



**COMMUNITY  
ARTS**

*Baltic-Nordic  
Network*

2021

**Compendium of  
Participative and  
Community Arts  
Best Practices in  
Latvia, Estonia  
and Sweden**



## NORDIC-BALTIC MOBILITY PROGRAMME

### Culture

## Compendium of Participative and Community Arts Best Practices in Latvia, Estonia and Sweden

### Baltic-Nordic Community Arts network

<https://culturelab.com/projekti/baltic-nordic-community-arts-network/>

<https://www.facebook.com/CANBnetwork>

### Main partners:

Culturelab, Latvia <https://culturelab.com/>

Tartu Centre for Creative Industries, Estonia <https://loovtartu.ee/en/>

Virserums Konsthall, Sweden <https://www.virserumskonsthall.com/english/>

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# Introduction

**Community art is an artistic activity (in any of art fields – dance, music, visual arts, performing arts etc.) that is based in a community setting, characterised by interaction or dialogue with the community and involving professional artists collaborating with people who may not otherwise engage in the arts. Community art activities tend to have high social value besides the artistic one, thus contributing to the wellbeing of the local community.**

**Likewise participatory art practices could be characterised as a form of art that directly engages audiences in the creative process so that they become participants in the event, which is a little broader concept as community art, where professional artists and non-professionals cooperate as equals creating a result, which could be not known in advance.**

**The notion of community art is not very well known in the Baltic countries. So we would like to provoke a discussion about what would be important criteria for successful community art projects. We have selected examples of projects in Latvia, Estonia and Sweden, which were presented to us as interesting case studies involving work of artists with audiences and communities.**

**We hope that these examples would help to analyse how artistic and social value of the project can be reached in collaboration of professional artists and communities and will inspire cultural animators and creative producers in Baltic-Nordic region for new cooperation ideas.**

**Team of Baltic-Nordic Community Arts network**

# COMMUNITY GARDEN "GROW!"

## KOPIENAS DĀRZS "AUDZ!"



 <https://www.fold.lv/en/2019/07/design-graduates-nora-gavare/>

## Place

Latvia, Sigulda (53 km from capital city Rīga), The Green Villa block.

The Green Villa block is a block of historical buildings experiencing an ongoing transformation into a room for creative activities, co-working, co-production and conferencing. It is also a rental space for interest clubs, cafes and others related to or caring for innovation, business, technology, green thinking, design, fashion, art, education, creativity, recreation, local traditions as well as celebration of life.

## Period

Implemented in spring of 2019, afterwards handed over to the owners of the Green Villa block to ensure a 4 season garden with full access for Sigulda residents and guests.

## Artists involved

The author and implementer of the project idea is Latvian designer Nora Gavare. The project is her master's thesis at the Latvian Academy of Arts and has received the Universal Design Expert Award at the international exhibition and competition "Universal Design Competition 2020" organised by the Munich Institute of Universal Design.

Her motivation to develop the garden comes from the fact that she was an «Erasmus» student studying urban planning and development at Hong Kong when she acquired firsthand experience of the problems of overpopulation, the expansion of urban environments at the expense of nature territories and the rapid increase in the demand for food – issues that, while still foreign to the Latvian community, are inevitable in the context of the coming climate crisis. Simultaneously, Latvia has seen an increase in demand for healthy, locally grown non-packaged food. «People in the cities want to know the origin, quality and processing of their food but the only way to be completely sure about its quality and «transparency» is to grow and prepare it ourselves. But do we have the necessary knowledge to grow tomatoes, for example? Have we distanced ourselves from such natural processes? What would it be like if we created a place where we could learn about, share and experience these things?» says the project's author.

## Community involved

Pensioners Society of Sigulda, the Organisation for Disabled Youths «Cerību spārni», the Art School of Sigulda and the students of Sigulda State Gymnasium, as well as local city residents and guests.

## Project idea / goals

The key idea is community participation and cooperation. It is a social, universal and experiential design project for society, where the garden is not just a place for growing vegetables, but a place to create an understanding of synergy between man, nature and time. The main project goal is to bring Sigulda residents together and develop urban gardening experience. By sharing knowledge and gardening experience it is believed that also understanding of the origin of food is increased, as well as the movement of a healthy and sustainable lifestyle promoted.



## Project description

The community garden is adapted to the needs of children, senior citizens and handicapped persons by designing the flower beds and seating spaces in the garden at different heights, thereby ensuring that they are accessible to everyone. The garden also features a greenhouse that is wheelchair accessible. Project seeks to develop urban gardening and actualizes the importance of healthy and sustainable lifestyles by promoting knowledge necessary to grow food, and serves as both - a meeting place and a bridge connecting different societal groups. Signs expressing the thoughts and needs of the plants growing here, are placed all around the garden, suggesting specific behaviours and actions in order to reduce confusion in its visitors and thus inviting them to participate in new, game-like experiences offering both knowledge and exploration, as well as further responsibility for the garden. Since there were regular visitors at events and gardening activity, it is believed that certain gardening experience was provided, as well as understanding of the origin of food is increased and a more sustainable lifestyle is promoted.

## Evaluation

The chance to observe seasons' changes, the sense of co-creation, as well as the variety of experience one can give and get at the community garden is what makes it interesting and meaningful to the local community.

Since Sigulda had never encountered a project seeking to implement openness and a free access model before, the community garden simultaneously tested whether the locals like to get involved and whether they have the capacity to share and work for the greater good of the community.

Project was introduced by several well attended creative workshops and other educational public activities explaining the importance of sustainable living. It provoked a positive response from the residents of Sigulda during the spring and was frequently attended by the local community during summer and autumn when it was handed over to the Green Villa to continue activities and remain open to residents and guests of Sigulda all year round. The idea of having a community garden spread around and in 2021 was about to come to life in several other cities of Latvia.

# END OF THE WORLD AND OTHER NONSENSE

## PASAULES GALS UN CITAS BLĒŅAS



<http://kristaburane.com/#pasaules-gals-un-citas-blenas-end-of-the-world-and-other-nonsense-2021>

### Place

The premiere took place in an empty school building in Valmiera city. However fantasy scenarios about the world's destruction and salvation were elaborated in a series of earlier workshops with school children from Cēsis.

### Period

The work premiered in Valmiera Summer Theatre Festival 2021, but was elaborated in various directions several months prior to the event, e.g. workshops with school kids – 1 week, creative fantasy scenario writing – 2 weeks, voice recordings of the main characters – 2 weeks, staging – 3 weeks.

### Artists involved

Idea, director, dramaturgy: Krista Burāne

Set designer: Pamela Butāne

Sound director: Emīls Zilberts and Mārtiņš Meiers

Producer: Ieva Briede

Actors: Mārtiņš Meiers and Jānis Kronis



## Community involved

Creative texts, fantasy scenarios and various voices of characters were provided by:

Pupils of the Cēsis New School - Ernests Purs, Anna Loze, Katrīna Kalniņa, Sebastians Janaus, Elza Māsēna, Emīls Ķirsis;

Pupils of Draudzīgais Aicinājums Cēsis State Grammar School Roberts Zimelis, Jānis Pomaskovs, Alise Medne, Martins Kristofers Audicks, Asnate Ivanova, Stella Herbstā, Gusts Kristaps Bernavs, Kārlis Linards Veitners, Katrīna Eliza Krišfelde, Una Bukša, Kristers Apinis, Paula Sietiņšone;

Pupils of Valmiera Viesturs Secondary school - Aleksandrs Alekssis Tuņķelis, Rūdolfs Segliņš, Jurgis Segliņš, Anna Segliņa.

## Project idea / goals

This participatory audio performance by Krista Burāne explores the relationship between man and nature. It contains 20 different scenarios created together with children and young people aged 10-16. After a series of workshops, the pupils of two schools in Cēsis, Latvia have elaborated fantasy scenarios about the destruction and saving of the world.

## Project description

The performance takes place in an empty school, proposing 5 different routes where viewers can go in pairs. These routes are created based on the possibilities of the premises of the particular school and allow visiting classrooms, library, gym, wardrobe, canteen, etc. while listening to the stories written and spoken by children and looking for the tools to save the world. In the last act of the performance the audience is invited to work in pairs to create an installation of the World Rescue Tools.

## Evaluation

Despite the Covid sensitive situation, this site specific theatre performance was played 9 times and managed to attract several hundreds of participants during the Valmiera Summer Theatre Festival 2021.

All kinds of participatory activities were involved – school children creating world's destruction and saving scenarios that formed a great part of the script as well as several hundreds of attendees who became actively involved and had lot's of fun by following the guiding routes through school building and thus deciding his or hers own scenario for the end of the world and it's salvation.

# PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME "TOGETHER"

## PUBLISKĀS MĀKSLAS PROGRAMMA "KOPĀ"



Daugavpils



Liepāja



Rīga



Valmiera

<https://lcca.lv/lv/publiskas-makslas-programma-kopa/>

### Place

Latvia's capital city Riga and five other cities around Latvia - Daugavpils, Liepāja, Cēsis, Madona and Valmiera.

### Period

Overall project period was from August to December 2020. The "Parade of Objects" by the public art programme KOPĀ was held from November 2020 till spring 2021.

## Artists involved

Several individual artists, as well as artist and architect groups were involved to design the objects in public space in 6 cities around Latvia. 5 urban art projects were developed in capital city Riga:

- "Metamorphoses" by Krista and Reinis Dzudzilo in the Opera Square in Riga with original, 157-year-old sculptural details of the Opera House facade;
- a socially critical sculpture by Ance Vilnīte "The Invisible" serves as a commentary on disability and the everyday life of people with reduced mobility in the city and can be found in Riga's Vidzeme Market;
- "Animals Don't Forget!" by Aija Baumanė-Lice - play objects around the former children's library "Zvirbulis" in the Youth Garden of Rīga's neighbourhood Āgenskalns;
- "Blue Fog Wall" by Anna Līva Traumanė and Harijs Vucens in Anniņmuižas Park, Riga suburb Imanta;
- "Your fatigue is not your fault" - a project created by artist Miķelis Mūrnieks and poet Henrik Elias Zēgner inhabits 10 different neighbourhoods of Riga, inviting residents to sit on colourful benches with poetic elements;

5 other objects were developed and placed in Cēsis, Valmiera, Madona, Daugavpils and Liepāja:

- "RUCKA Stop" by Nomad Architects - swings and related seating elements in the park of Rucka Manor, Cesis;
- "VA (Various Artists)" by Zahar ZE, Nameda Zemīte and Alvis Berngards created a legal graffiti wall with place-marking potential in Vienības Square, Valmiera;
- "Robot-boy Indriķis XIII" by the artists' association GolfClayderman in Madona - a skating object with the figure of the hero of the Latvian animated film "Fantadrom" in the centre (the author of the image is the artist Aivars Rušmanis);
- Augmented reality sculpture by Gints Gabrāns "Round Horizon Line. Rothko Elevator". The virtual sculpture can be seen all over Daugavpils with the augmented reality application SAN (the application can be downloaded on SAN website [san.lv](http://san.lv), as well as App Store, Google Play). Spirals with motifs of Rothko's paintings generated by artificial intelligence wind around the central axis (Rothko's cosmic elevator) in a 200 m radius around the Mark Rothko Art Centre. A further spiral with a radius of 10 km encircles the entire city, and the sculpture has a total height of 25 km;

- On the beach of Liepāja, the "Wind Pavilion" by Ēriks Božs invites to immerse oneself in reflections on wind, lee and draught. The old window frames and doors used in the construction of this vernacular architectural object are a reminder of the city's cultural heritage and the unique wooden architecture and handwork.

### Community involved

Community organisations and representatives were involved in several meetups with project curators in 6 cities around Latvia to design a cooperation model to sustain the exhibition of public art objects and draft the public call for artists. 10 projects were selected through a public call for proposals. Public voting was cast on popular news platforms to attract attention to the "Parade of Objects" and prize the artists.

### Project idea / goals

The public art programme TOGETHER was created to support visual artists to overcome the crisis caused by Covid-19, while improving the quality of the urban environment and driving attention to issues important to the particular place, neighbourhood or broader community.

### Project description

The public art programme TOGETHER was created as a support mechanism for visual artists in Latvia to overcome the crisis caused by Covid-19, while improving the quality of the urban environment. 10 new urban objects in Riga and regional cities were selected through a public call for proposals and subsequently developed. From August to December 2020, the programme was implemented by the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art and program curator Līga Lindenbauma as a delegation of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia in the field of visual arts. Starting from November 2020, Riga and 5 other cities in Latvia run the "Parade of Objects". All 10 objects were on show until spring 2021, but many lasted longer. This was the first national community art initiative for visual artists of this scale. The funding allocated for the implementation of the entire programme comprised EUR 150 000.

## PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME "TOGETHER"

41 project applications were submitted for the jury's evaluation in a publicly announced call for proposals. The projects were evaluated by a jury of seven: Selga Laizāne (Deputy State Secretary for the Centenary of Latvia, Ministry of Culture), Guntars Ruskuls (Head of the Strategic Management Department, Riga City Council, Department of Urban Development), Daina Auziņa (Head of the Latvian Visual Art Department, Latvian National Museum of Art), Solvita Krese (Director, Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art), Santa Hirša (Art Critic), Krišs Salmanis (Artist), Evelīna Ozola (Architect, Urban Planner, Director, Fold Platform).

Graphic design of the programme by Klāvs Priedītis, Nameda Zemīte.

Publicity of the programme: Paula Jansone (LCCA) and Gundega Turnele (LCCA).

Cooperation partners: Latvian news media lsm.lv, Liepāja Municipality, Madona Municipality, Valmiera Municipality, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Latvian National Opera and Ballet, Rucka Art Residency Centre, Riga Central Market, Association of People with Disabilities and their Friends "Apeirons", Alliance of Riga Neighbourhoods, Agenskalns Society, Anniņuiža Society "Riga Annenhof", Society "Brasa", Riga Darziņi Residents' Society, Society "Kundziņsala", Sarkandaugava Development Society, Trīsciems Society, SIA SAN.

## Evaluation

Art objects became not only elements for active use, like swings, benches, skate ramps, but also triggers for artistic interaction like the "Rothko Elevator", graffiti wall in Valmiera, etc. Moreover some objects like swings in Rucka Manor park served to change the social climate and people routines in the area. Public art objects on display in various places around Riga and Latvia encouraged small journeys, too. Using the participatory approach to develop public space was very challenging and time consuming, required lots of discussions, but gave unexpected results and public appreciation, too. Sustainable architecture and circular economy principles were applied to all multifunctional objects. This was the first collaboration of its kind to contribute to the open, inclusive public space via sustainable use of public funding.



# TERRACOTTA SCULPTURES OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

JAANI KIRIKU TERRAKOTA SKULPTUURID –  
JUHANI JAEGERILT KÜSI



 <https://www.sibulatee.ee/en/members/gallery-voronja/>

## Place

Peipsiveere Summer Gallery, Tartu apartment exhibitions in winter season and additional occasional events and art programmes (for example artists' home exhibitions Provisions, where exhibitions were opened in artists' birthplaces all over Estonia). In 2020 the permanent year-around art gallery and event place was opened in Tartu.



### Period

Peipsiveere Summer Gallery was opened in 2014, Tartu apartment exhibitions were organised in winters between 2017 and 2020. Artists' home exhibitions under Provisions programme were organised in 2018, as a sub-programme to centenary of the Republic of Estonia.

### Artists involved

The main organisers of the events and art programmes of Voronja Art Gallery are Raul Oreshkin and Kaili Kask. They curate exhibitions and art programmes in cooperation with visual artists and different partners. Home exhibitions were organised in different homes – private houses or apartments, and adapted to the style of the family life. For example, one artist designed 12 chairs and therefore, one of the home exhibitions presented these chairs. During the exhibitions, the works of art became a natural part of the apartment, even the larger-than-usual format visual artworks fitted into the apartments and led to many art purchases. When art is exhibited at home, the buyer gets a better idea that the art is suitable for home walls.

The apartment exhibitions were open for a limited time - mainly in the evenings and on weekends, and nevertheless their attendance was about 300 people per exhibition. This number is the same as a regular gallery month visit.

The number of visitors to the Voronja Summer Art Gallery was 1,200 in the first year and 7,000 in the last summer exhibition in 2020.

### Community involved

In the case of the summer exhibitions of Voronja Art Gallery, the target group includes both people interested in art and tourists visiting the Peipsiveere area. In the case of the apartment exhibitions, the community of visitors was unusually wide - on the one hand, the artist's acquaintances and friends, the apartment owner's friends and neighbours and relatives, as well as friends of the Voronja Gallery. The community impact of the apartment exhibitions was greater than expected. Each exhibition had its own audience, which brought together people living in the neighbourhood who do not usually go to exhibitions or communicate with each other. These exhibitions also satisfied people's curiosity, as visitors could see how people live in their homes. There were also cases, where families who had only recently moved to Estonia turned to the gallery owners. They had no local contacts and wanted to make new friends through opening their homes for exhibitions.

## TERRACOTTA SCULPTURES OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

For the first season, three home exhibitions were planned, but in reality this format became so popular that nine home exhibitions were made. This result is unusual, because Estonians are usually considered closed and restrained, but contrary to expectations, many families wanted to open their homes and run art exhibitions. To date, more than 20 exhibitions have taken place.

### Project idea / goals

The idea for the Voronja Art Gallery started in 2013. It was the time when galleries in Tartu were closed, attendance at art exhibitions was low and Raul Oreshkin was seeking possibilities to support the situation of artists. At the same time, the number of visitors to Estonian summer theatres was very high - people were ready to travel far from the city to watch performances. Raul copied the phenomenon of Summer Theatre and used it in the field of visual art. Voronja Art Gallery was among the first art projects, inspired by this idea, and many new exhibition venues have later been opened in rural areas. Many new galleries have later appeared in Tartu as well. All the art projects initiated by Voronja Art Gallery were designed to support the needs of artists and increase the visibility of art, on the one hand, and on the other, to give art lovers' communities different possibilities to enjoy and purchase artworks.

### Project description

The Voronja Summer Gallery is actually an old small residential building, the boat shed of which has been redesigned into an art hall. Over time, art has expanded to the attic, garden and other open spaces, even to an old sauna. The exhibitions are only open during the summer, when the gallerists are present, receiving and interacting with visitors and offering coffee and light food. Every summer there is a different exhibition, usually curated by a well-known artist. For example, the gallery's first exhibition was dedicated to the punk. This was extraordinary because the local village is known as an old believers village, inhabited mainly by old Russian-speaking people. Punk was completely opposite in this environment. However, the gallerists were able to create a very good harmony between the exhibition, the tourists visiting the gallery and the locals. Over time, the community has become more involved and the whole village and region has become more attractive to domestic and foreign tourists. The community is involved so that they can sell their own products in the gallery or at their homes to tourists coming to the area. Many new accommodation, boat rental or catering places have appeared in the village. The activities of the gallery have had the greatest impact on the development of the tourism sector.

The apartment exhibitions were collaborative projects between the gallery, the apartment owners and the artist. Each exhibition was different, creating a completely different environment and attracting various visitors. There were science-focused projects, design or contemporary art projects, and art exhibitions for younger or older generations. In the case of these exhibitions, new environments emerged, where homeowners were hosts and visitors to the exhibition were like family guests, and as a result, mutual communication took place more actively than during a traditional exhibition.

### Evaluation

The first goal - to popularise the field of art, has been fulfilled and exceeded. The goal was to show art, but the idea has developed into an art sale - in 2020, gallerists opened a new art gallery in Tartu, which operates all year round. If in the beginning art sales was more of a hobby, now it has become a family business. Sales of gallery's own products have been added – cafe and waffles, accommodation services and art sales. Today, the goal is to offer a gallery experience, but the visitors can also buy additional services or products.

Throughout these years, the Voronja Art Gallery has developed a large audience on the web and social media. If the original aim was to be visible in social media channels and offer gallery visitors opportunities to share their visiting emotions on social media. Last year the gallery reached the point where the mass of users is so large that they can no longer control what information about the gallery goes out.

The main unexpected impact has been the created family business and jobs to family members. However, it can also be a kind of trap as the part of the Voronja gallery visiting experience is visiting Kaili and Raul. The concept of the host-service must change.

The impact on developing the local business ecosystem has been huge. Many young people have bought summer houses in the village, and they are mostly art-friendly people - filmmakers, stained glass artists, musicians, artists. The village is rejuvenating. Voronja's activities have also created sales outlets for artists. The number of visitors and tourists has grown enormously.

Additionally, there have been changes in the minds of artists. Artists are more willing to use galleries for advertising and sales and they are much more ready to sell copies of their artworks at lower price. Thus the artworks are more affordable for the buyers. Buying art is not elitist, it can be bought for cheap money and it grows a new art audience. At first you buy a sticker, then a sketch and then a copy, and then an expensive original - if you already earn more.

# INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION „SECRET DOUBLE“



Exhibition in USA



Exhibition in Cēsis



Exhibition in Tartu.



Exhibition in Rīga

 <https://lasells.oregonstate.edu/exhibit/my-secret-double-international-exhibition>

## Period

First exhibition was opened in Latvia in Spring 2018, exhibitions were exhibited in Estonia in Fall 2019 and Oregon, USA in 2020

## Artists involved

The exhibition was organised in cooperation with the following organisations:

- Partneri, Latvia
- Imago Dei, Latvia
- ARTEST+, Estonia
- Bridgebuilders International, USA

## Community involved

The exhibition involved artists from Estonia, Latvia and neighbouring countries with guest artists from the USA. The artists were invited to create an artwork based on this topic of depression. As during the exhibitions different kind of workshops and seminars were held, the important communities targeted through the project were exhibition visitors and participants of the side events. The exhibition was first opened at the Congress Hall in Riga and from there it travelled to different cities in Latvia being exhibited in cultural houses and churches. In Estonia it was first opened in one of the biggest churches in Tallinn and later on in Tartu Salem Church. In the USA it was exhibited in the Giustina Gallery at the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis.

The places were chosen to get the exhibitions as much public attention as possible.

## Project idea / goals

To gather the exhibition artworks artists were invited to participate in the exhibition. A choice of artworks was made by judges from each partner organisation. However, in each country, the exhibition was different, featuring a higher number of local artists.

The aim of the art project was to turn attention to the topic of depression. It is clear that depression is a serious problem in all countries, and there are lots of stereotypes about this illness. The exhibition aimed to raise an awareness to this serious illness that takes away many lives, captivates the freedom of the free will, takes away happiness, hope and love. The organisers started this exhibition with a vision that artists had a special capacity to understand the locked away parts of our being that are too deep for words. Artists usually can communicate ideas, feelings and pain without words. Linked with profound verbal thoughts, the power of that which is created is multiplied.

The exhibitions showed that artists used the chance to offer their art for the purpose of helping others and providing hope. Artists understood the seriousness of the issue and invited the exhibition visitors to think, to analyse, to open up, and to seek help if needed and offer help if able.

During the exhibitions of Secret Double, visitors had the opportunity to attend lectures and therapy seminars, and original music performances. Professional information and information about how to recognize depression in people that are around us was provided, as well as depression related articles, and contact information on where to seek help.

## Community involved

There were 20-39 artists participating in different countries with their artworks. In Latvia and Estonia all together 6 exhibitions were held in different cities with more than 10 500 visitors coming to the exhibition and side events. During each exhibition seminars and round-table discussions were held on the topic of depression by psychologists, pastors and therapists. Some of the discussions were targeted at the depression of creative people with an aim to help them to understand the disease and instructions on how to find help. Some of the meetings gathered Christian people and helped them to openly talk about the problems of mental health, diseases, unbalanced life or loneliness.

## Evaluation

The aim of the project - to raise awareness to the topic of depression was achieved. The number of visitors of exhibitions and events exceeded expectations and general feedback was very positive. This exhibition did not have many outcomes in web for online recordings. However, the ones that have been open to reviewing have been extremely popular.



# "THE KNITTERS` CLUBS" – THE WORLD'S LARGEST EXHIBITION OF MUHU SOCKS.



<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=eestirahvamuuseum&set=a.10159125528642922>

<https://www.erm.ee/en/news/worlds-biggest-exhibition-muhu-sockings>

## Period

Exhibition of Muhu socks "The Knitters' Club" was the winner of 2019 "My Exhibition" competition and was opened from August 2020 to January 2021. In the Participation Hall of the Estonian National Museum people, civic associations and organisations who do not engage in museum work or curating exhibitions on a daily basis are allowed to put together their own exhibition if became winners of the contest "Make your own exhibition".

## "THE KNITTERS' CLUBS" – THE WORLD'S LARGEST EXHIBITION OF MUHU SOCKS

The participation hall offers an opportunity to make an exhibition for everyone who wants to share their interests and important topics with others in the form of an exhibition. The hall also provides an opportunity to develop cooperation with students and teachers and to carry out research and exhibition projects. The exhibitions opening in the participation hall can be divided into three:

- 1) Winner of the design competition "My Exhibition»
- 2) Exhibition to be completed as a result of school students' research
- 3) An exhibition on an important and eloquent topic in society

### Artists involved

The participants were enthusiasts, volunteers, from several countries - also good knitting experts from Estonia, non-professionals.

### Community involved

Craft and learning enthusiastic exhibition visitors, groups of school students, as well as people who participated in online events and online consultations online.

### Project idea /goals

The idea is to introduce this specific cultural heritage to adults and children and to do so in an inclusive way.

The idea of the exhibition is based on the old Muhu tradition. According to this, the women of Muhu island came together in one family and spent dark time knitting and talking together. This exhibition presents Muhu socks, which have been created in Knitters' Clubs around the world over the past two years. At the exhibition one can see both various old Muhu socks from different Estonian museums along with the Muhu socks made in knitters' clubs. These are masterpieces of knitting, brightly colored, especially dense, with their own set patterns.

### Project description

People from very different countries participated in knitters' clubs all over the world, and among them were school groups, young people, the elderly, Estonians abroad and others. The workshops of museum educators held within the framework of the exhibition attracted numerous people and school children.

## "THE KNITTERS' CLUBS" – THE WORLD'S LARGEST EXHIBITION OF MUHU SOCKS

On Saturdays, people went to the exhibition showroom for demonstration and on-site consultations and curatorial tours, the last were very popular. Entrepreneurs supported the exhibition. The publishers contributed to the completion of the exhibition catalogue. Folklorists and semioticians from the academic sphere were involved. Finally, the exhibition also developed cultural diplomacy, as several people in the Estonian diaspora participated and shared their knitwear as introducers of Estonian culture.

### Evaluation

The planned goals were achieved because the dissemination of information and the coverage of the exhibition was unexpectedly wide - more than 80 people sent their stockings to the exhibition. The exhibition showed that in addition to knitting, people also became interested in ethno-music, the heritage of the Muhu island and parishes, as well as the interest in publications and publications related to the topic. For general education schools, the project set a good example for handicraft teachers in developing methods of non-formal learning.

The pride of the community as a whole has risen, as the physical materialised examples of the craft industry, which was considered too "traditional" in the form of socks and stockings as well as prints, gave a signal that handicrafts can be very modern, colourful, fashionable and feminine. The men's interest in the exhibition has also been great and supportive. The introduction of Muhu as one of the most unique regions of Estonia to the wider world clearly showed a sign of activation.

# BEYOND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

## BORTOM DE BLÅ BERGEN



<https://utveckling.regionorebrolan.se/sv/kultur-och-civilsamhalle/kulturverksamheter-och-projekt/bortom-de-bla-bergen-konstpedagogik/>

## Place

Part of the title, "The blue mountains", refers to Kilsbergen, that has been given this name in popular speech because of the blueish glow which appears on the mountains under certain lighting conditions. But also referring to a residual product from the local ironworks, the blue-green flagstone. In this part of Sweden, Bergslagen, mining industry and ironworks have existed since mediaeval times and have strongly influenced the conditions set for man and environment.

The project was implemented at three locations in the three municipalities of Kumla, Degerfors and Lindesberg, all expressing a willingness to participate. This gave the project a broad geographical scope in the region, but also added different conditions for the artist to work with, conditions particular for each location. All three locations were small communities where long distances separated children and young people from the scenes of contemporary art.



## Period

The project was planned to end during the spring of 2020, but due to the covid pandemic this was delayed until the fall of 2020. The idea of working with art pedagogical development was in the action plan (2017-2019) that Region Örebro län submitted in regard to art and form. This regional commission was assigned to Konstfrämjandet Bergslagen and their work started in September of 2017. Art pedagogy permeated the project with the aim to create new and long-term structures for art pedagogical activity in the whole of Örebro län.

## Artists involved

Beyond the blue mountains is a 3-year participatory based pilot project in which Region Örebro län is project owner. The project is run by Konstfrämjandet Bergslagen in cooperation with the municipalities of Kumla, Degerfors and Lindesberg.

During the three years, artists Jelena Rundqvist, Hanna Wildow and the artduo Rören/Johannessen (Erik Rören and Signe Johannessen) have all worked within the project.

## Community involved

Children and youngsters in public school.

## Project description

Year 1 Hällabrottet, Kumla, Jag är Stenart

As a community, Hällabrottet has developed around a stone industry and a stonemason museum has been established. As a result of an open call, artist Jelena Rundqvist was picked for the project. Rundqvist worked together with Year 3 pupils from the elementary school Tallängen. Together they created Jag är Stenart, worked with the stone as a material, story-teller and inspirator and created Jag är Stenart. During Rundqvist's work with the pupils an artistic shape was formed, making a lasting impression on the site. In the form of a sculptural and interactive installation, consisting of seating furniture in stone, the children become involved in shaping their own local environment. Another project named Stenarna talar was later created, also situated in Hällabrottet, a follow-up to Jelena Rundqvist's project. In this project the stone was used as a pedagogue. An additional artist/potter was involved, together with Naturskolan, the recurring Stone Week with Hembygdsföreningen and Örebro konsthall. The pupils from Jag är Stenart were now in Year 6 and introduced the younger pupils to the Project.

The starting point for year 2 was Gränseskogen, one of the nature reserves in the municipality. The area has through history been difficult to access and therefore the trees of its fir forest have been left alone, untouched and old. 35 kilometres from Gränseskogen lies Storå skolan in Storå, Lindesberg municipality. Storå, with a population of approximately 2000 inhabitants, was in 2018 the first stop for many newly arrived refugees, approximately 900 people at the time of the project. Due to this, there were both pupils new to Storå and pupils that had lived in Storå their entire lives, that began Year 7 in secondary school. Partly because of this composition, the 40 pupils from this grade were chosen to work with the artist picked for the project after the open call, Hanna Wildow. Together they researched Gränseskogen, both in the forest and in Hanna's project studio in Storå. The word, the breath, the forest, the colour blue together with the demarcations set by history and society were interpreted during the second year of the projects, under the name of "Tag mitt andetag iväg".

This year, 3, the project was located at Sveafallens nature reserve, an area formed at the time of the retreating continental glacier. A majestic landscape with glacial potholes and steep rock walls. A source of fables and folklore, but also scientific "truths". This aspect was also used by the artistic duo Rören/Johannessen, who created a workshop where the pupils drew with posca pencils on a magnified map of the area, in which signs for real and magical objects were drawn out. As a result of the covid pandemic, we had to reshape the project and the artists presented an alternative ending in the form of a hike in the nature reserve. Instead of more workshops and one big communal end meeting, every class and their pedagogues received a video message from the artists. They were told that the artists were stuck in their respective domicile and that the pupils had to finish Den tredje Sanningen on their own. Using a hand printed map, they were to search and find three magical eggs and a holder for these. Guided by the stories and drawn signs by the children, the artist had transformed the existing road tunnel to a magic portal leading to another dimension, a portal that many of the children had talked about. When the pupils had walked through the tunnel, they had found Den tredje Sanningen about Sveafallen, en sanning or truth, only possible to find during this year of covid. All Year 3 pupils from five schools participated during the project's last year. The schools were : Bruksskolan, Åtorpsskolan, Strömtorpsskolan, Svartå skola, Parksskolan and the special school. During year 3 less workshops were carried out, but more pupils were reached. This year was affected by the covid pandemic, mainly because the artist's presence in Degerfors was limited.



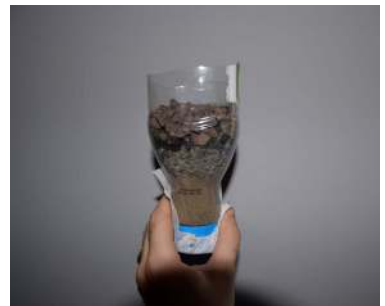
## Evaluation

Bortom de blå bergen is a project that took a different shape during the three years of activity. Every year has consisted of new artist/artists, new pupils and a new location. As a result, the project has tested different forms of art pedagogical methods, which has been of the project's purposes. The project has reached children who are separated from contemporary art by long physical distances. The project will also live on in the form of a methodological manual. There are also effects to witness in real time as a result of the project. It has been shown that responsiveness and respect between the participants is a recipe for success. A good cooperation with the municipality is also important and to offer something of value to all parties. It is important to highlight the driving force expressed by the artist and school pedagogue. Through feedback from participating pedagogues, the project shows that the meeting between pupils and artists help the pupils to grow. Especially pupils who are weak in theoretical subjects grow in work that is more "hands on". Not only affecting work relating to art pedagogy but also other subjects. It is another way to obtain knowledge.

Some interviews have been performed, showing that art pedagogical exercises and cooperation within the project contributed to a deeper contact between the pupils in one class. To walk out of the classroom and be situated in a new context makes it easier to get to know your classmates. You feel involved in the local environment. It makes a big difference to be able to move in nature in a different way. It gives a sense of freedom.

# THE POST APP-APOCALYPTIC CRAFT COLLECTIVE BABELS REHA

DET POSTAPOKALYPTISKA HANTVERKS  
KOLLEKTIVET BABELS REHAB



<http://nina.societe.se/det-postapokalyptiska-hantverkskollektivet-babels-rehab-the-post-apocalyptic-crafts-collective-babels-rehab/>

## Place

The participant-based work has been performed in several places in Sweden and Norway at both art institutions, festivals and in the public space within a community. The place is of less importance, it is the meeting between participants and the process that forms the basis in whatever place it is performed.

## Period

This is an ongoing project as part of Nina Jensen's artistic practice, started in 2014.

## Artists involved

Nina Jensen.

## Community involved

Participants in the events have been seniors, adults, teenagers and children. Jensen estimates that about 2,000 have participated in one of these meetings, The Post-Apocalyptic Craft Collective Babels Rehab.

## Project idea / goals

The Post-Apocalyptic Crafts Collective Babels Rehab takes place in the meeting between the participants and Jensen, where they become a fictional collective that lives in a world after the disaster. In this world, participants have an opportunity to talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the old world. What happens when you start over?

## Project description

Together as a group you share your thoughts, ideas and solve the answers to questions such as how should we live, what should we play with, what symbols do we have in this new world? The answers are created in the rubble of the civilization that existed. This can be natural materials available on site or recycled materials. The collective shares their knowledge and creates new forms of survival based on the rituals of craft. It is the participants who produce whereas Jensen can play the role of a supervisor but also a more active participant.

## Evaluation

The aim of the workshop is not an object or answer to world problems, artistic process. It is about having a discussion about what we want for society. To dare to test artistically craft and for Jensen to convey what she herself loves with the artistic work – a way to create meaning in what we see around, in us and in the work we perform but that everyone should have a chance to find their motivation and a

Nina Jensen's reflection is that the project gives her both reason and courage to talk about big questions and test out for her completely new methods and techniques. To also be able to do it together with thousands of people with their own experiences and reflections is incredibly instructive.

# FRAGILE AND ENDURING

## ÖM.TÅLIG



[https://www-miun-se.translate.goog/Forskning/forskargrupper/fgv/nyhetsarkiv/2020-9/dansprojektet-om-talig-om-manlighet--i-svt-vasternorrland/?\\_x\\_tr\\_sl=sv&\\_x\\_tr\\_tl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_hl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_pto=sc](https://www-miun-se.translate.goog/Forskning/forskargrupper/fgv/nyhetsarkiv/2020-9/dansprojektet-om-talig-om-manlighet--i-svt-vasternorrland/?_x_tr_sl=sv&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=sc)

## Place

Kramfors is a small, rural and working-class municipality. This in particular was important for the project when choosing Kramfors, as the idea behind Öm.tålig was to search for – Who is the man from the rural north? Another underlying factor contributing to the project being situated in Kramfors municipality, was that every year the regional institutions work and cooperate especially close together with one out of seven municipalities in the region of Västernorrland. During 2020, Norrdans choose to work together with Kramfors municipality in a participatory-based project, the first project of this kind for Norrdans.

## Period

Norrdans initiated the project, which went on during 2020, under the leadership of dance manager Martin Forsberg. It was Norrdans's first community project and choreographer Maria Ulriksson was asked to formulate an idea. She built her idea around an examination of masculinity norms in rural and sparsely populated areas of Northern Sweden. For this purpose she engaged an intergenerational group and continued to choreograph a dance together with this group. Norrdans cooperated with the small municipality of Kramfors and together during the fall, they were to examine the question "Who is the man from the rural north?"

## Artists involved

Öm.tålig is a project produced by Norrdans from the city of Härnösand. Norrdans is a part of Performing Arts Västernorrland, a regional and cultural institution owned by Landstinget Västernorrland and Sundsvall municipality. Participants in the project are dance consultant Annika Högberg from Norrdans acting as project manager, choreographer Maria Ulriksson, composer Anna-Sóley Tryggvadóttir and lighting designer Erik Nordlander.

## Community involved

There were 8 men, age 21-75 years old, participating in the project, but a few dropped out during the process. Some had experience relating to dance and theatre, while others had no experience at all. Norrdans came in contact with the participants through local dance pedagogues, social media and an ad in Kramforsbladet, a local newspaper. Annika Högberg was deeply involved in the recruitment process and together with Maria Ulriksson they arranged a meeting with the men already in the spring. Continuous repetitions/meetings followed during the fall.

Participants: Thomas Larsson, Yemel Aisa, Roger Kallin, Robert Sandström, Jesper Nordin, Carl- Ruben Johnsson, Erik O. Sjödin, Roger Andersson.

## Project idea / goals

The project was based on choreographer Maria Ulriksson's idea of guiding a group of men in order to help them use dancing as a tool in examining themselves as men of the north. In the end, the process would lead to a performance where the men participated as dancers. The performance was realised during 2020.

## Project description

Norrdans searched for participants during the spring. At the same time, a first information meeting and a weekend of workshops was carried out. During the summer, Maria interviewed the men who participated in order to get a broader picture of their personalities and history. In late summer, another weekend-workshop was arranged as a kick-off. During the fall, meetings became more frequent and took the form of repetitions in preparation for the premiere and the following two performances.

A core part of the project were the meetings between choreographer Maria Ulriksson and the men. Through these meetings, combined with movements created together, they examined the project's main question, but also found the way in which the performance would form.

The meeting process started carefully, in order to build trust and a sense of group belonging, together with playfulness and movement exercises.

Trust in the leader and the project was clear early on, as well as a the courage among the participants. A great deal of courage is needed to express yourself using movement, without any prior experience of dancing. To others, the courage may be needed to rid themselves of presuppositions that form their idea of what dancing is. During the workshops early on in the project, the men formed their own movements, which became a part of the whole journey. It was a matter of peeling of and opening up. At the end of the project, more was demanded of the participants. The performance required them to put in more of their time, concentration, affection and work. A dedication they were to shoulder with the greatest passion and gravity.

Anna-Sóley Tryggvadóttir, composer and sound designer, participated in the project. Through meetings with Ulriksson and the participants, she began her work during the fall. In dialogue with them, she created a piece that set their movements to music. Finally light entered the process and lighting for the performance was developed together with lighting designer Erik Nordlander. This was another layer added to the performance, that later was performed at three locations in Västernorrland, with the premiere in Kramfors. The performance was described as "a both fragile and powerful performance about and by a group of men. Digging deep under the surface of what it means to be a man and to live in the rural north."

## Evaluation

From Norrdans's point of view the process have been one of inclusion, in which the participants have felt a sense of involvement every step of the way. The fact that "one has spoken the same language" as well as the courage and openness, played key roles in the process. The meetings between participants and artists, where both sides have been keen to listen to each other, have also played an important role.



A further dimension of this participatory project was the meeting between performance and audience. A new audience was reached at the same time as the regular visitor was offered something different and challenging. From the point of view of the participants, the process has been one of development at a personal level. Their relationship to music has changed. One part of the project's success is also clear, one has met the participants with professionalism and have given them a sense of significance. The communication has been performed in a clear way – everyone has been aware of what applies.

# MEET, FRET, BUMP, COME ACROSS, SLOUGH, SCOUT

## MÖTA NÖTA STÖTA / RÅKA ÖMSA SPEJA



 <http://www.kerstinlindstrom.se/MOTA-NOTA-STOTA>

## Place

Västerbotten län is the second largest region in the country, with its population concentrated in the coastal area. MÖTA NÖTA STÖTA was implemented inland and in the mountainous areas of Västerbotten, a sparsely populated region with a magnificent landscape and a closeness to nature. The long distances to smaller communities and cities makes services and culture less accessible, compared to densely populated regions in Sweden. The project was active during a time when many refugees came to Sweden. Big groups of the newly arrived refugees were placed in small communities across the country, including inland areas of the north.

## Period

The project was implemented during 2016-2018.

## Artists involved

The project was created and organised by five artists. They were all part of Fibre art Sweden. Fibre art Sweden is a network for contemporary textile art. The initiative came from Victoria Brännström. Her family originates from inland areas of Västerbotten, where the project was located. The other four participants in the project were Kerstin Lindström, Lotte Nilsson-Välimaa, Maria Sandstig and Hanna Streefkerk. This group of artists organised the project themselves, with financial support from Postkodlotteriet, Konstnärsnämnden, Kulturrådet, Storuman and Sorsele municipalities and the educational association BILDA.

## Community involved

The project visited five larger communities in Västerbotten – Stensele, Storuman, Tärnaby, Sorsele and Ammarnäs. Number of inhabitants in these communities ranged between 100-5900.

## Project idea / goals

The project's primary goal was to organise creative meetings, with the handicraft as a common language, in order to share stories, communicate and exchange knowledge. It centred around the location, the textile handicraft and people's experiences. The project also strived to shed light on the important cultural workers who are active in rural areas. These contacts were key figures for a successful project.

## Project description

The project went on three trips, two in 2016 and one in 2017. These laid the foundation for a book that was put together about the project. During the first trip in June of 2016, research for the continued work was done and collaborations with cultural practitioners and newly arrived refugees in the area were organised. Ideas and material were collected. On a story-telling evening, bread baking and a midnight sun walk were arranged. Before the second trip, a green crew shed was rebuilt to a mobile culture house/studio. During the third trip, the project spent more time than earlier at every location. The green wagon returned to Storuman, Tärnaby, Ammarnäs and Stensele. Different themes for every location were presented during the tour. Inside the wagon, the coffee pot was always brewing and every morning the project served a free breakfast. The public was invited to participate in different activities arranged in and around the wagon.

Some days the visitors were many, other days just a few came to visit. One example is the small village Ammarnäs with around 100 inhabitants, located close to the hiking trail Kungsleden. Hundreds of visitors came to the wagon during four days. The visitors consisted of Ammarnäs residents and mountain hikers from across Europe. To quote Kerstin Lindström: "When we opened the door and the visitors came, a swarm of interesting stories accompanied them."

## Evaluation

The project's primary goal was to organise creative meetings by being active at different locations. Researching the possibilities of materials and handicrafts, viewing these as bearers of stories, cultural archetypes, technical skills and messengers of knowledge. The green wagon provided the opportunity to seek up new places and send out invites to many meetings. These meetings involved both residents that had lived in the area for generations, as well as newly arrived refugees.

In cooperation with already existing cultural institutions at the different locations, the green wagon was active as an open space for communal creative work. The collaboration with cultural workers at the different locations was invaluable for a successful project. It was also important to revisit the different locations.

During the process, the artists developed a method that proved successful in all its simplicity. Every location and activity had their unique theme, expressed in the different arrangements. In the mornings, a free breakfast was served and there was an atmosphere of openness and interest in sharing experiences with one another. There was also room for spontaneous activities that arose in dialogue with the visitors.

For the artists that participated, the project has had an impact on their own artistry. The places and the interaction with different people made a strong impression. The area in which the project was situated is surrounded by majestic scenery and the artists listened to powerful stories from the inhabitants. The green wagon worked out perfectly, creating a concentrated, creative space without any disturbances. The Green wagon and its shifting content made up a communal artwork, a mobile sculpture.

## Contact information

The community art and participatory art best practice cases were collected by three founding members of the of the Baltic-Nordic Community Arts network, i.e. cases from Latvia were compiled by Culturelab (Ieva Hmielevska), cases from Sweden were compiled by Virserums Konsthall, Sweden (Carolina Jonsson), and Tartu Centre for Creative Industries, Estonia (Küllli Hansen).

Readers are welcome to contact the Baltic-Nordic Community Arts network and its members for collaboration projects and support to community art practices.

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