encounters various people and animals, experiences powerful natural phenomena and other seemingly small but magical coincidences."

Hanna Samoson(1987) explores the boundaries of art and tries to perceive the unknown. Being in constant motion as an intuitive creator, her work is characterised by quick and spontaneous decisions. She studied photography at the Estonian Academy of Arts and graduated from the FAMU Academy of Performing Arts in Prague in 2021. In the autumn of 2020 she walked the future route of Rail Baltic from Ikla to Tallinn as an endurance art performance, as a result of which the film Trail Baltic: A Trip to the Green (2023) was produced in cooperation with Levila. Among her latest shows are group exhibitions Pine-fulness at Tallinn City Gallery (2021) and Vana-Võromaa Cultural Centre (2022) and Runner Along the Border, Rat Catcher and Bricklayer at the Art Hall Gallery (2022).

The collaboration for the exhibition involved the support of spiritual guide Klara Hobza, along with artists and companions Helena Keskküla and Johanna Ranne, composer Janek Murd, sound designer Martin Kikas and project manager Hanna-Antheia Stern. The exhibition was designed by Kairi Mändla.

The exhibition is accompanied by a versatile audience and educational programme, information about which will be announced on Tallinn Art Hall's website at [kunstihoone.ee/en/programme](https://kunstihoone.ee/en/programme).

Title: Hanna Samoson. Magic is sometimes very close to nothing at all

Curator: Siim Preiman

Venue: Tallinn Art Hall Lasnamäe Pavilion

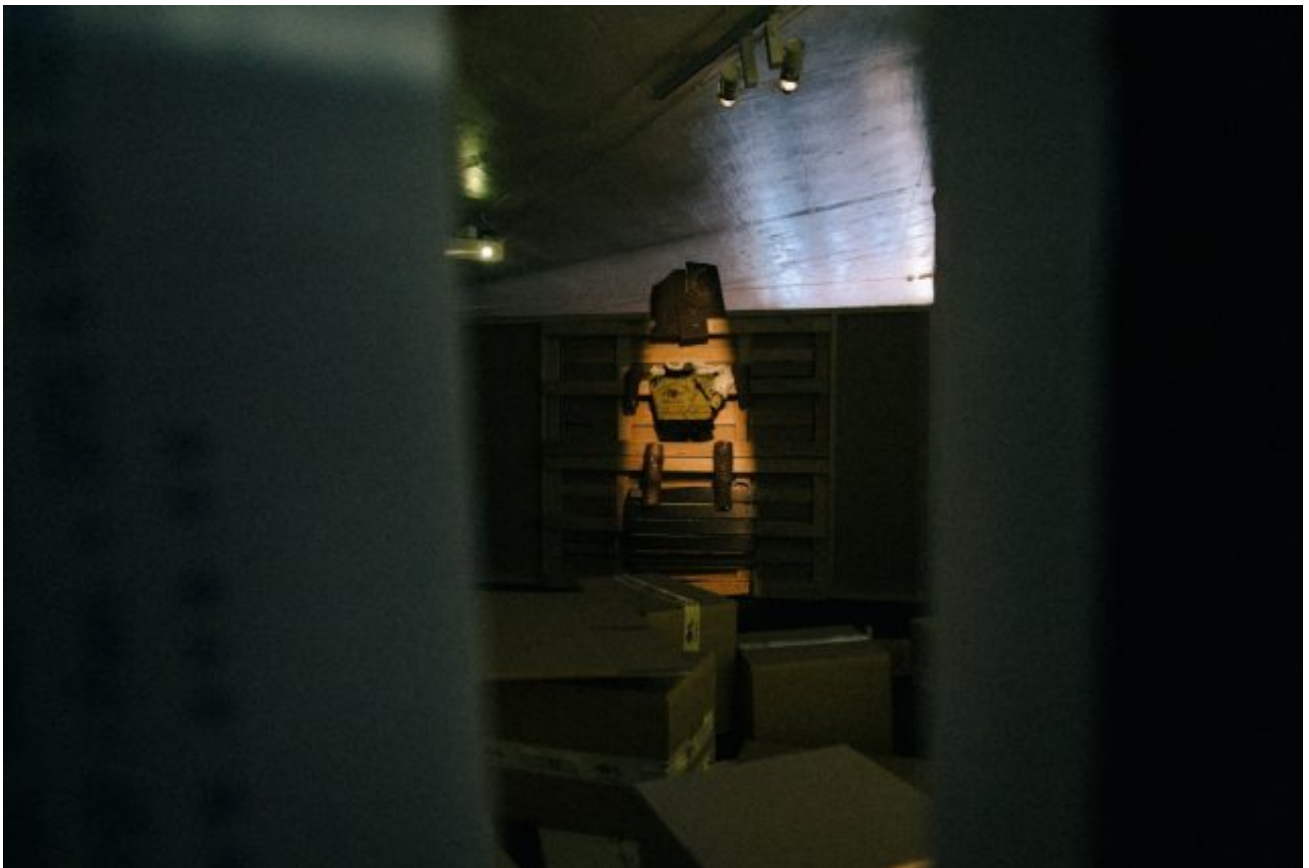
Dates: 09.12.2023–25.02.2024



Hanna Samoson, Enriko, Video, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, *Tower*, Video and installation with cardboard boxes, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



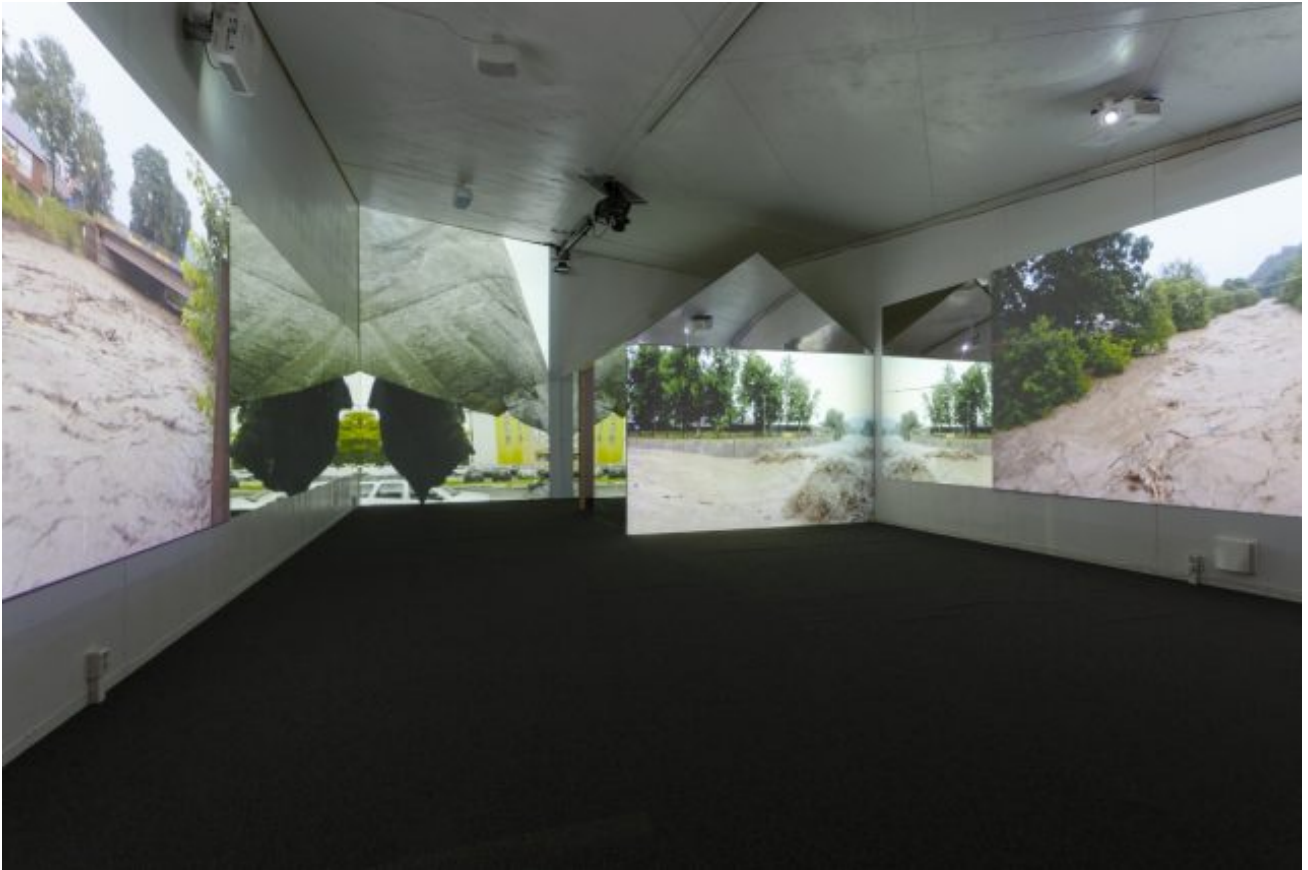
Hanna Samoson and Helena Keskküla, *A Pile of Rocks on a Chair Granite, pallet, bench*, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson, Tower, Video and installation with cardboard boxes, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson, Tower, Video and installation with cardboard boxes, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk

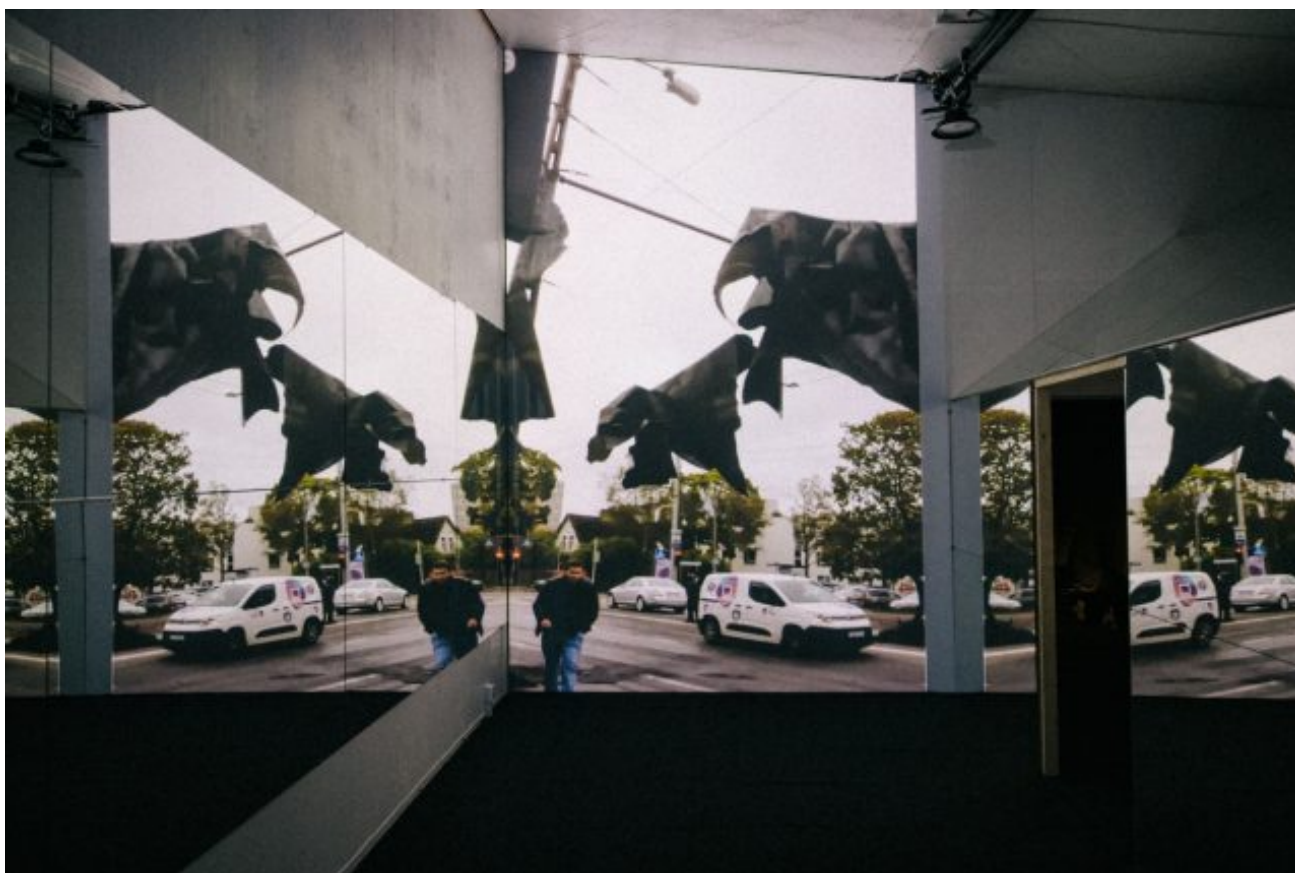


Hanna Samoson, *Wheel of Fortune*, Video installation, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet

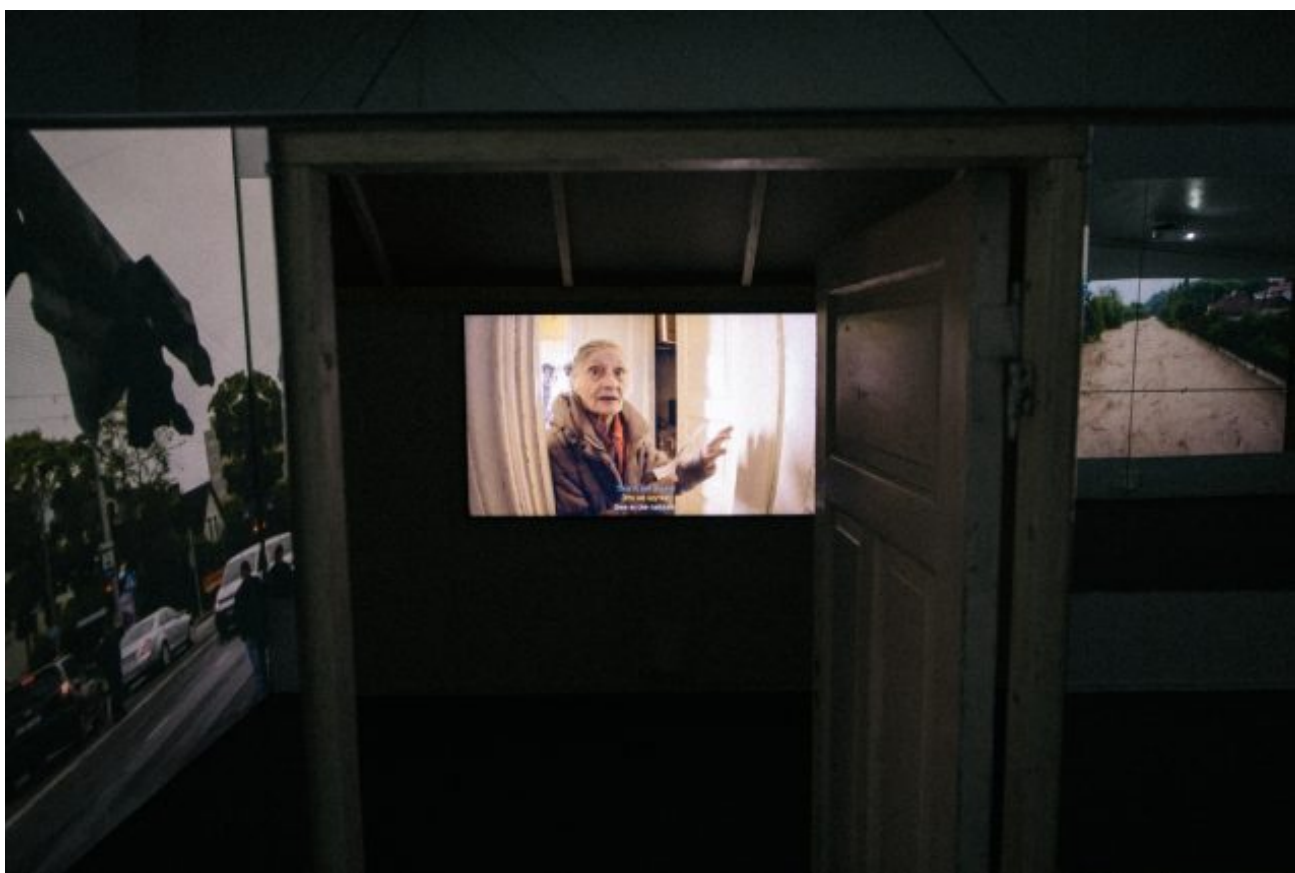


Hanna Samoson, *Wheel of Fortune*, Video installation, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet





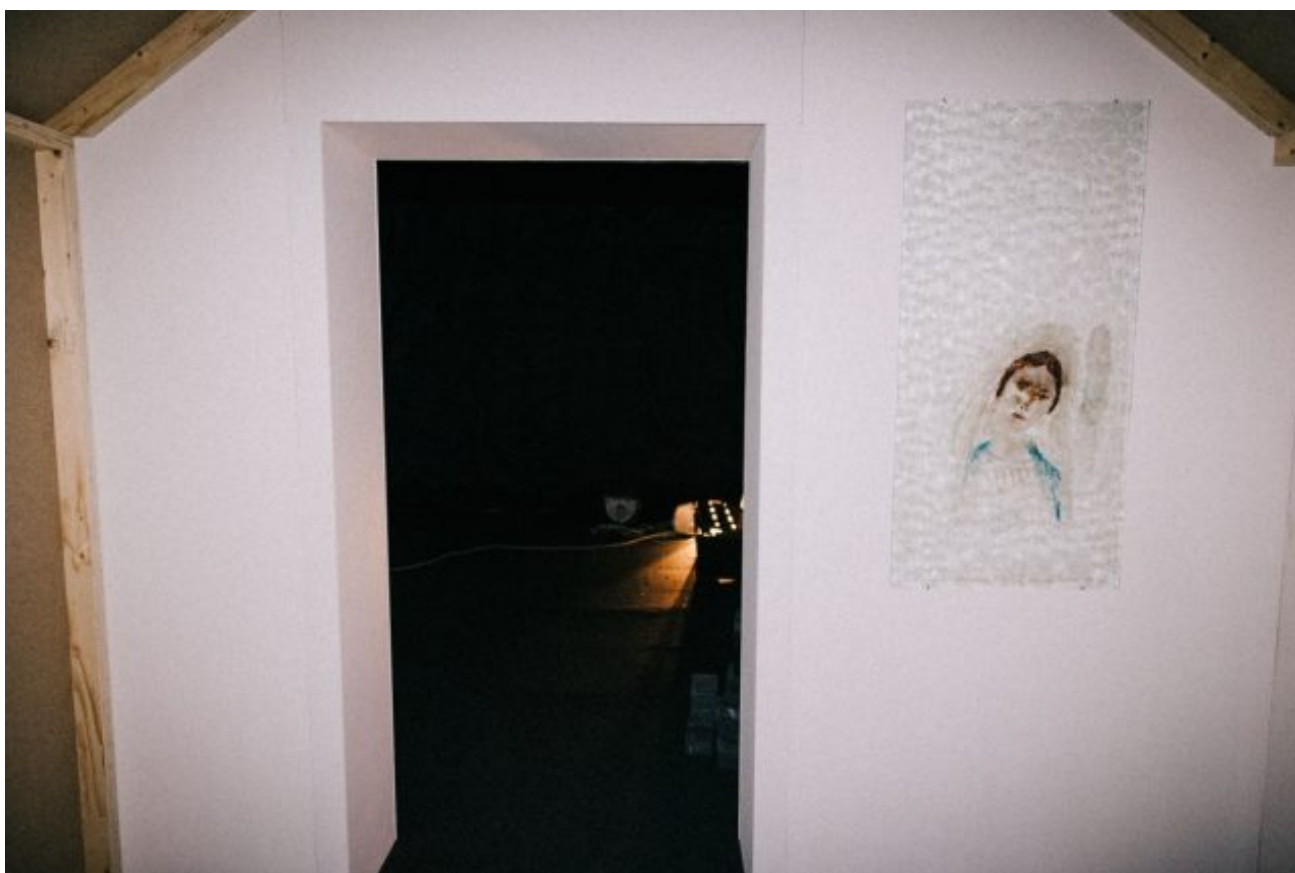
Hanna Samoson, *Out*, Video installation, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson *Johanna*, Video, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson, Johanna, Video, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Johanna Ranne, Apparition in Tina Street Glass, blood, oil, 1997-1998. Photo by Ken Mürk



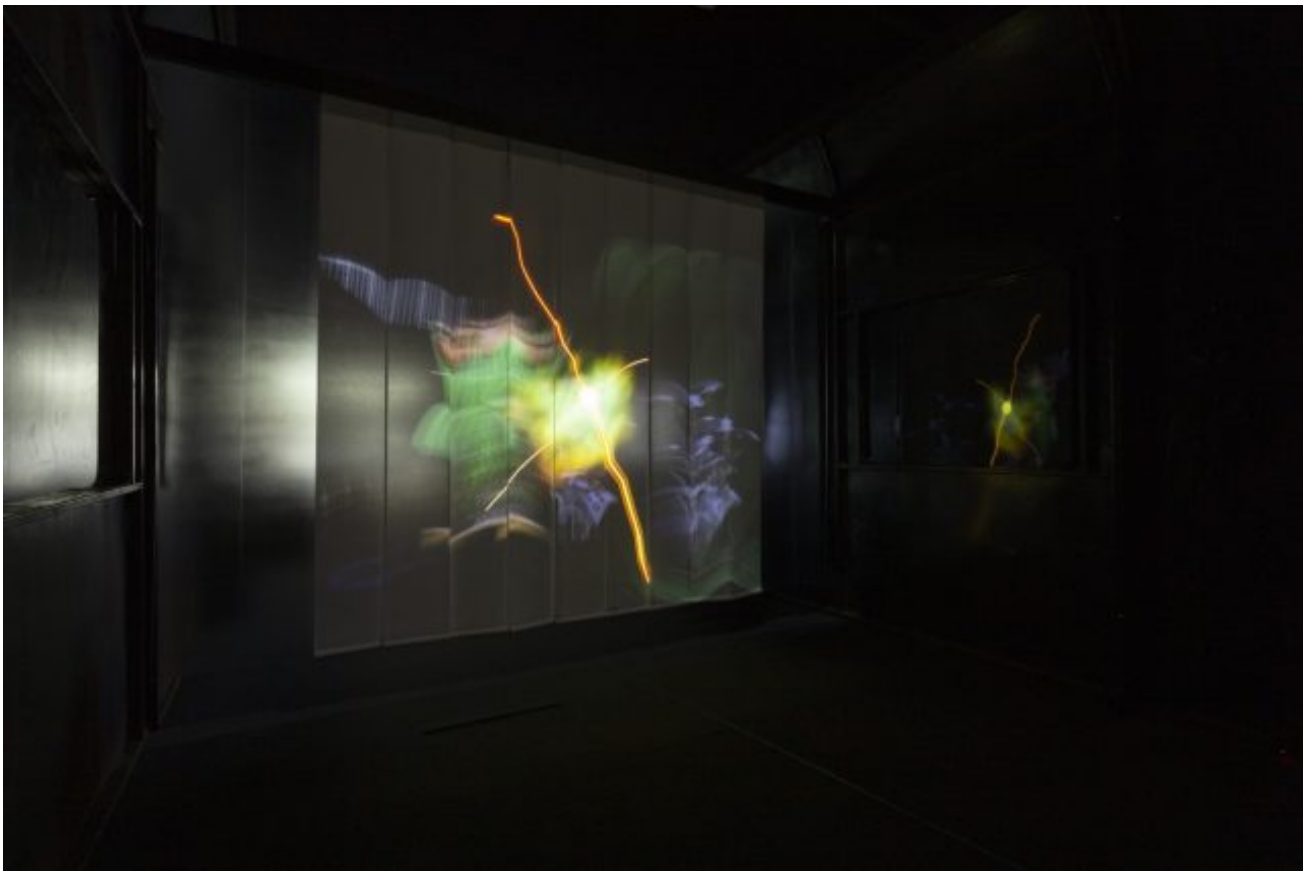
Hanna Samoson and Helena Keskküla, A Sculpture of Cause and Effect, Granite, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson and Helena Keskküla, A Sculpture of Cause and Effect, Granite, marble, 2023. Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson, *Out*, Video, bus stop sign, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, *The Fifth Dimension*, Video, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, New World, Video installation, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, New World, Video installation, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, Exhibition view. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson, Moon, Video installation, limestone, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



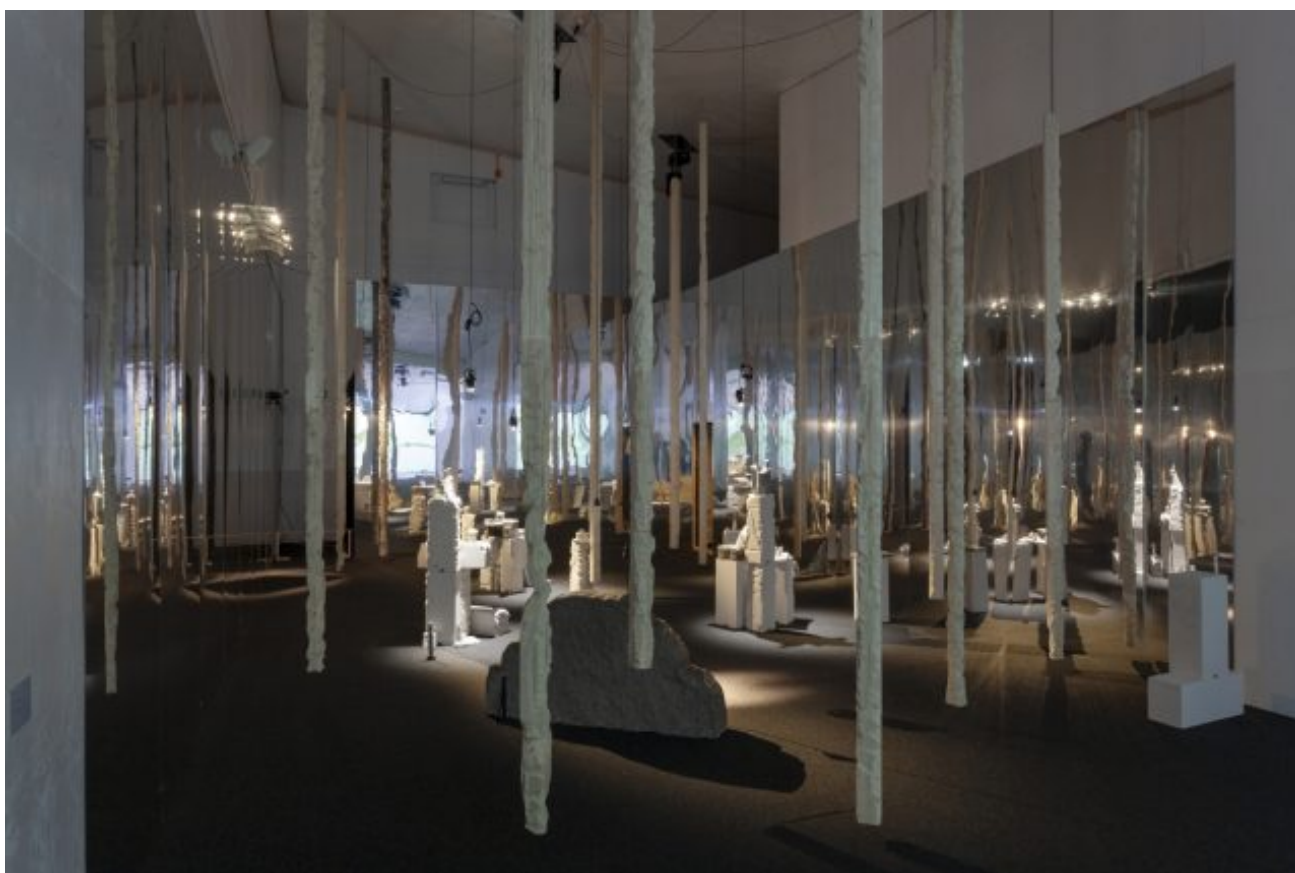
Hanna Samoson, Moon, Installation, limestone, 2023.  
Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson, Exhibition view. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet





Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson and Helena Keskküla, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, granite, wood, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson and Helena Keskküla, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, granite, wood, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



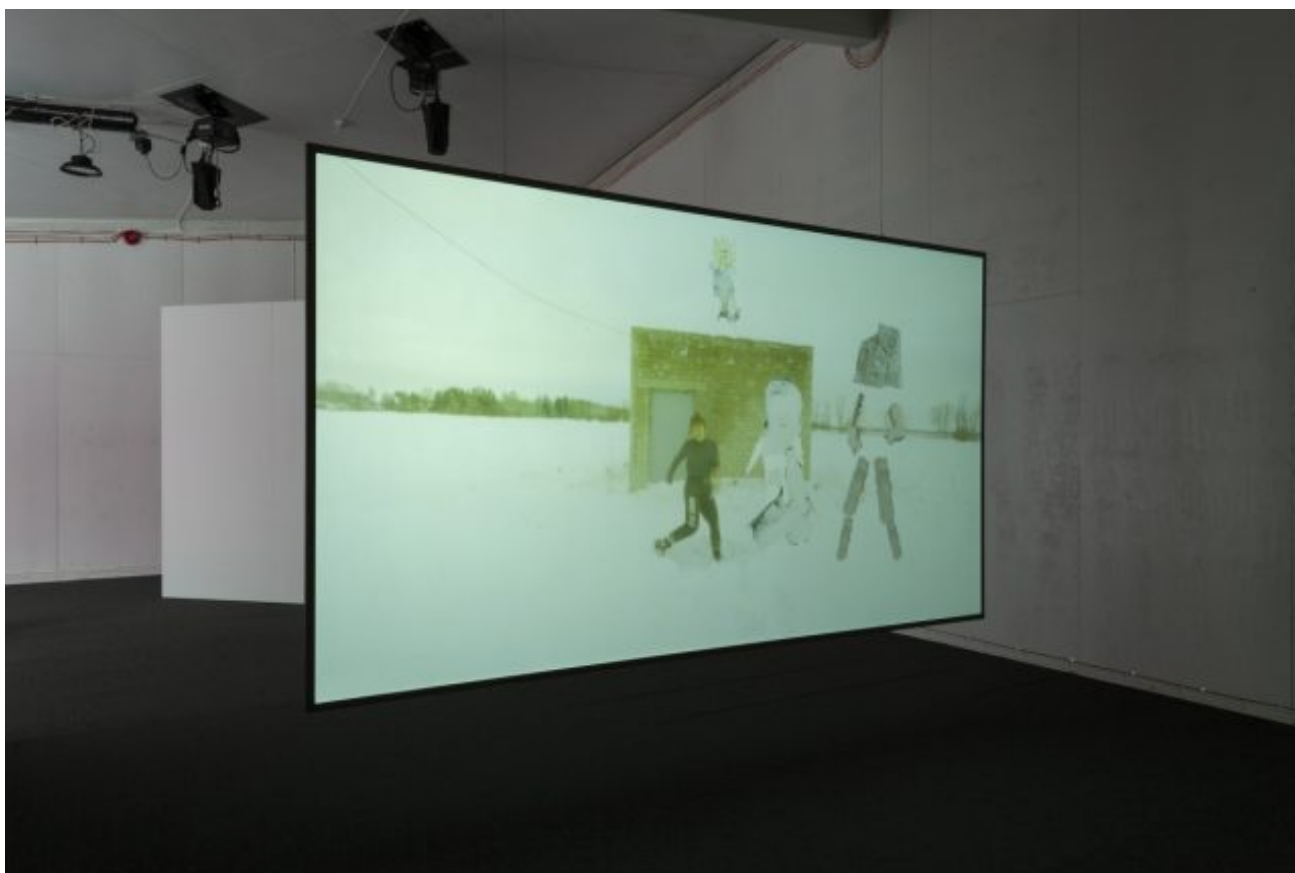
Hanna Samoson, *A Garden of Plenty*, Installation. Marble, limestone, wood, 2023. Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson and Helena Keskküla, Unknown authors, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Granite, limestone, marble, wood, 2023-2024. Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson, A Garden of Plenty, Installation. Marble, wood, 2023. Photo by Hanna Samoson



Hanna Samoson, *A Shared Secret*, Video, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



Eke Ao Nettan\_Miuks, *Limestone*, 2023. Photo by Paul Kuimet



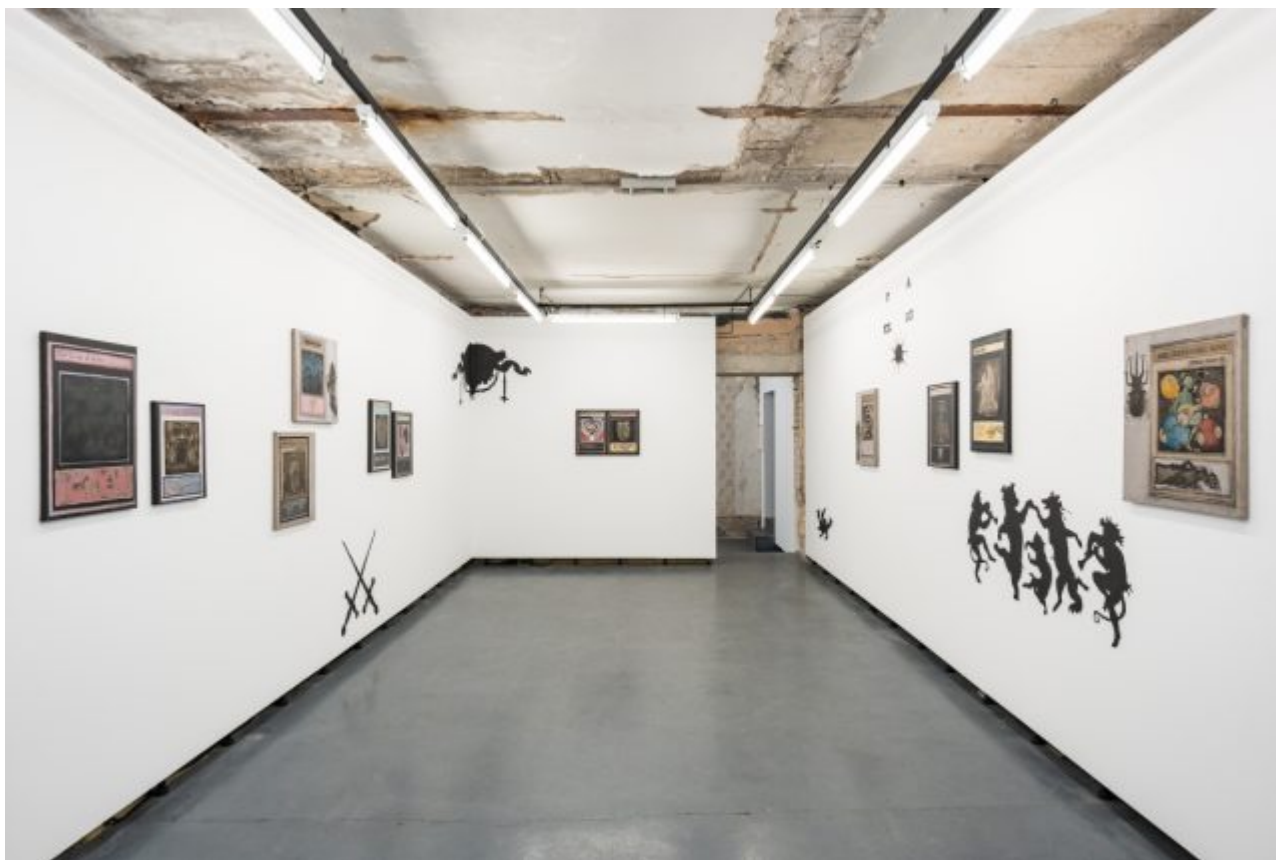
Hanna Samoson, Temple for Uku, Alaska green granite, Bauroc aircrete, marble, black bricks, paving stones, 2023. Photo by Ken Mürk



# Photo reportage from the exhibition 'KRIPTIK' by Emilis Benediktas Šeputis at the Rooster Gallery

February 21, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



The Rooster Gallery presents an exhibition KRIPTIK by the young generation artist, painter Emilis Benediktas Šeputis featuring his latest series of works in which the artist is looking for the unity of the meanings of different phenomena, objects and texts that have shaped his and his generation's imagination and its parallels and place within the historical iconographic tradition.

The exhibition KRIPTIK unfolds as a perpetual interplay of encoding, decoding, and transcoding, where the various visual elements within the artist's works coalesce into enigmatic wholes. Šeputis poses an unsolvable conundrum, drawing inspiration from diverse iconographic traditions and appropriating materials from seemingly random sources. The result is a synthesis of disparate imagery into novel, culturally rich formations that bear witness to the multiplicity and global nature of contemporary visual culture. The fragmented and collaged landscape of today's visuals, interwoven with different temporalities, is a central theme in Šeputis' exploration.

Through the incorporation of elements from the "Yu-Gi-Oh!" card game, the artist constructs contemporaneous sign systems, weaving dense visual narratives teeming with meanings and contexts. These narratives are aimed at capturing the structure of feeling prevalent among the youngest generation. By presenting a collection of inspirations and significant discoveries in the form of cards, Šeputis establishes a vocabulary of iconography rooted in his childhood experiences. The time when these cards were cherished collectibles, shared among peers, and a source of collective enjoyment forms the basis for an undefined yet resonant iconography. It is a homage to an era where shared cartoons created universally recognizable characters, surpassing the iconic

heroes, plots and symbols that have endured for millennia.

Šeputis, however, refrains from asserting the uniqueness of the present. Instead, he intricately links, combines, and juxtaposes characters and plots from anime and manga, pop culture references, and the aesthetics of television and the internet over the last decades. These are interwoven with magical and mystical symbols that have shaped contemporary culture, along with traces of ancient allegories and mysterious religious symbols, details from the old paintings. The resulting narratives are contemporary systems of images and texts where understanding the signs of one temporality weakens the other. These unstable, multifaceted, and shifting intertextual positions, with their excesses or depreciations, paradoxically contribute to the universality of culture.

Emilis Benediktas Šeputis (b. 2000) is a painter of the young generation who completed his bachelor's studies in painting at the Vilnius Academy of Arts in 2023. Since 2019, he has been participating in creative workshops and art projects. From 2021, he has been involved in group exhibitions, both as a participant and a curator. He works as a scenographer, and in 2022, he was awarded the 'Golden Stage Cross' for his work in the creative team of the dance performance 'Me two / We, The Clique' ('Low Air' dance theater). In 2023, he became a finalist in 'Zabolis Art Prize' painting competition. The artist's works are found in private art collections in Lithuania and abroad.

Graphic designer: Jokūbas Juršėnas

Lighting artist: Nojus Drašutis

Curator: Bliss

The exhibition is part of the cultural project 'SUMENĖK'.

'KRIPTIK'

Emilis Benediktas Šeputis

The Rooster Gallery

2024 02 02 — 2024 02 25

Photography: Andrej Vasilenko

