

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

LIKENESS IN DIFFERENCE

Perspectives on Baltic Regional Art History

13 May 2022

Estonian Academy of Arts, main auditorium

14 May 2022

Kumu Art Museum, auditorium



The seminar is jointly organised by the Art Museum of Estonia and the Estonian Academy of Arts

Main organisers: Anu Allas and Eda Tuulberg

Coordinators: Annika Toots and Tiiu Saadoja

With the support of:



The seminar is part of the research programme of the Art Museum of Estonia *Art in the Baltic States During the Soviet Period: Regional Characteristics and Defining Interactions (2021–2025)*.

The Art Museum of Estonia and the Estonian Academy of Arts are grateful to all those individuals and institutions who contributed to the realization of the seminar.

LIKENESS IN DIFFERENCE

Perspectives on Baltic Regional Art History

The meanings and self-understanding of the Baltics as a geopolitical and cultural region have changed several times throughout history. In the field of culture, the frequent interaction between the three Baltic republics in the Soviet time was replaced by narratives of national independence in the 1990s. Because of the polarised world perception of the Cold War era, the three countries sought to define themselves through these narratives as part of either Eastern Europe or the West. Therefore, their interest in one another and the sense of shared regional characteristics remained in the background for quite some time. Nevertheless, the last few years have witnessed changes in several spheres (of culture), which have served as a launch pad for a more active and productive dialogue.

The seminar jointly organised by the Art Museum of Estonia and the Estonian Academy of Arts brings together art researchers and curators from the three Baltic countries. The art history of the Soviet period serves as the point of departure for the seminar, but it is neither meant as an overly restrictive framework nor does it exclude insights into the preceding or following processes in art. The regional, comparative and international focus on an analysis of cultural practices and the respective institutional conditions establishes a basis for presentations on both shared and individual experiences, facilitates studying their causes and backgrounds, and helps to challenge the established narratives that we construct and reproduce about our own art histories and those of others.

The two-day seminar has been divided into six panels. Topics vary from photography and studies of the heritage of women artists to analyses of Soviet exhibition activities and experimental art practices. Presentations will also deal with real and imaginary art collectives and pose future-oriented questions about potential trans-Baltic research topics, exhibition projects and new theoretical approaches that provide the necessary framework. The aim is to explore intersections between the participants' research interests and activities, and to prepare a foundation for future cooperation projects.

The working language at the seminar is English.

FRIDAY, 13 MAY

**Estonian Academy of Arts (Auditorium A101)
(Põhja puiestee 7)**

11.00

Opening Remarks

Anu Allas, Eda Tuulberg

11.15–13.00

Baltic Socialist Art Histories Through Contemporary Critical Perspectives

Chair: Ieva Astahovska

Participants: Inga Lāce, Linda Kaljundi and Ieva Astahovska

13.00–14.00

Lunch

14.15–16.00

Avenues and side-roads: future transnational research in the Baltics, methodologies, trends, and perspectives from *inside* and *outside*

Chair: Inga Lāce

Participants: Eglė Juocevičiūtė, Gregor Taul and Toms Ķencis

16.00–16.15

Break

16.15–18.00

Real and Imagined Alliances

Chair: Andres Kurg

Participants: Laine Kristberga, Liisa Kaljula and Adomas Narkevičius

SATURDAY, 14 MAY

Kumu Art Museum
(Weizenbergi 34 / Valge 1)

11.00
Opening Remarks
Kadi Polli, Eda Tuulberg

11.15–13.00
Exhibiting Identities and Imaginations
Chair: Maria-Kristiina Soomre
Participants: Kädi Talvoja, Māra Traumane and Karolina Jakaitė

13.00–14.00
Lunch

14.15–16.00
Encounters with “Other Feminisms”: Theory and Curating in the Baltics
Chair: Anu Allas
Participants: Jana Kukaine, Ingrid Ruudi and Laima Kreivytė

16.00–16.15
Break

16.15–18.00
Invisible Photography
Chair: Annika Toots
Participants: Alise Tifentāle, Agnė Narušytė and Annika Toots

FRIDAY, 13 MAY

Baltic Socialist Art Histories Through Contemporary Critical Perspectives

Chair: Ieva Astahovska

Participants: Inga Lāce, Linda Kaljundi and Ieva Astahovska

In this panel, we will discuss Baltic art and its shared histories, based on our own experiences of researching and curating across the region, as well as examining how these issues are affected by the current political emergencies. We will address connections between local, regional, and international contexts, reflect on the recent transformations of our societies that have largely defined both its social and political course, and consider the cultural context. A particular focus in our discussion will be on environmental, social and cultural changes, and the ways in which they reflect contested memory in the Baltics. We will discuss these subjects by focusing on exhibitions and museum practices.

How can entanglements between post-socialist and postcolonial perspectives in the context of visual art help to analyse historical and current events in our region? What is the urgency of rethinking Baltic and Eastern European dimensions in history writing in the light of these debates? We are particularly interested in the new questions that these debates introduce for studying the socialist period. How can solidarity and internationalism in the context of art from the socialist period be revisited in the light of contemporary critical perspectives on nationalism, colonialism and migration?

Inga Lāce will outline her ongoing research on the links between Eastern Europe and the Global South, focusing on international exhibitions of art from India and the Congo that took place in Riga from the 1960s to 1980s, in connection with alternative exhibition geographies and cultural diplomacy.

In her contribution, Linda Kaljundi will reflect on how environmental changes have affected the study and curating of Soviet Estonian art.

Ieva Astahovska will discuss her ongoing research on how artists in Latvia in the 1970s and 80s used the international context, coupling cultural and political narratives of the socialist bloc with the art language of Western modernism, and how these art practices can be revisited today through the prism of post-socialist and postcolonial entanglements.

Avenues and side-roads: future transnational research in the Baltics, methodologies, trends, and perspectives from *inside* and *outside*

Chair: Inga Lāce

Participants: Eglė Juocevičiūtė, Gregor Taul and Toms Žencis

The question of the visibility of the art of the Baltics and its history is a recurring one evoking emotional reactions and anxiety regarding exclusion/inclusion in *international* art worlds and histories, as well as prompting schemes of state support, and fuelling new collaborations between partners from the countries, as well as representation projects outside of the region. In this panel we will depart from speakers' current research focuses and methodologies: from private collecting in the Soviet time (Eglė Juocevičiūtė) to ethnographic traits in Baltic printmaking (Toms Žencis) to the comparative history of late-Soviet monumental-decorative art in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (Gregor Taul).

Departing from these threads, we will move to a discussion of potential future opportunities, where collaboration is key, guided by the following questions: what has been the narrative of Baltic art and how has it been perceived? What is the balance between repetition and evoking complexity? Should our stories focus on the Baltics alone or include a larger number of post-Soviet or Eastern bloc countries? What are the possible methodologies and thematic approaches we could use and what are the practical needs for transnational research, from the knowledge of languages to the digitisation of archives? Whom do we address and how do we speak? Do we want to drive down the avenues or go along the side roads?

Real and Imagined Alliances

Chair: Andres Kurg

Participants: Laine Kristberga, Liisa Kaljula and Adomas Narkevičius

This panel will bring together papers on alternative collectives – real and imagined ones – of artists working in the Baltic countries during the late Soviet period. It will investigate new theoretical and historiographic horizons of talking about Baltic art, inter-artistic collaborations and shared circumstances of the Soviet regime. The purpose is to bring together artists from the Baltic countries, to compare and contrast their cultural and institutional settings and propose potential paths for future research.

Laine Kristberga, in her presentation will examine how artists in socialist Latvia established tiny social clusters, where they tried to remain immune from the Soviet political doctrine and ideology by exercising more democratic and autonomous principles in decision-making and in the creation of art. These unofficial networks proved crucial in stimulating the development of participatory aesthetics in event-based art, i.e. performance art. However, from the contemporary point of view, these processes can also be discussed as examples not only of art, but also of social design and cultural democratisation, because the artists considered did not create objects, but processes that impacted their social

reality, eventually leading to greater change in society. Under the pressure of enforced Soviet collectivism, participatory artistic practices during the Soviet period can be seen as camouflaged survival strategies aimed at experiencing more liberal and authentic ways of life.

Liisa Kaljula will address the shared Baltic art histories during the late Soviet period. The artists who worked in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during the late Soviet era were united by the similar Soviet environments that surrounded them at the time. In the 1970s, when more conceptual art practices emerged in the Western part of the Soviet Union, several Baltic artists independently turned to the art of appropriation. Appropriating the Soviet visual culture that covered their public spaces, and often without even knowing each other or each other's work, these artists formed invisible artistic networks that started to erode the Soviet regime.

Finally, Adomas Narkevičius's paper will examine the art practices of the Estonian sculptor Anu Pöder (1947–2013) and the Lithuanian photographers Algirdas Šeškus (1945) and Virgilijus Šonta (1952–1992), focusing on certain works of these artists from the 1970s to 1990 which explore the transformative possibilities of duration, the body and corporeal form. With close attention to the formal and material devices of the artworks, this presentation develops the Nietzschean notion of untimeliness [Unzeitgemäßheit] as an art historical tool for reckoning with artworks unrecognised, unexhibited or otherwise out-of-sync with their past and/or present. Defining it in relation to the temporal notions of the anachronistic and the anachronic, it argues that untimeliness, unlike other concepts operative in the discipline, does not model and, therefore, does not assume the temporality of the artworks of Pöder, Šeškus and Šonta. Through untimeliness, (these) works of art produce their own durations to resist both the impositions of their historical period and expose the blind spots of the present.

SATURDAY, 14 MAY

Exhibiting Identities and Imaginations

Chair: Maria-Kristiina Soomre

Participants: Kādi Talvoja, Māra Traumane and Karolina Jakaitė

This panel focuses on exhibition practices in the Baltics during the Soviet period, highlighting the identity formation processes and self-representational aspects of pan-Baltic collaborations. The case studies touch upon the question of the exhibition format as a specific tool for presenting and intertwining national identities, while also being a versatile platform for transnational communication and exchanges of ideas. These comparative insights elaborate on the peculiarities of the institutional and discursive field that formed the agency of exhibitions, and also emphasise the importance of personal relationships between artists.

Kādi Talvoja's research addresses the formation and development, roles, effects and contexts of Baltic art triennials during the Soviet era. The seriality of Baltic triennials makes them valuable sources to monitor the comparative dynamics of changes in Soviet cultural politics, power relations, institutional mechanisms and value orientations. The competitive climate of the triennials, which elicited the distinguishing characteristics of each art school, made them some of the most important platforms for national identity creation. However, the phenomenon is still practically overlooked in Baltic art histories, and its advantages in helping to move beyond the national viewpoint have mostly been ignored. Talvoja is intrigued by how the commitment to the "nation branding" of Baltic triennials within the Soviet regime fits into the more global context of exhibition history.

Māra Traumane will focus on the reception of the exhibition of fourteen Estonian architects at the House of Architects' Union in Riga in 1978. The exhibition coincided with the large-scale exhibition of monumental-decorative art *Savai pilsētai (To Our City)*, which for the first time united designers, artists and architects in an attempt to develop a visual concept for the public spaces of Riga, and invigorated discussions about the necessity of cross-disciplinary collaboration between practitioners of art, design and architecture. The exhibition of Estonian architects evoked a two-part reaction. Seen as a critique of the unification and standardisation of Soviet architecture, urban planning and its alienating effects, it was enthusiastically received by the experimental wing of Latvian designers. At the same time, the ironic and critical conceptual proposals of the Estonian architects attracted the attention of Latvian architects and provided the impulse for initiating annual thematic exhibitions of experimental projects of young architects, with the first programmatic exhibition, *What will be the Fate of Regional Architecture?*, organised in 1979.

Karolina Jakaitė will talk about an exhibition presented at the Soviet Industry Exhibition at the Earls Court Exhibition Centre in London. "Better from the Baltic" was the title of an article in the *Daily Telegraph* in 1968, a short passage describing Baltic fashion shows and models from Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius. The Baltic-Scandinavian-Western style of design was especially suitable for the USSR to employ in presentations directed at international audiences. During the Soviet years, specialised exhibitions of furniture, posters, package design, trademarks and logos, souvenirs, fashion and jewellery from the Baltic republics were frequently organised, in addition to group and solo exhibitions. Shown in all three capitals, these events shaped certain traditions and travel routes, as well as encouraging personal encounters between designers. The presentation will show visual examples from the archival sources and private collections, will draw attention to some tendencies, and will share initial insights on why and how "the Baltic designers were better".

Encounters with "Other Feminisms": Theory and Curating in the Baltics

Chair: Anu Allas

Participants: Jana Kukaine, Ingrid Ruudi and Laima Kreivytė

Our panel focuses on interconnections between feminist theory and feminist curating in the cultural and geopolitical context of the Baltics. We will look at the discourses that have formed the understanding of feminist art, theory, criticism and curating in this specific environment, while trying to avoid overly limiting binaries of "Western" and "Eastern European" feminisms. Our main concern is the question of how to give voice to historical (or contemporary) agents and experiences without imposing on them predetermined concepts, both in terms of vocabulary and curatorial strategies.

Jana Kukaine will offer theoretical insights into "feminist sensibilities" in late socialist cultures, defined as intuitive feminism (Ljiljana Kolečnik), latent feminism (Zora Rusinova), reluctant feminism (Beáta Hock), profeminism (Mark Alan Švėde), parafeminism (Amelia Jones and Alise Tifentāle), soft feminism (Adelina Popnedeleva) and centrifugal feminism (Gerardo Mosquera). These terms describe feminism in the art field as something obscure, emotional, semi-hidden and even unconscious, or as "weak resistance" (Eva Majewska), with no agentic heroes or clearly defined enemies, aimed at survival, not at victory. The "other feminisms" are, among other things, deeply rooted in everyday practices and in embodied affective experiences.

Ingrid Ruudi will discuss oral histories and alternative archives in the context of the feminist curating of Late Soviet and contemporary art and architecture. Working with memories, biographical details, life stories and personal archives of artists raises a number of questions related to the positioning of the curator and the agency of the author. Oral history is always based on an intersubjective experience (Lynn Abrams), but how can the process of interrogation be set up in a way that best actualises and empowers the authentic voices of artists? How and in what forms and media should the assembled oral histories be disseminated to the public? How is it possible to remain, as a curator, a

co-creator and a dialogue partner instead of becoming a judgemental assessor? Similar questions pertain to archival materials that may be characterised as “minor archives” (Kirsty Volz).

Laima Kreivytė will talk about post-curating as feminist art practice and politics. Post-curating is a form of discursive intervention into existing exhibition practices, challenging canonical narratives and questioning displays from the inside. Analysing feminist post-curating as politics, Kreivytė will discuss the distribution of power within the art field: the power of art institutions, the power of star-curators, and the power of artistic activism. How is feminist post-curating related to institutional critique and the role of women artists? How can post-curating engender social and political changes? In her performative presentation, Kreivytė will examine complex interactions of art, curating and political life, as well as how hybrid strategies of feminist post-curating can make significant cultural and political changes.

Invisible Photography

Chair: Annika Toots

Participants: Alise Tīfentāle, Agnė Narušytė and Annika Toots

This panel brings together three different cases from the Baltic states in which photography, which in its essence is about capturing and seeing – writing with light – has been, is or will become invisible. The three presentations in this panel approach the topic of “invisible photography”, or non-images, from three very different perspectives, emphasising the complexity and tension between photography and power, the visible and the unseen. Alise Tīfentāle focuses on the private archive and estate of Zenta Dzividzinska (1944–2011), a Latvian artist and photographer active locally and internationally in the 1960s, whose legacy has recently drawn the attention of art historians, curators and artists. But most of her works exist as small test prints or only in the form of negatives and are therefore invisible. Agnė Narušytė focuses on another kind of invisibility: censorship. While highlighting the relationship between photography and power, Narušytė discusses the photographic heritage of the Lithuanian photographer Virgilijus Šonta (1952–1992), who led a double life and, among other things, photographed erotic male nudes. Annika Toots approaches the question of “invisibility” in photography from a more conceptual perspective and analyses photograms by the Estonian photographer Peeter Tooming (1939–1997) from 1992. These experimentations with light, objects and light-sensitive surfaces are destined to fade with time, as was the photographer’s intent. While poetically fading, they carry the traces of the social and economic changes of that time.

BIOGRAPHIES

Anu Allas is an art historian and curator whose research interests include visual and performative art in the late socialist period, as well as the position of women artists in art history. She defended her PhD thesis on experimental practices in Estonian art and theatre of the 1960s (Freie Universität Berlin, 2013), and has written articles and curated exhibitions mainly on Soviet-period art (among others, the permanent exhibition *Conflicts and Adaptations* in the Kumu Art Museum, 2016). In 2019, she co-curated, with Tiina Abel, the exhibition *Creating the Self: Emancipating Woman in Estonian and Finnish Art* in the Kumu Art Museum. Since 2020 she has worked as the vice-rector for research in the Estonian Academy of Art.

Ieva Astahovska is an art scholar, critic and curator. She works at the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art, where she leads research projects related to art and culture in the socialist and post-socialist periods, and connections between the post-socialist and postcolonial perspectives in the Baltics and Eastern Europe. Her recently curated and co-curated exhibitions include *Ecotopias. Ecology & Solidarity* at the Riga Art Space (2022, upcoming), *Difficult Pasts. Connected Worlds* at the National Gallery of Art, Vilnius (2022) and the Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga (2020), *Ecosystems of Change* in the public space of Riga (2021), *Valdis Āboliņš or How Fluxus Came to Aachen* in the Ludwig Forum, Aachen (2018). She has edited several research-based publications, including *Valdis Āboliņš. The avant-garde, mailart, the New Left and cultural relations during the Cold War* (LCCA, 2019), NSRD. *Juris Boiko and Hardijs Lediņš* (LLMC, 2016), and *Revisiting Footnotes. Footprints of the Recent Past in the Post-Socialist Region* (LCCA, 2015). Her research interests also include contemporaneity and historicity, relations between history and memory, art geographies and question of peripheries, art and ecology.

Karolina Jakaitė is a design historian and researcher at the Vilnius Academy of Arts Institute of Art Research, and the co-founder of *Design Foundation*. Her research specialities comprise design history studies, design and identity, national pavilions, Lithuanian design in the 1950s-1970s and contemporary design. She has written articles, edited books and catalogues on Lithuanian design, organised conferences and curated design exhibitions in Lithuania and abroad. Her latest publication, a book about the Soviet Lithuanian pavilion in London in 1968, *The Cold War Capsule: Lithuanian design in London in 1968* (Vilnius: LAPAS Publishing House, 2019), was presented for the National Book Contest *The Book of the Year 2020*.

Eglė Juocevičiūtė is an art curator and researcher working in the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius. Her research focuses on the visual art perception of Lithuania during the Soviet period and the 1990s.

Liisa Kaljula is an Estonian curator and art historian, based in Tallinn, Estonia. She has studied art history at Tartu University (BA) and cultural theory at Tallinn University (MA and PhD). She has written articles, edited catalogues and curated exhibitions about the art of the late Soviet and post-Soviet eras, such as *Future Is Born Today. Progressive Art of the ESSR 1958–1968* at the Tartu Art Museum (2009), *Maria Kapajeva. The Dream Is Wonderful, Yet Unclear* at the Narva Art Residency (2017), *Sots Art and Fashion. Conceptual Clothes from Eastern Europe* at the Kumu Art Museum (2019) and *Thinking Pictures. Conceptual Art from Moscow and the Baltics* at the Kumu Art Museum (2022). She is currently working at the Painting Collection of the Art Museum of Estonia and has recently completed her PhD at Tallinn University on the appropriation of Soviet visual culture in Estonian art of the late Soviet era.

Linda Kaljundi is a Professor of Cultural History at the Estonian Academy of Arts and a Senior Research Fellow at Tallinn University. Specialising in Baltic history, historiography and cultural memory, as well as environmental history, she is primarily interested in finding new, transnational and connected perspectives on the region's history and heritage. Kaljundi has published and edited collections on history and history writing, and historical fiction and images. At the Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, she has co-curated the exhibitions *History in Image – Image in History: The National and Transnational Past in Estonian Art* (2018), *Conqueror's Eye: Lisa Reihana's In Pursuit of Venus* (2019–2020) and the new permanent exhibition *Landscapes of Identity: Estonian Art 1700–1945* (2021).

Toms Kļencis is a philosopher and researcher working at the Archives of Latvian Folklore. The focus of his current research is cultural nationalism in Baltic printmaking during Late Socialism.

Laima Kreivytė is a curator and writer based in Vilnius. She teaches at the Vilnius Academy of Arts and is working on her PhD thesis on curating as an art practice and politics. Kreivytė co-curated the exhibition *Baltic Mythologies at the 3rd Prague Biennial* (2007) and was a curator of the Lithuanian pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009). Recently she co-curated the new permanent display of the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius (2019).

Laine Kristberga is an art historian and researcher at the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia. She holds a PhD from the Art Academy of Latvia. Currently her doctoral thesis *Intermedial Appropriation as a Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Performance Art in Latvia in the Period of Late Socialism (1964–1989)* is being turned into a monograph that will be available in both English and Latvian. Kristberga also works as an assistant professor at the University of Latvia and teaches at the Art Academy of Latvia, and Riga Business School. Her scholarly interests cover art, culture and politics during the Cold War period. As the director of the Latvian Centre for Performance Art, she is responsible for organising the annual international performance art festival *Starptelpa*. Kristberga has contributed essays to several publications, among them *Performance Art in the Second Public Sphere* (Routledge, 2018), which includes her chapter *Performance Art in Latvia as Intermedial Appropriation*.

Jana Kukaine is a feminist scholar and a curator of contemporary art based in Riga. Currently, she is working on her doctoral thesis on visceral feminist aesthetics at the Art Academy of Latvia. Kukaine's research interests include feminist art history, affect theory, new materialism, and postcolonial and post-socialist feminisms. She is the author of the monograph *Daiļās mātes. Sieviete. Ķermenis. Subjektivitāte* (*Lovely Mothers. Women. Body. Subjectivity*, Riga: Neputns, 2016) and many articles. In her curatorial work, Kukaine is committed to advancing the feminist art scene in Latvia and the Baltic region by addressing issues of local sensibilities, geopolitical singularities, vernacular culture and feminist genealogies.

Andres Kurg is a professor of architectural history and theory at the Institute of Art History, Estonian Academy of Arts, in Tallinn. His academic work specialises in the Baltic countries and Russia during the Soviet era, with a special focus on the influence of technological transformations and changes in everyday life to the built environment from the 1960s to the 1980s. He has published articles in *AA Files*, *ArtMargins*, *Journal of Architecture* and *Home Cultures* and has contributed to several collected volumes and exhibition catalogues. He has curated exhibitions on Soviet architecture and design, including *Our Metamorphic Futures. Design, Technical Aesthetics and Experimental Architecture in the Soviet Union 1960–1980* in the Vilnius National Gallery of Art (2012). He has held several international fellowships, including at the Getty Research Institute, Yale University, and Friedrich Schiller University Jena, and has received funding for his work from the Graham Foundation and EU Culture programme.

Inga Lāce is a C-MAP Central and Eastern Europe Fellow at MoMA, New York. Since 2012 she has been a curator at the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art. She was a co-curator of the Latvian Pavilion of the Venice Biennale 2019 with the artist Daiga Grantina (co-curated with Valentinas Klimašauskas) and a co-curator of the 7th–10th editions of the contemporary art festival SURVIVAL KIT (with the co-curators Jonatan Habib Engqvist in 2017 and Angels Miralda and Solvita Krese in 2018–2019, in Riga). She is also a co-curator of the research and exhibition project *Portable Landscapes*, with exhibitions at the Villa Vassilieff in Paris, the Latvian National Art Museum in Riga (2018) and the James Gallery at CUNY in New York (2019). She has curated the exhibitions *It Won't Be Long Now, Comrades!* at Framer Framed in Amsterdam (2017, co-curated with Katia Krupennikova) and *Performing the Fringe* at Konsthall C in Stockholm (2020, co-curated with Jussi Koitela). Lāce was a curatorial fellow at de Appel, Amsterdam (2015–2016), organising a program and editing a publication on the intersection of art and ecology, *Instituting Ecologies*.

Adomas Narkevičius is a Lithuanian curator and art historian based in London and Vilnius, and Associate Curator at Cell Project Space, London. He is interested in non-linear aspects of historical time, as well as the body, sexuality and the limits of representation. His current research focuses on the notion of untimely artwork to reconsider the “belatedness” of post-war art in the Baltics. In 2020, his MA dissertation *Defiant Bodies: Untimely Art in the Baltics Under Soviet Rule* at UCL, London, was awarded the Oxford Art Journal Prize. He also holds a BA in Philosophy from Vilnius University. Between 2017

and 2019, Adomas Narkevičius was a curator at the Rupert Centre for Art, Residencies and Education, running the Alternative Education Programme for emerging art practitioners, as well as curating the Public and Residencies programmes. In 2016, he initiated Rupert's Reading Room and Live Art programming. Among his recent curatorial projects are *Sideways Looking* by Peng Zuqiang, *A Glossary of Words My Mother Never Taught Me* by Renée Akitelek Mboya at Cell Project Space, *Šonta. From the Archives* at išgirsti, and the group exhibitions *Authority Incorporeal* at Rupert, part of the 14th Baltic Triennial; *Avoidance* at FUTURA, Prague (co-curated with Dina Akhmeedeva), the international symposium *Enacting Knowledges* at KAH (co-curated with Vaida Stepanovaitė), and the JCDecaux Emerging Artist Award at the Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius (with Monika Kalinauskaitė).

Agnė Narušytė is an art and photography critic, curator, professor at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, researcher at the Lithuanian Cultural Research Institute, editor of the *7 meno dienos* weekly photography section, and a regular commentator on the Lithuanian Radio and Television (LRT) radio programme *Kultūros Savaitė* (Culture Week). She has published the following monographs: *Aesthetics of Boredom in Lithuanian Photography* (Vilnius: Vilnius Academy of Arts, 2008), *Lithuanian Photography: 1990–2010* (Vilnius: White Arches, 2011), *Camera Obscura: Lithuanian Photography 1839–1945* (with Margarita Matulytė, Vilnius: VDA, 2016), and *Chronometers. Imagine Time: Chronopolitics, Heterochrony and the Experiences of an Accelerating World in Lithuanian Art* (Vilnius: VDA, 2021).

Ingrid Ruudi is an architecture historian and curator based in Tallinn. She is a researcher and visiting associate professor at the Estonian Academy of Arts, Institute of Art History and Visual Culture. Her research interests range from the second half of the 20th century to the present, including intersections of architecture and art in the transition era, architecture as an agent in the public sphere, and gender studies in architecture. She has curated numerous exhibitions, including *A Room of One's Own. Feminist's Questions to Architecture* (2019) at the Museum of Estonian Architecture. She has contributed architecture and art criticism to Estonian and international media.

Maria-Kristiina Soomre has been working as the Adviser on Visual Art at the Estonian Ministry of Culture since 2011. In that capacity she has contributed to the overall development of the field and particularly to the improvement of the social welfare of art workers. Soomre has lectured at the Estonian Academy of Arts, has participated in the work of numerous art juries, and in several articles has discussed issues related to the Estonian art scene, as well as mapping its potentials. In 2004–2011, Soomre worked as a project manager and curator at the Art Museum of Estonia. Her research has focused on institution criticism and the history of exhibitions.

Kädi Talvoja is an art historian and research fellow at the Estonian Academy of Arts. From 2002 to 2010 she worked in the Art Museum of Estonia, during the last five years of which she held the position of Curator and Programme Manager of Soviet period art in the Kumu Art Museum. She specialises in Soviet era Estonian and Baltic art history. Her interests are focused on historiography, exhibition history, national discourse and questions of agency.

Her PhD thesis *Severe Style in the Context of Estonian Art History Writing*, was defended and published in 2019. Her publications include *(Re)nationalizing Estonian Art During the Thaw: Lively Legacy of Kristjan Raud – A Socialist Realist History? Writing Art History in the Post-War Decades (Das östliche Europa. Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte 9. Wien: Böhlau, 2018)* and *Official Art Becoming Resistance. Adopting the Discourse of Dissent into Estonian Art History Writings – Making Art History in Europe After 1945 (Studies in Art Historiography. Eds. N. de Haro García, P. Mayayo, J. Carrillo. Routledge, 2020)*.

Gregor Taul is an art historian and semiotician based in Tallinn. He's currently working as a lecturer at the Interior Design department of the Estonian Academy of Arts and finishing his PhD on late-Soviet public art in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Alise Tifentāle is an art and photography historian, media scholar, writer, editor, occasional curator and educator based in New York City. She is the author of *The Photograph as Art in Latvia, 1960–1969* (2011), and the author or editor of several other books about photography. Her articles have been published in *ARTMargins*, *CAA.Reviews*, *Communication Today*, *MoMA Post*, *Networking Knowledge*, *PhotoResearcher*, *Social Sciences* and other journals. She has contributed chapters to such volumes as *Routledge Companion to Photography and Visual Culture* (2018), *Exploring the Selfie: Historical, Analytical, and Theoretical Approaches to Digital Self-Photography* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), *The History of European Photography 1970–2000* (Central European House of Photography, 2016), and *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation, and Design* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

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