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echo gone wrong

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Adding World to it: Nine Letters

May 15, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Zody Burke, *The House of Asterion*, Hobusepea gallery, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

By Bob Bicknell-Knight, Theresa Roth, Anna Ovtšinnikova, Mats Johan Soosaar, Giulio Cusinato, Kristina Kuzemko, Kroplya, Fausta Noreikaitė, Aidan Timmer and Laura De Jaeger (introduction)

A few years ago, Bart Verschaffel published the collection of essays on *What Artistry Can Do*. The writer introduced the notion of sustained attention: to read something, one does not need to apply theory on it. 'After all, an artwork does not come with a meaning: it acquires meaning when someone chooses to focus and dwell on it and add world to it.' Verschaffel means that it is an engagement, a dialogue, a relationship through an encounter, that activates it.

After visiting Zody Burke's exhibition 'House of Asterion' at the Hobusepea Gallery in Tallinn, a group of contemporary artists did just that. Inspired by the artist-led project 'Love Letter to an Artwork', they each addressed a work in the show. Every piece called upon each person's attention, to share something with it, ask a question, whether through admiration, doubt or curiosity.



Excavation Site / Väljakaevamine, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

A Love Letter

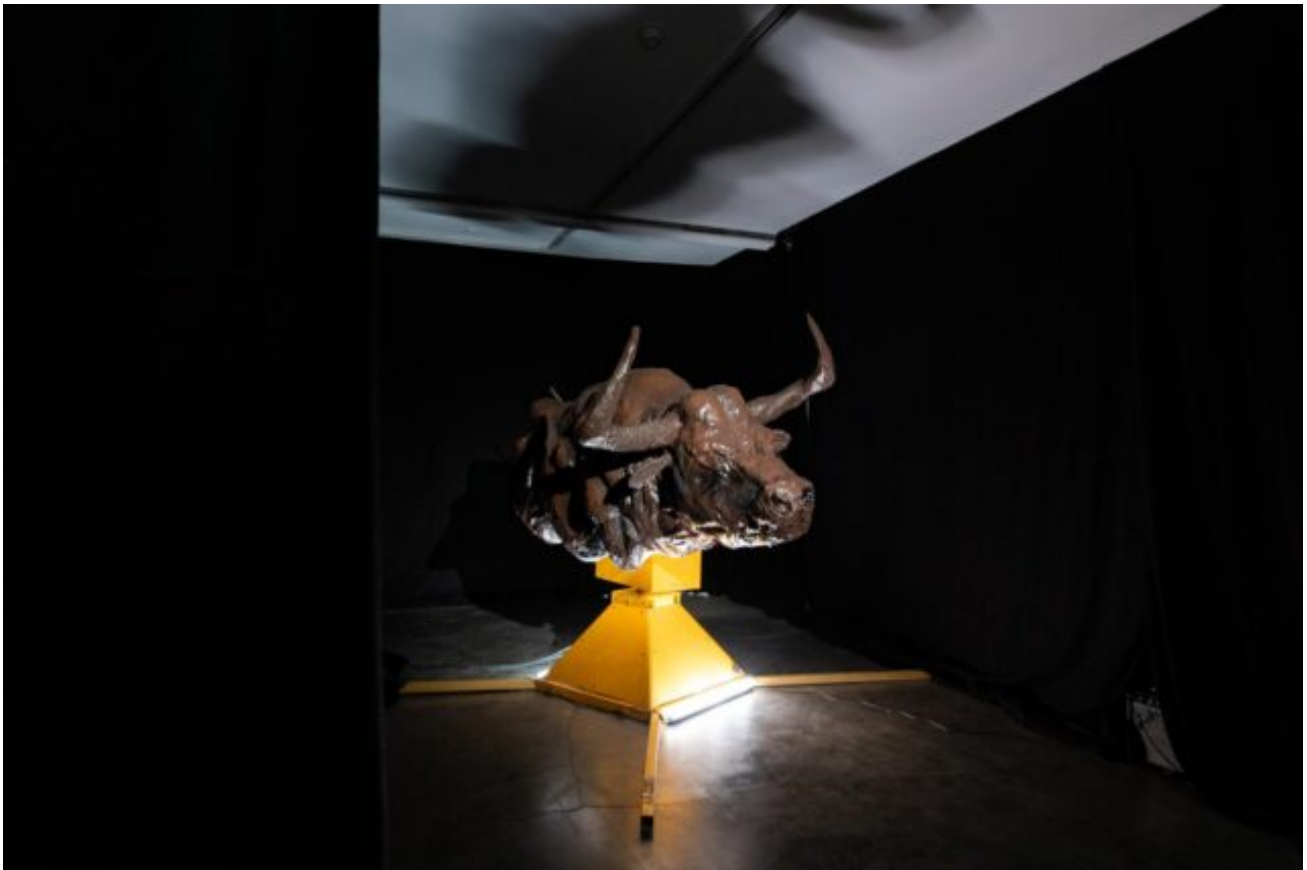
I'm not sure about your name, but I remember that we had a connection, you and me. We saw each other once or twice last week in the bowels of a building in the old town. A dimly lit location, filled with sound and silt. You were elevated, on a sort of stage, and had a number of different component parts. It felt like you used to be something special, something someone thought would be worth preserving, collecting, hoarding. Your set felt slightly manufactured and artificial. When your creator told me how they had some experience working in film production, things started to make sense.

I remember your hand very well: a delicately crafted appendage made to look like stone or ceramic. An attempt to disguise your inner, weightless polystyrene interior. I wouldn't say that this was a failure, but I always find it difficult to separate what once was and what is. In this case, I can see the cracks through the craftsmanship, although perhaps I'm just too sceptical. The organ, like several of your other body parts, was partially submerged in a pile of what I assume was sand, mimicking an archaeological site. The pile was atop the stage. This raised position gave weight to the items above.

It's hard to admit, but I did peek under your stage. I tend to do so on a first encounter. I like to get close in times like this, inspecting and cataloguing. Asking and attempting to answer questions about production and conceptual considerations. In this instance, it felt odd to see you this way. It felt like a spell being broken, although this one was created to break and fall apart. Underneath your stage was an empty space, devoid of any real importance. You knew this would happen. You allowed me, no, you wanted me, to shatter this illusion. You are a fabrication, a reproduction, a copy. I have seen things like you before, and have even made some things of my own in the past that appear almost identical in shape and scale.

Perhaps we will meet again one day, you and me. We will both have grown and changed with time, degrading and evolving in different ways. Perhaps your segregated entities will be separated and scattered to different parts of the Earth, mimicking the journeys that your great ancestors took after being uncovered and assaulted, split up and sold. Perhaps there is an even worse fate in our joint futures.

Yours,
Bob Bicknell-Knight



Asterion, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

Dear Minotauros,

I'm writing to you because you confuse me.

Last week, I found you. I walked down to the basement, following your rhythmic sounds. I saw your veins. I saw your muscles. Childhood memories resurfaced as I watched your unbound movement.

You are so big.

As a child, I had illustrated books; well, books about Disney movies. Not official ones; cheap, unauthorised versions. Not the kind with beautiful film stills. Just a few pages, skipping major parts of the plot. The drawings were made specifically for those books. You could easily spot the inaccuracies: faces only loosely resembling the originals, slightly deformed. And yet sometimes the characters appeared more beautiful, more detailed than in the movies, especially the sidekicks, who only got a couple of seconds on screen.

So I had this book of Lady and the Tramp. Early in the story Lady, the female lead if you will, escapes from her home and gets lost in the city. She's hunted by two evil dogs, only to be rescued by Tramp, the hero (I don't know if you've heard the story anyway). The scene unfolds on a double page: the frightened Lady on the left, the two antagonists in the bottom right-hand corner.

I remember it so vividly. Their shiny brown fur stretched over tense muscles, laced with pulsating veins. They were shown in profile, baring their teeth, gums bulging grotesquely. I couldn't take my eyes off them. It was my favourite page.

Twenty-five years later I see you, and feel the same arousal I did as a child with that book. I want to touch your veins, your muscles. Feel them. Rub my body against you and satisfy myself.

I don't know why I'm telling you this.

So I sit in front of you and watch.

Your massive shadow dances across the ceiling. I never get bored of watching you. With every turn, I discover a new detail. I catch your eyes and want you to know: what are you thinking about? What do you see?

You shake left and right, as if you are dreaming. I wonder if I appear in your dream.

Do you dream of me?

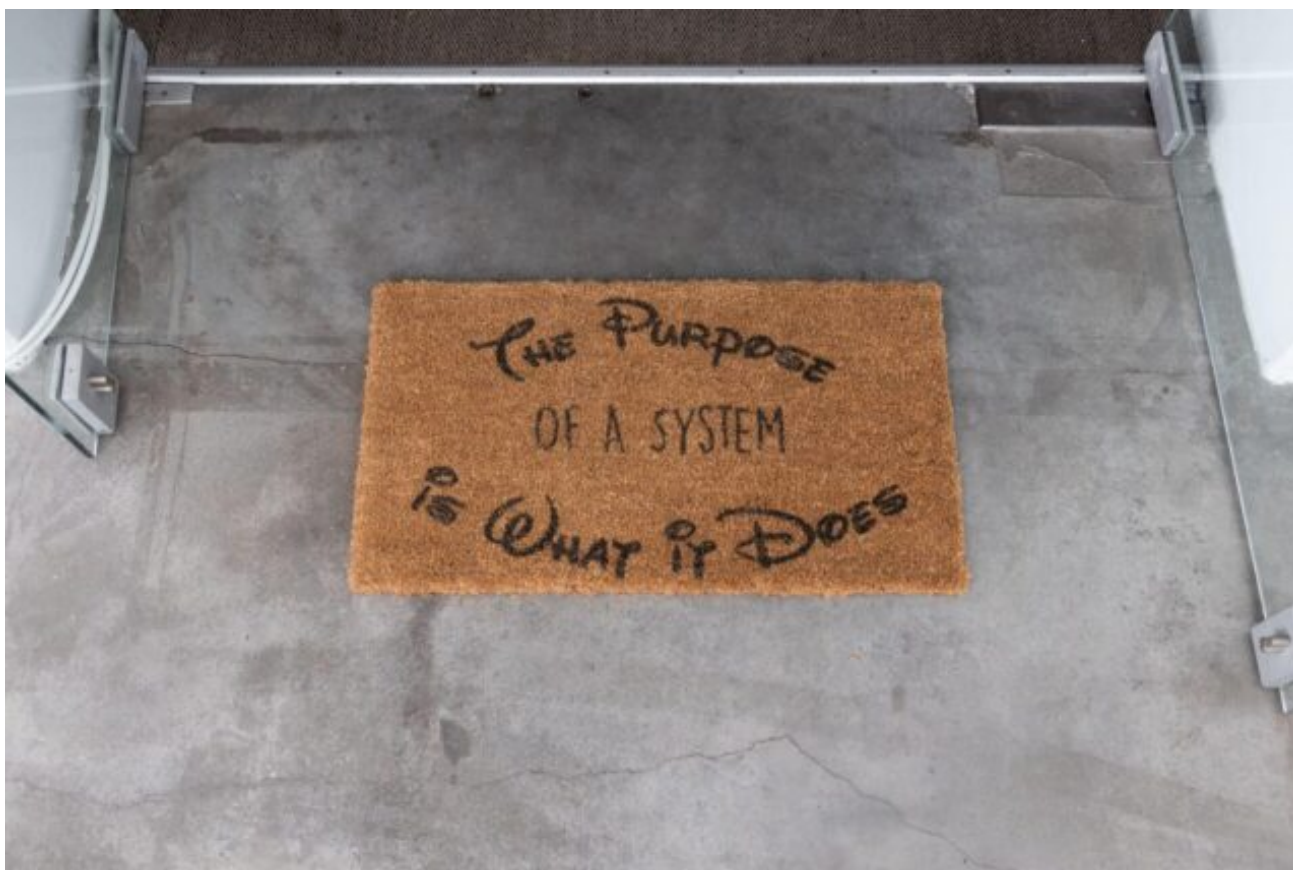
They cut off your feet to keep you from escaping the labyrinth. I want to tell you that I hate them for doing that to you, but I also want you to stay here.

And yet I dream. I imagine our life together outside. I know that you didn't do this to those boys and girls. You didn't want this to happen.

Am I the only woman writing you letters?

Please don't answer with a letter. My girlfriend can't know.

T.



The Purpose of a System is What it Does / Süsteemi eesmärk seisneb tema mõjus, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

Dear *Asterion* and *The Purpose of a System is What it Does*,

It's true. I was staring at you. Looking at you moving in circles created a place of comfort in my existence while listening to electronic white noise. I simply enjoyed the empty feeling that your majestic body provided me. I didn't even care to *think* about what you do to me. I was doing that exact same thing everybody else was doing, looking at you for no reason. Like people in the club, looking at the DJ to escape reality by focusing on one figure. Thanks to you I found myself in that state of trance. I liked it because it made me feel at ease. Why would I want that, though? It isn't even your fault that your purpose to simply mesmerise and hop around makes everybody like you. You are the big star for no reason. A mechanical bull that cannot even be ridden. You look big, strong and oily, but your insides are plastic. Why would anyone awe you? Does your coolness and purposelessness make you a work of art? Have you ever talked to the mat?

It's rather ironic to find you here on the floor where no one would notice you. I wonder, have you ever felt left behind? Have you ever felt out of place? I assume you've been trying to fit in with your popular Disney and Comic Sans font. Unfortunately, telling the truth tends to make people confused and anxious. That's where everybody starts stepping over you. Are they ignoring the truth? It's like that situation where everybody likes the cool kid but nobody thinks of the reason why. That kind of stuff makes you question yourself: what is your purpose? But maybe you are in the right place after all. It's not your fault that people would rather watch the lost bull ride itself and feel nothing than actually think about what they are doing and what they are consuming. It's nobody's purpose to pinpoint every little detail for everybody to actually understand us. It should come from their own will. Your purpose is just to be there. You said your words.

It's a pity that you were both misplaced, and for that reason you were both misunderstood. It's a pity that people are attracted by the easy and not by the reasonable. Judging myself here! I was part of the grey mass that consumed that oily 'bullshit' piece of plastic. I enjoyed my brain being turned off. You guys are just here to reflect us.

Better luck next time,
Anna



Cowch / Lehm-diivan Cow, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

To the couch

I started off thinking I would write a review, but I don't think that would be fair. You are much more than a tourist attraction on Google Maps. Writing a review would kind of downplay your status as a piece of art, and it feels like an unreasonably violent thing to do. So take this as a letter of appreciation instead. I am always happy when there is a place to sit down at an exhibition. Even if it isn't a large exhibition where one would spend an entire day, it is still nice to have a moment to rest. You are beautiful and comfortable. I would love to have a couch as nice at home. If I had to, I would give you a rating of 5/5 stars, and would recommend you to a friend.

Mats



Hermes & the Bull Jumpers / Hermes ja üle härja hippajad, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

Dear Hermes & the Bull Jumpers,

I write this letter to you after the reveries I felt at the sight of you. Memories came from afar, from a part of me buried inside. Sleepy memories of a life before.

I have the feeling that I was there, or perhaps I am sure of it: I was there. The bullfight is in me and I am the bullfight. Is this the essence of dance: to dance with the animal element, primordial, unpredictable? This way of dancing is perhaps the only self-conscious form that exists. I believe that man began to move unconsciously only a few hundred years ago. Before that time, there was movement in relation to ... and this previously smoky and confused feeling is now rooting violently in me. I was there, at those feasts, dancing with the bull. I grabbed its horns and pushed myself into a somersault. These memories emerge from the resin and project me forward. A leap. I feel that you have come from the distant past into the future, but even if you exist in time, you may not survive it. You belong to different eras, and it has always been difficult to place you. Despite this complicated character of yours, I'm still happy to have met you. You are like the comic strip 'Fritz the Cat' found on an archaeological site.

I wish you all the best, and hope to see you again. Maybe tomorrow, maybe yesterday.

Yours,
Giulio



Pasiphaë, Queen of the Rodeo / Pasiphae, rodeo kuninganna, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

You appeared as though you had just emerged —
from a dream, a forgotten myth,
or perhaps from the back of Zody's mind.

Your stitches seemed undone and redone,
as if someone had struggled to repair you —
or gently set you free.
There was no pretence of perfection.
You stood there,
holding your form
like you were a thread in some larger story.

There was a tilt in the way you leaned,
worn but still curious,
like a figure who had wandered the labyrinth
and began to question the walls around them.

You didn't demand attention,
but I couldn't help tracing every line.
While you called back to something ancient,
I recognised a world I had never stepped into before.

Thank you for being strange
in a soft, searching way,
a quiet kind of magic,
offering a different map through the maze.

Love,
Kristina



Ariadne, or the Hanged Nymph / Ariadne, ehk võlla
tõmmatud nümf, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane
Treima

Subject: We are drowning in drought
From: ariadne.or.the.hanged.nymph@zody.burke
To: excavation.site@zody.burke

Dear Excavated site,

I hope this letter finds you well, and that my wish to tell you to fuck off brings you clarity, not trauma. Come to terms with your status as 'not the one', and before you send me anything, run a quick check for boundary crossing. I have them. I'm a person too. And I don't want to keep flinching at your messages, wondering 'Is this going to be something profound about art, or another body-crushing piece of soulmate bullshit? Should I brace myself, let the emotional blister fester and bleed, or face it now before the pain sets in?' As you might've guessed, I don't believe in soulmates any more. And I'm done riding your carousel. All of my belief stayed behind in that cinematic evening where you said 'I'm not.' NO ONE FORCED YOU TO SAY THAT. THAT WAS YOUR 'NO.' NOW LIVE WITH ITS CONSEQUENCES. Please, take them into account. You're neither a lighthouse nor an anchor: no one's looking to you for direction, holding on to you, or dragging you out of anything. Your desire to cast me as Ariadne isn't going to fly. That's not the myth we're living. Wash your eyes and finally see: it wasn't my choice, it was your desire. In our shared reality, I'm closer to Medusa: violated, denied justice, and transformed by life into a terrifyingly beautiful woman. So if we're

following the chain of vengeance, it's you who should turn to stone now and finally release my soul, not keep building imaginary labyrinths and trying to follow some fishing line back 'home'.

I don't want to destroy what we had; but whatever this is now, whether nostalgia or some desperate urge to prolong something that no longer exists in its original form, it carries the weight of a swamp I refuse to sink into. We've been dry for a long, long time. So dry it feels like sand scraping my throat. You lost your last real chance to find out 'what if' about three years ago.

I'm living my life now. I have new people in it, people I can talk to about what I want and what I'm afraid of, instead of spinning on the echo ride of your fractured inner world. Talking to you could've been an interesting experience, but let's be honest, we were never really friends.

With still kind regards,
no more Ariadne



Asterion, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Jane Treima

Dear Asterion,

I keep thinking about how to approach you, whilst already knowing that all attempts are doomed to fail. Your nature is designed to devour those of my kind; thus, any effort to establish contact would be a self-destructive act. My poetic approaches could not reach you, as we're divided by centuries, ancient constructions, and mythological symbols. I ought to use some undefined form of visual expression, as no verbatims of mine are able to get to you. But then I notice your eyes, covered with artificial blood, already dried out, knowing that there's no life inside you left. Seeking contact through sound is equally hopeless, as the sound of your structure occupies an entire room, making every other sound in the space secondary (including my voice). So we're destined to be distant and

inaccessible to each other, inflicting pain upon one another as a result: you, determined to demolish my existence, as the love that was exceeded to you wasn't bigger than the hate; and I, hunted by your image of suffering, confronted with my own aching.

The works that resonate with the observer on a personal chord always say more about the observer than about the object of their observation.

I know the story of your origin, Asterion.

Your myth of perpetual suffering echoes through the darkest corners of my being.

Your punishment for the acts of savagery, when cruelty itself was inflicted on you before you even gained a physical life form, speaks of existential questions raised centuries after your genesis. Both your mythological posture and the representation of it in this gallery space are an offspring of violent and loving acts combined: dismantled, constructed and glued together, from materials that seemingly don't belong together. Yet they form a singular composition, an outcome of external decisions. Any life form, and any work, essentially, is that: repercussion or consequence, agentless until it learns self-sufficiency and self-governance.

So when I look at you (rotating around your own axis in the basement of the gallery), I pity you, Minotaur, for not having the agency to choose your nature and for being rejected for your essence. Which is nothing but the outcome of decisions made for you and before you. Even if you are a symbol, a representation, and a compass for morally ill behaviour, it is you (the actor with no agency) who lives the punishment. Those who are supposedly 'learning' from your story get to stare at you from a safe distance, hearing the echo of your suffering through the walls of the labyrinth to which you are chained. Your predecessors, possibly, carry some guilt on their shoulders. But what is guilt if not a small grain compared to timeless suffering?

You don't need my pity, as I don't need yours. Perhaps pity is nothing more than one's need to exhibit compassion, a self-soothing opportunity to display one's empathy? Thus, this letter, too, is nothing more than yet another exhibit of my capacity to feel.

I could have chosen any other artwork in the exhibition, I could have chosen any other feeling to speak about; but instead I chose to focus on the Minotaur's pain, which by proxy, essentially, is a talk about myself and my pain.

I've read Greek and Roman myths multiple times, yet only those that speak of perpetual agony are the ones I truly remember and keep coming back to: Sisyphus, Prometheus, Tantalus, just to name a few. For years, I praised Rodden as the ultimate genius, just because of one sculpture, The Danaid, being swallowed by her own suffering.

I connect profoundly with others through shared trauma and healing, seeing it as a form of bondage. If you can hold space for the pain of the other, you can hold space for their joy too, but not the other way round. Unaddressed pain always finds ways to escape through the cracks; and to me, in this space, Asterion, you are that crack.

Sincerely yours,
Fausta



Asterion, Zody Burke, 2025. Photo: Anna Mari Liivrand

Dear M,

Although I feel a strong aversion, writing about you, regarding your very strong presence in the space, I can't seem to get around it. I would rather write about the other relics surrounding you. You are the obvious choice. You swallow the focus that was meant for the others. Unfortunately, writing about another work in the room would be like treason against my own emotions and the sentiment I feel concerning you.

Throughout my childhood, I sustained a long obnoxious fear regarding the non-existing. For some reason the mythical and unreal have always plagued me. I was never afraid of the dark or other childhood clichés. It was 'Cerberus', the three-headed dog that guarded the gates of Hades, that made me refuse to close my eyes. I am aware of the fact that this may sound kitschy, but unfortunately it is the truth.

My first fictional encounter with the Minotaur was in the Toyota Prius of my grandfather. I was approximately five years old, and my two aunts had a dreadful habit of trying to frighten me. (I almost lied about them being twins, just for the gothic aspect of this letter.

I figured it would resonate better with the overall ambiance of how I remember the moment.) When they told me about you I was petrified; you were all I could think about for the next couple of days while sleeping in the guest room at my grandfather's house. My aunts would imitate your footsteps outside the door and make growling sounds from the hallway. I was terrified, and never slept at that house again.

While being in the cellar seeing you again, those memories resurfaced. While trying to pay close attention to everything that was around me, you viciously stole my focus once again. How am I supposed to investigate, listen and feel, when you are in the same space as me? Your vigorous and lumbering shape swallows everything that is present, living or dead, body or object. You are both the key player and the executioner of this exhibition.

Once again, I am back in my grandfather's guest room, which I have fiercely tried to forget ...

Until we meet again,
A.

Photo reportage from the exhibition 'The House of Asterion' by Zody Burke at Hobusepea gallery

‘What appears hard and unchanging can, in fact, be soft’. The artist Ieva Kotryna Ski presents the exhibition ‘stonewashing’

May 20, 2025

Author Deimantė Bulbenkaitė



Ieva Kotryna Ski. Photo: Ieva Kabašinskaitė

This spring, the Paris-based Lithuanian artist Ieva Kotryna Ski presented the exhibition ‘stonewashing’, her largest solo project to date in Lithuania, which will be on view at the Editorial project space in Vilnius until the end of June. The works on display not only continue the artist’s ongoing exploration of parallels between geological phenomena and queer identity, but also invite viewers to reconsider the relationship between surface and digital imagery, and the tensions that sometimes arise within it.

I meet with Ieva Kotryna just a couple of days before the exhibition opening, and it seems that with each passing minute, the artist, freshly arrived from Paris, is diving deeper into both Vilnius itself and the significance of her work in the Lithuanian context. Our conversation flows from her audience

award-winning video piece ***Sinkhole*** at the JCDecaux Award 2021 to her experience marching in Kaunas Pride. But we focus on the latest chapter in her artistic practice. Over the course of an hour in a Vilnius courtyard, we trace the last few years of her work, spanning journeys to Northern Ireland in search of natural geological formations, and reflections on what it means to create *in between*: between Vilnius and Paris, between digital and mechanically captured images, between deep time and the everyday.

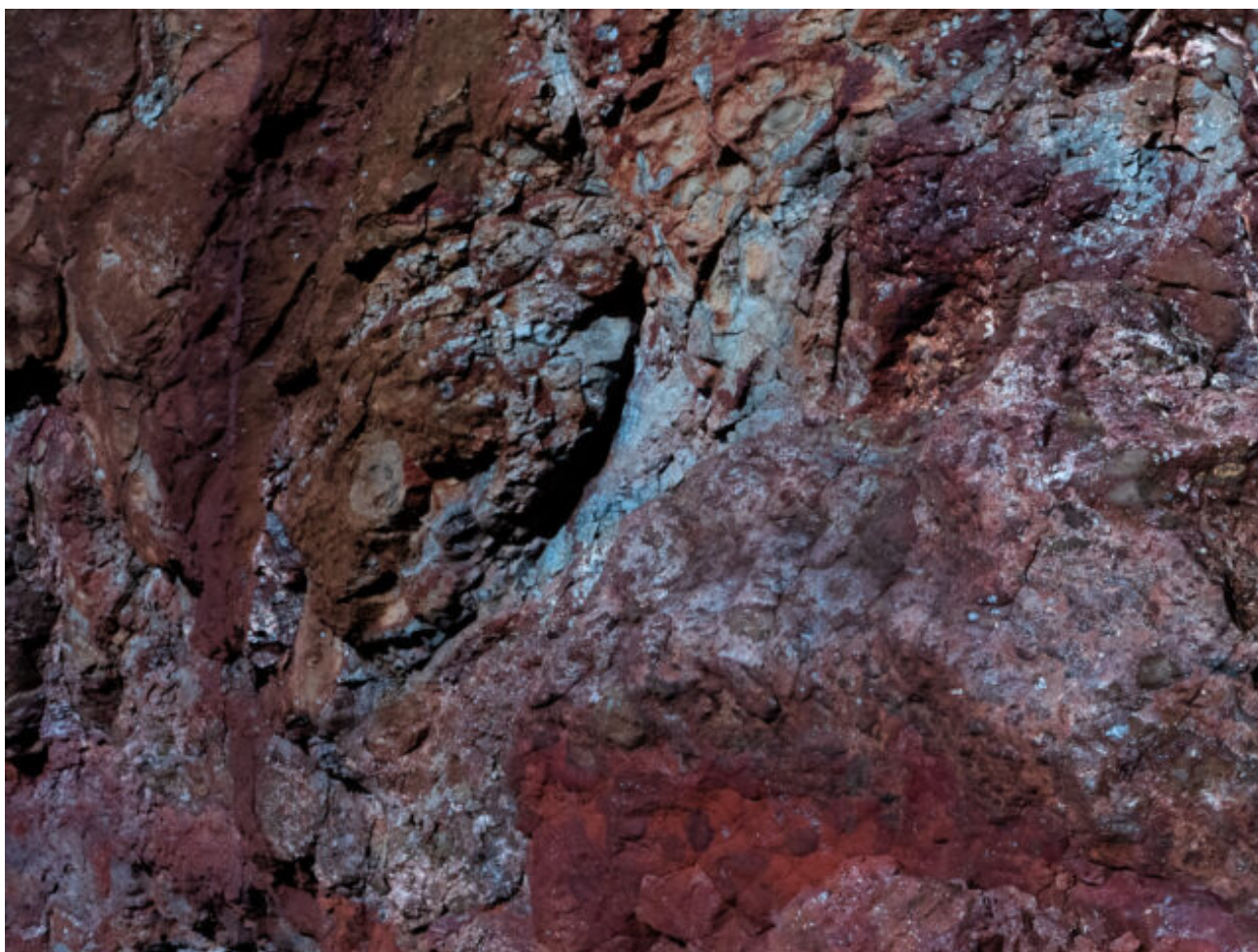
Deimant? Bulbenkait?: Although your work has been familiar to the Lithuanian contemporary art audience since the video piece Sinkhole was shown (and won the audience award!) at the 'JCDecaux Award 2021' exhibition, the new show 'stonewashing' at the Editorial project space is arguably your most ambitious project in your home country to date. What have the last four or five years of your creative life looked like, and how did they lead you to the point where 'stonewashing' is now taking shape?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: The period following ***Sinkhole*** wasn't marked by a quick transition into another intense project. The first year after its release was dedicated to completing my Master's studies, during which ***Sinkhole*** itself became a central focus, so the deep dive into its themes continued naturally. During that time, I wasn't otherwise very creatively active; of course, I was exploring certain topics, some of which are reflected in the exhibition 'stonewashing'. Later, another important project for me began, the 'Preila Project', which I'm currently developing together with Ignė Narbutaitė. After a preliminary presentation in Preila last year, which we titled 'Thing-Finding', we'll be presenting the completed project this June at the Pamario Gallery.

The impulse for this collaboration came from Neringa Municipality's residency grant call at the Nida Art Colony. Since the Curonian Spit is a place of deep personal significance to my family, and my cousin Ignė and I had long been discussing the idea of working on something together, this opportunity seemed ideal. The creative process lasted nearly three years. Its extended duration was mainly due to the geographical distance (Ignė lives in Vilnius, and I'm based in Paris), as well as the challenges of coordinating our schedules and finding a suitable space to present the work.

In parallel with these major projects, other creative activities and the development of personal ideas also took place. One such project was 'Dyke Into', realised in the streets of Vilnius together with Janina Sabaliauskaitė, using JCDecaux billboards. The project's roots go back to the research I conducted for ***Sinkhole***: while studying geology, I came across a phenomenon known as a 'dyke', where one type of rock intrudes vertically into an older formation. In English, the word also has another, more contemporary, meaning, referring to homosexual women. On getting the opportunity to use public billboard space, the idea came up to merge these distinct meanings of the word 'dyke'.

My interest in geological formations continued to develop over time. During a residency in Northern Ireland (at CCA Derry Londonderry), I learned that the region's coastline features numerous naturally formed dykes, so I began travelling along the coast to document them. As I went, my focus expanded beyond this specific geological phenomenon, to broader reflections on geological processes in general, and how they shape our perception of the landscape. These contexts became the foundation for the video work featured in the exhibition 'stonewashing'.



Ieva Kotryna Ski, faults and folds, 2025. 09:12 min., HD video loop (video still)

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: As is noted in the accompanying text for your new exhibition, you've been exploring geological processes and their relationship with contemporary environments since your earliest works. I read that your interest in geology comes from your grandfather, a geologist whose research focused on sinkholes. Later, your practice evolved towards reflections on geology and linguistics, which led to the 2023 public billboard project 'Dyke Into', inserted into the urban context of Vilnius. What kind of relationship with the landscape, and what new nuances of it, does your new video work faults and folds reveal?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: Geology entered my artistic practice thanks to my grandfather and his research. However, my earliest works were more focused on exploring the aesthetics of phone-recorded imagery. The first fragments, capturing everyday moments in my life and the life of Vilnius, emerged rather accidentally, partly due to a visual 'glitch' in the phone camera itself. While studying film in Paris, I wrote my Bachelor's thesis on the significance of phone-shot footage in documentary cinema. But during my Master's studies, I changed direction and began grounding my work more deeply in geological themes.

At the same time, it was also a natural extension of my interest in certain technological aspects. While working on *Sinkhole* I began to explore the relationship between the surface of the digital image and the surface of the Earth, the 'errors' in digital imagery, and how different visual technologies shape our perception of reality and the landscape. These investigations are even more clearly articulated in my new work *faults and folds*.

I'm particularly interested in the aspects of the instability and the ongoing transformation of rocks, as well as a kind of geological 'deception'. Something that appears solid and immutable can, in fact, be soft, fluid, and capable of completely changing form, visually misleading us. This theme of deception

also plays out on a broader level of visual perception: how a visible texture may not correspond to the actual properties of a material. In the video piece, there are also moments when this visual manipulation is intentional, aimed at misleading the viewer and playing with their perception.

I want to emphasise that in *faults and folds*, the image is no longer purely digital. After many years, I picked up an analogue film camera again. However, the footage captured on film doesn't serve as the final result; it is further processed using AI-generated animations and editing software effects. I think there's often a temptation to show film-based footage (whether photographic or moving image) without much selection, simply because it tends to be inherently beautiful. At the same time, it's true that images captured on film have a very different kind of vitality. Still, I'm drawn to digital imagery, precisely because there is no single digital image. There are countless variations in quality, depending on the devices used to capture them. Low-resolution images often feel to me like they convey reality more accurately, as we actually experience it, whereas ultra-high-definition visuals can sometimes appear like renders, making the recorded environment deceptively perfect. Our perception of image quality constantly shifts with each new technological development: what might have seemed like high definition around 2005 now appears significantly degraded.



Ieva Kotryna Ski, stonewashing, 2025. Exhibition view at Editorial, Vilnius

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: As I understand it, the process of creating this exhibition was marked by an unfortunate incident. While searching for geological dykes along the Irish coastline, your camera fell into the water, forcing you to work with a low-quality video camera and an analogue film camera. Are the digitally modified or AI-animated photographs seen in the exhibition a result of losing that original camera, or was it more of a deliberate attempt to explore new ways of working with the image, ways that, as you put it, strip it of the 'stability' we typically associate not only with photography but also with the rocks depicted? Could this be a way of exposing that supposed stability in a new light?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: Artificial intelligence (AI) entered my practice partly as a natural extension, and partly due to practical circumstances. After losing my main camera during the trip, I was forced to

collect most of the visual material through photographs and low-resolution video footage, which didn't fully align with my initial vision. While I had already used computer-generated effects and image modification tools before, AI initially attracted me as a new instrument I simply wanted to try out. I began experimenting without a clear project in mind, and quickly realised that achieving the desired results wasn't easy; it requires a specific set of skills, not unlike the work of a 'prompt writer'.

It was only while preparing for the exhibition that I realised AI could actually serve a purpose in this context. Although I'm naturally critical of the rapid adoption of 'trendy' technologies, and I myself found it somewhat ironic to give in to this wave, I came to understand that AI could help me solve a specific visual challenge. Since most of the material I had was static photographs, AI offered a way to introduce movement and transformation into them. I began experimenting, playing with images and the capabilities of AI, and the results integrated organically into the project's overall concept. This interaction with technology allowed me to explore how landscapes are formed, the relationship between image surface and authenticity, and the moment of deception and uncertainty: when it becomes difficult to distinguish what in the image is actual nature and what is technological manipulation.

As with many of my projects, this work emerged largely through experimentation and the editing process. The question of how to visualise the transformation of landscapes or rock formations, changes that are not always visible to the naked eye, was not resolved in advance; it evolved through trial and error. Working with AI was marked by unpredictability: sometimes I would try to describe the desired result in precise terms, and at other times I would simply upload an image and let the algorithm decide what to do with it. This process, spending hours at the computer testing different variations, would eventually lead to visuals that naturally wove themselves into the overall narrative. While sometimes an idea comes first, and then seeks its visual form, in my practice it often happens the other way around: the image generated through experimentation offers the idea or the way forward.

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: You've been living in Paris for some time now, where you completed a Bachelor's in film and a Master's in artistic research, and where you continue to develop your practice, often collaborating with peers from the art field. Although it doesn't seem like you're observing Lithuania's art and cultural scene from a distance, physical separation inevitably affects the sharpness and sensitivity of one's perspective, especially on issues that may still be perceived quite differently in Paris and Vilnius. How do you feel personally about creating and living between cities? How do your experiences of Paris and Vilnius intersect and shape your work?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: The theme of the city as a source of creative inspiration is especially important to me, something I reflect on often. I remember how, after moving to Paris, where I've now lived for eight years, I felt for a long time that the city didn't inspire me as deeply as Vilnius did. Vilnius always seemed to spark creativity; my first phone-recorded video works captured precisely the experiences and everyday life of the city. Paris, with its overwhelming cultural and everyday abundance, initially felt stifling: it was difficult to connect with it on a personal level, to find my own spaces and references.

Moreover, in recent years, the works I've created haven't been directly related to the city I live in: my inspiration often came from travelling, frequently in natural settings. Still, recently, perhaps due to the many years I've spent in Paris, the deeper familiarity I've developed with it, or the more active reflection on my relationship with the city, I feel it is beginning to return to my work.

In the current exhibition, I sense a certain intertwining of different aesthetics and emotional tones that were perhaps more separated in my earlier work: for instance, there was a clear distinction between the pieces made before *Sinkhole* and those that came after. While I don't speak directly about cities or depict them overtly, 'stonewashing' subtly pays homage to Vilnius. As an object for

sitting, we chose an old concrete curb found in a landfill, exactly the type of curb that's now being replaced *en masse* throughout the city. And yet, so many memorable hours were spent sitting on those curbs in Vilnius.

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: Do your works carry a greater political or social weight when shown in Vilnius, and does that affect how you perceive the significance of your own artistic practice?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: The project 'Dyke Into' stood out with its clear social and political weight. I created it specifically with the Lithuanian context in mind, aiming to increase visibility for queer people, and to introduce the wider public to the meaning of the word 'dyke'. I thought that in Vilnius, unlike in Paris, where the term is quite popular, and is often associated with culture and fashion, and rarely provokes intolerance, it was still less commonly used outside the queer community, let alone widely understood. Historically a slur, the word 'dyke' has been reclaimed by the community, and transformed into a symbol of female strength. Initially, I considered presenting 'Dyke Into' in public ad spaces in Kaunas: after experiencing extremely hostile reactions during Kaunas Pride, I felt that speaking on these issues was even more urgent there. However, JCDecaux couldn't offer any available billboard space in Kaunas, so we ended up showing the project in Vilnius. While I anticipated a stronger public backlash, the actual response revealed something different: a general lack of understanding of the term. The most telling feedback came in the form of a complaint submitted to JCDecaux, stating that an 'offensive word' was being used in public, highlighting potential differences in perception even within the LGBTQ+ community, or between different generations. That incident pushed me to further explore the context of the word's use, and the politics of who has the right to use it.

The multilayered play with language also extends to the title of the newest video work *faults and folds*, which combines two geological terms: 'folds' referring to the bending of layers of rock that leads to mountain formation, and 'faults' meaning fractures in the Earth's crust, often where geological dykes are found. But the English word 'faults' also means 'errors' or 'mistakes'. This dual meaning links geological processes to the theme of visual perception, its fragility and potential for distortion. This deliberate, and at times untranslatable, layering of language opens up deeper reflection not only on the transformations of nature and landscape, but also on the nature of the image and the ways it is interpreted.



Ieva Kotryna Ski, stonewashing, 2025. Exhibition view at Editorial, Vilnius

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: It's worth noting that you have a remarkable ability to speak about queer identity in a highly nuanced and multilayered way, embedding the theme within the contexts of geology and the notion of geological or deep time, something fundamentally inaccessible to our human, earthbound existence. How and when did narratives related to queerness begin to take shape in your practice? And with each major work, do you find yourself exploring different facets of this theme, perhaps ones that feel personally relevant to you at that moment?

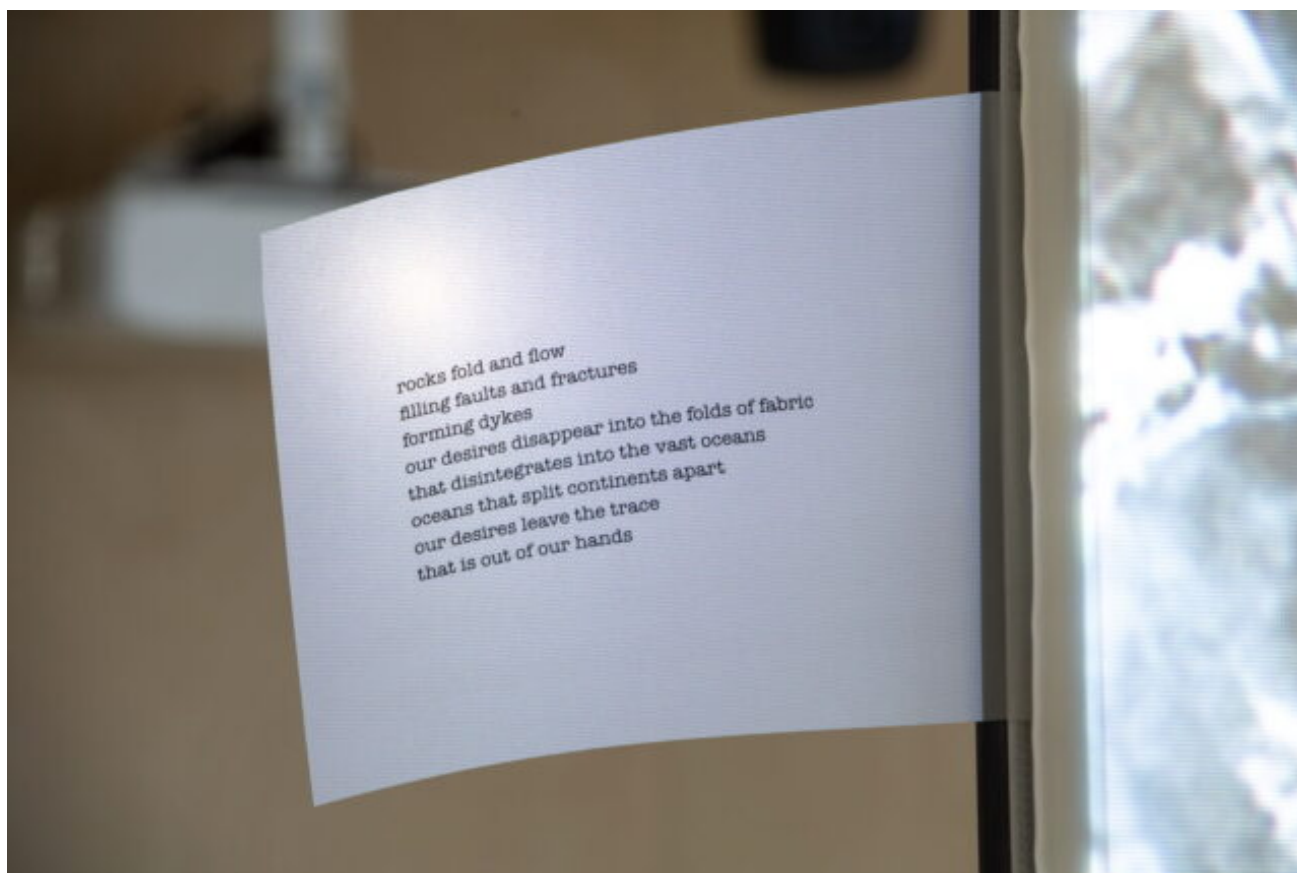
Ieva Kotryna Ski: My identity naturally weaves itself into my artistic practice: it's an inseparable part of my life that, like any other personal experience (such as love), inevitably surfaces in my work, even if the work isn't solely about that. The project 'Dyke Into' was a direct expression of this connection: a conscious effort to increase the visibility of queer people in Lithuania, while also exploring the meaning of the word 'dyke', a term reclaimed by the community and transformed from a historical slur into a symbol of strength. It's important for me to speak about this, because it's painful to witness how basic aspects of identity can still shock or cause issues. In my most recent work, this thread continues, but alongside it emerges the theme of desire. Here, desire is explored through materiality, whether it's the texture of fabrics like denim, or the substance of rocks themselves. Within the community, the word 'dyke' also carries associations with desire, gaining a broader resonance. This theme connects to ideas I've touched on in earlier works (such as *Sinkhole*), where I explored the relationship between the tangible and the intangible, encounters with matter of unimaginable scale, or with inner feelings that can manifest as overwhelming, even frustrating desires.

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: Alongside the video work faults and folds, the exhibition also features abstract photographs from your grandfather's geological archive: microscopic images of the mineral mica. As with much in your practice, mica reveals itself as a paradox of value. On one hand, it causes buildings to deteriorate when present in construction mixtures. On the other hand,

it's a highly heat-resistant insulator; and aesthetically, it's used in shimmering cosmetics. Why was it important for you to show these photographs alongside the video work, and what kind of relationship do the images establish with it?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: The inclusion of my grandfather's microscopic photographs of mica in the exhibition has an unexpected backstory. While researching geological formations in Northern Ireland, I found myself constantly thinking about mica, due to the widely publicised defective building block crisis there, an event by which homes began to crumble because of the use of mica-rich materials. Roadside signs even read 'Mica is a virus.' This situation turned mica into a kind of antagonist, even though it's simply a mineral. The problem wasn't mica itself, but its improper use in construction mixtures, without regard for its properties. Although mica wasn't the sole cause of the crisis, it became a symbol of the issue and of the inaction of the Donegal region authorities. This story resonates with broader reflections in my work on the illusion of geological solidity, and on fragility and instability. What appears unmovable can, in fact, be incredibly delicate.

The archival mica photographs taken by my grandfather add yet another layer of representation in the exhibition. These are microscopic, analogue images that capture only fragments, abstracted details that seem to penetrate the inner structure of the rock. As scientific photographs, they offer a perspective I couldn't achieve with my own camera, a way of looking inside the material. This mode of representation resonates with the visual approach in the video work, which also attempts to peer into the 'interior', down to the level of rock micro-organisms. Moreover, the visual character of these mica images, especially considering the 'virus' connotation it took on in Northern Ireland, bears a striking resemblance to medical imagery, like cell or virus scans. In this way, the personal (my grandfather's photographs), the socio-political (the crisis in Ireland), and the visual-philosophical (reflections on interiority and surface) intersect in the exhibition.



Ieva Kotryna Ski, Untitled, 2025. Text on paper

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: I was somewhat surprised by the exhibition title 'stonewashing', a term that refers to a denim treatment process designed to accelerate the fabric's fading and softening,

essentially simulating a kind of wear that the wearer themselves never had the chance to create or experience. How did this term enter the vocabulary of this particular exhibition and ultimately become its title?

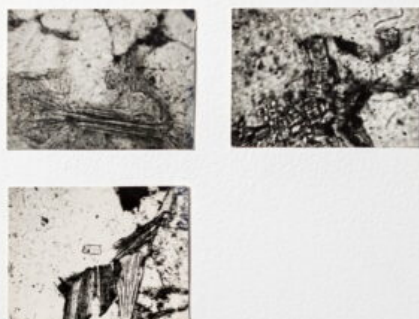
Ieva Kotryna Ski: The jeans featured in the exhibition serve as a multilayered reference. Initially, my thoughts revolved around materiality in a broad sense, even extending to explorations of dark matter. But jeans entered my creative field from a far more everyday experience: an obsessive search for the perfect pair. What might seem like a banal pursuit evolved into a deeper interest in the fabric itself. As a garment, jeans are highly iconic, embedded with countless cultural references. They also hold a particularly important place in queer history and aesthetics, where workwear became a form of expression of identity and a key element of 'dyke' visual culture.

This everyday object also opens up more complex themes. Learning that denim production is one of the most polluting industries, requiring vast amounts of water and chemicals, changed my relationship with the material. This ecological perspective aligns closely with the themes explored in the exhibition: material transformation, erosion, the impact of water and elemental forces. The title 'stonewashing' itself comes from the original method used to give jeans a faded, worn look, by washing them with pumice stones. That etymology made the term seem especially fitting, as it ties together the exhibition's varied references: from the desires embedded in denim to the ongoing transformations of geological (and other) matter.

Deimant? Bulbenkait?: One of the most compelling leitmotifs in your work for me is the power of the imagination, or, more precisely, the desires that unfold within it in various forms. These desires are often expressed through their near-impossibility, through the slowness of their fulfilment: a beautiful geological metaphor might be continents that drift towards each other at a rate of just a few centimetres a year. Slowly, but they do move closer. What desire do you have for this exhibition?

Ieva Kotryna Ski: Desire, although broad in its definition, often becomes the main driving force both in life and in creative practice. It sparks curiosity, leads to new ideas, and sometimes even evolves into obsession. Desire carries with it a sense of intangibility, a longing for something perhaps not entirely reachable or fully comprehensible. That feeling is closely tied to a continuous search for connection with reality, a search that can grow more complex when living away from one's home city, under a certain veil of estrangement between oneself and the surrounding world. I'm reminded of the character in John Cassavetes' film *Opening Night* who speaks about how, in youth, emotions exist just beneath the surface, so close, and how difficult it becomes to preserve that sensitivity later in life. That resonates with me too: the attempt to find a way to once again fully perceive and feel the world and oneself within it. Regardless of the specific subject matter, even if it's just rocks, the moment of desire always remains. Because the act of making becomes a way to seek out and rebuild that connection with reality.

The specific desire I have for this exhibition is closely tied to the viewer. As with my other works, my greatest wish is for the exhibition to act as a kind of gateway, one that encourages visitors to travel in thought, to reflect on things they may never have considered before. That's why I consciously avoid offering overly precise or closed interpretations, because I believe my perspective as an artist is only one among many. What I value far more is hearing and seeing how others interpret the work in their own way. Personally, I find it deeply moving when another artist's piece stirs emotions in me that I hadn't yet named, or provokes unexpected thoughts and reflections I couldn't have predicted. That's the kind of openness, to new thoughts and sensations, I hope visitors bring with them to the exhibition.



3 microscopic photographs of mica from the archive of geologist Vytautas Narbutas, 12×9 cm, 12×9 cm, 11,5×9 cm



Ieva Kotryna Ski, stonewashing, 2025. Exhibition view at Editorial, Vilnius

Universal Circularity, or Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis' Exhibition 'The Seasons'

May 27, 2025

Author Gabrielė Kmeliauskaitė



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela

'Did the birth of *Homo sapiens* coincide with the birth of art?'

The curator Audrius Pocius opens Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis' exhibition 'The Seasons' with this question posed by the philosopher Georges Bataille, referencing the Palaeolithic cave paintings in Lascaux, and inviting viewers to take a map and descend, like archaeologists, into the artist's imagined 'cave', the 16th-century underground chambers of the Medūza gallery, which has opened to the public for the first time for this exhibition. Richard Strauss' symphonic poem *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* echoes somewhere in the background, just as we enter a dark and cold, almost prehistoric underground space, where visitors are greeted by the blinking gaze of ... monkeys.

These creatures are a recurring theme, almost a signature theme, in Duonis' work. The artist's monkey howls beside the Iron Wolf in the Sapieha Park, it baths in a tub in Paupys, and it climbs the wall of the sculpture garden at the MO Museum. The animal functions both as a comic figure and as an object that questions human nature. This exhibition is no exception. Through humour, it poses essential existential questions, and grounds the viewer (both literally and metaphorically) in raw experience. What sets a human apart from a monkey? What is the relationship between prehistoric cave paintings and contemporary culture?



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela

These ideas are echoed, and the aforementioned monkeys are 'activated', by the massive, cave-like bas-reliefs towering in the underground labyrinth, where abstract symbols and patterns emerge, open to each viewer's interpretation. Still, the cultural motifs are hard to miss: a cross, musical notes (or perhaps dancing figures?), and even hints of cartoon characters. This reflection of contemporary culture, situated in a space that feels like distant prehistory, evokes a gentle sense of the collective unconscious, where the boundary of millennia blurs in the context of art, and the visitor suddenly realises that they themselves are that monkey, trying to grasp the world. All the more so because the material of the artworks is fragile and tactile; we feel we could easily leave a mark upon it. And perhaps we have? Here, time does not exist; the past and the future merge into one primal space of human origin, into the soil from which everything blooming on the surface grows. On a hidden screen embedded in a bas-relief, a flower blooms and drops a seed, the monkey, which falls with a splash into some water, where another flower unfolds, and the cycle begins again. A wall of modern bricks is visible through a crack in the layer of ancient markings, and beside the contours mimicking prehistoric paintings, we see the imprint of a tyre ... Unwittingly, the exhibition's title 'The Seasons' takes on a meaning far beyond the traditional four: it becomes a reflection of the cyclical nature of humanity itself, universal, repeating and eternal.

Notably, there are no labels or captions next to the artworks, and over time it becomes clear that this exhibition is less about rational analysis and more about feeling. It invites exploration and play, fittingly so, as the art critic Jonas Valatkevičius has described Duonis as one of the most sensual artists of his generation, while the artist himself has said that his work is meant for children. In several spots, plush toy monkeys climb the brick walls like mischievous tricksters, encouraging visitors to approach the exhibition with a smile. The discovery of hidden spaces with the help of a map evokes a sense of adventure, of play. Perhaps that is exactly what our ancestors were doing as

they drew in caves – playing.



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela

Yet beneath this veil of light humour lie deeper and more sombre layers of reality. One work stands apart: a dress enclosed in glass, positioned at a dead end in the labyrinth. It echoes the image of a monkey seen near the exhibition's entrance, spinning on a screen, dressed in elegant clothing, an image that connects to the commentary by the curator Audrius Pocius. The text recounts the story of a chimpanzee called Petra, which was captured in 1904 in West Africa and trained to behave like a human. Dressed in a suit, Petra ate with a knife and fork, smoked cigars, and performed on roller skates on stages around the world. It is believed that this phenomenon inspired Kafka's 1917 short story 'A Report to an Academy', which describes the forced metamorphosis of an ape into a human, a transformation inevitably accompanied by pain and suffering. In the same way, the dress waiting in the cave seems to foretell the framing, or perhaps self-framing, of the monkey-human's identity, prompting viewers to reflect critically on this so-called step in evolution.

Interestingly, the exhibition space, a dark, cold and silent underground labyrinth with no mobile phone signal, functions as an artwork in itself. The pieces are an inseparable part of it: the bas-reliefs merge seamlessly with the underground walls, creating a natural sense of continuity, sometimes even making us wonder whether a visible form is a deliberate artwork, or simply a part of the original structure, like the nails embedded in the masonry in certain places. Most likely, it is both. A true instance of mimesis. The dim lighting highlights the texture of a work, and allows it to shift, depending on the viewer's angle, while the underground silence, interrupted occasionally by distant footsteps or a cautious whisper, fosters an intensely intimate connection with the space. As we wander through its winding corridors, the thought arises intuitively that this labyrinth probably extends further and further out of sight, like a network of roots encircling the entire Earth.



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela

The materiality of the works deserves separate attention, as Duonis boldly employs silicone, polyurethane and polyurea, calling himself a carver of air bubbles. Symbolically, these are construction materials: durable, but not as hard as stone or concrete; reinforcing the impression that the artist is 'building' culture underground. It is also significant that the media used are synthetic, artificially manufactured in factories and shaped to fit human needs. Through this specific choice of materials, the work balances between the seemingly natural, primal atmosphere it creates, and the subtle intrusion of artificiality, a marker of human culture seamlessly integrated into the space. Even more diverse media are used to create the monkeys, the exhibition's central figures, which appear carved, drawn, and animated in motion. Once again, they serve as a reminder that they are ever-present and omnipresent, an enduring epicentre of humanity, inseparable from the present moment.

I leave the exhibition wrapped in a strange sense of calm, as if for a moment I had forgotten the concepts of time and individuality, and ascend the stairs back to reality. As Duonis puts it: 'The exhibition ends with light.' And yet it hardly feels right to call this labyrinth an exhibition; it is more of an experience, a meeting between the modern and the primal monkey. Their symbiosis invites us to immerse ourselves in the realms of universal human desire, to explore the surroundings with childlike curiosity, until a trickster-like humour gives way to deeper reflections on the nature of *Homo sapiens*, and the archaic underground space silences the mind before the all-encompassing circularity of nature. 'Monkeys understand everything; they just don't tell us,' Duonis smiles. 'That's where the true power of existence lies, in their little heads.'



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo: Laurynas Skeisgiela



Donatas Jankauskas-Duonis. Exhibition 'The Seasons', Medūza gallery, Vilnius, 2025. Photo:

Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Sun-kissed' by Ivar Veermäe at the Tartu Art House.

May 7, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



'Sun-kissed'
Ivar Veermäe
11.04.–11.05.2025
Tartu Art House

The exhibition focuses on techno-utopian ideas, according to which humans could, theoretically, control the global climate system. By spraying large quantities of aerosols into the stratosphere it should be possible to mimic the activity of volcanoes and thereby reduce climate warming by reflecting some solar energy back into space.

Artist has broken down such proposals into parts, then expanded them and worked with the locations and processes referred to in them: the stratosphere, volcanic areas in southern Italy, and biological and technical systems.

The work was done through controlled and accidental actions involving a variety of forces and life forms, such as wind, corrosion and micro-organisms. Photographic prints of close-up views of the Sun* created a test area for studying changes created by microscopic life on its surface. Metabolic transformations take place through human microorganisms brought into contact with the energy source and the surface of the image.

“Through the exhibition, I try to grasp the unimaginable scope of geoengineering, and the complexity of geological relationships. Additionally, I am continuing the experiments in the stratosphere that began with the work “Second Earth” (2023). A video of my conversation with geoengineering experts will provide background for the exhibition,” explains the artist.

The exhibition is supported by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia.

Thanks: The Veermäe family, Anja Dreißig, Kalev Tamm, Michael Wallys, Laura M. Hartman, Douglas MacMartin, Elspeth Spence, Forrest Clingerman, Wake Smith, Duncan McLaren, Masahiro Sugiyama, Renzo Taddei, Chad M. Baum, Kevin Surprise, Andy Parker, Michael Wallys and Ülo Rossmann and the co-workers.

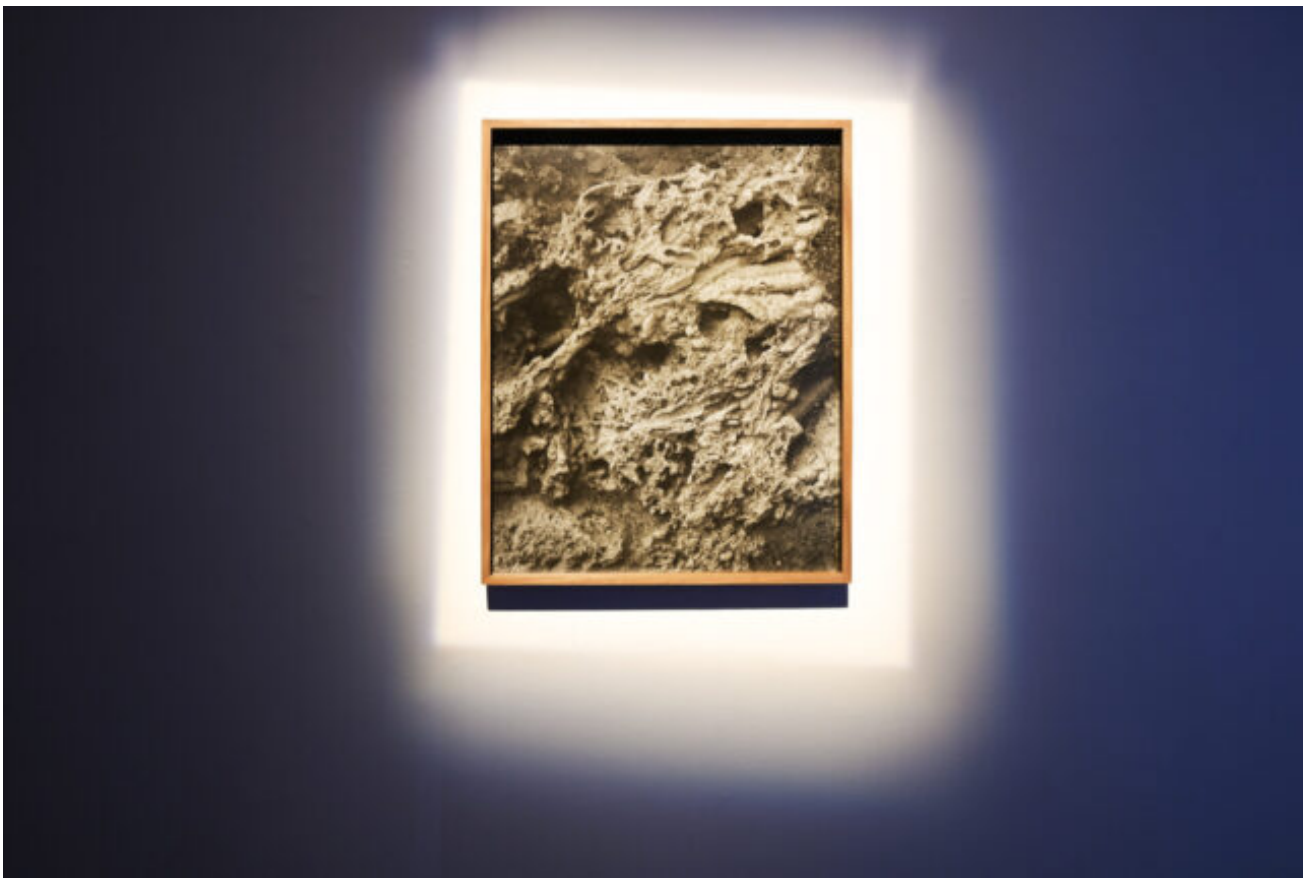
Ivar Veermäe (b 1982) is an Estonian photographer based in Berlin. He has studied production engineering at Tallinn University of Technology, graphic design at Tallinn Polytechnic from 2001-2003, photography at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Estonian Academy of Arts from 2004-2009, and spatial strategies at the Weißensee Art School in Berlin from 2011-2014. Veermäe has had numerous solo exhibitions, including at the Tallinn Art Hall Gallery, Edith-Russ-Haus, Galerie im Turm, (AV17) Gallery, Belgrade Cultural Centre and Tallinn City Gallery. In addition, his work has been exhibited at RIBOCA, the Venice Architecture Biennale, the transmediale festival, the Kumu Art Museum, EKKM, Tallinn Art Hall, BIENALSUR, Buenos Aires, Bozar, ZKM, Karlsruhe and the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (LCCA).

* NASA public domain and Paul Stewart (CC BY 2.0)

Photography: Ivar Veermäe and Kaimar Tauri Tamm / Tartu Art House





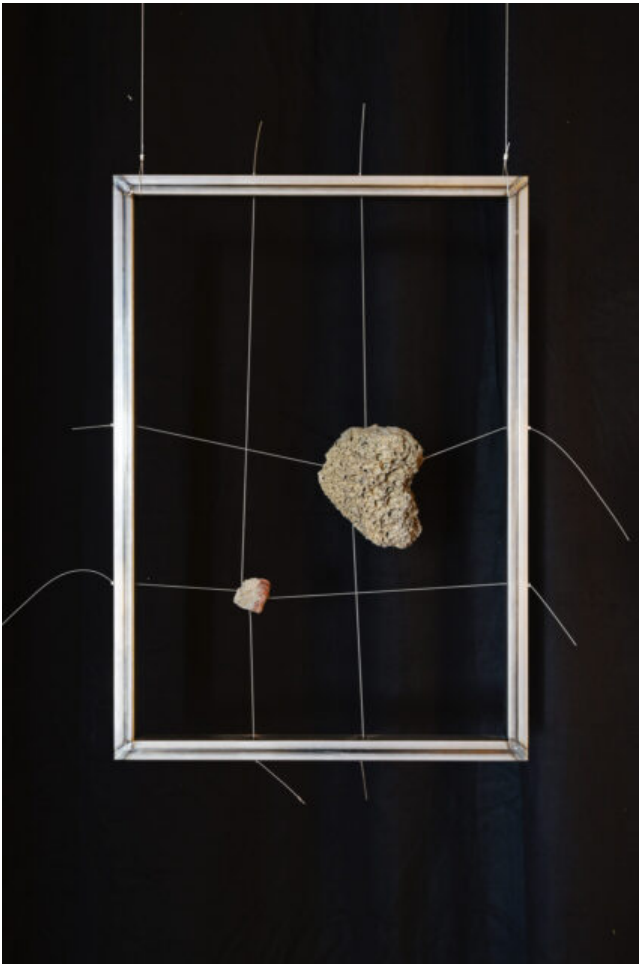




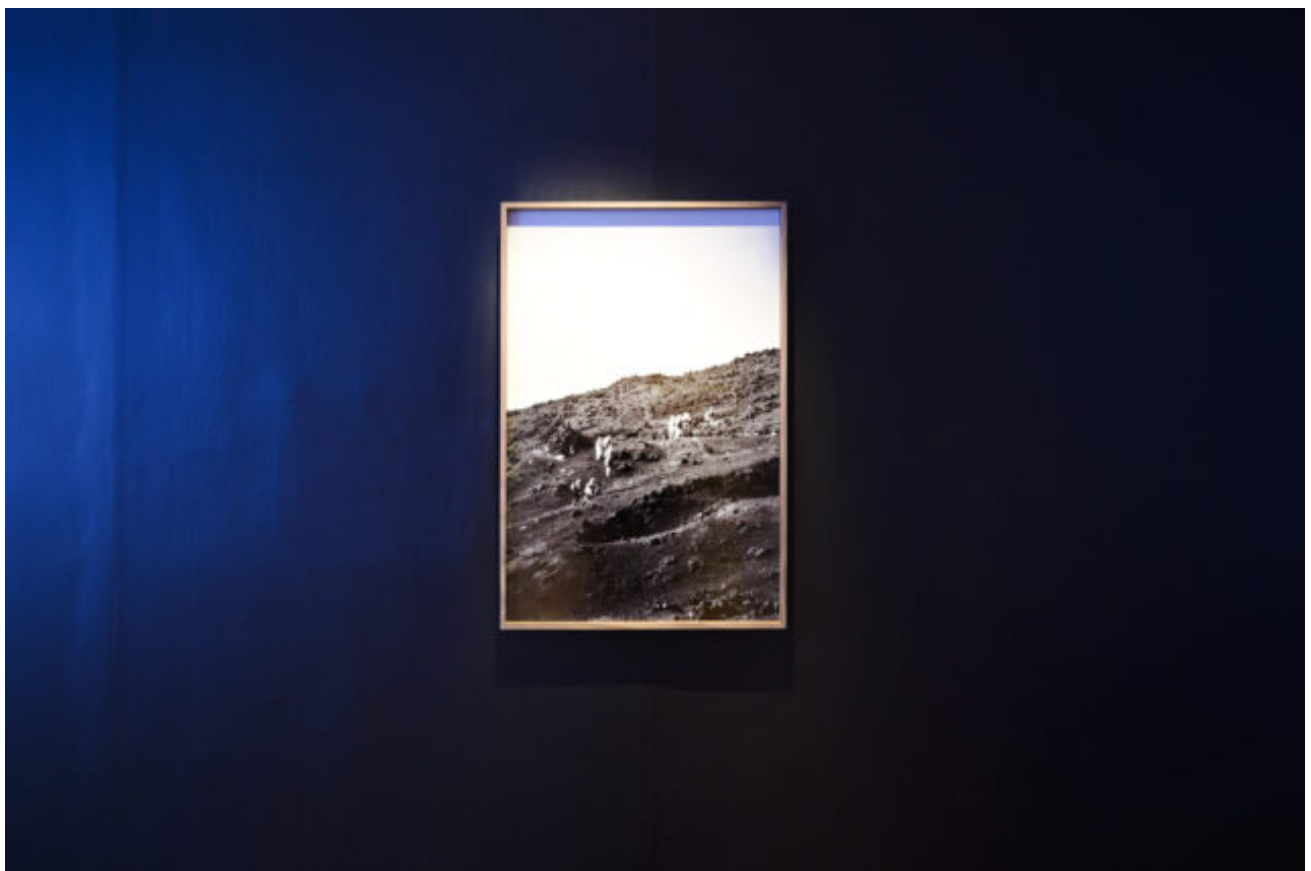


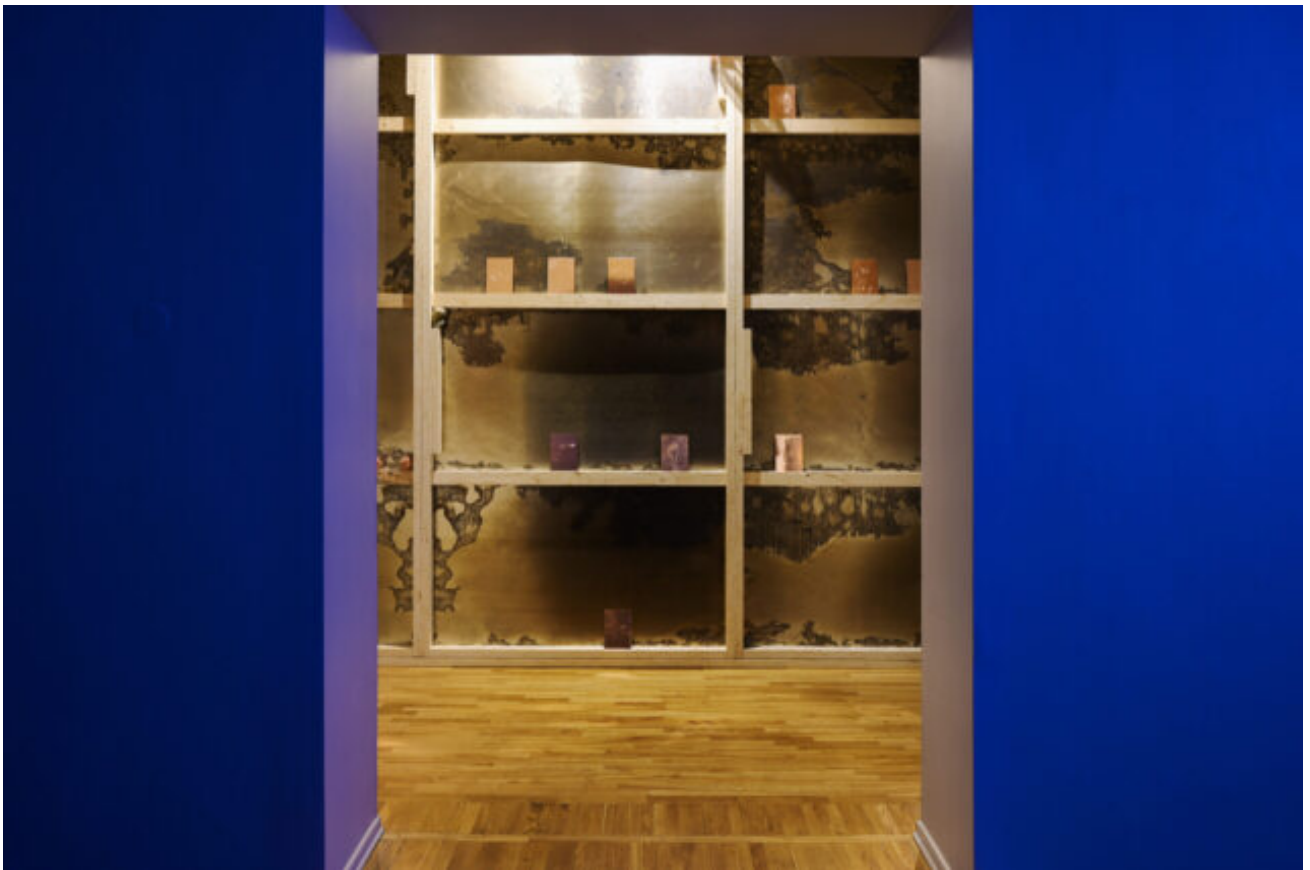








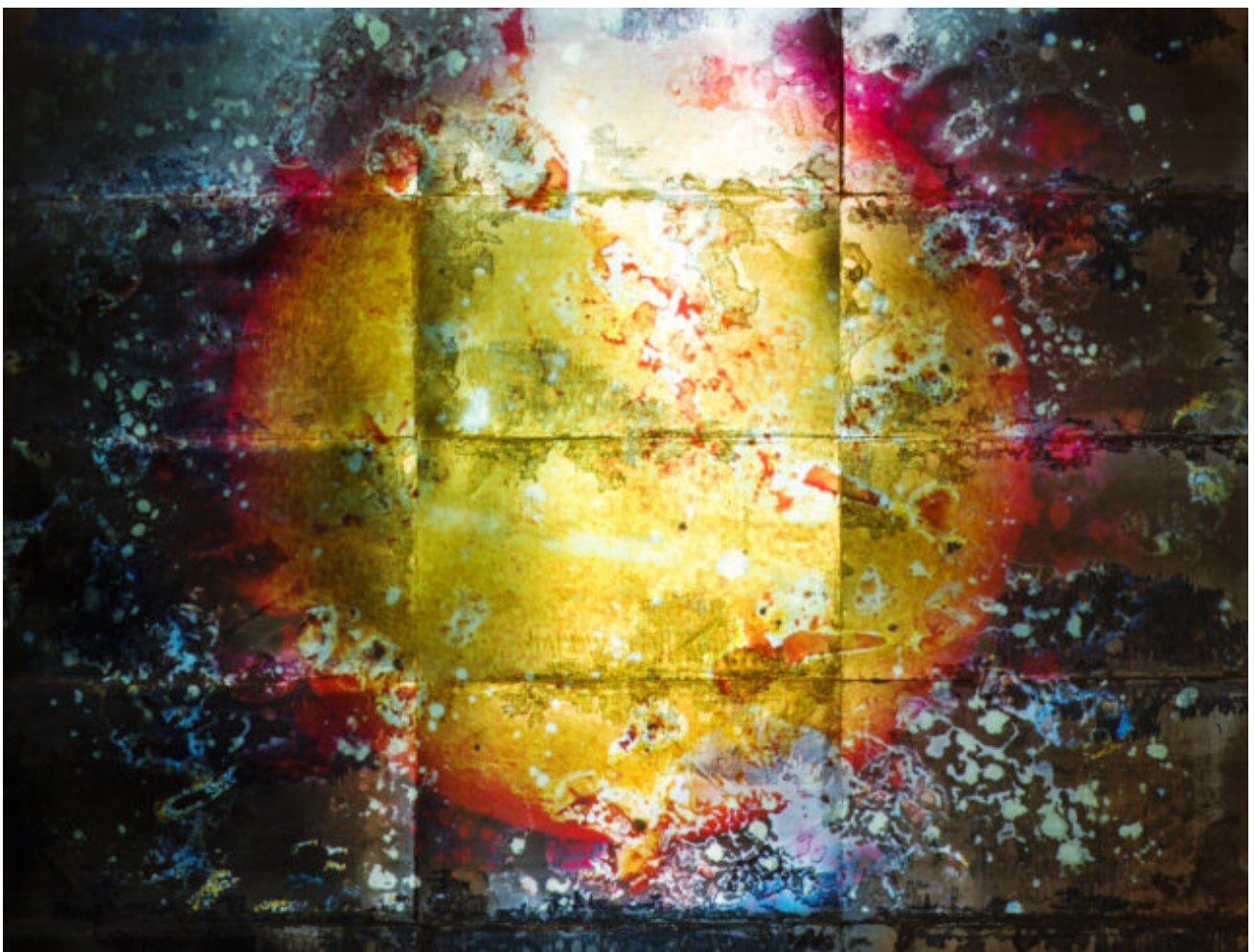




























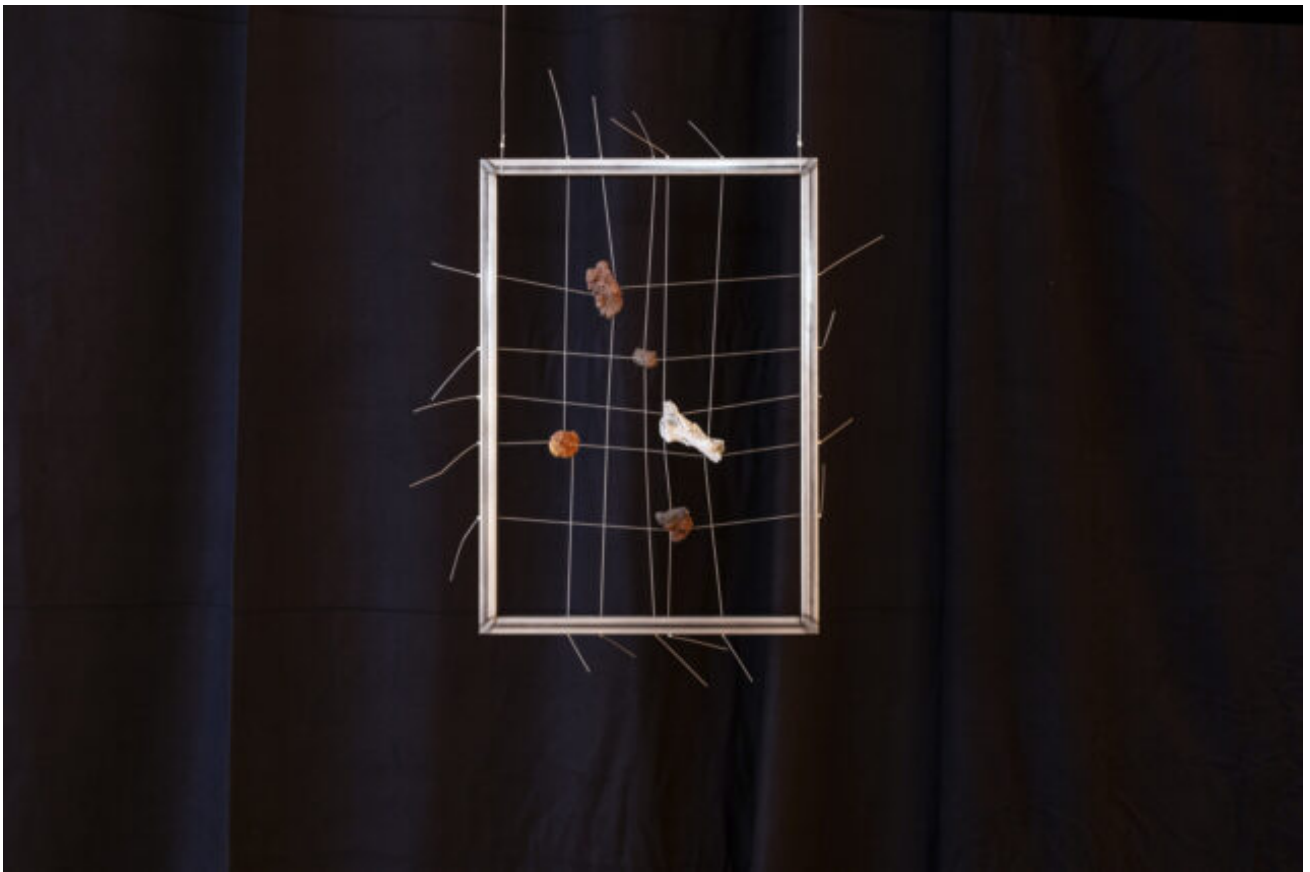




Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Voltentity' by Agate Tūna at the Galerija ASNI

May 13, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



*The Atlanteans used crystals in unlimited quantities to produce energy, converting solar energy into electrical energy. Some of the Atlanteans who managed to escape took the crystals with them to other lands. In Egypt (their first place of refuge – translator's note) they built pyramids, using the crystals to lift and place massive blocks of stone.**

In the exhibition "Voltentity", Agate Tūna focuses on quartz crystal as a mediator of spiritual energy and technological environment, continuing the research of the ghost in photography initiated in her previous projects ("Techno-Spectre"). In her latest series of works, Tūna has created a visual diary of visible and invisible sensations, tracing the ability of energy, memory and identity to transform under the influence of technology. The title "Voltentity" combines the words 'Volt' (voltage) and 'entity' (essence), reflecting the dual nature of the quartz crystal as both a conductor of spiritual energy and an integral part of the contemporary technological environment.

Honoré de Balzac believed that every picture taken in a photograph takes away part of the subject, making the camera the thief of the soul. Today, this idea takes on a new meaning as the essence of the digital world is projected into electromagnetic space in the form of shadows and data points. The ghost has evolved from a metaphor for a restless soul into an energetic entity that resonates with the language of technology – electromagnetic waves, data streams, electronic voice phenomena (EVP), artificial intelligence algorithms and other contemporary media. The quartz crystal becomes a symbolic bridge to such a transformation – its piezoelectric properties have made it today an indispensable element in military radios, computer chips and mobile phones.

For Agate Tūna, process is essential, a curious dialogue with materiality and observations of its changes – perhaps this is why she has chosen analogue photography as her main means of expression. Using mirrors, glass, copper wire and scanning, Agate subjects her primary material (raw film) to various multimedia manipulations and interprets the photographic image into plexiglass objects and chemigrams. In addition, spatial extensions of photography enter the gallery as an autonomous affirmation. Furniture, wallpaper, electricity and corporeal symbols captured in pictures of the body are analogous entities that reflect and challenge the digital. At the same time, it is a play with the *home* as a conceptual place of domesticity and creation, an allegorical electromagnetic field that affects the human (artist's) body, mind and spirit in everyday life. In this sense, Tūna challenges the female aspects of technology and affirms her belonging to the field of spiritual feminist methodology – the replacement of rational and materialistic patriarchal beliefs with emotional and intuitive knowledge. Spiritual feminism focuses on intuition, energy, nature, mysticism and alternative knowledge systems (dreams, rituals, spiritual practices) as sources of collective transformation, and Agate Tūna's "Voltentity" ideally embodies its essence, declaring the bodily, cosmic and magical as the central perspective. The grammar developed within the exhibition thus unintentionally and cyclically suggests the crystalline and technological concepts used (entity, technology, mother-plate, memory, nest, etc.) as entities in the female gender.

Agate Tūna & Auguste Petre

**Atlant?da*, from the newspaper Rīgas Balss, Nr.170 (21.09.1990).

Agate Tūna (b. 1996) is a multidisciplinary artist from Riga, Latvia, working across photography, photographic installations, experimental video and sound art. Her practice explores the relationship between spirituality and technology from a woman's perspective. Taking a research-driven, web-like approach, she traces connections between her family's spiritualist heritage, hauntology, quartz crystals, and techno-specters while examining how historical narratives, personal experiences, and technological advancements shape our perception of the unseen. Photography, as a "haunted medium," plays a central role in her work, preserving traces of the past while shaping imagined futures. Through analogue and experimental techniques such as chemigrams, she investigates the materiality of the photographic image. From self-portraits to staged compositions, her process is deeply hands-on, involving set construction, object-making, and direct engagement with physical materials.

She holds a Bachelor's degree from the Art Academy of Latvia, Department of Painting (2020) and a Master's degree from the Art Academy of Latvia, Interdisciplinary Master's programme POST (2023), she has also graduated from the ISSP School of Photography (2022).

Recent group exhibitions include: "Beyond Our Bodies Our Beings Extend". Pilot Gallery. Riga, LV (2024); "The Elevator Chats 2.0". Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center. Budapest, HU (2024); "New Address: EDEN". Kim? Hanzas 22, Riga, LV (2024); "Contemporary Histories of Photography I / Who Has Come Here?" RFB, ISSP Gallery. Riga, LV (2024); "Metahorror". Both gallery. London, UK (2024); "BDO Emerging Artist Award", (1st prize). Pilot Gallery, Riga, LV (2023); "Chasing the Devil to the Moon", Tallinn Art Hall. Tallinn, EST (2023); "Flora Fantastic". Apexart Gallery. New York, USA (2022); and solo exhibition "The Order of Invisible Things". DOM Gallery. Riga, LV (2022).

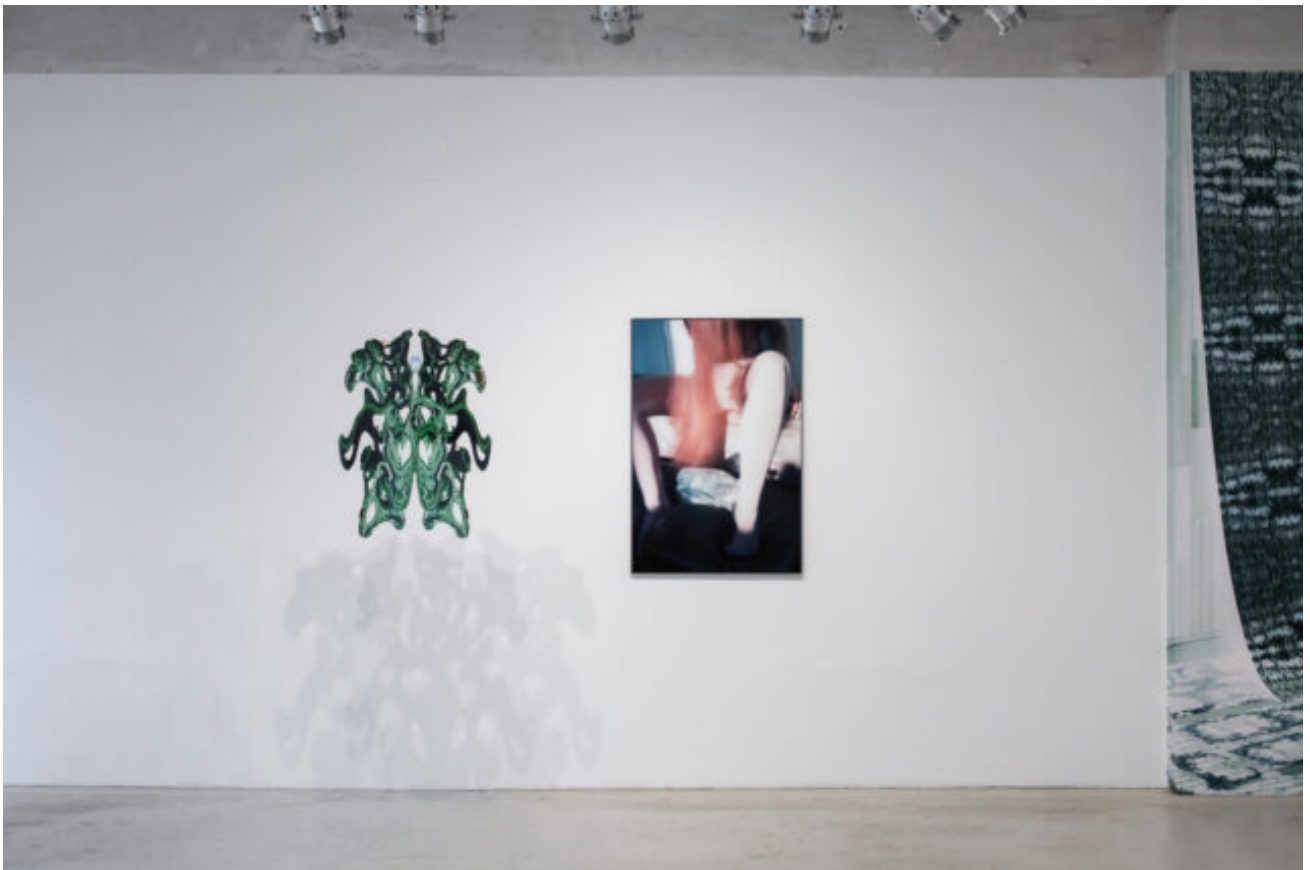
Supported by: Novum Riga Charitable Foundation, GroGlass, State Culture Capital Foundation and RAW.

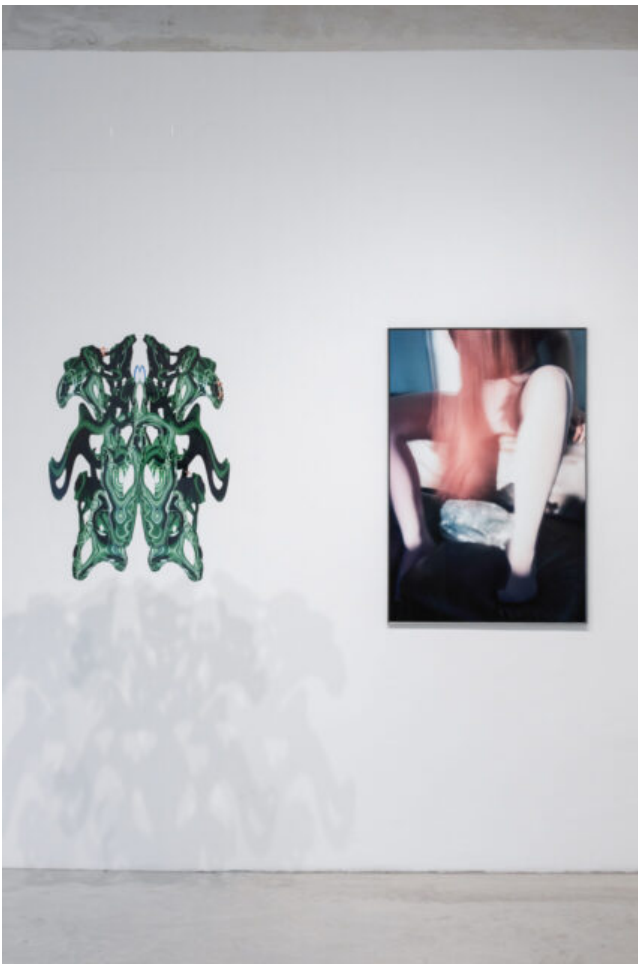
Agate Tūna
"Voltentity"

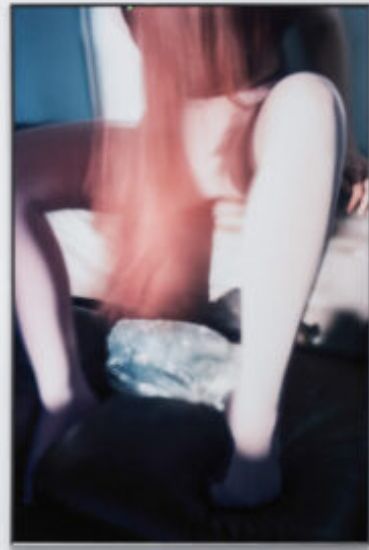
30.04.2025 – 01.06.2025
Galerija ASNI
Kr. Valdemāra street 17A, Rīga

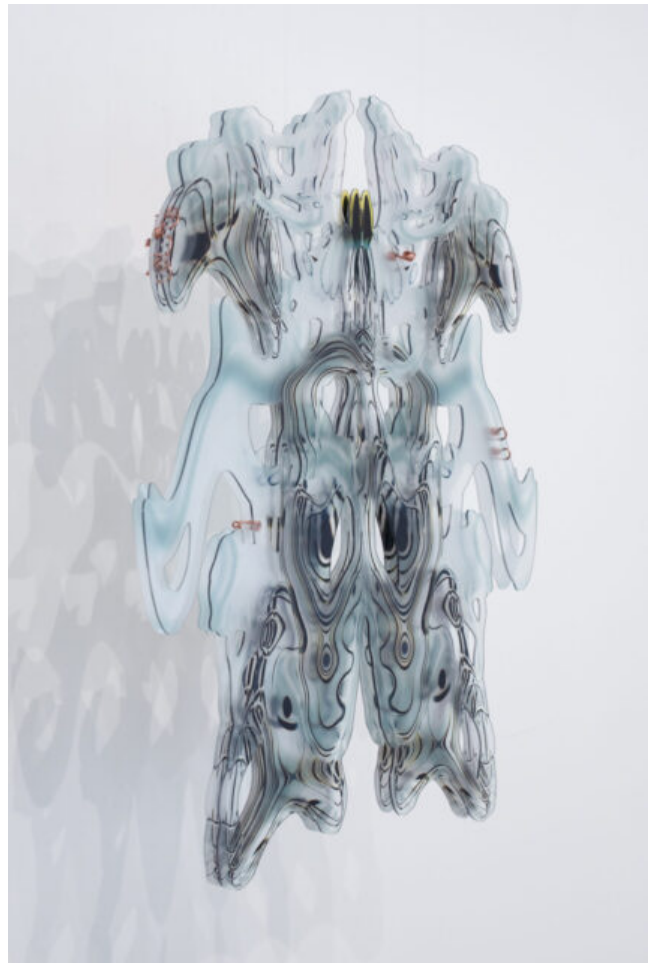
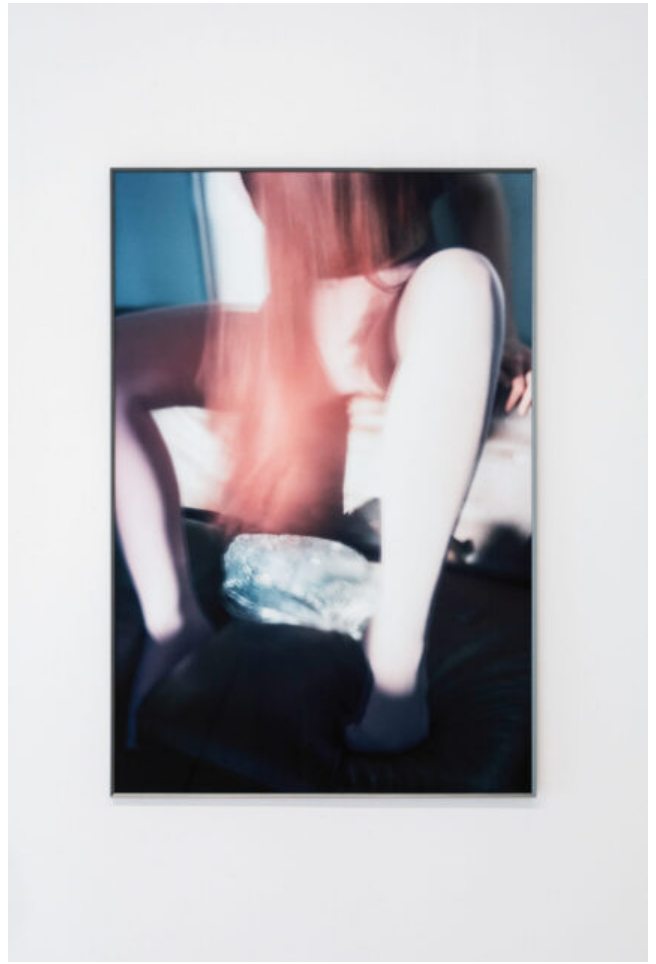
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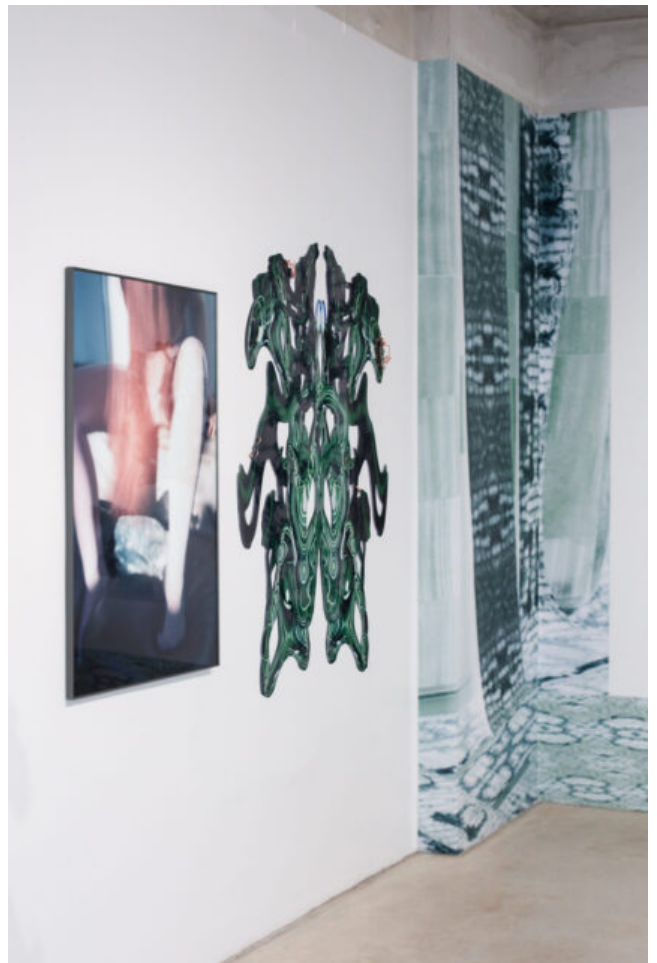




Photo reportage from the exhibition by Viktor Timofeev at the Latvian National Museum of Art

May 14, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



The exhibition brings together key motifs of Viktor Timofeev's artistic practice, forming a unified multimedia installation that includes new paintings, drawings, video works, and a specially composed soundscape, created in collaboration with artist Miša Skalskis (FI/LT). The exhibition elements intertwine autobiographical references with broader societal processes, developing a socio-critical metaphor in a scenographically structured environment. As visitors gradually move through the three exhibition spaces, a dramaturgy unfolds – revealing the coexistence and clash of two parallel realities – prompting an exploration of the boundaries between fact and fiction, objectivity and subjectivity.

Deeply connected to the artist's ongoing creative explorations, which include games, worldmaking, and an interest in irrational systems, the exhibition works extend long-developed concepts while seeking new modes of expression. One of Viktor Timofeev's key pieces, *Alphabet Clock*, which systematically and infinitely mutates letter forms, is reinterpreted within the exhibition, addressing issues of alienation, power, and societal norms.

Working between Riga and New York, Viktor Timofeev has long examined identity, language, and modes of communication, investigating their multilayered, shifting nature and the possibilities of integration or resistance within dominant systems. His work often explores governance structures and communication mechanisms. These serve as both a reaction to the turbulent, uncontrollable processes of contemporary reality and as an opportunity to construct an environment that subverts the norms of daily life with absurdity and play.

Viktor Timofeev is a multidisciplinary artist from Riga, Latvia currently based between Riga and New York. Recent solo exhibitions include 427 Gallery in Riga (2024), Interstate Projects in New York (2021), and Karlin Studios / Futura in Prague (2020). Recent group exhibitions include Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-On-Hudson (2025), kim? Contemporary Art Center in Riga (2024), Tallinn Photomonth in Tallinn (2023), the National Gallery Prague in Prague (2021) and the 14th Baltic Triennial at Contemporary Art Center in Vilnius (2021).

Artist: Viktor Timofeev

Exhibition curator: Andra Silapētere (LCCA)

Exhibition Title: Other Passengers

Venue: Latvian National Museum of Art

Dates: 22.03.2025-15.06.2025

Sound artist Miša Skalskis

Graphic designer Daria Melnikova

Architect Līva Kreislere

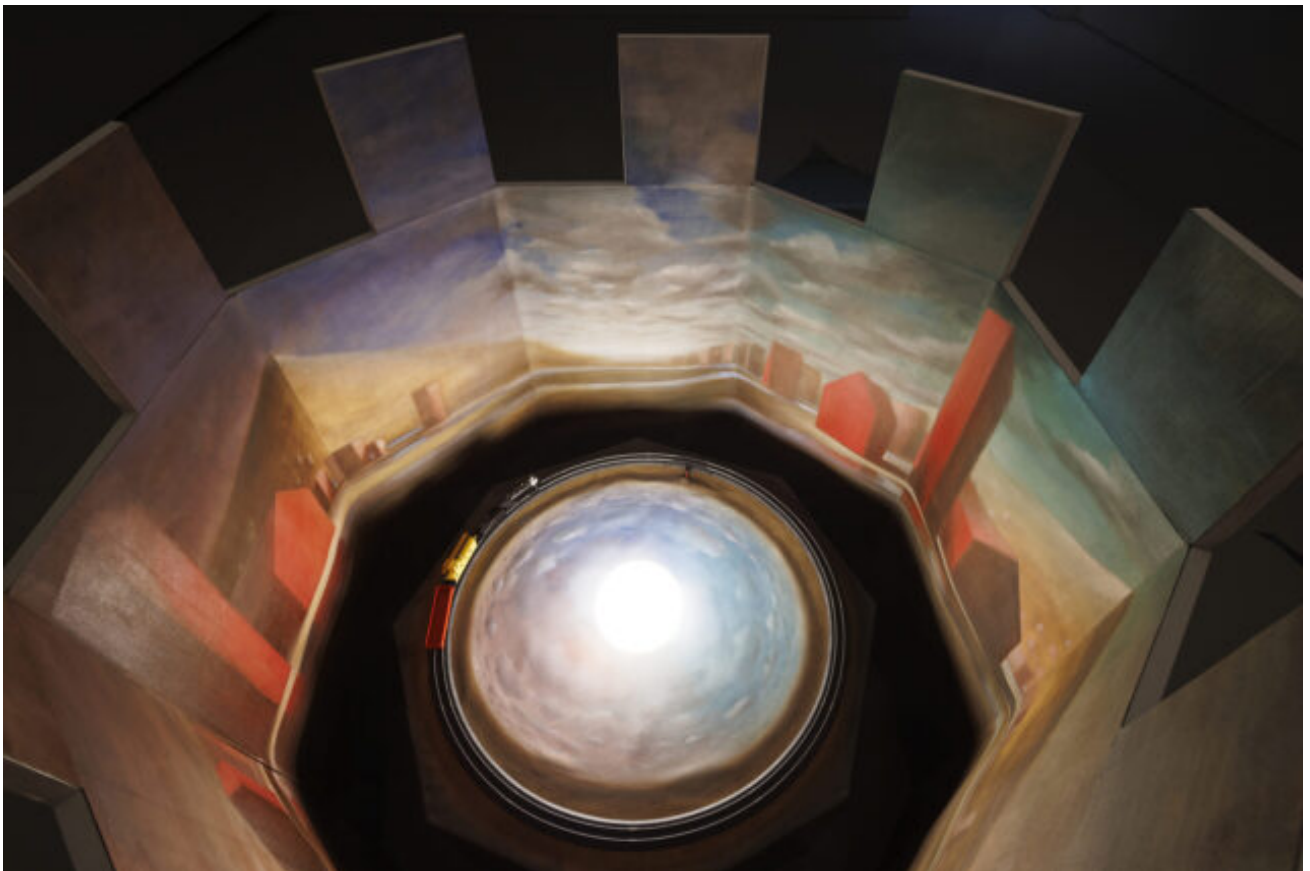
Producer Elīza Anna Reine / Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art

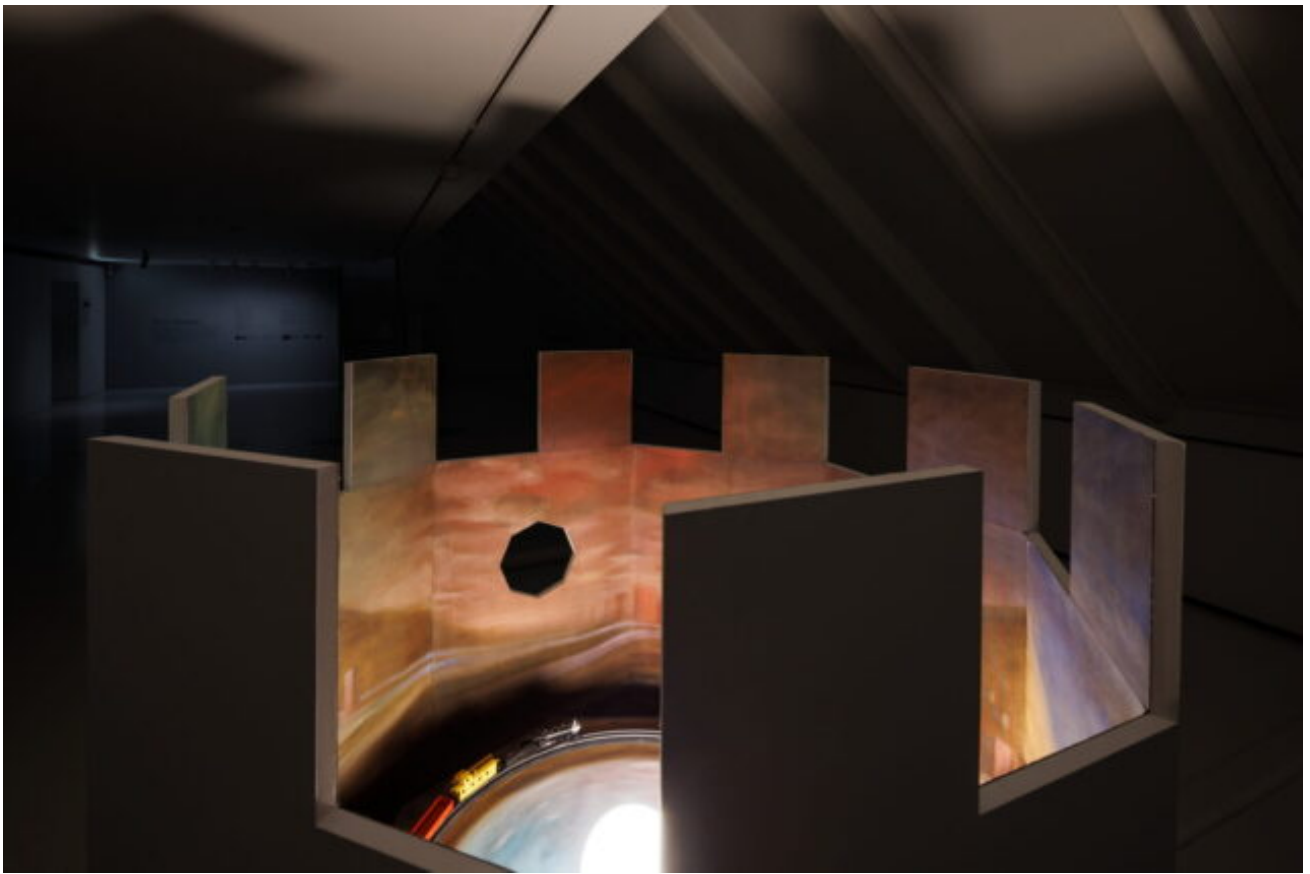
Project manager Katrīna Vastlāve / Latvian National Museum of Art

Organisers [Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art \(LCCA\)](#), [Latvian National Museum of Art](#)

Photography: Ansis Starks







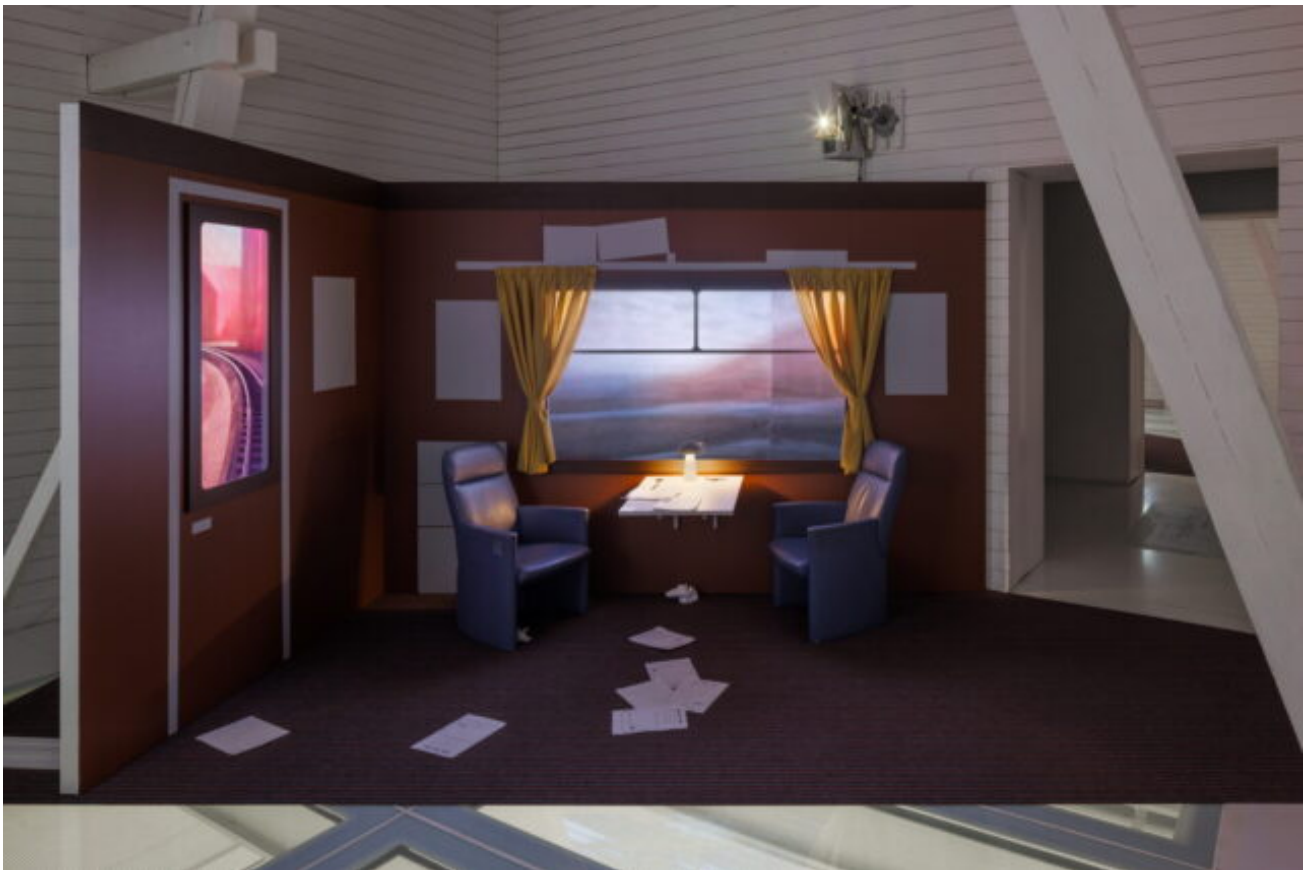






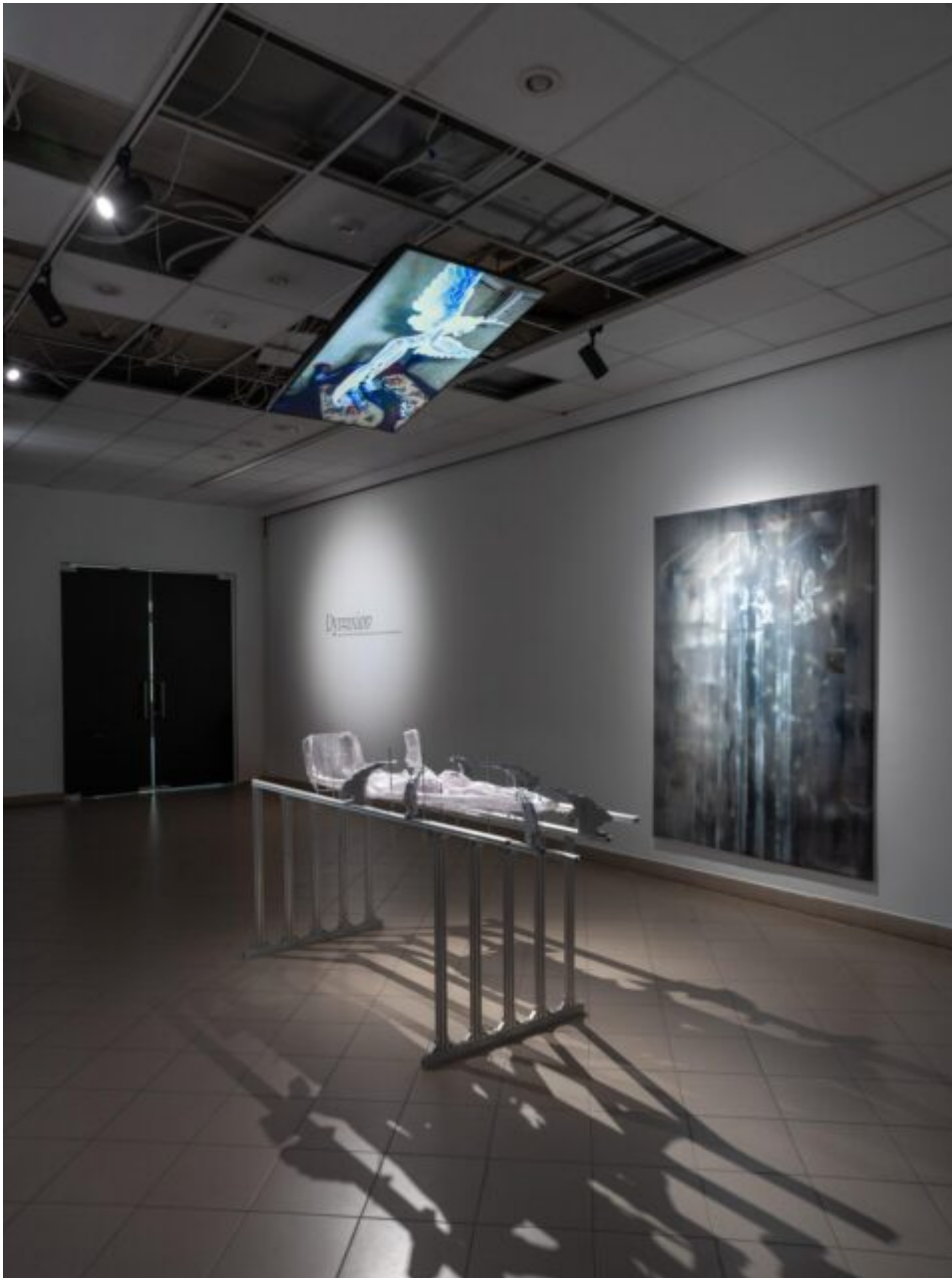




Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Dymaxion' at the Klaipėda Culture Communication Center

May 19, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



The exhibition “Dymaxion” opens on May 9 at 6 PM at the Klaipėda Culture Communication Center (KKKC) and runs until June 8.

Participating artists: Agata Orlovskā, Deividas Valentukonis, and Mantas Valentukonis.

The first-floor gallery, currently undergoing renovation, will feature exposed ceilings with visible metal grids, wiring, ventilation ducts, and aluminum structures. These elements become part of the exhibition itself, reflecting the intersection of digital and physical realms and evoking post-industrial architecture as a metaphor for virtual reality.

The title “Dymaxion,” coined by futurist Buckminster Fuller, refers to achieving maximum efficiency with minimal energy. This principle is echoed in the exhibition’s structure, where technology and art merge into new forms of interaction and meaning.

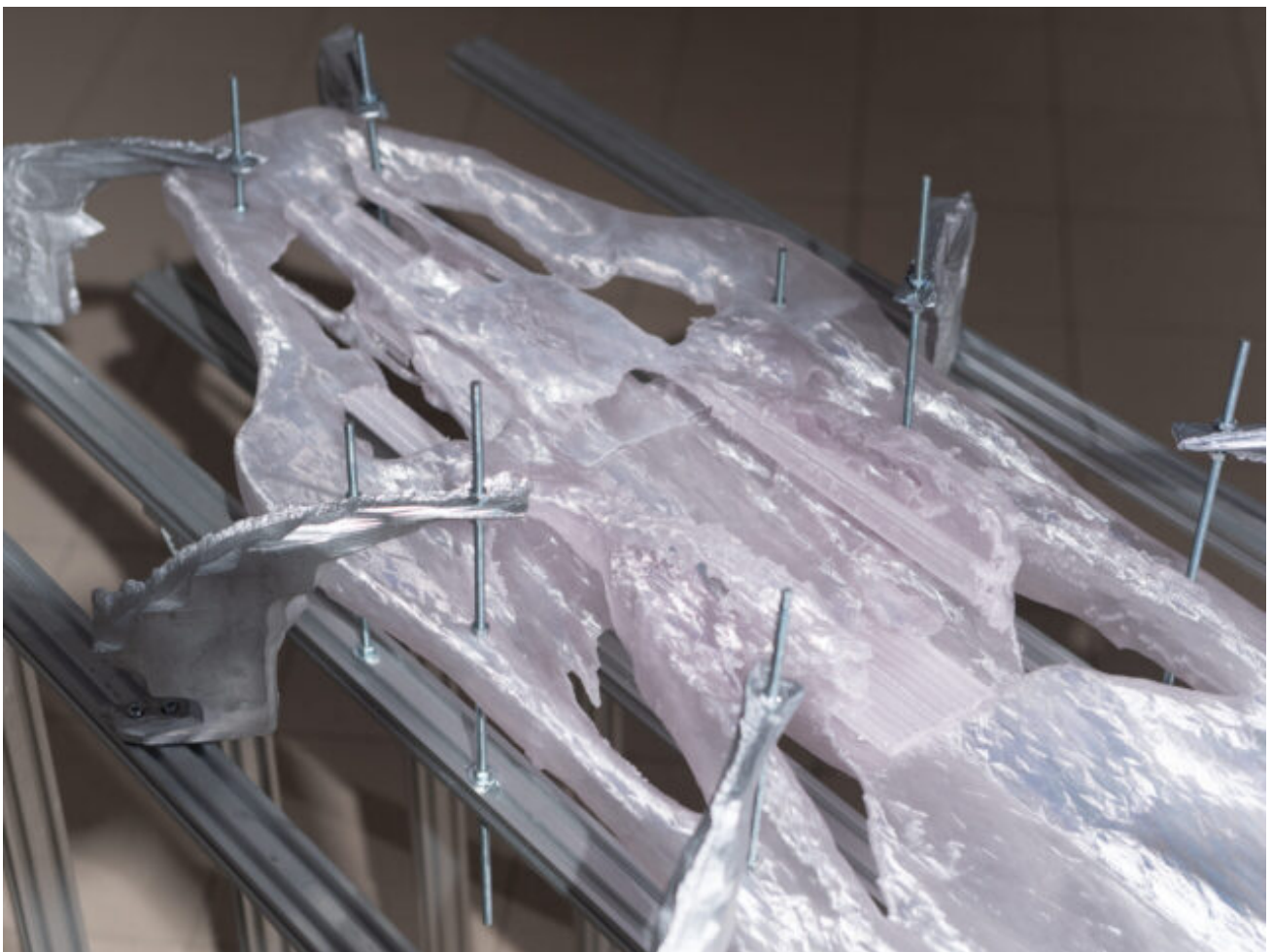
Materiality is central to the exhibition. Wires become digital nerves, embedding virtual processes into physical space. A projected video game image on a curved wall evokes a space station window, while references to Stanisław Lem’s “Solaris” and Franz Mesmer’s theories of animal magnetism suggest a fluid, interconnected energy between matter, perception, and emotion.

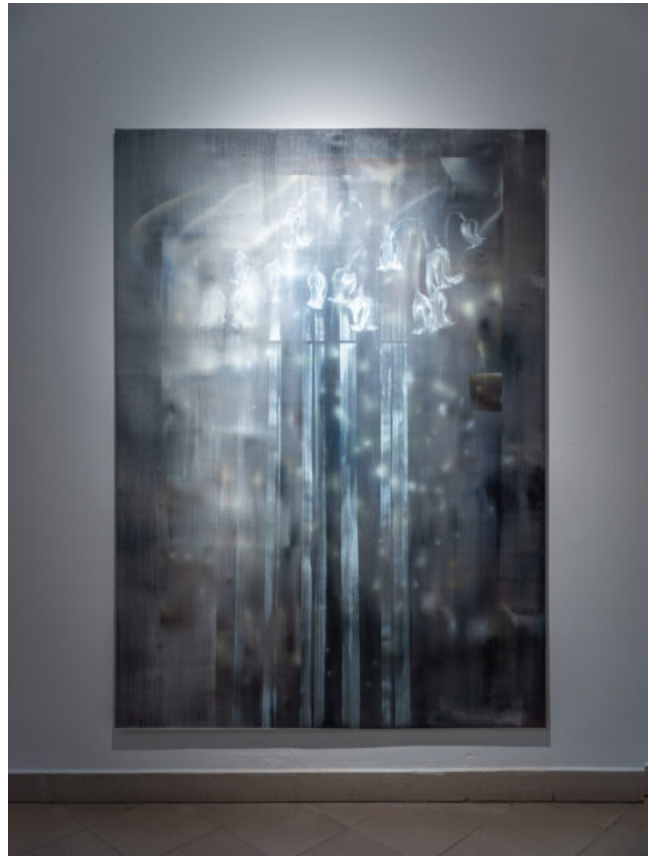
Aluminum plays a symbolic role as a post-industrial material—light, strong, and transformative. Reliefs made from melted car parts become new media surfaces, resonating with the layered abstractions in Mantas Valentukonis’ paintings.

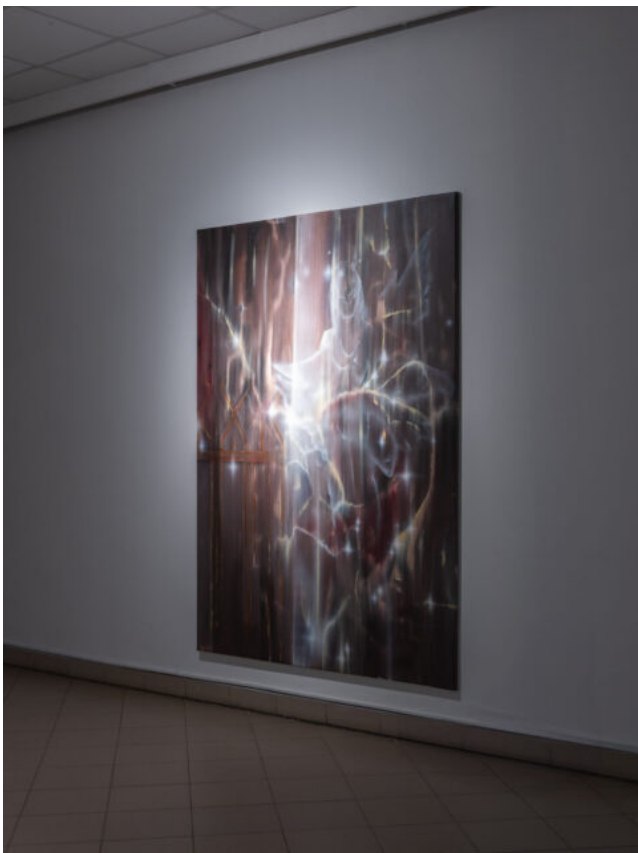
Agata Orlovska’s installation “Do Not Go Gently Into That Good Night” explores human-technology interdependence, using solar modules activated by the presence of the viewer. In “Lady Died,” Deividas and Mantas Valentukonis combine ritual and illusion, referencing a Slavic childhood levitation game to explore collective belief and transformation.

Mantas Valentukonis’ paintings bring together materiality, digital perception, industrial memory, and mythic imagination. His work reflects the exhibition’s core themes: ritual, transformation, and liminality.

Photography: Laurynas Skeisgiela













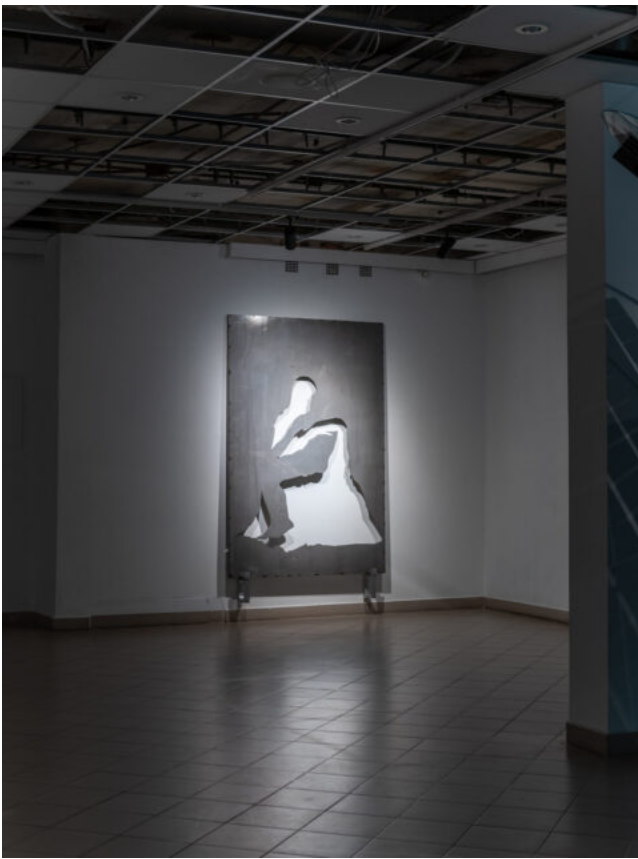


Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Rooms in Rhymes' at EKKM

May 22, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Brigit Arop, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo

Rooms in Rhymes is seven curatorial phrases that form an exhibitionary poem, an experiment in spatial poetry and curatorial collaboration.

Each week a new exhibition by one of the curators builds upon or replaces another on one of the museum floors, forming a rhythmical and fluctuating whole of displays throughout the building. The exhibition cycle experiments with curating as a form of poetic, performative and collaborative practice. It seeks to enhance diverse dialogue in visual art projects and invite a plurality of curatorial approaches into the museum. EKKM's only in-house curator, Evelyn Raudsepp, has invited an extended group of curators to join her. This includes team members who have a curatorial practice, but who usually carry out different roles at the museum, as well as creatives who have previously worked with EKKM: Anita Kodanik, Brigit Arop, Johannes Luik, Laura De Jaeger, Laura Linsi and Marten Esko.

In search of an aesthetic form for this collaboration, the exhibitions start to unfold line by line as a poem. The curated fragments are not necessarily expected to rhyme, yet the poetic tension invites one to look for the resonance between them, creating space for potential f(r)iction.

Rooms in Rhymes makes use of the museum building's character: three floors rhythmatises each author's phrases, passages create pauses, staircases cuts. When finishing the path, ascending and reversing the exhibition visit, new connections will arise, embracing the dynamics of delayed

meaning and disordered attention. As we go in circles, the linear-temporal strains expand to wider space-time dimensions in experiencing an exhibition, activating what's in between, in peripheries, in the blank spaces.

The exhibition project recognises that collective and collaborative work is messy, asymmetrical, and in constant flux, yet art (and EKKM) is where experimentation should happen and times for searching mutual ground relevant. These curatorial adventures can work as independent entities, but we were keen on looking at curating as socialised practice, highlighting interconnectedness. Feedback and reflection, exchange of ideas and shared commitment have been inherent to the methodology of this process, questioning and reimagining an exhibition format (or at least attempting to).

An artwork will never gain its full meaning in the studio and continues to evolve when encountering the audience. Likewise, making of an exhibition does not end with the opening. This exhibition cycle can be approached as a temporal artwork, on-folding in time, encouraging you to be curious and explorative.

We invite you to slow openings, to re-encounters, searching for rhythms and rhymes. The cycle of exhibitions will be accompanied by an extensive programme of slow openings:

Laura De Jaeger (4.04–20.04, II floor) will open the exhibition cycle on the museum middle floor with in-betweenness, inspired by the suspended time of the waiting room.

Artists: Agnes Isabelle Veevo, Ben Caro & Kat Cutler-MacKenzie, Camille Laurelli.

On the opening evening, 4 April at 18.00–21.00, Kirte Jõesaar's durational performance *My Pleasure* takes place.

Marten Esko (11.04–27.04, III floor) fantasises of untimely rhyming and compares visions of technologically saturated futures, presents and pasts.

Artists: Coumba Samba, Julia Scher, Katja Novitskova, Louis Morlæ, Madlen Hirtentreu, Mihkel Ilus, René Kari.

On the opening evening, 11 April at 18.00–21.00, Gretchen Lawrence's sound installation-concert will take place at 19.00.

Johannes Luik's (17.04–04.05, I floor) exhibition approaches space using the metaphor of an egg, which is simultaneously a form and a process, a tension between interior-exterior and endless creation.

Artists: Alexander Webber, August Weizenberg, Eke Ao Nettan, Helena Keskküla, Liis Vares, Sandra Ernits.

By the opening evening, 17 April at 18.00–21.00, the exhibition is not ready yet and creating it continues during the opening.

Brigit Arop (25.04–18.05, II floor) combines the means of expression of ASMR, familiar from contemporary internet culture, with the presentation of the work by Estonian artists.

Artists: Ulvi Haagensen, Kadri Liis Rääk, Piibe Kolka, Gerta Raidma aka Lacqueur.

On the opening day, 25 April at 12.00–19.00, the curator is at the bar, listening to ASMR and serving tea.

For her exhibition from the cycle *Rooms in Rhymes*, Laura Linsi (2.05–18.05, III floor) has invited artist Benjamin Arthur Brown, who intertwines performance and sculptures with non-reality,

reflecting the absurdity of our reality.

Artist: Benjamin Arthur Brown.

On the opening evening, 2 May at 18.00–21.00, Benjamin Arthur Brown's performance will take place at 19.00.

Anita Kodanik (9.05–25.05, 1 floor) weaves a transindividualist sensibility – inspired by rats into an exhibition that explores inevitable misery; one that can only be alleviated through the hope of togetherness.

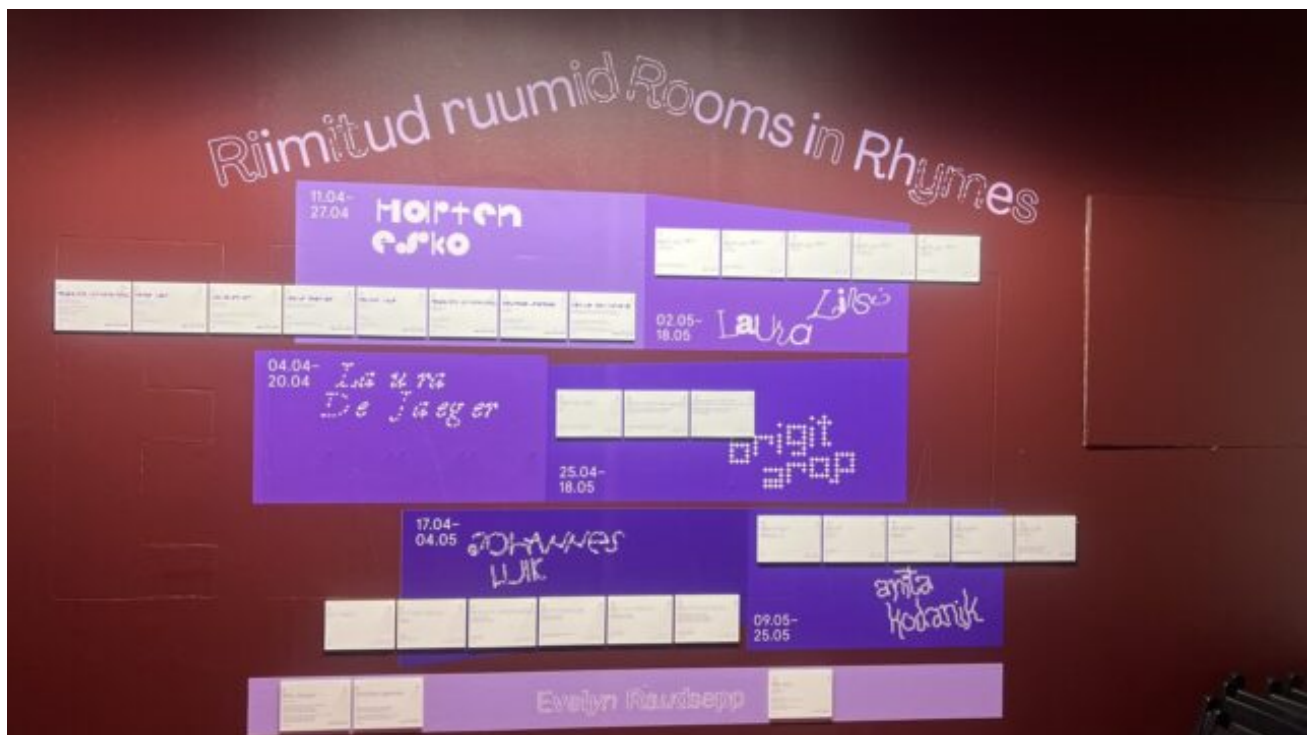
Artists: Alina Kleytman, Filip Vest, Samira Elagoz, Zody Burke, DJ Tiine Rott.

On the opening evening, 9 May at 18.00–21.00, artist Filip Vest will perform their piece *Self Tape* at 19.00

Exhibition team: Johannes Luik, Kadi Kesküla, Agnes Isabelle Veevo, Tonya Kroplya, Hans-Otto Ojaste, Tanel Asmer, Ats Kruusing, Aksel Haagensen, Mark Alexander Ummelas.

Supporters: Estonian Cultural Endowment, Estonian Ministry of Culture, City of Tallinn, Akzo Nobel, Estonian Academy of Arts, Liviko AS, Punch Club OÜ.

We thank PAiR (Pavilosta Artist in Residency) and the VV Foundation for hosting a residency that supported the curators in preparing for this exhibition.



Rooms in Rhymes, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025.



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Johannes Luik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo.



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Johannes Luik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo.



Eke Ao Nettan, A Silence Seen by Looking, 2024/2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Johannes Luik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Alexander Webber, Allround, 2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Johannes Luik, exhibition

view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025.
Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Johannes Luik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025.
Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



August Weizenberg, Standing female figure, 1897. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Johannes Luik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



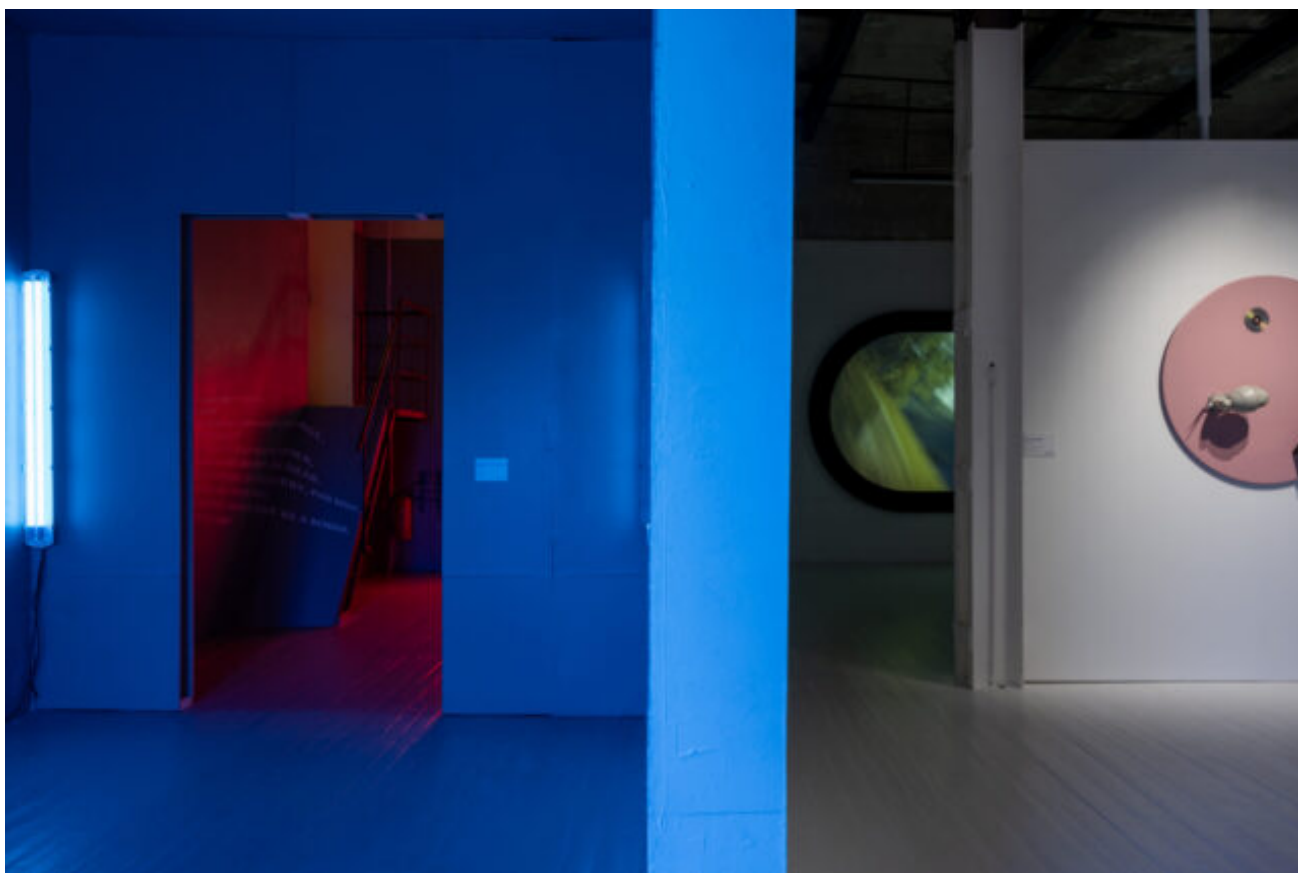
Ben Caro & Kat Cutler-MacKenzie, the DIY ethos or thesis is: stay permanent, 2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Laura De Jaeger, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Diana Olesyuk



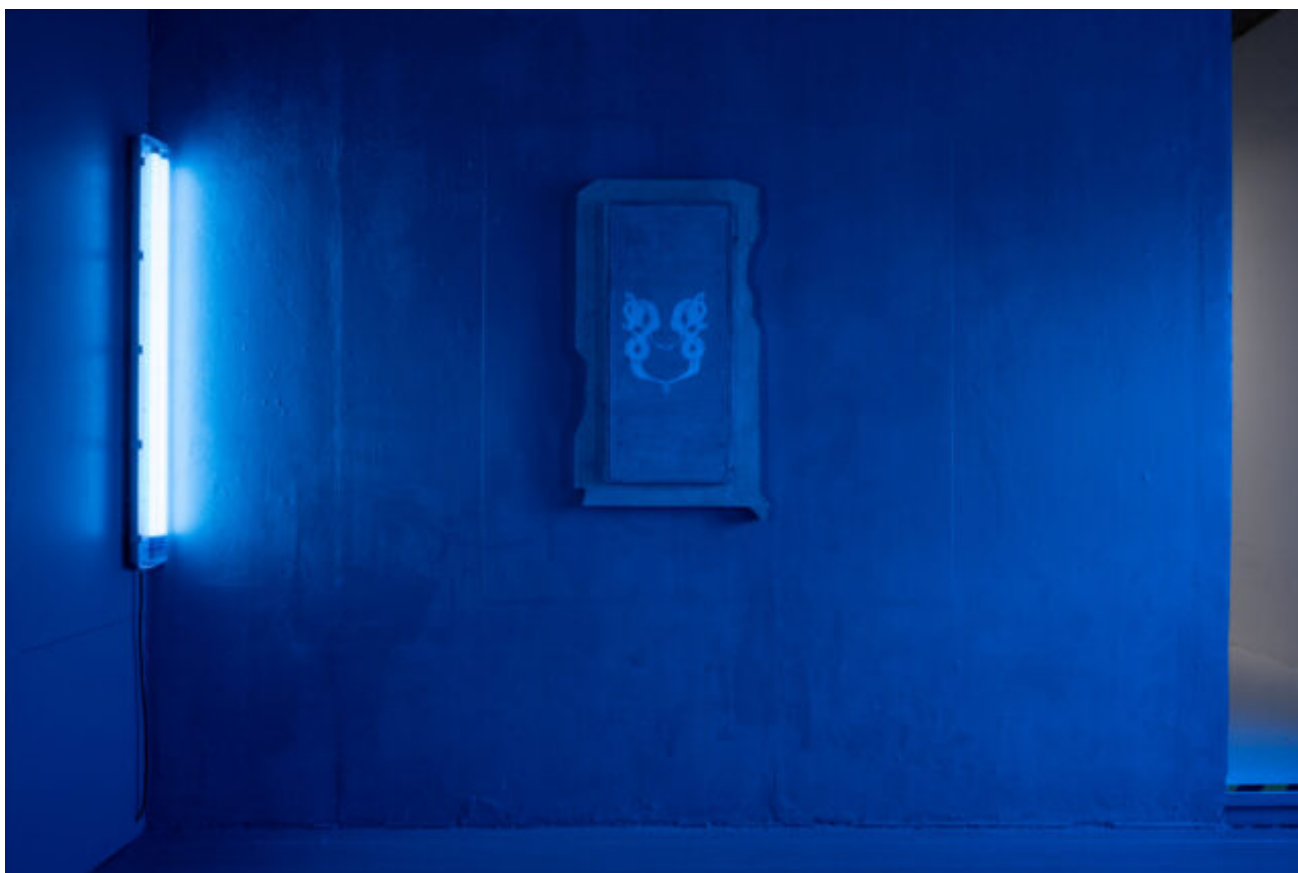
Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated by Laura De Jaeger, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Marten Esko, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Marten Esko, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025.
Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Madlen Hirtentreu, Ghost Dog, 2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Marten Esko, exhibition view,
Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Marten Esko, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025.
Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



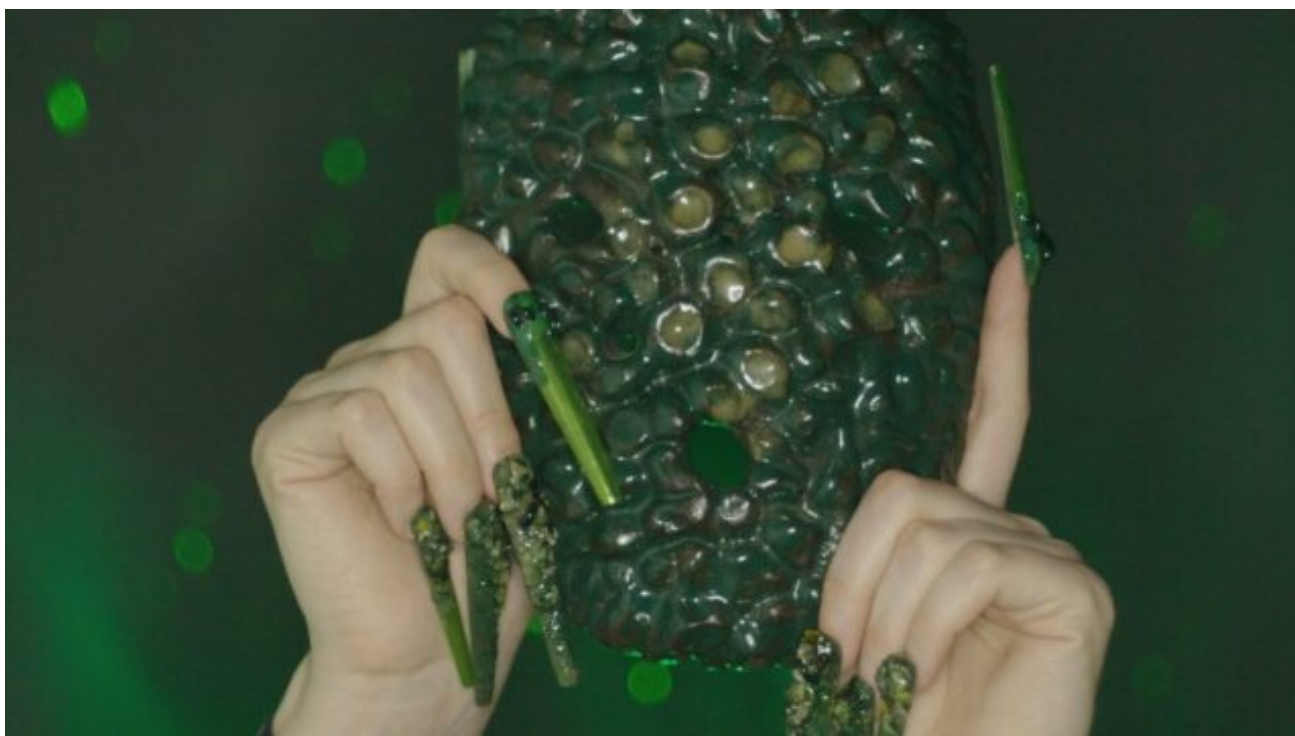
Louis Morlæ, Ekstasia & Six Last Things, 2023. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Marten Esko, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Brigit Arop, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Brigit Arop, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Kadri Liis Rääk, Piibe Kolka, Gerta Raidma aka Lacqueer, Brigit Arop, Estonian Art ASMR: Kadri Liis Rääk's Yearning Biophilia, 2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Brigit Arop, still frame, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Ulvi Haagensen, Piibe Kolka, Gerta Raidma aka Lacqueer, Brigit Arop, Estonian Art ASMR: The Art of Cleaning by Ulvi Haagensen, 2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Brigit Arop, still frame, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Laura Linsi, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Laura Linsi, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



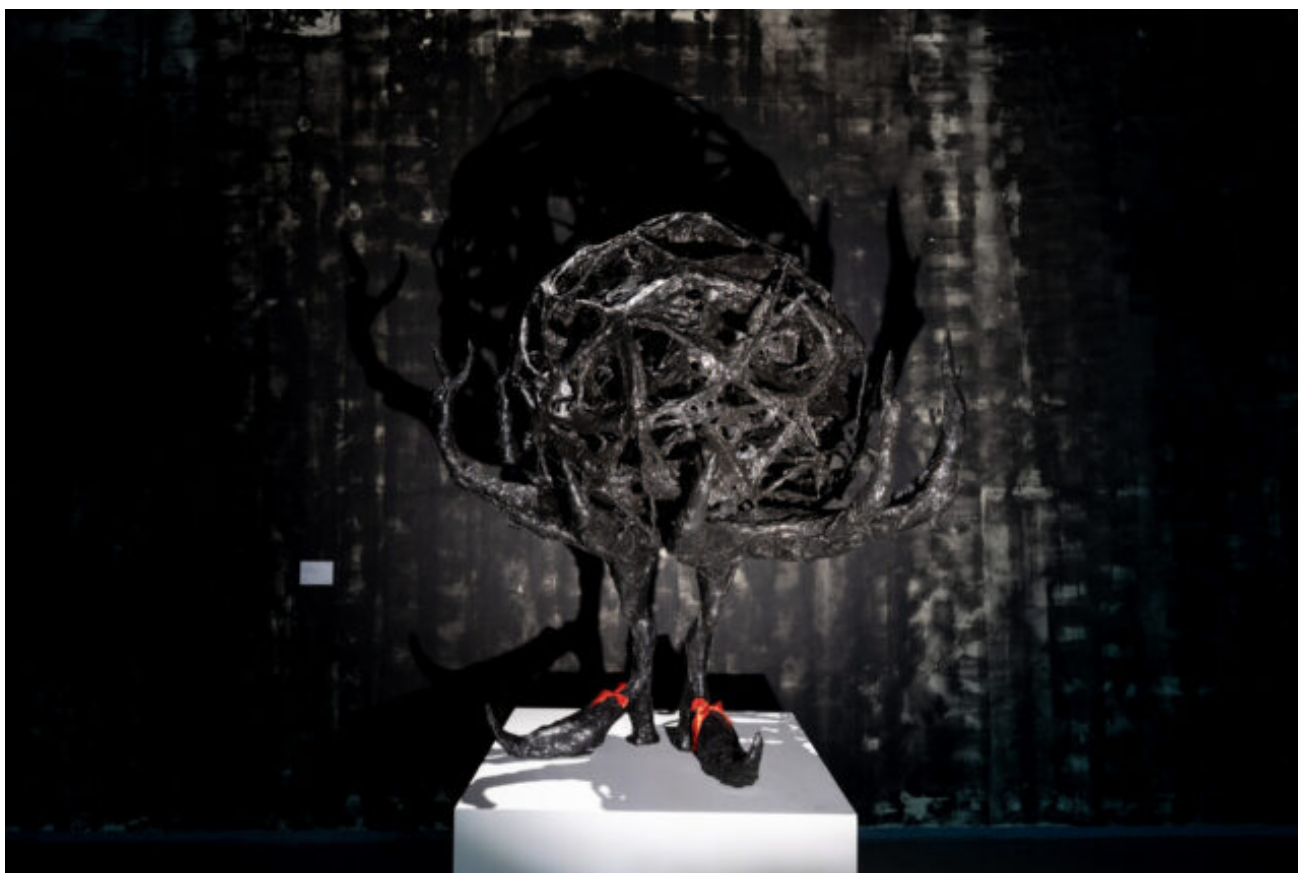
Benjamin Arthur Brown, W.T.W.T.C.H., 2025. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Laura Linsi, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Anita Kodanik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Zody Burke, Gang Aft Agley, 2023. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Anita Kodanik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



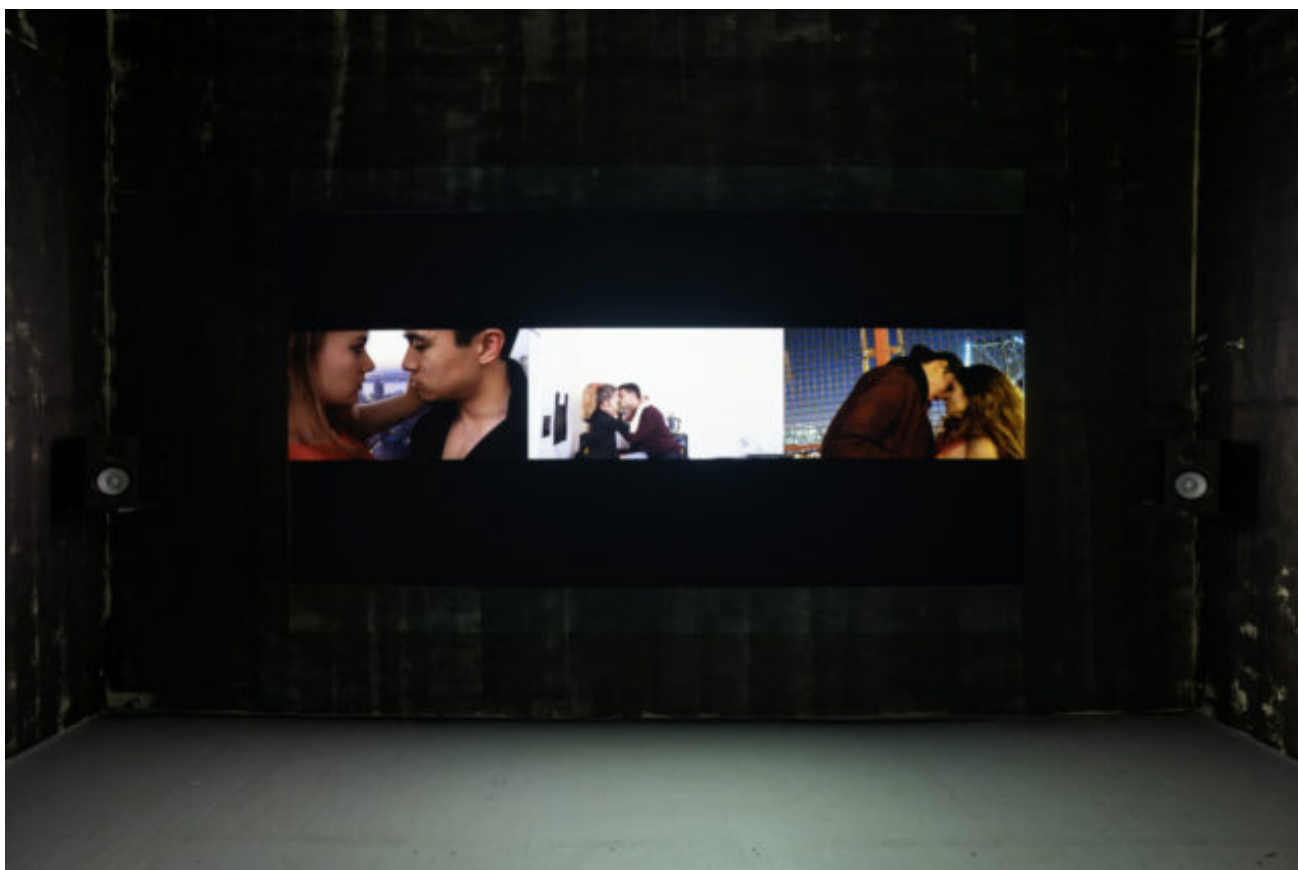
Alina Kleytman, *Necessary Luxury or Luxury Necessity?*, 2024. *Rooms in Rhymes*, cycle curated Anita Kodanik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Filip Vest, *Self Tape*, 2024. *Rooms in Rhymes*, cycle curated Anita Kodanik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Anita Kodanik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025.
Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo



Samira Elagoz, The Young and the Willing, 2018. Rooms in Rhymes, cycle curated Anita Kodanik, exhibition view, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, 2025. Photo by Roman-Sten Tõnissoo

Photo reportage from Vytenis Burokas' exhibition 'Uncertainty Gardens' at Drifts gallery

May 23, 2025

Author Echo Gone Wrong



“If faut cultiver notre jardin.”

— Voltaire, *Candide*

Voltaire ends *Candide* with this quiet insistence: faced with chaos, cultivate. Not as escape, but as method. Not despite history, but because we are thrown into it. And while history unleashes its destructive forces, the garden becomes a necessary site – for clarity, for repetition, for sanity.

For several years now, Vytenis Burokas has made a garden his studio. His homestead in Lauryniškės, a rural village in Širvintos district, 40 kilometers northwest of Vilnius, has become a physical terrain and a conceptual ground. There, tending and thinking blur. Fixing, placing, maintaining – each act becoming a quiet form of composition. Gardening, like drawing, unfolds in time.

Working in the garden, Burokas began to blur acts of cultivation with processes of artistic inquiry. What began as an “expedition to the homestead in search of new artistic expressions” gradually revealed deeper drives: connecting with long-lost neighbors, gathering fragments of the past, and composing with memory as both material and method.

At Drifts, Burokas presents his second solo exhibition with the gallery. Drawings and living plant elements, cultivated in raised beds, some built for artworks, others repurposed from military crates, are dispersed throughout the space. The boxes evoke logistics and latent mobility: a tension

between rootedness and readiness to move. Glass bottles of wild apple cider punctuate the installation, grounding it in quiet acts of transformation and offering. Indirectly, the works carry residues of the garden – material traces, stained surfaces, the imprint of repeated gestures. They do not depict the garden; they metabolize it.

Some pieces are large, solid: wooden boxes reimagined as sites of cultivation and reflection, staging fragile drawings *within* and on top of their surfaces. Others are modest, almost shy, yet assert themselves with quiet persistence.

The drawings are not visual notes. Many of them are not representational in a traditional sense; they do not document the garden so much as metabolize its very conditions. Burokas's drawings often feature fluid, near-evaporating stains overlaid with gestural, bleeding ink lines. The medium's behavior becomes part of the composition: soaking, spreading, and interacting with the surface in unpredictable ways. What emerges is not a fixed form, but a process: a metabolic residue of an action, a memory, a spill. Forms drift between vegetal, anatomical, and totemic—neither fully figure nor object, but quietly suspended in between. The mottled texture of the cardboard, yellowed and fraying at the edges, reinforces a sense of organic decay and time-passed, suggesting fermentation not only as metaphor, but as visual logic.

In one work (*Pottery*, 2025), a bulbous, spiraling form – a living being or a vessel in repose – is rendered in black ink across a sheet of yellowed cardboard. An earth-toned, shadowy tide blooms: the accidental trace of soya sauce spilled and absorbed. The viewer observes the liquid's path where it settled unevenly, creating a soft shadow that now evokes both growth and decay. The paper's fragility – its softened edges and discoloration – adds to the sense that the image is not made but grown, like mold in a cellar or a memory rising to the surface.

Elsewhere, forms drift between human and vegetal, symbolic and intuitive. "Sometimes the drawings come before the thoughts," Burokas notes. Motifs return, mutate, and decay. The process is cyclical, like fermentation: slow, unpredictable, alive.

Throughout the exhibition, Burokas offers cider brewed from wild apples gathered from trees growing near the remnants of the Second World War-era homesteads – places remembered only in oral histories, old maps, or subtle disruptions in a forest floor. "So in a way," he writes, "this is cider from lost orchards."

The offering is not incidental. Fermentation, for Burokas, is both process and principle – a metabolic transformation that parallels the slow, unpredictable ways in which knowledge, memory, and matter evolve. Just as microorganisms convert fruit into cider, so too do lived experiences and cultural residues – strained through observation and time – become material for drawing, installation, and reflection. Fermentation here is not preservation, but change: intimate, active, alive.

This logic of transformation continues in the sculptural works: wooden beds with living plants. Over time, they will be watered, cared for, and eventually returned to Lauryniškės. A cycle of growth, extraction, return.

Burokas draws on a lineage of artist-gardeners – from Claude Monet's sensory landscapes to Ian Hamilton Finlay's sculptural poetics to Derek Jarman's apocalyptic resistance. For Burokas, cultivation is a way of thinking with time, memory, and decay. Gardening becomes a practice of maintenance, of embodied recollection. As Finlay once wrote, "Gardening activity is one of five kinds: sowing, planting, fixing, placing, maintaining... all these may be taken under the one head, composing." For Burokas, this composition is also pedagogical. A teacher at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, his work models a slow transmission: fermentation of knowledge, porous boundaries between

drawing, performance, and embodied thought. His alter egos, narrative gestures, and cyclical processes suggest that identity, too, is something cultivated – part memory, part myth, always in flux.

Uncertainty Gardens does not seek resolution. It renders cultivation as a way of being-with: with time, with landscape, with rupture. It holds the garden not as place but as method—shaped by weather, war, and care. It asks not only what we grow, but how we care for what remains: how we tend to fragile forms, take responsibility for seeds we did not plant, for roots that hold stories beneath the surface, for fruits shaped in silence, left for others to find.

Mėta Valiušaitytė for *Drifts*

‘Uncertainty Gardens’

Vytenis Burokas

8 May 2025 – 27 June 2025

Drifts gallery, T. Vrublevskio str. 6-2, Vilnius

Exhibition text by Mėta Valiušaitytė, art historian and curator

Text translation by Paulius Balčytis

Text editing by Rima Bertašavičiūtė

Sincere thank you to: Vaida Jonušytė, Dominykas Liaudanskas, Naglis Kristijonas Zakaras, Rokas Valiauga, Laura Kaminskaitė, Vadim Šamkov.

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Photo reportage by Vaida Jonušytė





