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The space between — interview with Ana Lipps

July 5, 2024

Author Dovydas Laurinaitis



Photo from Ana Lipps archive

I'm typing this on the train back from Telšiai, passing neighbourhoods of fields, neatly delineated and then complicated by additions of bushes, trees, concrete and wooden buildings, openness and walls, the occasional colourful blossom only seen as a trace in short-term memory or elderflower I can't smell. I ended up here yesterday after embarking on a road trip with Ana Lipps as they transported heaps of glued-together animal bones with interwoven lights, in preparation for their upcoming exhibition at VDA Telšių Galerija, 'There is still room in the bag of stars', opening on July 2.

We met while doing Rupert's (centre for art, residencies and education in Vilnius) Alternative Education Programme in 2022 and have continued to entwine further as friends and colleagues (we share a studio in Spaudos Rėmai, after all). As with all good friends, we have lots in common, not least the shared intersections of our identities that allows us to step into each other's perspective with a certain ease.

With a Lithuanian diplomat for a mother and a German businessman for a father, Ana grew up between the two countries, before embarking on a bachelor's in the UK, followed by a master's at the Dirty Art Department of the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam. Rupert brought them to Vilnius again and they have chosen to stay, for now.

This drive we took, between Vilnius and their grandma's kaimas in Telšiai, is not an unfamiliar journey for them, and in between our stops at Circle K, we chatted about their practice, upcoming exhibition and what it means to be suspended between points A and B.

Ana Lipps: I think this drive is a journey home, in either direction. I feel very cosy in airports, just from the way I've grown up; we were travelling a lot. Liminal spaces are really homey for me and driving in a car is a calming experience. I don't feel stressed about taking a bus or an airplane; these journeys tend to not be just dead time, but time where I get to think, reflect, also listen to music or audiobooks, be inspired... they're very productive.

With the yellowing teeth of wide-jawed animals smiling behind us, the conversation inevitably turns macabre, as Robbie Williams plays through the speakers.

AL: When I was younger, I saw my grandad's body and I had the sensation he was going to wake up. I was terrified of him getting buried because I thought he was just sleeping and I was freaking out the entire funeral. When my dad died, I was really scared I would have the same freak-out, but then I had such a relief because I just stood at the casket and thought 'That's not him. He's not here anymore'.

Dovydas Laurinaitis: All this talk about life and death, needing proof of one state or the other, I sense a lot of desire to hold the in-between as that's where the possibility is, I think you told me that at some point. Once you get from A to B, they're fixed states.

AL: In my work, I'm not so much thinking about death, more so spaces of transition. I don't find bones that macabre. Maybe I just spent too much time gluing them together. In the way the exhibition will be set up, the bones are not the focal point. Among many things, there will also be vats of black liquid that smell of unrefined petroleum being stirred and creating a vortex. It's actually using that washing machine mechanism in the back.



Photo from Ana Lipps archive



Photo from Ana Lipps archive

AL: I think it's one of my favourite parts of making art. Creating these absolutely insane problems for myself and figuring out how to make it a reality. The way I create work is that I suddenly get a vision

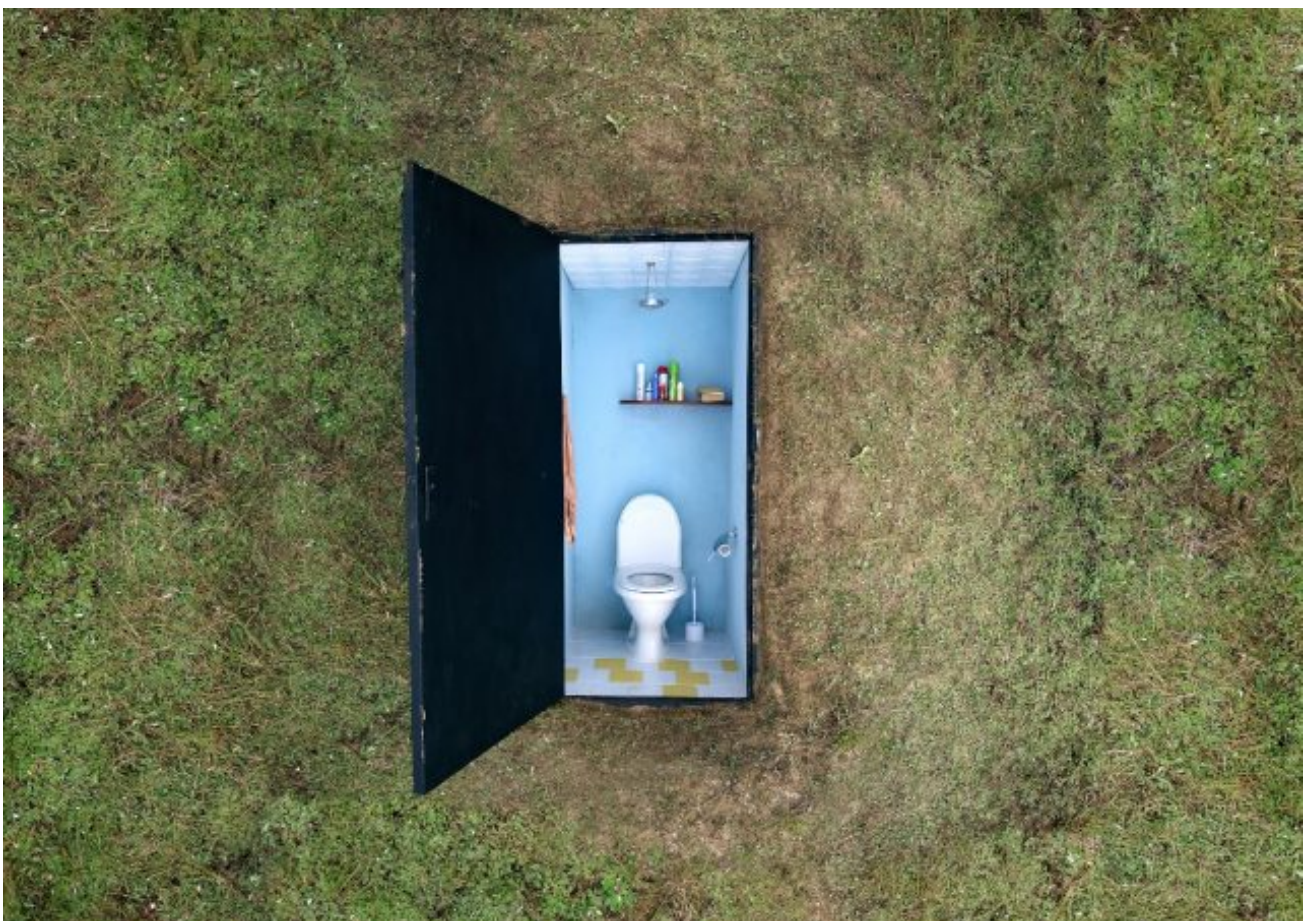
in my head and afterwards realise where it came from. With this piece, I was also driving from Vilnius to my grandma's last October. It was after the Rupert Halloween party and I was a bit hungover and it was really dark, I was spiralling and thinking 'I'm never going to create any work ever again'.

DL: Why did you think that?

AL: 2023 was just so uninspired for me. I guess I was dealing with a lot of trauma and trying to process it. I had no space to create work in my head and it took me a while to get out of that space. The first image I got was a starry sky, as a container of different narratives. Humans have always created stories through looking at the sky and naming the stars, or creating constellations. Usually, these are creation narratives as well, which tell you a lot about a culture, the people, and how they perceive themselves in relation to everything else in the world and each other, how they structure their society... The sky definitely creates this liminal effect, it doesn't hold a singular truth, it can hold many truths simultaneously.

DL: So inspiration came when you were feeling very hopeless. You mentioned liminality, which you explore in your work, that's kind of your main cauldron that you're stirring and stirring. How did that appear in your practice?

AL: I've been grappling with it since probably my bachelor's. Back then, I was creating pieces with doors and called them 'alternative realities', like that piece with the door in the ground that opens into a toilet. At some point, one of the tutors mentioned liminality to me.



'PERPENDICULAR REALITIES ACT I: THE TOILET' by Ana Lipps. Photo by Lina Margaityte and Marius Krivičius

DL: Was that the first time you heard that term?

AL: Yeah, but I didn't immediately jump on it. It kept floating around me.

DL: Why not?

AL: I think it was quite popular at the time, but now I'm just way too deep into it.

DL: (Laughs) At this point, the trend-hoppers have moved on and only the real ones remain.

AL: Liminal is a very liminal term. I wrote my master's thesis on it and I spent quite a long time learning the etymology and origin. It was coined relatively recently by this ethnographer, Arnold van Gennep. He was looking into different societies, especially, rural societies, and the 'liminal' in his head were stages to rituals. The way he conceptualises it is that in a ritual, you have the pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal. The liminal is when you go into a space in which societal rules are upheaved and you're allowed to change and come back to society in this newfound form. What's interesting is that he also spent some time talking about people who stay in the liminal being a dangerous zone because you can get lost there. In many ways, what he thinks are liminal personas are queer people, or people not living according to the normative rules of society.

DL: So is he saying that we're lost?

AL: Yeah, essentially.

DL: But in this kind of condescending way? Is he an ally?

AL: I think he was talking very vaguely about it, which is also why liminality has such wishy-washy terminology. Let's say marriage is a ritual, and between getting engaged and getting married is a liminal space, but the outcome is pretty fucking clear to me. *(Laughs)* It's not that you're changing societal rules when you're engaged. I don't really get where he was coming from, but the terminology he created was useful enough for me that I can continue elaborating it in my own terms philosophically. So it's actually a state of being, but then architects and the internet decided what the liminal aesthetic looks like, which has nothing to do with where the word came from. It's these empty, abandoned spaces; there are whole Reddit threads filled with them, which is also not what my work is about. I analysed these different ways of conceptualising the liminal and then created my own thing where I wanted it to be a space of dwelling. My master's thesis was all about the liminal as a space of resistance because it's supposed to be a transitional space, but what if you stay and live in it? Why can't we live in the liminal? It's a state of being but can also be a physical space. This is the way I conceptualised Ubiškės³.

They inform me that currently at their grandma's, an initiative from Kaunas Artist House is using several buildings on the land to develop a new queer musical, Vaivorykštės Miuziklas, which will premiere in autumn. Upon arrival, we will be treated to a work-in-progress showing. Having been a resident at the first edition of their residency programme, Ubiškės³, taking place in the same kaimas, it's commendable how generous Ana is in sharing their resources with groups that oftentimes find themselves without a space, much less this idyll of meadows, lakes and wooden houses, where the crackling of campfire, smell of šašlykai, laughter and bottles of wine from forgotten number of nights ago mix into what can only be described as a queertopia.



Work-in-progress showing of 'Vaivorykštės Miuziklas' at Ubiškės3. Photo by Ana Lipps



Work-in-progress showing of 'Vaivorykštės Miuziklas' at Ubiškės3. Photo by Ana Lipps

DL: Given how much we've discussed liminality, normativity and identity, is your work autobiographical, despite not being immediately identifiable in that way?

AL: There's a beautiful word in German, *jein*. It's a mix between *ja* and *nein*. I create these compositional visions and because of the way the art world functions, I need to use words to contextualise them, and eventually it all comes together, but it's not a linear process. Being who I am, my very liminal identity as a queer, non-binary person with ADHD—that's what drew me to the liminal. I realised very early on the idea of belonging to a lot of things at once is unacceptable to most people. You can contain multitudes, but they're often incomprehensible to others. In the same way, these liminal spaces I create are a way of translating this idea of multitudes into space. If you can exist in these liminalities in prolonged ways, maybe you can understand how other people can be liminal and contain multitudes of identities within themselves. Like the leaves falling out of the ventilation system in *Rupert*, correlating the decay of the building with the seasonal decay of leaves. Then you have this out-of-season aspect, this queerness, where it's snowing outside but the leaves are falling inside. I love having incongruence and dissonance between what you think you ought to see and what you're seeing.



'SPECTRAL CARBON' by Ana Lipps. Photos by Laurynas Skeisgiela

DL: That reminds me of practical magic, where it's always better if you don't know the secret of how it was done, letting you believe that it could actually be magic. When you understand there's a string or a mechanism, it kind of ruins the trick. When people ask you how you did it, do you keep your secrets to yourself and follow the Magician's Code?

AL: I wish I could, but I just love to talk. I'm not a mysterious, aloof person. Also, it's usually such a feat to accomplish, and I want to tell people about it.

DL: Don't you think it lessens the impact? Then it becomes real, it stops being something more-than-real, containing so many possibilities. Isn't that why you love sci-fi?

AL: Yeah, but I want sci-fi to become reality; for the unreal to become real. It is something of this world, it didn't just manifest itself.

DL: Isn't that thing existing and the feeling it generates in the viewer enough inspiration?

AL: I don't usually sit in the pub and tell every person or broadcast it online. I tell a few people, but it's not common knowledge. It's also sometimes so insane that when you explain it to someone, it goes into one ear and comes out the other.

DL: Well, communicating liminality in language is difficult, and you have to break it to do so. But when you see objects, like in your work, it's so immediate and snaps you out of your own reality, opening you up to new potentialities.

AL: I think my work has an aspect of absurdity and playfulness that comes from seeing something unexpected.

DL: So how is this going to manifest in this exhibition? You're bringing the sky inside?

AL: In a way, for sure. This is my first solo show. The way I create work doesn't usually lend itself to white cube spaces because a lot of the time, this manifestation of the unreal into reality comes from the spaces being real, having a lot of history and context, and then I change an aspect inside of it. With this exhibition, I'm trying to transform a white cube space which is a first for me. I'm putting a giant half dome inside the space that's 3.4 metres tall, made out of metal and covered with a tent... I think it's also the first time I'm creating every element of the environment myself, even down to the smell, which I made in collaboration with Emilija Povilanskaitė.



Photo from Ana Lipps archive

DL: What feeling do you want people to walk away from the exhibition with?

AL: Maybe being a bit unsettled, feeling as if you've stared into the abyss.

DL: Because that's how you felt driving back to your grandma's that time?

AL: Yes, but... I don't want to tell people how they should feel.

DL: So let me ask the question from the other side—what do you want the work to say?

AL: One of the things that will be part of this exhibition is Ursula K. Le Guin's text 'The Carrier Bag of Fiction', which I've had translated into Lithuanian. In the text, Le Guin takes this creation story of the male, mammoth hunters who have brought back all this flesh, and you have this 'provider' or 'hero'

storyline that stems from conceptualising hunter-gatherer life in a specific way, which is not necessarily true. There has been a scientific paper that broke that myth, but that doesn't mean that the myth has been broken. There are these narratives that are prevalent in our heads that are not actually true.

DL: Well, people pick the narrative that suits their needs best. None of us will be able to know what it was actually like back then; we can just theorise. In the same way, you're picking a certain theory that aligns more with your worldview, people who benefit from a patriarchal, very gendered way of being pick another theory, because it suits theirs. Neither of you are right. It's also more about what these narratives say about the present, because when we talk about history and narratives of the past, they're normally never about the past, but the present and future.

AL: I don't want to ask people to believe in a specific narrative, I just want a baseline understanding that these narratives aren't better or worse than each other, and that they can co-exist. Reality is relative and maybe we all just need to chill. *(Laughs)*

Indiscernible Identity

July 16, 2024

Author Rūdis Bebris



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'To Be We Need to Know the River'. Mari-Leen Kiipli, view from the installation 'Rain Garden' (2023) and video 'Searching for Eleen Re' (2024). Cultural Centre Siguldā Devons. Photo by Ingus Bajārs

The year 2024 is the ninth year the Riga Photography Biennial (RPB) has taken place, or more precisely, it is the fifth official biennial, whereas the other four years have featured off-year programmes. Therefore, one could assume that local audiences have just about grown accustomed to something related to photography happening from middle or late spring until approximately the middle of summer, and sometimes longer. Moreover, this year it seems that the RPB is the only event to scratch this itch, due to an unfortunate lack of financial support for Riga Photomonth, another festival that normally happens around the same time, thus not only encouraging healthy competition and prompting expected comparisons, but also making Riga appear like a true cultural hub for photography. Well, at least for a moment, before Latvian photography retreats to the rather quiet and lowly life it is accustomed to for the rest of the year, being of interest to a couple of art institutions and a few enthusiasts, but otherwise underrepresented in research, and with a museum caught in the recent misfortunes of relocation and left without a director.



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'Human Computer'. Photo by Ingus Bajārs



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'Human Computer'. Photo by Ingus Bajārs

Be that as it may, this remark is not necessarily a critique of the festival or the biennial format, but rather the conditions in which they take place, and to give credit where it is due, some relevant issues and blank spaces in our knowledge of photography are implicitly acknowledged in this year's RPB, mainly with one of its focuses being on the history of photography. And theoretical framing is precisely what interests me most in this year's biennial, and what I devote this article to. Namely, as the bio[1] of RPB 2024 states, this year's central topic is identity: the programme focuses on 'a range of existential questions, including the impact of technology on human nature, the relationship between man and nature, as well as the informative code of the contemporary image'. Yet, as I will try to show, I do not think this is the best keyword for the event, although that does not mean the RPB is not interesting or successful in other ways.

In a sense, what could be seen this year fits into the scheme of what the RPB usually tackles: it is an event dedicated to the analysis of visual culture and image culture, with a strong focus on technology and how it influences everyday social and political practices, and various understandings of different facets of reality. There is also a self-reflective aspect to the biennial, with photography itself being a topic of interest, broadly conceptualised[2] as 'an all-embracing concept encompassing a mixed range of artistic image-making practices that have continued to transform the lexicon of contemporary art in the 21st century'. This is manifested not only in the content, but also in the form: most works are not photography in the traditional sense, but rather videos, new media art, objects and artefacts.

There is no denying that the topic of identity fits in with this context, for the concept can be interpreted in at least two ways, both as that which makes a thing what it is, and what connects and unites it with other similar, or in fact identical, things. Moreover, if one asks *whose* identity the RPB thematises, I propose two referents: the identity of people, both in a natural and a social sense, and the identity of photography itself. For example, the central exhibition 'Human Computer' engages very directly with the question of what it means to be human in the contemporary technological age, whereas Renāte Feizaka's and Klāvs Liepiņš' 'Potato People' aims to thematise what Latvianness is in a globalised world. In contrast, 'Contemporary Histories of Photography I and II' explore the historiography of the medium, so in other words, the narrative of the identity of photography, and this is complemented by 'The Apparent – Un/believable', which calls into question the relationship between reality and the seeming objectivity of photographic representation,^[3] and 'A Breaking Point, A Delicate Balancing Act', which aims 'to examine photography and explore its present-state melancholy'^[4] in the age of artificial intelligence. Although the topics are obviously more nuanced than I let on, I think it is safe to say that they boil down to an interest in evaluating what constitutes humanity and photography.



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'Contemporary Histories of Photography I'. Agate Tūna, 'Who Has Come Here?', 2024. ISSP Gallery. Photo by Sasha Komarova



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'Contemporary Histories of Photography I'. Kristīne Krauze-Slucka, 'Enthusiasm in Times of Extreme Scarcity. Ina Stüre', 2024. ISSP Gallery. Photo by Kristīne Krauze-Slucka

On a more personal note, I believe that the second type of identity, that of photography, is explored more skilfully in the biennial. Indeed, my personal highlights of the event were the aforementioned exhibitions 'Contemporary Histories of Photography' and 'A Breaking Point, A Delicate Balancing Act', held in the ISSP and RIXC galleries respectively. 'Contemporary Histories' starts off with the honest observation that the history of photography in Latvia is somewhat uncharted territory, but, importantly, this also opens up opportunities: it is possible to write and pioneer a new history of photography, sidestepping the pitfalls, biases and missing aspects of traditional history writing, and acknowledging the subjectivity of the process. The exhibition is also the precursor to a forthcoming and very valuable publication, *A Visual History of Photography in Latvia*. One could speculate how much this is an achievement of the RPB, or whether the project just coincided with the biennial and tactically decided to ally itself with it and be subsumed in the programme, but it is a valuable occasion deserving publicity nevertheless. 'A Breaking Point, A Delicate Balancing Act', however, was a strong reflection on the nature of photography, without displaying any actual photographs: the exhibition consisted of unique cyanotypes (Albert Grøndahl), a site-specific installation (Ieva Rojūtė) and AI-generated images (Benjamin Freedman), which, I suppose, could be roughly translated into three main topical pillars of materiality, language and variation, all certainly important to photography. This was also quite possibly the first time I had such an aesthetic response to AI-generated images: Freedman strove to and succeeded in invoking feelings of nostalgia, *déjà vu*, and imaginable memories, although I have my reservations about comparisons between such constructed 'memories' and how memory truly functions. The age of AI has given us a new metaphor for describing human processes, replacing the paradigm of comparisons with, for example, the computer program, but surely not everything can be explained in these terms.



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'A Breaking Point, A Delicate Balancing Act', RIXC Gallery. Photo: Ingus Bajārs



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'A Breaking Point, A Delicate Balancing Act', RIXC Gallery. Photo: Ingus Bajārs



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'A Breaking Point, A Delicate Balancing Act'. Benjamin Freedman, 'Mountain Sunrise' and 'Mountain Sunset', 2023. RIXC Gallery. Photo: Ingus Bajārs

Yet I cannot help thinking that there is a more fundamental issue behind these speculations. Now that it is clear how the programme can be understood through the lens of the main topic of identity, it is worth noting that it is a topic almost too synonymous with the RPB's general thematic focus, open to simple interpretation. For it is hard to name something that could *not* be interpreted by invoking the concept of identity: it is a term that encompasses cause and effect, past, present and future, ideals and reality, thus being too general and not really adding anything to the individual exhibitions that constitute the biennial.

I do not suppose it is such a bad predicament though: the project would not lose much if the concept of identity was simply withdrawn from the central position. But there is also another path that could be taken to interpret this year's RPB. The three essays included in the official publication emphasise perfectly three different talking points of the biennial: posthumanism, and a twofold focus on the history of photography, a productive and a self-reflective one. Starting from the latter, history is of interest to the RPB, both philosophically, as confirmed by the already-described questioning of the nature of photography, and in a sense true to the discipline, as is confirmed by Irēna Bužinska's research and exhibitions at the National Library of Latvia on photomontage in Latvia during the interwar period, and on photographs in Latvian children's books, narrow and precise topics that add to the collage of knowledge. Yet the case for posthumanism is different.

There are undoubtedly exhibitions that allude to posthuman ideas. The central exhibition features an explicit reference to the thought of Donna Haraway, and I would argue that Nastja Sāde Rönkkö's poetic video-installation 'salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears', for example, also invites associations with Astrīda Neimanis' hydrofeminism. Yet if we follow the line of thought identified in

Daniel Rubinstein's essay 'Posthuman Photography' republished in the catalogue, can we be sure that the way photography figures in the RPB is not 'reduced to the view of the human eye'[5] and goes beyond dichotomies? Although I admit that the essay probably does not hold authoritative weight on the concept of the biennial, it is an interesting question to ask. And the answer points to the fact that there is actually quite a bit of humanistic content. I agree with Daniela Zālīte's observation[6] that the way the question of identity is posed in the central exhibition is actually rather anthropocentric, and the human remains at the forefront of the works. Even if we look at a different example, the exhibition 'Potato People', it also fails to offer a satisfactory answer to how we should conceptualise the (post)human condition. The form of the artworks, videos played on screens, points towards intermingling with technology, but the content almost reads like a longing for a simpler, pre-modern world, stereotyped identity practices, merging with nature, as if the authentic human experience is a thing of the past. Perhaps the exhibition 'To Be We Need to Know the River' is closer to the intended message, yet even here one could ask what human solidarity with nature might look like, and whether this does not require humans to take the position of guardians, thus still placing ourselves at the top. Is nature truly so defenceless, and is this the kind of protection it requires?



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'To Be We Need to Know the River'. Kotryna Ūla Kiliulytė, view from the installation 'Arctic Swell' (2023). Cultural Centre Siguldas Devons. Photo by Ingus Bajārs



View from the Riga Photography Biennial 2024 exhibition 'To Be We Need to Know the River'. Kotryna Ūla Kiliulytē, view from the installation 'Arctic Swell' (2023). Cultural Centre Siguldā Devons. Photo by Ingus Bajārs

In summary, I think the 2024 Riga Photography Biennial is best understood as an assemblage of multiple topical focuses that coincides with what the project normally strives to say, although I would not go so far as to call it identical. This year's RPB has added to the bundle of reflections on the medium of photography, image culture, and contemporary existence, but its most notable contribution might be support for the colouring of multiple blank spots in the history of Latvian photography. In this respect, I look forward to the forthcoming *Visual History of Photography in Latvia*, and encourage others to do the same and stop by the ISSP for 'Contemporary Histories of Photography II', the final event in the biennial programme, open until mid-August. Other than that, it seems that this was a year when the Riga Photography Biennial merely strengthened its own identity. What's next?

[1] <https://www.rpbiennial.com/aboutus.html>

[2] <https://www.rpbiennial.com/aboutus.html>

[3] *The Riga Photography Biennial 2024 Publication*, p. 98-101.

[4] *The Riga Photography Biennial 2024 Publication*, p. 81-83.

[5] Rubinstein D., *Posthuman Photography // The Riga Photography Biennial 2024 Publication*, p. 25.

[6] <https://fotokvartals.lv/2024/05/16/kas-tas-ir-cilveks/>

Žygimantas Augustinas according to Henri Bergson

July 26, 2024

Author Aistė Kisarauskaitė



Siren #3. 2023 Charcoal, canvas, wooden frame, 155x108 cm. Photo: Gintarė Gritėnaitė

In the winter sleet, or the summer heat that melts asphalt, museum spaces with stable temperatures create the illusion of art unaffected by time (or climate change). This illusion is reinforced by paintings done in the manner of the Old Masters, making it seem at first glance that the works of Žygimantas Augustinas are made for museums. His exhibition 'Guarantee', on show at the Vilnius Picture Gallery of the Lithuanian National Museum of Art, can be described as a retrospective, showcasing most of his work from the earliest graphic pieces to current projects. The retrospective format also references the sum of completed works that can be reviewed, discussed and recognised for their merits and timeless values.

However, Žygimantas Augustinas is a contemporary artist, and his 'museumness' is simply material for crafting narratives, much like his own figure, which is used in place of the protagonist. In Birutė Pankūnaitė's article 'Prostheses, Good Intentions, Hybrids, and a Lullaby' (*7 Meno Dienos*, No 24 [1516], 14 June 2024), she highlights the hysterical masculinity that Augustinas perceives as a prosthesis and reflects in many of his own or other men's images. 'Exaggerated facial expressions, typical self-loving poses, repulsive pride in one's superiority, stereotypical costumed appearances, or unappealing yet emphasised nudity: many paintings pulsate with the unhealthy narcissism of the character.' This interpretation aligns with the message the artist seems to be sending.

In the introduction to the guide to his exhibition 'Guarantee', Žygimantas Augustinas outlines a completely different narrative created by the exhibition curator Akvilė Anglickaitė. He presents concepts and terms that serve as keys to individual rooms and the artworks in them. The main concept of the narrative is reality and its instability. 'A vanishing reality,' says Augustinas, one in which nothing is clear or tangible, crumbling and increasingly fracturing with each subsequent work. It is normal for a good artist's work to offer multiple viewpoints. This temptation arose for me while writing this article: choosing a particular basic concept on which the article's architecture is built can differ entirely from one based on another concept also suitable for this exhibition. During the pandemic, the stark contrast between *reality* and *actuality* became so pronounced and unacceptable that I started reading Kristupas Sabolius' edited book 'On Reality' (Lapas, 2021) every day. Its blurb states that reality is not self-evident. The war in Ukraine also contributed to its fracturing, which Žygimantas notes by devoting a separate room to this theme, with the central piece *One Month Since the Start of the War* (2022).



Jagiellon. 2020. Oil on canvas, 114×81 cm. Photo: Gintarė Gritėnaitė

However, I would prefer to build on different material, less discussed by both the curator and the art critic mentioned. The unhealthy narcissism of the characters depicted and the sarcasm towards them raise questions about the artist's relationship with his characters, or possibly himself, as the depicted figures bear a clear resemblance to the artist. There is also a play on the similarity between the names Sigismund II Augustus (in Lithuanian Žygimantas Augustas) and the artist's name Žygimantas Augustinas, further highlighting the connections with the characters depicted, in works such as *Žygimantas August(in)as (after Lucas Cranach Jr.)* (2014). In the works, there is the protagonist's enjoyment of power, sometimes even the violent egocentrism of the white man, as in the portrait with a gun *Respite* (2012), or *Grand Duke of Lithuania Sigismund II Augustus in His Bedroom* (2015), with a threatening clenched fist. Initially, I thought he was wearing a karate outfit, but it was just a robe. We see a company executive or a businessman, probably after a night out drinking, with his shirt unbuttoned and stains on his jacket, a 'nouveau Lithuanian', 'nouveau

Russian', or nouveau Sigismund II Augustus (*King Sigismund Augustus (after to Ž. Augustinas)*, 2015), feeling the reflections of the cult of genius (*The Case of K. Donelaitis*, 2014, although this work is not exhibited in the show). All this is mixed with a large dose of caricature, irony, and the yeast of laughter. The proportions are maintained, and the master's hand turns even the strangest combinations into great recipes, worthy of Queen Bona's recipe book.

The magic enchants us so deeply that you forget what you were laughing at. First and foremost, it seems that the artist is laughing at himself, i.e. he uses himself as a model, because it would be unethical to mock others so harshly. (Saying that he uses himself instead of a model because it is more convenient is unconvincing; looking at oneself is much more challenging than looking at what is directly in front.) Thus, this laughter, merging the artist's 'self' with his characters, persists even in his recent project, *seirenes* (male sirens) with animated genitalia (*Siren #3*, 2023), akin to other Greek gods who did not shy away from sex, not only with other women but also with natural phenomena or objects (for instance, Zeus pursued the goddess Cybele, who changed into a rock to escape, but was raped even in that form). According to Greek mythology, you can never be sure that a bull or a swan isn't a transformed rapist god. The exhibition's title points to the danger of relying on the perceived (or imagined) reality for assurance and trust. It is inspired by one of the three maxims inscribed on the façade of the Temple of Delphi: alongside the well-known 'Know thyself' and the less famous 'Nothing in excess', there was a third, whose meaning has been debated for thousands of years, clearly linking certainty (assurance) with misfortune.

Thus, the artist views *reality* through the prism of sarcasm and *laughter*. Many renowned philosophers have pondered not only reality but also laughter. Immanuel Kant's famous version of incongruity theory states that the essence of humour is 'the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing'. Therefore, the ironic title of the exhibition 'Guarantee' can be linked not only to the Greeks but also to Kant's incongruity theory, which speaks of the transformation of expectation/guarantee into nothing. Schopenhauer claimed that humour arises from the sudden discrepancy between the representation of an object and the recognition of its true nature. This fits painting, where the intelligent PhD in fine arts Žygimantas Augustinas is portrayed as a failure and a fool (*Self-Portrait #2*, 2004) or as an 'uppity' inadequate ruler in fashionable branded underwear (*Jagiellon*, 2020).



Self-portrait #2. 2004. Oil on canvas, 40.6×40.6 cm. Photo: Gintarė Gritėnaitė

This discrepancy between the portrayal of an object and its true nature (in this case, the artist's personality) is discussed extensively in Henri Bergson's book *Laughter*, which devotes significant attention to the idea of disguise: 'The person who disguises themselves is comical [...] Similarly, any disguise, not only of a person but also of society or even nature, becomes comedic.' Bergson emphasises the social significance of laughter, describing it as a social gesture. This concept seems to drive the artist's creative carousel, including his recent sound projects that reflect the threats of war (*Image and Sound as Tools for Controlling and Relaxing the Humans Psyche*, 2022–2024). Admittedly, these recent works contain much less humour and laughter, whereas earlier pieces, such as *Sigismund II Augustus with Barbara Radziwiłł* (*Žygimantas August(in)as' Second Wife (after Lucas Cranach Jr.)*, 2014), or *Donelaitis*, are probably only relevant to our social circle. Such jokes would hardly be understood by a New Yorker. The **social significance** here unfolds as broader social criticism, and in Bergson's words, the artist's 'comedy creates characters we have met and will meet on our path'. According to the philosopher, while characters in drama are individualised, those in comedy are typified, representing specific groups of people. Sigismund II Augustus and Barbara Radziwiłł are essentially legendary rulers, Dalia Grybauskaitė is a president, and Bona Sforza is a queen (*The Phantom Portrait of the Hybrid of Queen Bona Sforza and Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė?*, 2017). Although not in the exhibition, the collection includes a civil servant (*A Clerk*, 2012), possibly a hired assassin (*Executor*, 2011), a witness (*Crime Witness*, 2002–2003), and even sirens, which represent a certain group. According to Bergson, many comedies are named in the plural form, or by collective terms. '*Learned Women, The Ridiculous Précieuses, The World of Boredom*, and others depict numerous encounters with different characters who, in reality, belong to the same type.' The philosopher notes that a comedic character is a **type** that essentially relies on models that brazenly clash with societal norms. It goes without saying that Žygimantas presents us with a gallery of heroes who break or do not conform to these societal safety standards.

Bergson also emphasises the aspect of the body and corporeality (including the body of society), which is so prevalent in the artist's work. The philosopher draws attention to the comedy of the 'dull,

monotonous body' and the characters obstructed by their own physicality. Žygimantas' characters constantly and proudly display their often unattractive bodies. This creates a contrast between the Classical painting technique, which suggests the importance of the depicted subject, and the triviality of the character's values.

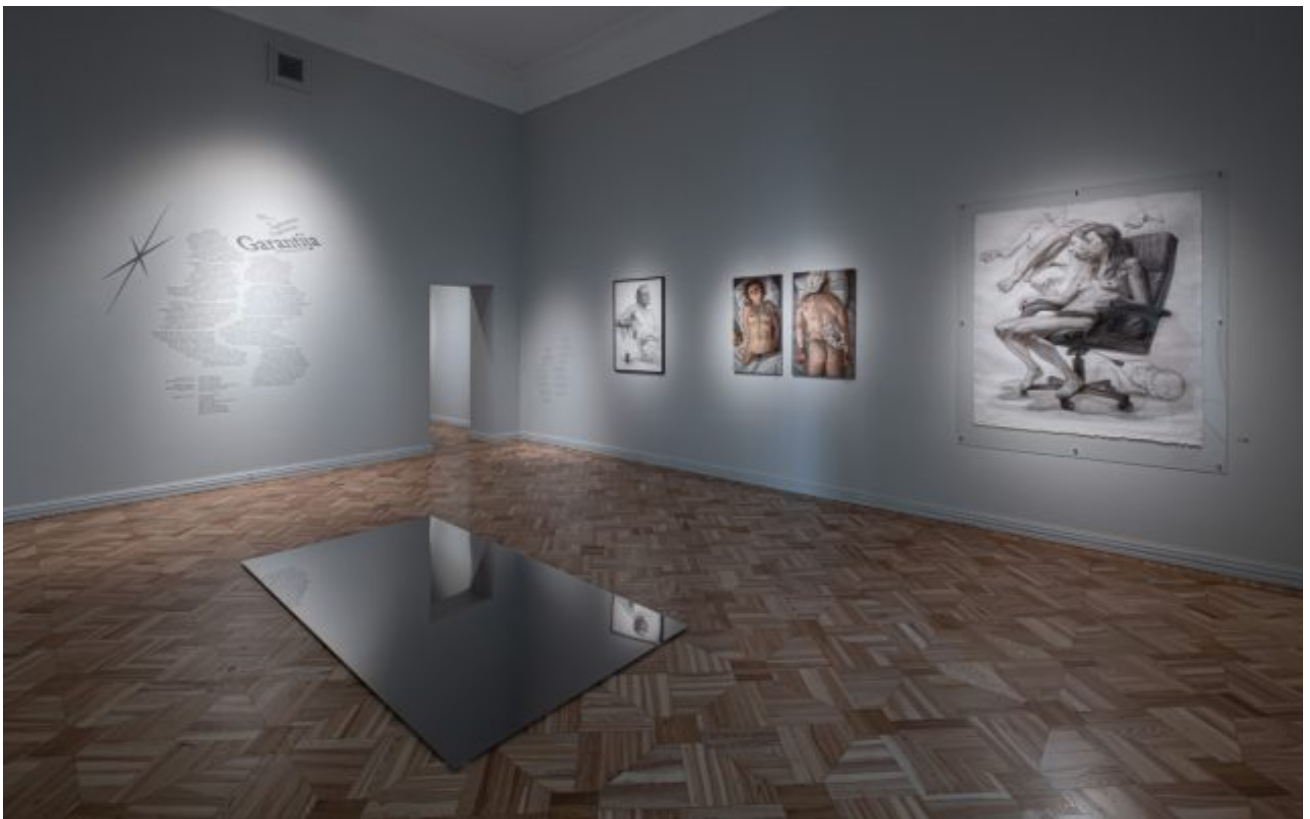


After the Action. 2009
Oil on canvas, 83.5×64 cm. Photo: Gintarė Gritėnaitė

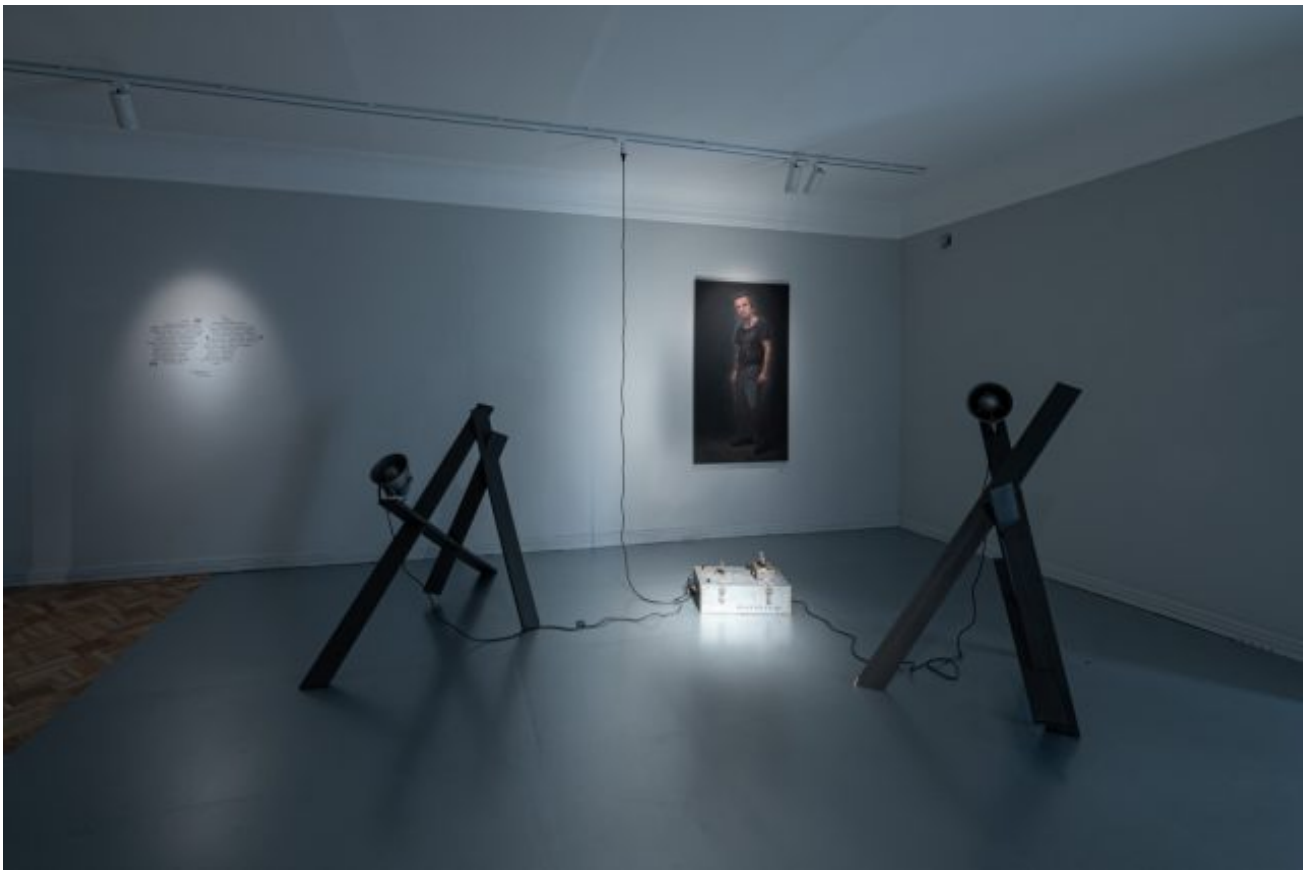
Žygimantas' work is clearly infused with social criticism, and his means of expression is *laughter*, which, as Bergson asserts, shows a slight rebellion on the surface of social life. Sprawling through the museum's halls, the exhibition generates thoughts about *laughter as a museum value*, demonstrating its timelessness. However, in the face of war, it is natural for laughter to weaken, overshadowed by the ominous wailing of sirens. We can only hope that the time will come when we can persistently mock our vices, raise a slight rebellion on the surface of social life, and receive a response. For now, as the artist said in the exhibition guide, we must learn to live in this crumbled reality, even though another reality is also possible, at least in new works.

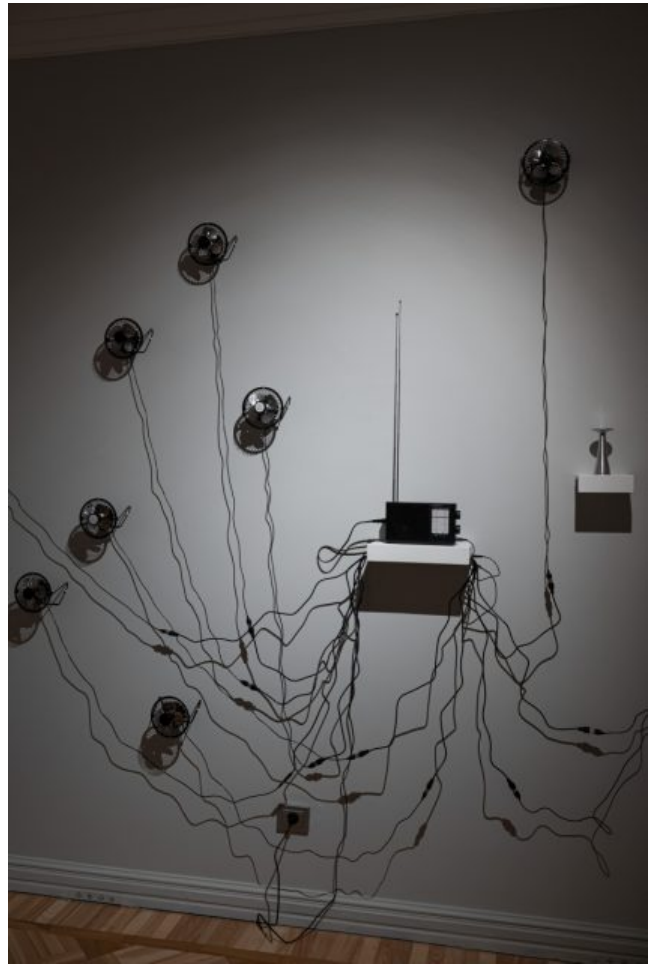
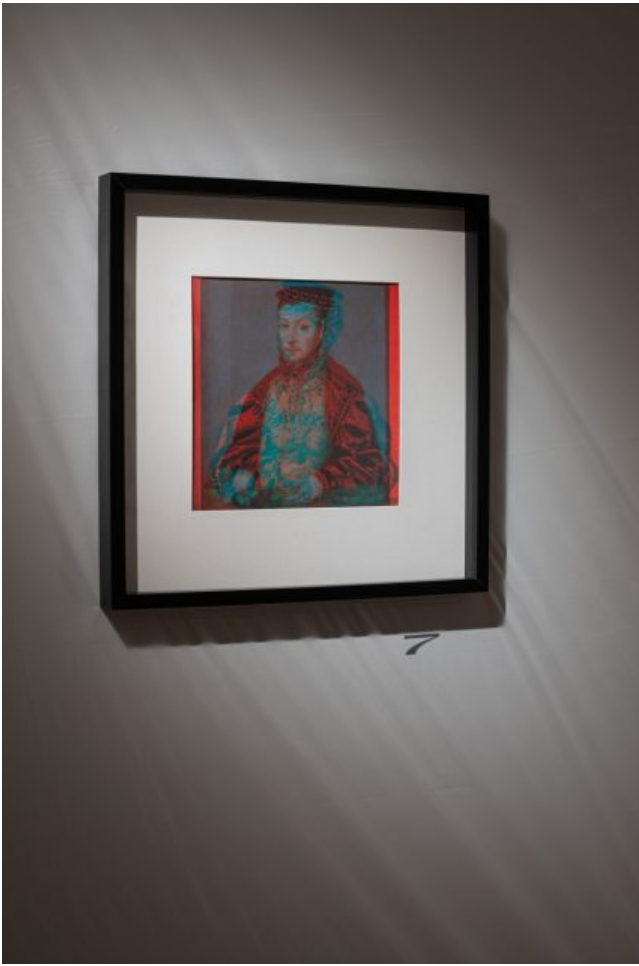
Photography: Gintarė Gritėnaitė







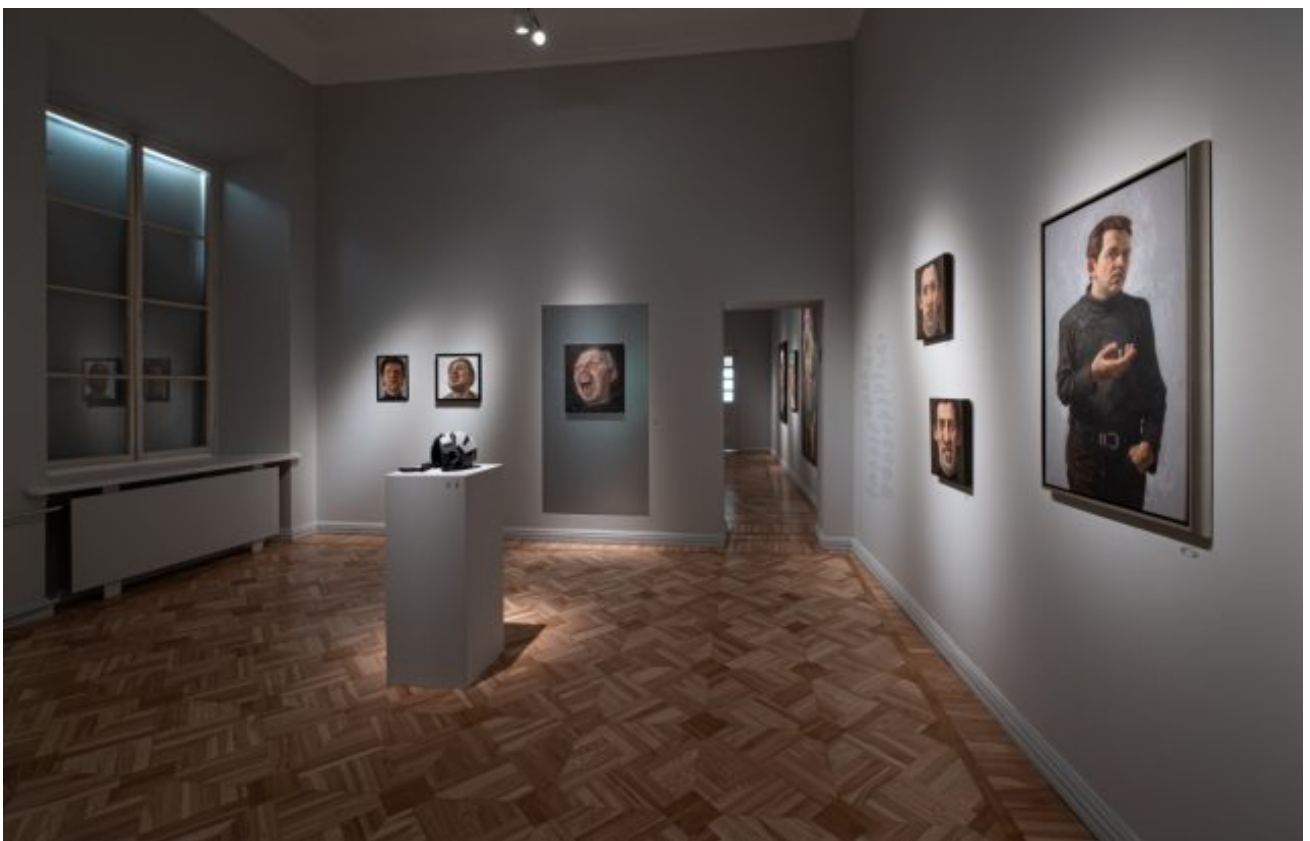




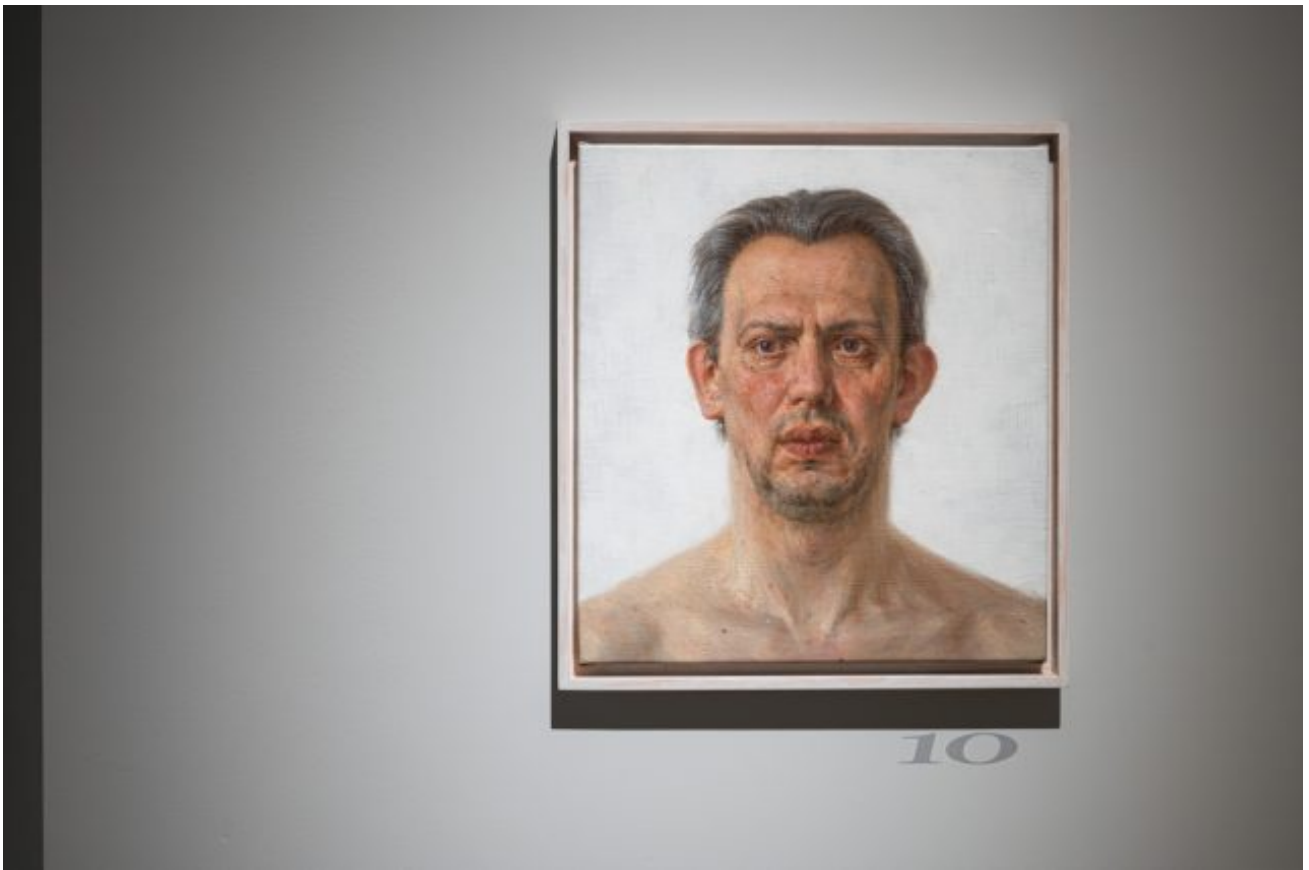




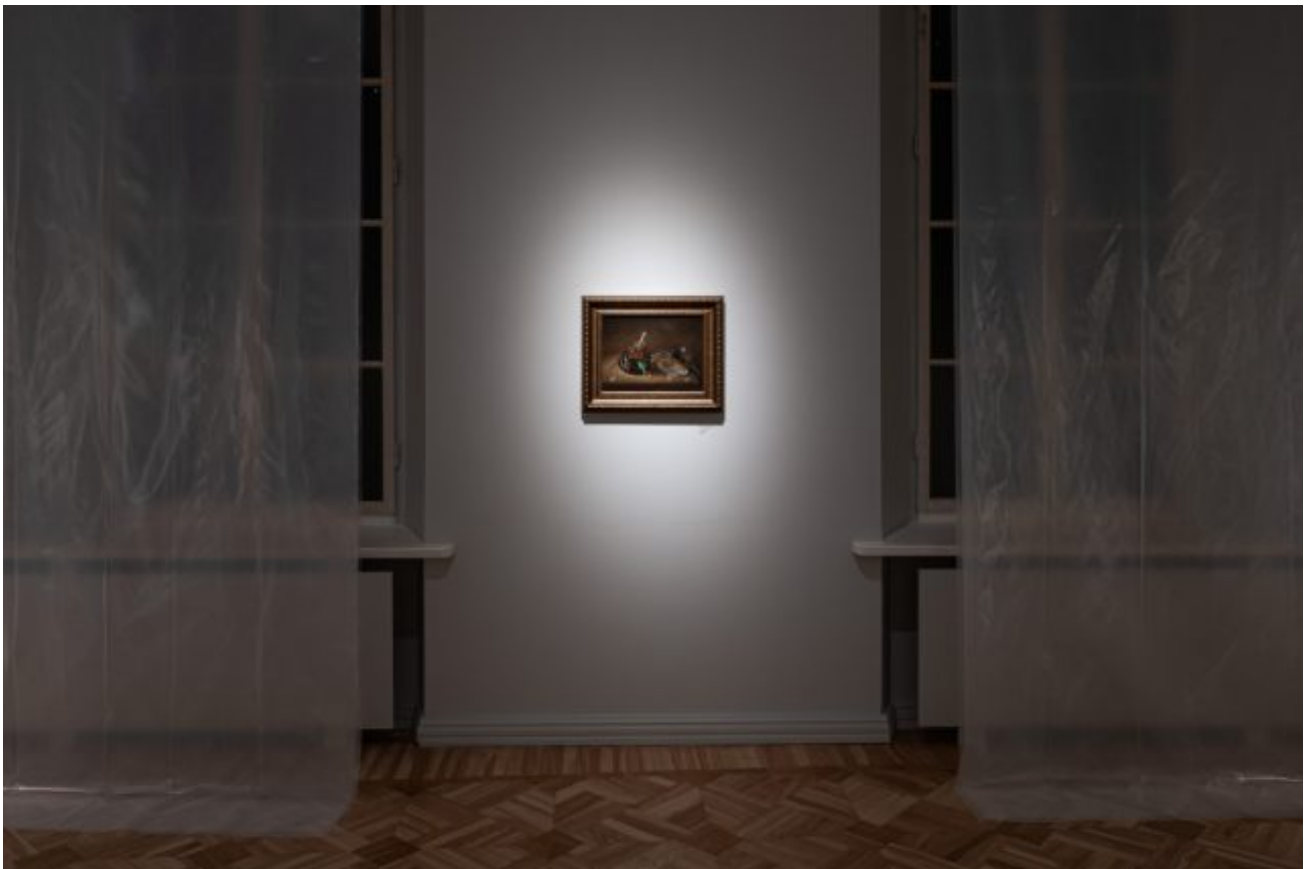




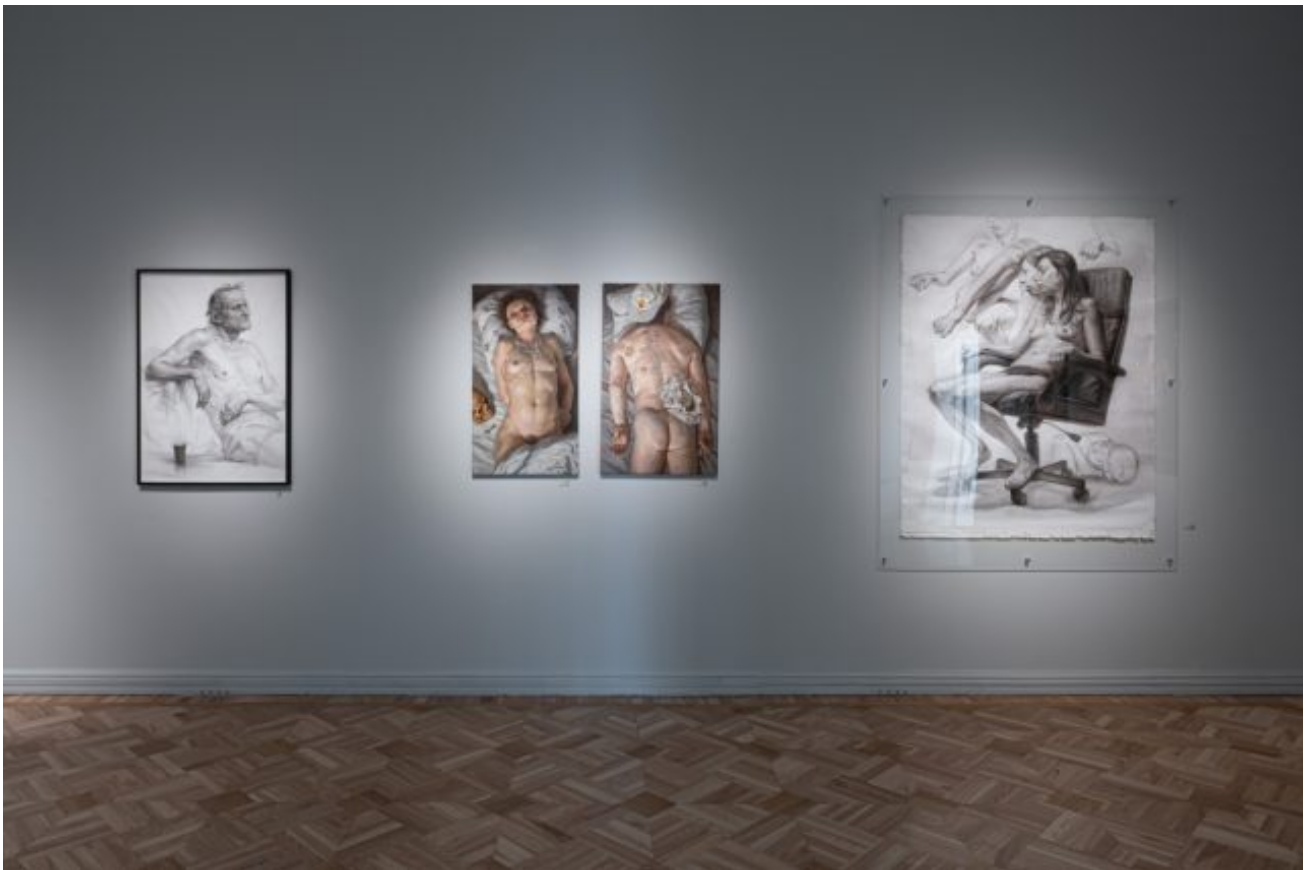












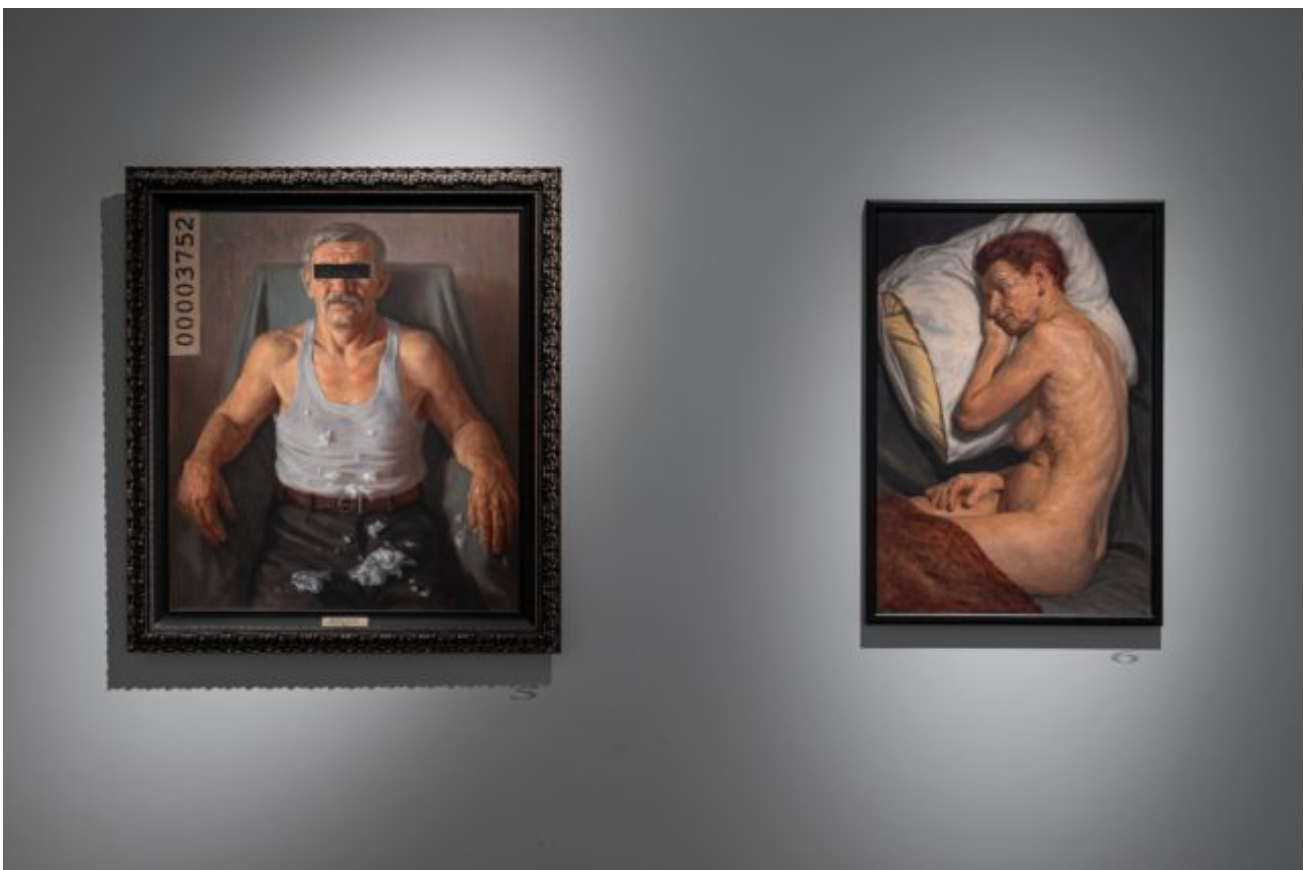






Photo reportage from the exhibition 'I Create What I See – ABACADABRA'; by Liisi Eelmaa at the Draakon gallery

July 5, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



From Wednesday, June 12 *I Create What I See – ABACADABRA* by Liisi Eelmaa is open at Draakon gallery. The exhibition will remain open until July 6, 2024.

Hot afternoon, a little bit too airless, the studio is being heated from three windows by the spring sun. I am kept awake by the strong coffee and its stimulating taste.

There is a bunch of different objects on the table: there are read and not yet read books, crumbs from white bread, eaten apple core, a fork, a cup, a notebook used for three years, papers, sketches, pencils, napkins, loudspeakers, some pencils, brushes, colors in tubes, bottles, walnut oil, a glass mortar, different natural mineral pigments. PIGMENT – MATTER, just matter, material. It can become anything, any object and being. It is especially pleasant to know that when putting your hand deep into the package, so it seems that the hand drowns into the yellow flour.

This flour could become spirit. Easily dusting material squeaks silently between the walnut oil mortar and glass. Transforming smoothly into creamy matter, to transform later even more and even further.

If the objects aren't made alive, they are just things, just as dust on the table.

The matter could become spirit, for that one must give soul to the matter. Making the matter alive, such as the job of the alchemist, who sees, uses and directs the forces of consciousness, energy and matter and understands the unity in them. Do I also transform together with the pigment, do I also change? Isn't it then the karma of a human to be born, then become matter again and then get closer to one's true nature, closer to spirit, year by year?

But where are the spirits who have left the material world?

The holy places in nature, holy forests, stones, trees, soulful nature. The places, that have to do with the togetherness of the alive and the dead, because the matter and spirit have become one. There can also be a holy place in the spiritual sphere, such as the reflection of stones on the surface of water here in the material world. Spiritual sanctuary, that you constantly see in dreams and that is more real than any other room. First you have to create it in the sphere, so that it would reflect through all these elements. Through the holy forests, stones, trees, meadows, walls, electricity plugs, floors, tables, colors, through the brush and hand.

Liisi Eelmaa (1982) is an Estonian theatre artist. She obtained a bachelor's degree in scenography from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2004 and a master's degree from the Department of Liberal Arts at the Estonia Academy of Arts in 2017. She has been performing in exhibitions since 2003 and has worked as a freelance artist in various theatres since 2005. Her most recent solo exhibition *I Create What I Think – ABRACADABRA* was held at the Large Gallery of Tartu Art House in 2020.

The exhibition is supported by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia.

Exhibitions in Draakon gallery are supported by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, Estonian Ministry of Culture and AS Liviko.

Exhibition by Liisi Eelmaa

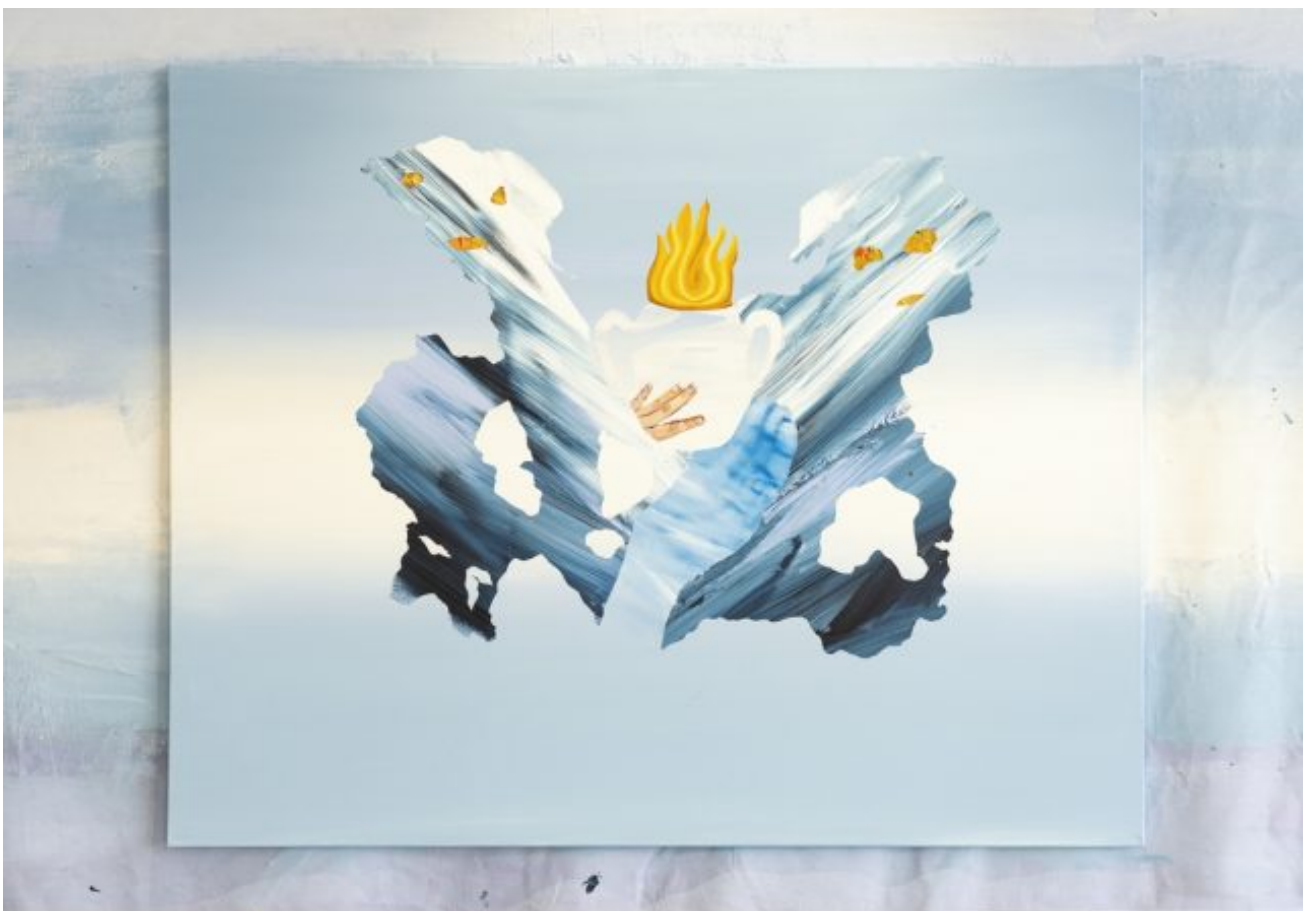
Title: *I Create What I See – ABRACADABRA*

Open: 12.06.-06.07.2024

Draakon Gallery, Pikk 18, Tallinn.

Mon-Fri 11.00-18.00, Sat 11.00-17.00

Photography: Anna Mari Liivrand











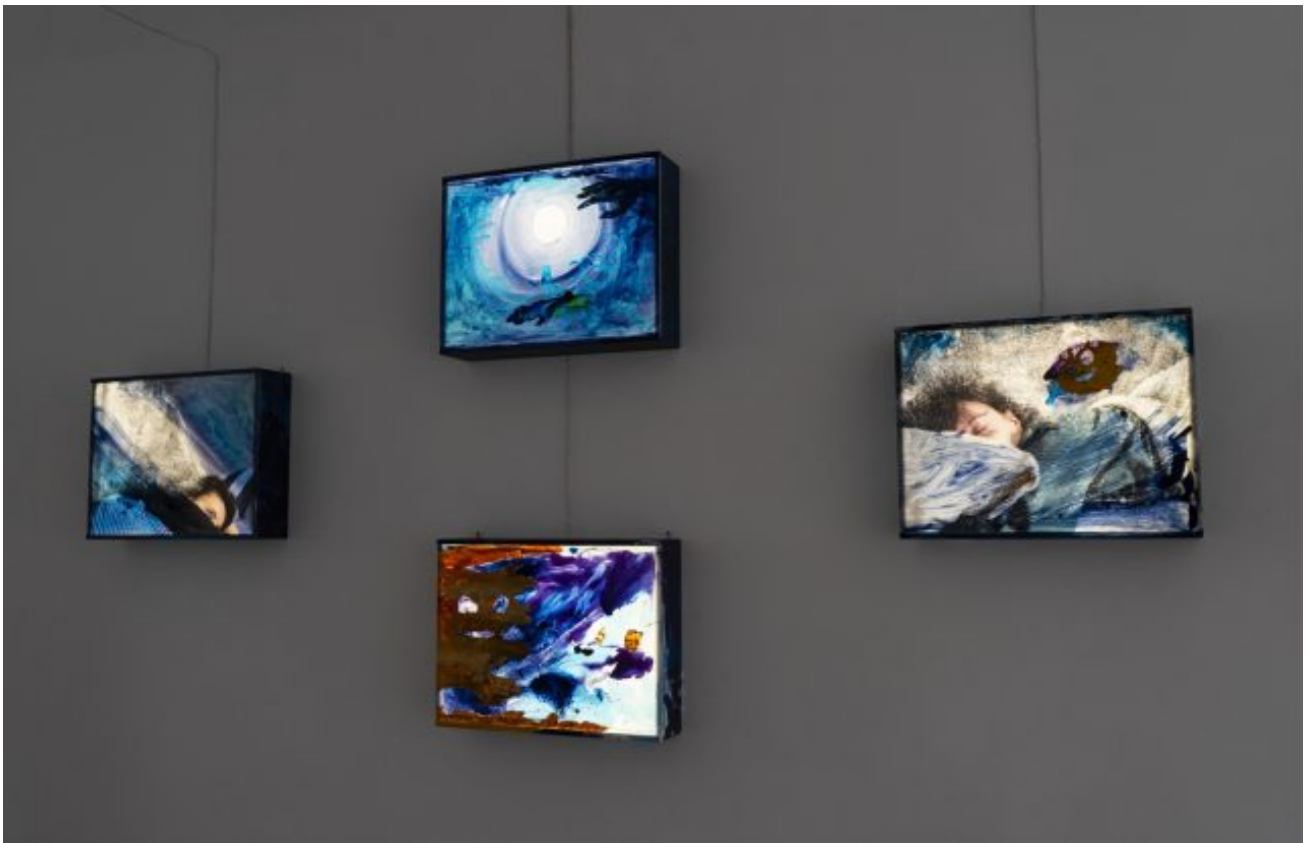


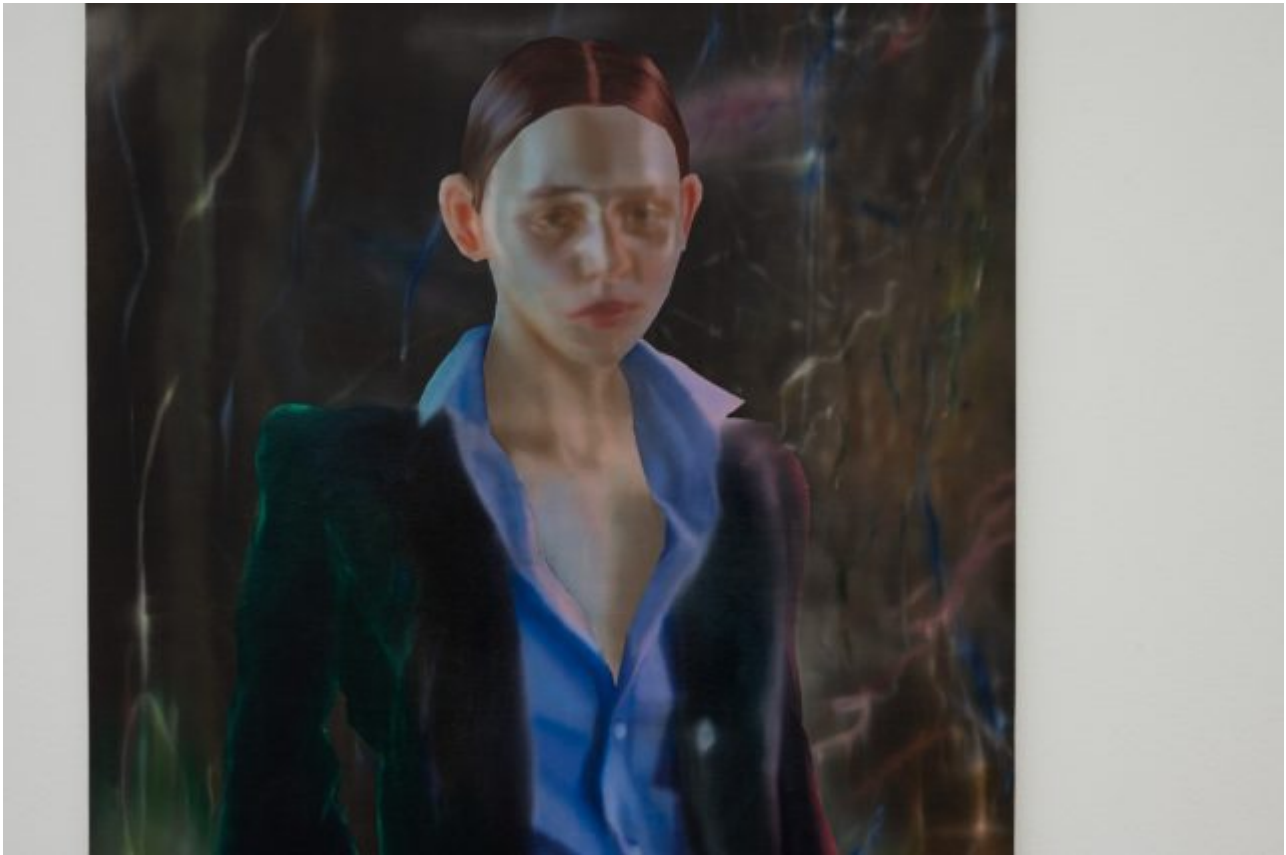




Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Promises' by Rūtė Merk at the National Gallery of Art

July 12, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



On 5 July the National Gallery of Art of the LNMA opened *Promises*, an exhibition by the international acclaimed painter Rūtė Merk. The visitors are invited to reflect how the advanced technology alters our bodies, to revisit the very concept of corporeal and how the medium of painting is capable of rendering the desires of our time and the promises of technologies. The exhibition will be on until 6 October.

“By putting on this Rute Merk’s exhibition the National Gallery of Art gains a firm support on two legs, by linking the museum’s common historic time with our time, or maybe even “the promised” future. Our inspiration is the artist herself, and I am positive she will enthuse the viewer too with her fantastic renditions of our well-familiar present captured using the medium of painting”, Lolita Jablonskienė, director of the NGA says.

The artist flirting with the history of art

In her exhibition *Promises*, Merk, lionized by the Lithuanian and foreign art critics as one of the most intriguing artists of the young generation, opts for the classical genres of portrait and still life and the traditional painting in oils to design the archetypes of our time and their shifting boundaries in the contemporary world. The material and virtual, the natural and artificial, the particular and abstract are bedfellows in her art pieces.

The curator of the event Inesa Brašiškė describes how the artist fashions her portraits from the elements dug from digital culture, merged with her personal experience and impressions. “Even though Merk’s portraits flirt with the history of painting, there are no doubts they evoke not the times of folds of robes, but of sweatpants and business casual suits. These are the types representing popular culture and fashion, and the idiosyncrasies of the millennials, produced from bits and parts of the artist’s memories, impressions and a deliberate archeology of the digital culture.

21st-century-still life on show

According to the exhibition curator, several centuries ago, still life painters created arrangements of trophies, ripe fruit, cut flowers to convey the ideas of mortality, of the cycles of nature and the prosperity of the middle class. The still lifes by Merk also show contemporary consumer products that have become attributes of the contemporary aestheticized lifestyle and economic good fortunes.

“The overblown, nearly abstract motif of latte aspires to become an allegory for the global economic networks and the frenzied culture of productivity. In her paintings the difference between the natural and the synthetic collapses. The blue phalaenopsis unknown to nature, the ideally looking identical engineered fruit address the interventions into the most intimate levels of nature,” the curator of the exhibition Brašiškė says.

In the light of screen suns

Some of the pieces by Rūtė Merk will strike the viewer as images from video games and 3D animations generated by the digital image editing software. According to the curator, the painter’s colour scheme, her visual effects, figure modelling and composition result in products intended for on-screen viewing. “The dissolving, hazy, out-of-focus abstract backgrounds leave you with an uncanny feeling as if being created not for the human, but rather an artificial eye”, the curator of the exhibition notes.

The exhibition invites to ponder on what, and also how we see in the light of screen suns.

Rūtė Merk (b. 1991) is a Lithuanian painter based in Berlin. She graduated in painting from Vilnius Academy of Arts and Munich Academy of Fine Arts. She received the DAAD scholarship in 2023, and won the Audience Choice Award at the JCDecaux Young Painter Prize. The artist’s work appeared in solo and group exhibitions in New York City, Shanghai, Berlin, Munich, Kyiv and Vilnius. Her work has been acquired by the MO Museum in Vilnius, M Woods in Beijing, ICA Miami, the MAMCO in Geneva, the Sifang Art Museum in Nanjing, and by other art institutions.

Curator Inesa Brašiškė

Coordinators: Beatričė Mockevičiūtė, Austėja Tavoraitė

Architects: Beatričė Mockevičiūtė, Mindaugas Reklaitis

Designers: Gailė Pranckūnaitė, Laura Grigaliūnaitė

Translator Paulius Balčytis

Partners: VACANCY, TARA DOWNS, SIXCHAIRS BOOKS

Media partner JCDecaux Lietuva

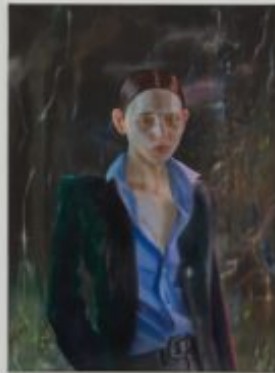
Photography: Gintarė Grigėnaitė



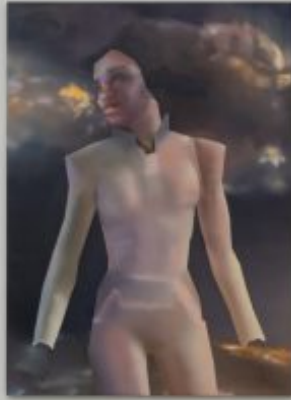




1900
The Boy with the Red Headband
Oil on canvas
1900



1900
The Boy with the Red Headband
Oil on canvas
1900



Portrait of a Woman, 2012
Digital artwork
100% acrylic on canvas
100x100cm

Portrait of a Woman, 2012
Digital artwork
100% acrylic on canvas
100x100cm



Portrait of a Woman, 2012
Digital artwork
100% acrylic on canvas
100x100cm

Portrait of a Woman, 2012
Digital artwork
100% acrylic on canvas
100x100cm

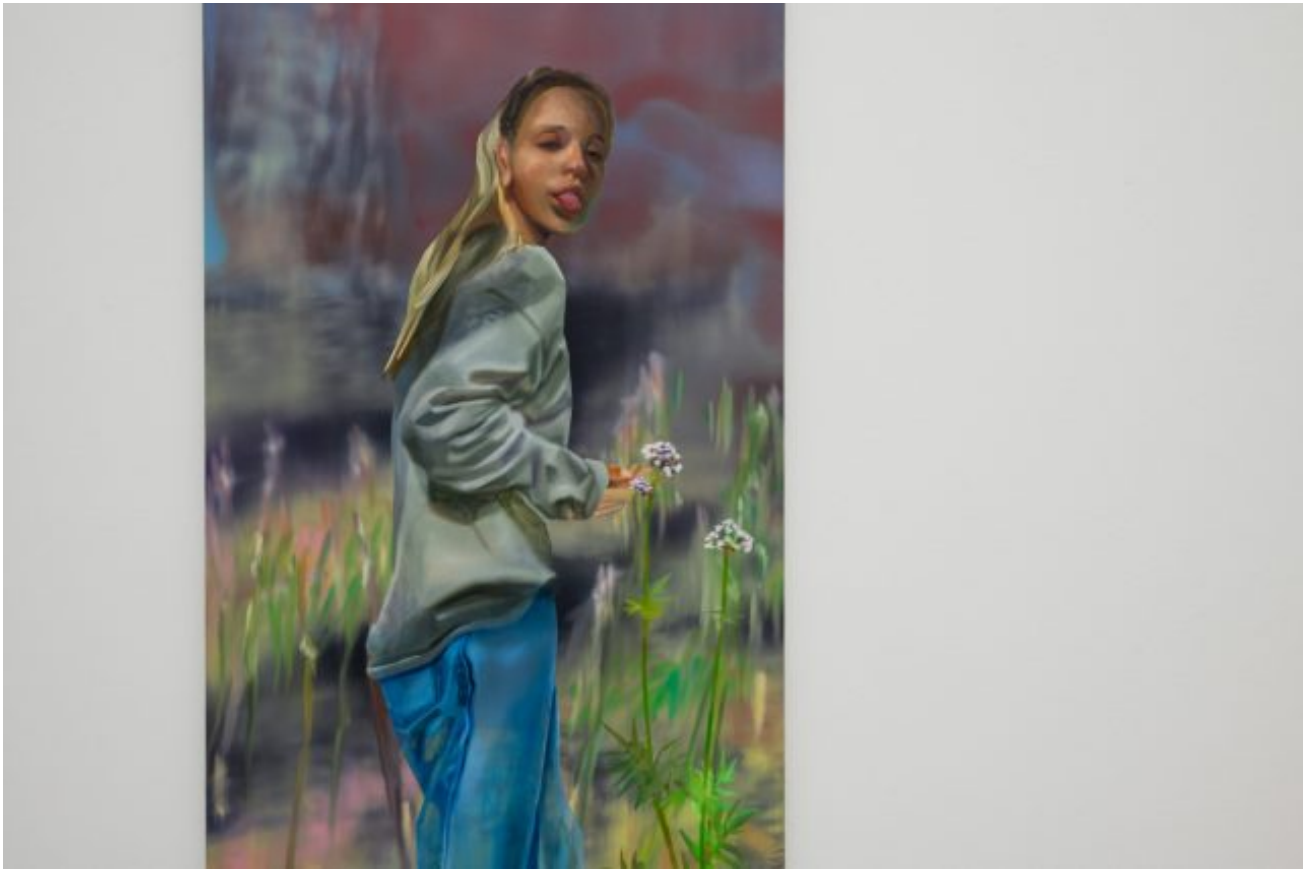


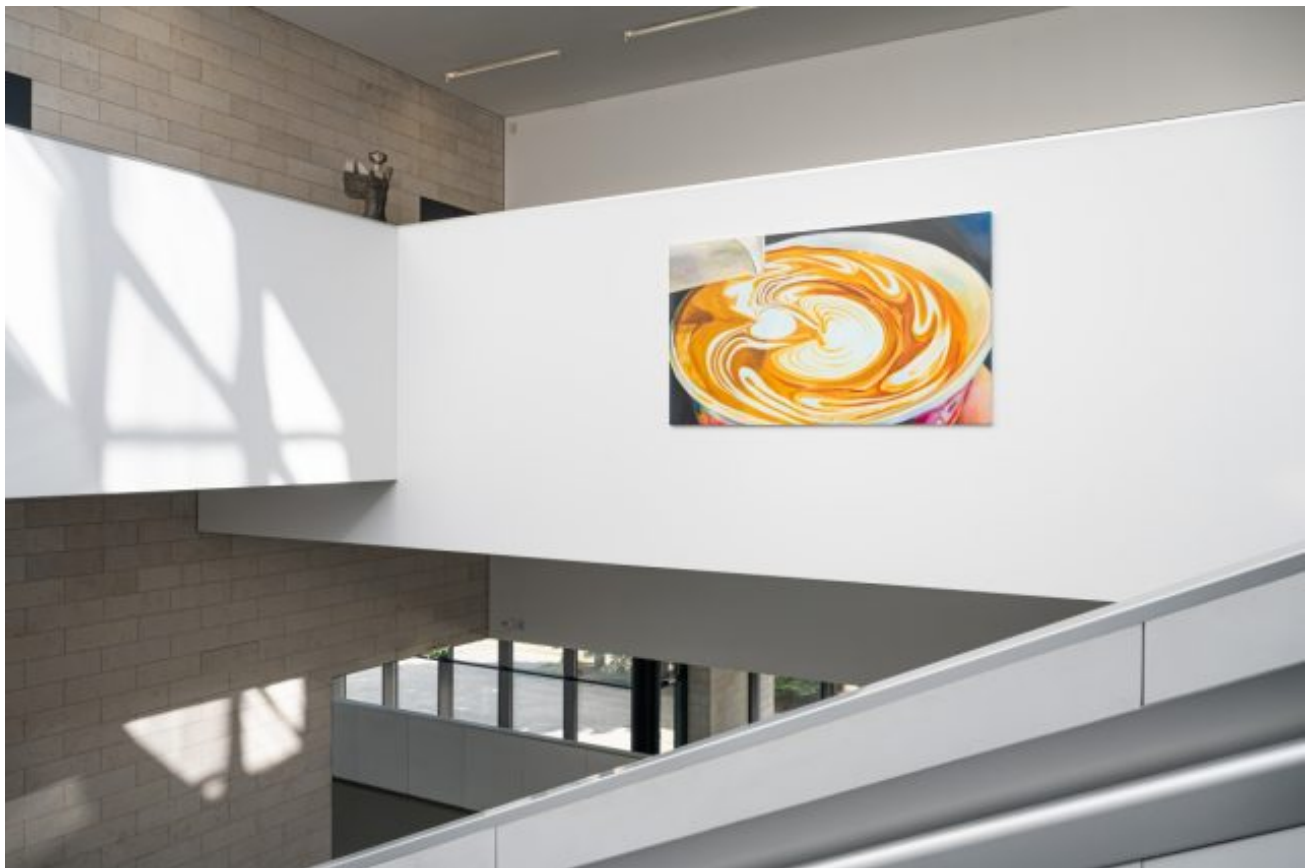
1965
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Photoreportage from the exhibition 'Validity Period' by Roman Butym and Pavlo Kyryk at the DOM Gallery

July 19, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Until July 27, the DOM Gallery in Riga will host the exhibition 'Validity Period' on the topic of ecology and consumerism.

The project was realized in 2021 in Krakow by Ukrainian artists Roman Butym and Pavlo Kyryk. For three months, the authors visited local municipal waste collection points, using trash as decorations for the project.

The project was nominated in the 8th edition of the Fine Art Photography Awards (London, 2021).

The exhibition space is a metaphor for the future, where climate change has already become a reality, and environmental pollution has fundamentally altered the familiar landscape. The home has become a place of nostalgia for nature, and artifacts such as dried wildflowers or seeds have become valuable collectible items.

The project's photos are complemented by four 3D frames containing soil, five wheat spikes, dried poppy flowers, and a mixture of sunflower seeds and wheat grains. All natural materials come from Ukraine. In addition to their primary sense, they also have additional meanings, such as the wheat spikes addressing the theme of historical memory («The Law of Five Spikelets» during the Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932-1933) or the dried poppy flower, serving as an allusion to the symbol of memory for the victims who died during wars.

The photos are for sale, and all proceeds will be donated to the Come Back Alive Foundation.

Additionally, during the exhibition, anyone can participate in a charity raffle for a certified Fine Art Print photo from the project. To participate, you need to make a donation of at least 5 euros to the Come Back Alive foundation, which professionally engages in volunteer work, helping Ukraine in the war with Russia (<https://savelife.in.ua/en/donate-en/#donate-army-card-once>). In the payment description, write “raffle – Validity period, 2024,” and send the transaction confirmation to the email validityperiod2024@gmail.com.

The winner will be determined by a randomizer after the exhibition ends.

Roman Butym is a Ukrainian photographer living in Krakow, Poland. Roman engages in artistic, advertising, and reportage photography. His works have been published on the Instagram of World Press Photo, and in the online magazines Photo Vogue Italia and The Eye of Photography Magazine.

Pavlo Kyryk is a Ukrainian writer and graphic artist living in Krakow, Poland. He is a laureate of the Krakow City Artist Scholarship 2024 and the Smoloskyp Publishing House Literary Contest (Kyiv, 2016). He also collaborated with the National Museum in Krakow.

Photographer: Pavlo Kyryk











raffle



Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Room No. 6' by Kristians Fukss at Alma gallery

July 19, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



'Room No. 6' is a continuation of Kristians Fukss' (b. 1999) exhibition series called 'Rooms', which began with 'Istaba Nr. 4. Veltījums Marselam Prustam' (2021) as part of the exhibition 'GALERIJA ALMA @ PADURES MUIŽA' and 'ISTABA NR. 5' ALMA (2022). The current exhibition takes place from 20th June to 9th August 2024.

Plato and Mickey Mouse – indeed a philosophically and artistically fortunate combination. One might, of course, ask: in what sense is it fortunate? Let's set aside the "philosophical" aspect for a moment and address the "artistic". The image of Mickey Mouse first appears in Kristians Fuks' art in his solo exhibition *Wolken*, held in 2019 at the Ojārs Vācietis Museum. The subsequent trajectory of this character in Fuks' artistic practice is described by the artist himself as "using a playful approach to address serious matters..." A playful approach can save an author resolved to grapple with such a seasoned combatant as Plato () – the philosopher named Aristocles () according to tradition, whose other name familiar to us all means "broad" which, again following tradition, is linked to the robust physique sculpted by Plato's martial arts practice. In the context of Platonism, this sounds almost like an oxymoron, but the contradiction inherent in this thinker's name characterizes his entire philosophy and its subsequent influence.

It is possible to be playful and yet maintain seriousness in two ways. The third way would, of course, be Socratic irony, which – as far as we can see in Plato's early dialogues and given that in the later ones, it does not explicitly appear at all – is expressed from power positions, hence we might need to retain this meaning of the term and abstain from using it here.

The first seriousness regards Plato: Kristians Fuks has invited Plato to his room number six for a serious conversation about the meaning of life and virtues. But what does “taking Plato seriously” entail within the context of contemporary Latvia? It might mean dedicating a lecture or two to Plato in aesthetics, ethics, epistemology, ontology, or your basic philosophy course, or maybe composing an entry for the National Encyclopedia about him (which already exists). A mathematician, perhaps, might add: bestowing an eidetic aura upon a theorem that has neither been formulated nor proven.

The second is the critical seriousness, which might prompt one to embark on a quest for critical theories. However, let's keep in mind that Kristians Fuks' Mickey Mouse is a visual – not a literary – character. And being an art character, it sidesteps the verbal entanglements of unambiguity – to the extent that unambiguity is at all possible. Moreover, an art character may not obey even the intentions of its own author, as it becomes independent upon entering the public space of the exhibition and changes, over time, its trajectories of meanings.

What do the three different Mickey Mice signify? Could they mean that the three levels are not as distinct as knowledge, opinion, and ignorance in Plato's epistemology, not as distinct as true being, appearance, and non-being in his ontology? Indeed, the three parts of the soul are united in a two-horse chariot, led by reason or intellect; much like a charioteer commands and steers two horses, one of which is “upright and has clean limbs; he carries his neck high, has an aquiline nose, is white in color, and has dark eyes; he is a friend of honor joined with temperance and modesty, guided only by the word of command and by reason”, while the other is “crooked, heavy, ill put together, his neck is short and thick, his nose flat [..]” (Phaedrus, 253d). The literary image of the charioteer and the chariot is powerful enough to be steered in a direction other than Plato intended. But let's leave reason to hold the reins for now. Concerning his own life and its meaning, Kristians Fuks categorizes virtue into three forms: intellectual ability, scoutism, and artistic endeavor. Only the artistic endeavor – disregarding the recommendations in Plato's Laws (802b-c) – exhibits independence akin to horses breaking free from the reins of the charioteer. How fortunate that it is so!

The light of the lantern might invite the audience to recall Plato's cave, lure them through Alain Robbe-Grillet's labyrinth of repetitions, or lead them to relate to the lamplighter on a distant planet visited by the Little Prince, or make them dream about it as a guiding light on the way to Narnia... Kristians Fuks asks: “In a world ruled by virtue, wouldn't scouting knots adorn the walls instead of decorative panels?” The answer can be found in his Room no. 6.

Text by Dr. phil. Jānis Taurens

Curated by Astrīda Riņķe

Photos: Ansis Starks











Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Islands and Archipelagos' at the M. Žilinskas Art Gallery

July 25, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Le a Porre by Lukas Mykolaitis

The 'Islands and Archipelagos' exhibition was held from June 5 to 8, 2024, at M. Žilinskas Art Gallery, Nepriklausomybės sq. 12. The name of the exhibition "Islands and Archipelagos" refers to a myriad of constellations – real and imaginary – comprising the fabric of the city. An island serves as a symbol of both retreat and resilience, where social, political and everyday pressures can be warded off and new alliances formed. Tracing through the material and architectural history of the city, one can move through the history of islands, steadily growing and merging, transforming itself and the city that they forge.

Rave cultures and festivals are islands par excellence – only possible when multiple conditions align and necessary separation is established – between what an island is and what it is not. These coordinates might change but they are essential to nurture creativity and space where diversity is celebrated. During the festival, new imaginaries that in the future will bleed into the outside world can be born, proving that no island exists in full isolation.

The Art Program at M. Žilinskas Gallery transformed three floors of the gallery into an archipelago of affection, deception, and smuggling. Referring to the maze-like interior of the gallery, the visceral nature of festivals and the mysterious personal history of Mykolas Žilinskas, whose name the gallery bears, the islands of art program beguiled, stimulated and seduced. The exhibition invited diverse

artists working through different disciplines and mediums to show how deception can be an integral part of creative world-making. From site-specific installations to CGI and video works and objects from the gallery's collection, "Islands and Archipelagos" seduced the audience and proposed future scenarios for the gallery.

Artists: Algirdas Jakas (LT), Eglė Ruibytė (LT), Emilija Povilanskaitė (LT), Jurgis Lietunovas (LT), Tomas Daukša (LT), Mykolas Valantinas (LT), Léa Porré (FR/UK), Ringailė Demšytė (LT), Joey Holder (UK/FIN), Matilda Tjäder (SE), Saulė Barley (LT), Tsingyun Zhang (CN/GER), Marikiscrycrycry (UK), Iceboy Violet (UK), Ella Jo Skinner (UK), Jette Loona Hermanis (EE).

Curator: Tautvydas Urbelis

Exhibition architect: Vladas Suncovas

Light designer: Adomas Kaikaris

Coordinators: Margarita Žigutytė, Karolis Aleksynas

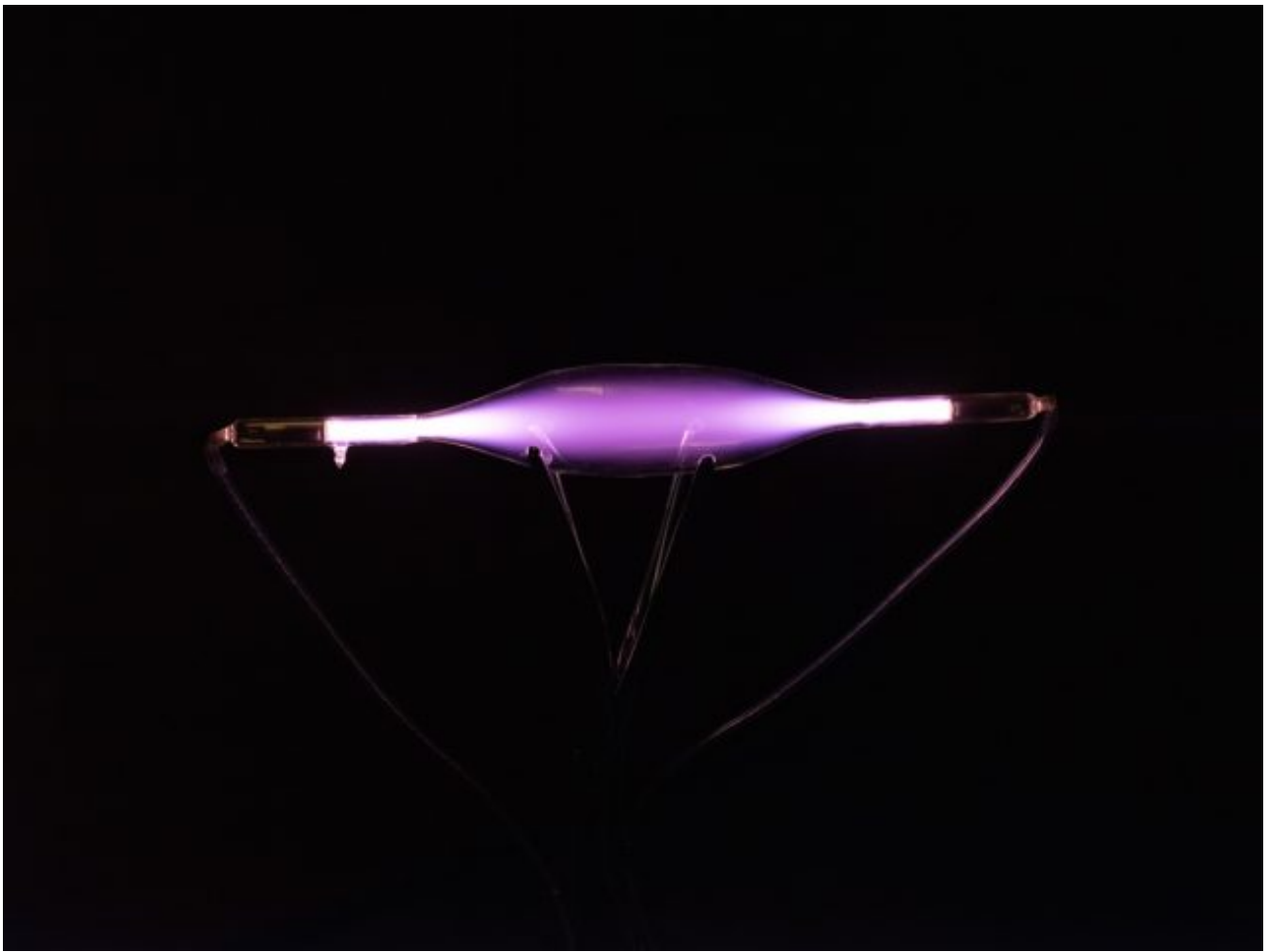
Photography: Lukas Mykolaitis



Eglė Ruibytė ir Algirdas Jakas by Lukas Mykolaitis



Joey Holder by Lukas Mykolaitis



Mykolas Valantinas by Lukas Mykolaitis



Ringaile Dėms yte by Lukas Mykolaitis



Saule Barley by Lukas Mykolaitis



Tomas Dauks a by Lukas Mykolaitis



Tomas Dauksa by Lukas Mykolaitis



Tsingyun Zhang by Lukas Mykolaitis

Photo reportage from the exhibition of technological art 'Enter Woodland Spirits' in Tartu

July 26, 2024

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Norman Orro, Joonas Timmi. *The Allure of Teleogenesis*, 2024. Exhibition *Enter Woodland Spirits*. Photo: Taavi Piibemann

The European Capital of Culture Tartu 2024 unveiled its international exhibition of technological art *Enter Woodland Spirits* on 28th of June, offering the public new contexts in which to approach and revive folk wisdom and render the essence of nature as a tangible and tactile entity. Twenty two artists from the Nordic and Baltic region have participated in the exhibition, including fourteen new works inspired in several cases by Estonia's natural heritage. *Enter Woodland Spirits* takes place in two historic neighbouring buildings in Tartu: the Estonian Literary Museum and the University of Tartu Natural History Museum.

Closely intertwined with the exhibition project is the newly created anthology *Estonian Nature Folklore*, which highlights the rich folklore collections and their value from an ecological perspective: the folk inheritances of the Nordic countries and their people, which reveals both utilitarian and sustainable aspects in addition to a respectful relationship with nature as a soulful, powerful partner.

Enter Woodland Spirits takes visitors on a journey through two historic buildings, with the possibility to encounter installation environments, sound and video works, works generated by AI or through manipulating with augmented reality, kinetic sculptures and other hybrid forms where the art experience is multi-sensory. Site-specific artworks can be encountered from the largest auditorium of the University of Tartu to the mysterious attic of the Literary Museum.

The artists from the Nordic and Baltic countries embrace the essence and reverence for nature in their work. The exhibition will feature Bryndís Björnsdóttir and Þorsteinn Eyfjörð from Iceland, Oskar Koliander from Denmark, Tori Wrånes, Ingrid Torvund and Jonas Mailand from Norway, Hans Rosenström, Niskanen & Salo in collaboration with Inkeri Aula, Pia Sirén and Nastja Säde Rönkkö from Finland, Linda Boļšakovaa and ART+ from Latvia and Norman Orro with Joonas Timmi, Zody Burke, Johannes Luik, Emer Värk, Roman-Sten Tõnissoo and Mari-Leen Kiipli from Estonia.

Initiated by the Estonian Literary Museum in 2019, the *Enter Woodland Spirits* project is part of the European Capital of Culture Tartu 2024 programme line *Tartu with Earth*.

Enter Woodland Spirits

28.06–25.08.2024, Tartu, Estonia

at the Estonian Literary Museum and the University of Tartu Natural History Museum building

Curators: Henri Hütt, Evelyn Raudsepp

Participating artists: Bryndís Björnsdóttir, Þorsteinn Eyfjörð from Iceland, Oskar Koliander from Denmark, Tori Wrånes, Ingrid Torvund and Jonas Mailand from Norway, Hans Rosenström, Niskanen & Salo in collaboration with Inkeri Aula, Pia Sirén, Nastja Säde Rönkkö from Finland, Linda Boļšakova, ART+ from Latvia and Norman Orro and Joonas Timmi, Zody Burke, Johannes Luik, Emer Värk, Roman-Sten Tõnissoo, Mari-Leen Kiipli from Estonia.

<https://folklore.ee/loodus/en/projektist/naitus>

The exhibition is supported by the European Capital of Culture Tartu 2024, Nordisk Kulturfond, the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, Frame Contemporary Art Finland, OCA Norway (the Office for Contemporary Art Norway), the Danish Arts Foundation, the Nordic-Baltic mobility program for culture, ECOC 2024 Duo Networking project / EEA and Norway Grants, Icelandic Visual Arts Fund, Icelandic Artists' Salary Fund, The Finnish Cultural Foundation, The Arts Promotion Centre Finland (Taike), Upgreat, A. Le Coq, Estonian Academy of Arts.

Concept and organising by Henri Hütt, Evelyn Raudsepp, Taive Särg, Ave Goršič.

Exhibition website: <https://folklore.ee/loodus/projektist/naitus>



Norman Orro, Joonas Timmi. The Allure of Teleogenesis, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Ingrid Torvund & Jonas Mailand. Seeper Weeper Sleeper, episode 1, 2022. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits.
Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Mari-Leen Kiipli. Phantom Influence, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



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Mari-Leen Kipli. Phantom Influence, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Roman-Sten Tõnissoo. Explora, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Roman-Sten Tõnissoo. Explora, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Þorsteinn Eyfjörð. Cillum Self, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Linda Boļšakova. Roots, 2024. Exhibition Enter
Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Linda Bojšakova. Roots, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Linda Bojšakova. Roots, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Oskar Koliander. Intelligo #5, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Oskar Koliander. Intelligo #5, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Johannes Luik. Transition: The Unknown (Contact with the Wooden Floor), 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Johannes Luik. Transition: The Unknown (Contact with the Wooden Floor), 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Bryndís Björnsdóttir. Lick, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Bryndís Björnsdóttir. Lick, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Zody Burke. The Under-Earths Spin, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



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Zody Burke. The Under-Earths Spin, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Pia Sirén. Forest Choir (Mantra), 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Emer Värk. /imagine a cell, in deserpunk style, with „the end is near“ scratched on the wall –style raw, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



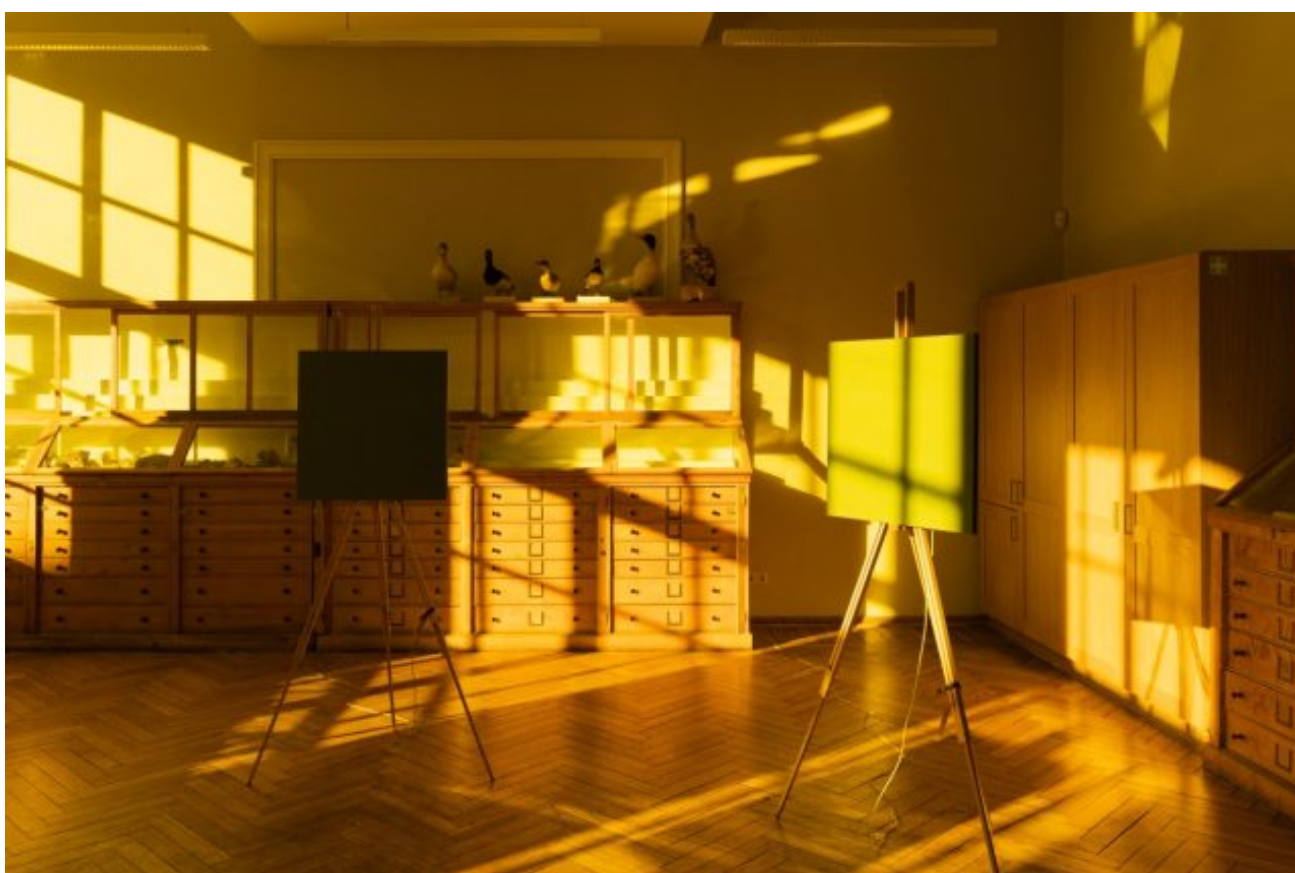
Emer Värk. /imagine a cell, in deserpunk style, with „the end is near“ scratched on the wall –style raw, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Nastja Säde Rönkkö. Soovana, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



Niskanen & Salo, in collaboration with Inkeri Aula. Pilv-Cloud, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: courtesy of the artists



Niskanen & Salo, in collaboration with Inkeri Aula. Pilv-Cloud, 2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: courtesy of the artists



Tori Wrånes. Still live, (LIPS DON'T CRY AT ALL), 2019–2024. Exhibition Enter Woodland Spirits. Photo: Taavi Piibemann



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