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Nº

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VERONIKA VALK

NOORE ARHITEKTI PREEMIA 2012

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YOUNG ARCHITECT PRIZE 2012

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Noore arhitekti preemia on Eesti Arhitektide Liidu (EAL) 2008. aastal loodud ning koos koostööpartnerite Heldur Meeritsa ja reisibürooga Go Travel väljaantav auhind. Auhinnaks on maailmareis 4500 euro väärtuses, samuti avaldatakse võitja loomingust kataloog.

Preemia on mõeldud kuni 40-aastasele Eestis elavale ja töötavale Eesti arhitektuuri arendanud või Eestile olulist tuntust toonud arhitektile, kelle loomingulised saavutused on leidnud laialdast tunnustust, olnud omal alal innovaatilised või kelle looming on oluliselt kaasa aidanud Eesti ja Eesti arhitektuuri tutvustamisele maailmas. Preemia žürii koosseis on vähemalt viieliikmeline.

Kuni 2012. aasta laureaadi väljakuulutamiseni anti preemiat välja igal aastal. Nüüd jagatakse preemiat üle aasta.

Noore arhitekti preemia 2012 võistlus kuulutati välja 27. novembril 2012. Kandideerisid Aet Ader, Kadri Klementi, Katrin Koov, Indrek Näkk, Toomas Paaver, Indrek Peil, Salto AB ja Veronika Valk. Žürii koosseisus olid arhitektuuriportaali ArchDaily asutaja ja peatoimetaja David Basulto, arhitekt Ülo Peil, arhitekt ja NAP 2011 laureaat Villem Tomiste ning ettevõtjad Heldur Meerits ja Aavo Kokk. Auhinnasaajaks valiti Veronika Valk. Eesti Vabariigi president hr Toomas Hendrik Ilves kuulutas laureaadi välja pidulikul auhinnatseremoonial 14. veebruaril 2013.

Kataloog on sarja varasematest väljaannetest oluliselt erinev, kuna tegu on Veronika Valgu 22. novembril 2013 kaitstud doktoritööga (RMIT University, School of Architecture and Design) pealkirjaga „Steadfast in Versatility: the substrate of a multi-modal practice", mille juhendajateks olid Richard Blythe ja Marcelo Stamm, ning mida on käesoleva kataloogi jaoks vähendatud ning kohandatud. Kataloog on välja antud doktoritöö vormistamise keeles – inglise keeles.

Kataloog on välja antud nii paberkandjal kui ka digitaalselt (e-raamatuna).

The "Young Architect Prize" was established by the Union of Estonian Architects (UEA) in 2008 and is awarded in co-operation with Heldur Meerits and the travel operator Go Travel. The prize is a trip around the world, valued at EUR 4500, plus the publication of a catalogue containing the winner's works.

The prize is awarded once a year to an architect under 40 living and working in Estonia, who has contributed to the development or reputation of Estonian architecture, whose work has been widely acclaimed, been innovative in its field or substantially contributed to the presentation of Estonia and Estonian architecture abroad. The jury consists of a minimum of five members.

Until the announcement of the winner for 2012, the award had been handed out on a yearly basis. The award is now handed out every other year.

Competition for the "Young Architect Prize 2012" was announced on 27th November 2012. The nominees were Aet Ader, Kadri Klementi, Katrin Koov, Indrek Näkk, Toomas Paaver, Indrek Peil, Salto AB and Veronika Valk. The jury members David Basulto –Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief of the architecture website ArchDaily, architect Ülo Peil, architect and the winner of the "Young Architect Prize 2011" Villem Tomiste, and entrepreneurs Heldur Meerits and Aavo Kokk, chose Veronika Valk as the recipient. The winner was announced on 14th February 2013 at a gala ceremony by Mr. Toomas Hendrik Ilves, President of the Republic of Estonia.

This catalogue is fairly different from its predecessors in the series, as it is Veronika Valk's doctoral thesis, defended on November 22nd, 2013 (RMIT University, School of Architecture and Design), titled "Steadfast in Versatility: the substrate of a multi-modal practice", with academic advisors Richard Blythe and Marcelo Stamm, and that has been adapted and reduced in volume for this publication. The catalogue is in English, the same language as the thesis.

In addition to the hard copy version, the catalogue is available digitally as an e-book.

STEADFAST IN VERSATILITY
The substrate of a multi-modal practice

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Veronika Valk
arhitektuuri kutsemagistri kraad

**School of Architecture
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VERONIKA VALK

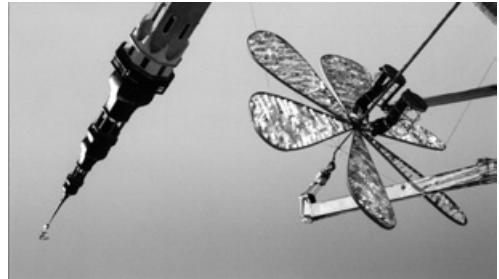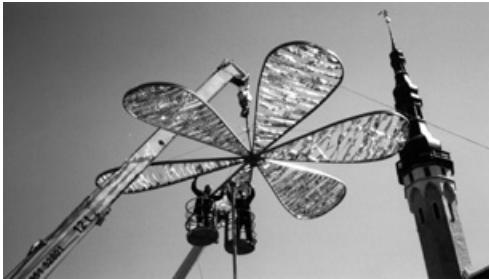|	
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Country	Estonia
Bio statement	Veronika Valk studied at the Estonian Academy of Arts (EE) and the Rhode Island School of Design (US). She works as an architect in her practice Zizi&Yoyo (EE). She has constructed both public and private buildings, designed interiors and landscapes, won some 30 prizes at various competitions and has published a number of critical essays on architecture and urbanism. Veronika Valk received the Young Architect Award in 2012.

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

What is it to be Public, to produce Publicness in Public Space in Estonia at the beginning of the twenty-first century?

THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Making my usual photo-shoot tour at the Tallinn seashore on a crisp, cold January morning in 1998, I walked from the city centre to the Linnahall concert hall, further west towards the heat-plant which was still in operation at the time, to the Soviet-era Patarei Prison (also still functioning as a prison at the time), and to the hydroplane hangars. These were all in the closed-off zone, reminiscent of the military regime, and I was imagining what the waterfront might look like in the future. The hydroplane hangars were guarded by a grumpy old man who nevertheless always allowed me to enter the territory, and to take photos of the structures on the waterfront.

Upon entering through the gate, I froze with fear as a giant black dog came around the corner, but then I made it safely around the three-dome structure. I took the photos I needed and, as the sea was covered with fairly thick ice, I thought I would make a shortcut back eastward across the ice to the prison. The prison was walled off with heavy barbed-wire fences – also from the bay side. Walking on ice and continuing to take photos, there was suddenly the sound of a safety-catch released, accompanied by a shout from the watch-tower: "*Streljaju!*" was the only word I could make out ("Shoot!" in Russian) across the ice.

Patarei had been a political prison during the Soviet occupation. There is hardly a family in Estonia that did not have someone who suffered in this building during the Soviet regime. The area around it, the Kalamaja neighbourhood, was an upper middle-class residential area before World War II. The two-storey wooden apartment buildings had well-kept courtyards in between the buildings, with 2 – 3m-high fences to block the lush greenery from the street. Many young police officers had an apartment here during the first independence of Estonia, yet when Russification commenced and the Estonian policemen were deported to Siberia or executed, many members of the Russian military were assigned to live here.

Kalamaja was 'nationalised' because the notion of 'private property' did not serve the communist ideology. During the 1960s, fences around the gardens were taken down and the former oases between those fine timber houses were made into public 'brown space', a no-man's-land where nobody took care of the gardens any longer. Furthermore, people who were released from the prison gained rooms here as part of the 'rehabilitation' program. Kalamaja turned more and more criminal. The energetic inhabitants moved to newly-built 'commieblock' areas. The local population in Kalamaja aged, contributing further to a downward spiral and degeneration.

In 1991, when Estonia regained independence, the vast process of re-privatisation began, giving property back to the offspring of the former owners of the property. Yet generations had passed in between. Now in the post-Soviet era, many people could not properly work out what to do with it – how to maintain Kalamaja, for example, restoring the former gardens and developing the neighbourhood. The second republic brought with it an entirely new publicness, with new challenges – firstly in terms of a change of mindset.

The very idea of public and private space needed to be re-invented in Estonia, as it was simply not possible (and, I suggest, also not desirable) in the instant of independence to eradicate the Soviet period's impact on the living environment and Estonians' perceptions of the built artifacts that had been introduced by the Soviets (Linnahall is a specific example, discussed in Section II). In the face of the Soviet occupation and nationalisation, followed by the wave of re-privatisation at the beginning of the 1990s, the loss of Estonian publicness has been critical. It was – and still is – critical in terms of the future sense of publicness in Estonia, especially regarding architecture, urbanism and various aspects of public life, which are full of 'leftovers' from the Soviet era, as well as in terms of the absence of a traditional notion of Estonian publicness that was destroyed by World War II, and during the subsequent Soviet era which completely re-invented notions of the private ownership and 'occupation' of space – or, in a single phrase, the notion of Estonian publicness.

It was simply not possible to revive the Estonian culture to what it had been prior to the Soviet period, therefore the tactic of reinvention was and still is critical. I tell these stories not for melodramatic effect but to bring the reader into the world of the concerns that consume my practice. What is at stake here, in the light of those quite dark stories? Mine is the ultimate act of resistance, as my personal context is caught up in the very difficult entanglement of conditions that are post-war, post-Soviet and even post-colonial (considering the Russians as colonists), as well as post-modern and post-Global Financial Crisis. The question here for my practice is: how can we, as architects, design our way out of this? How do we design public space and publicness in such a context?

THE NOT-SO-LOCAL CONTEXT

In response to the situation described above, there are other, more global questions that have captivated me as a designer, yet that at first glance seem to lie outside the framework of the practice-based thesis. For reasons of clarity, I will mention briefly some of those puzzling questions that continue to motivate my work. In Section II, I dismiss the vast majority of them, referring back to those issues in Section III.

I wish to point out that this research endeavour over the past three years has been undertaken by a person who is interested in a whole spectrum of individual, future-oriented questions. However, during the PhD process it became clear that those questions cannot be dealt with directly. Thus, I held them back when describing the body of work in Section II. Yet I am unapologetic about the grandness of those questions, as the designer should never hide from such issues. Therefore, please bear with me until Section III's 'Findings'. In the next few paragraphs I outline a few of the questions that motivate me and have fuelled my work. All these questions are related to this research in the sense that they are important and interesting to me, but are not essential to the research itself. They may be likened to a borderland cloud of questions that influence my work through directly motivating it, although the body of work itself cannot be described through those questions.

ESPRIT OF
TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURES

When I approach speculative ideas about the future, I am not interested in utopias – or indeed in a life where everything is perfected. In such sterile conditions, there is the danger of people's lives ending up being blank and uniform. What if those who have access to advanced technology start to subvert their own cultural systems? When do you intervene, when do you 'help'? When do you cause a war? When do you stop the war? What if the perfect city is in fact a walled city, an exclusive enclave? How do you 'spread' technology? This research is not asking how one gets people to accept the new technologies. Nor is it asking what happens to somebody who chooses not to conform.

DESIGNER OF
THE FUTURE

Perhaps it is indeed up to architects and designers to start to design the future. What we are probably looking at is a shift in what an architect does: what counts as architecture? Practitioners might be more conscious than most about the future and what is emerging. What if the notion of emergence is that of 'guiding' the processes without instrumental intervention? It is up to architects and designers to recognise this potential and guide it in a resilient way. Architects and planners are researching what the future city would look like, with every designer envisioning a different future – yet how do we arrive at that moment or space in our environment where we recognise that the future that is around us is itself the product someone's imagination?

The work at hand does not interrogate what 'work' or 'education' might mean in 2049. We, as architects and designers, could pose questions to a future policeman: what kind of challenges do you face in an urban setting in 2149, as opposed to contemporary cities? Do you find similarities in terms of domestic violence, alcohol problems, transport infringements? Or is there a completely different system of social welfare, pensions and economies? Furthermore, current trends in transhumanism point towards programming bodies and processes – what about the possibility of artificial 'viruses' incorporated in our bodies? And so forth.

ESPRIT OF THE BODY IN THE
FAMILIAL URBAN REALM

What does the new city hold for traditional family values? How are these new technologies affecting our lifestyle? Do we, as humans, interact one-on-one anymore? Or has the new city somehow replaced this? We are entering an era in which virtual communication collides with the real.
If Facebook is a 'neighbourhood', then do neighbourhoods exist in the future? These are all intriguing questions.

Even though the research addresses to a certain extent very basic human delights and the enjoyment of sensorial experiences, it does not investigate being trapped within the body as though within a space capsule, looking at how to design the body as an amusement park. Is one really one's own mood-moderator? When replacing parts of brains via advanced technologies to enhance intellectual capabilities, then where does artificial intelligence come into the picture? What if we have a 'spare brain' or an external brain? What happens to the notion of distraction? How can materials and finishes define gender roles, tribal instincts, or social instincts versus biological instincts?

In 2149, is there still a notion of 'slow', or is that gone? If life is eternal, or almost, then what is 'life after death'? What happens to 'spirituality'? Do we have eternal beauty? If we do, then how do we appreciate it? These and hundreds of ever-more intriguing questions are not the focus here. Nor even are those that tinker with programming the (urban) space: what about the expanding urban agglomeration becoming increasingly attractive to a growing number of people, some of whom might try to challenge and subvert those processes? How would the control mechanisms of the society deal with that?

This research is not directly tackling questions that belong more to the social sciences – for instance whether we, as architects and designers, could start to have an answer as to what happens to notions of 'age'. The lifespan of future generations is an interesting question for an architectural practice, as is the impact of extended lifetimes. What is going to happen along the way in terms of population control? Yet an overlapping point here, which directly refers to this research, concerns speaking of a person 'getting old': one possible response I might have is that the first sign of a person getting old is her giving up her curiosity and/or creativity.

TO THE HEART
OF THE RESEARCH

Of all the questions I mentioned here, the one that most informs my work concerns 'creativity'. Creativity and its neighbouring concepts – curiosity, propensity to explore, etc. – take centre stage. Stepping out of the realm of those questions, I will now give you an idea of what comes in the next section. Thus, the following paragraphs, which constitute the core of my research, must to a large extent be set in contrast to the questions highlighted above. The questions I have outlined above float through my research and provide, in a sense, a motivational background, but they are not the research *per se*.

This research is about inventing ways to produce spaces of inspiration that catalyse curiosity and generous, resilient creativity. The focus is on something which goes beyond the local, national or regional borders: specifically 'joyful' approaches to publicness in design activity. These approaches aim at enhancing public space, concentrating on the mutual impact of microclimates and playfulness. It is a search for functional realities, which not only incorporate but immerse themselves in and build upon other disciplines and institutional, ideological and structural processes.

My 'creativity agenda' will find a new way to be articulated in aspects of how to channel creativity as a practitioner, embedded in my practice (discussed in Section III). The body of work to be presented offers ways for architecture as behaviour to accommodate and recognise a species of architect – that is, the architect as initiator – who for certain specific reasons occasionally refuses to follow some prescribed protocols or to fall into prescribed categories. Such a practitioner might have been defined in various circumstances as 'a visionary', 'a utopian', 'a radical', 'an activist' or even 'a terrorist'. This is because, quite often, my practice manifests itself as an initiative.

A closer look at completed work reveals how, with each sample provided, the practice first takes a 'position' (=conception) at an architectural or urban scale. It then gives in to a multiplicity of professional 'obsessions' studying the feasibility of the concept in order to further convince the stakeholders, by forming and utilising a multiplicity of instruments (legal entities, mass media, etc.). By blurring traditional discipline boundaries and using accessible 'devices', initiatives tend to unveil alternative ways to tackle obvious challenges. I regard my specific 'research findings' in Section III as at least a partial contribution to a culture of criticality, offering some open-ended 'protocols'. In that sense, 'architecture as initiative' has provided fertile ground for me, enabling certain open-ended 'protocols' to emerge, as many of their complex, multilayered strategies and tactics generate unique opportunities for unobvious cross-disciplinary ambitions to synchronise their activities for a period of time. As a freeform collective or swarm, the engaged individuals are acutely aware of the nature of the invention, yet unaware of the exact result. Architecture as initiative occurs in a loosely-defined transdisciplinary intersection that emphasises open-source knowledge through sharing.

Thus, the chapters offer an exploratory journey through a venturous practice that builds upon architecture as initiative. *Venturous practice* is a term originally coined by Richard Blythe and is used here to refer to those practitioners who are adventurous enough to want to step beyond current practice boundaries – in other words, those practitioners whose work will change the practice, the discipline and knowledge.[1] The venturous practitioners are often the venturous researchers among us.

Yet one thing tends to be common across the rhetoric: venturous practice walks on the borderline of fiction and reality. Our curiosity is what enables us to learn. Our ability to dream fuels our actions. Hence, architecture that triggers our curiosity about the world and fuels our imagination, and manages to do it in a playful yet resilient way, is probably the way ahead.

As my practice resides predominantly in Estonia, gradually becoming more international as its collaboration network expands over the years, I commence the PhD document with an overview of the context and an outline of the motivations of my practice. Section II provides a series of different perspectives and considerations of 'samples' (completed projects) or examples of projects through which the research has been undertaken. It is through these projects that the 'discoveries' have been made, articulated in Section III and accompanied by conclusions that outline implicitly what has been discovered.

The research process itself has consisted of three main activities. Firstly, it has been about looking back at an existing body of work and reflecting on the practice as it has emerged ('reflection on' or 'R-o'). Secondly, the reflection has taken place while continuing to practice, thus I have also been immersed in reflection in my current practice ('reflection in' or 'R-i'). Thirdly, throughout the research activities, I have kept my eyes on the future, thinking toward future practice ('reflection for' or 'R-f').[2]

How do I intend the reader to engage with this catalogue? I am well aware that the structure of the document may cause some readers initial difficulties in perceiving the work, since there is often a tendency among readers to first look for overarching topics or themes that might help to clarify the messiness of the actual practice and which binds it together in a seamless whole. Indeed, I have taken care to confront myself again and again with the very idea of a hierarchy of themes – with the temptation to arrive at a level of abstraction that could assist in constructing a single narrative. However, after much reflection and discussion of how best to structure and deliver the insights of my research, I concluded that, despite my appreciation for the benefits of providing a clear conceptual statement, in this case any 'tidying up' would not convey the actual nature of my practice – it may even prove an unfortunate and misleading outcome. I have thus constructed a space of insight that does not follow the usual conventions of presentation (for example, with a hierarchy of 'notions' whereby one or two are highlighted as 'prime').

I hope that the readers of this catalogue will recognise the multiplicity of layers, aspects and impulses that are present in this practice and that I aim to uncover in this document – ultimately, I hope that I have been able to convey the nature of my practice successfully. One might even call the entire catalogue an experimental laboratory: because quick and familiar hierarchical structures would not properly represent the core of the practice, I have made my best effort to ensure that this catalogue renders the character, essence and profile of the practice as naturally and authentically as possible.

The aim of the catalogue is to bring to the fore the simultaneous activities, parallel lines of thought, triggers and outcomes. In order to counteract the attendant problems that can arise from a non-hierarchical document, I begin by presenting a 'manifesto' of 'architecture as initiative' as a navigational device to guide the reader in understanding the intentionality of my practice. How to engage with the manifesto? This is not to be taken as an overarching narrative – it is instead intended to reveal the specific undercurrents of my approach, evident in some of the 'samples' in Section II.

[1] Blythe, R 2011, 'Glide: design, indeterminacy and the specificity of the contingent', *Journal of Artistic Research* [Online]. Available at: http://www.research-catalogue.net/view/?weave=1077. See 0:02:11. "To be clear what I am interested in when I talk about design research is the part of design that you might describe as being venturous – that is to say, the kind of designing that changes the way we think about our world and the ways in which we practice designing itself." 'Venturous practice' builds on 'venturous Australia', a phrase coined by Terry Cutler in 2008.

[2] Blythe, R & van Schaik, L (forthcoming), *What if design practice matters? design research in architecture,* London: Ashgate.
[3] See Pia Ednie-Brown (ed.), 'The innovation imperative: architectures of vitality', AD, January 2013, London: Wiley.

Acknowledgements

Even though my community of practice is understandably and quite properly tied very much to Tallinn and Estonia, then the PhD process could not possibly have arisen out of that context. It is only due to the invitation to participate in the RMIT University School of Architecture and Design's 'practice-based research' model, led with profound experience, diplomacy and resolve by Leon van Schaik who has played the decisive role in setting up the Melbourne 'laboratory', that I have been so fortunate to be guided through the process.

RMIT University's School of Architecture and Design offered me a fee-exempt fellowship as part of Richard Blythe's initiative to bring their practice-based research model from Melbourne to Europe. The EU program was set up by him with support from Leon van Schaik, SueAnne Ware and Martyn Hook, and in the last two years by Marcelo Stamm, followed now by Pia Ednie-Brown. Johan Verbeke, the former head of the Sint-Lucas School of Architecture (today LUCA, as part of KU Leuven, Belgium), also played an important role in making this happen. He and Richard Blythe devised the way in which the RMIT PhD was offered in the EU, first through Sint-Lucas and now extending to other architecture schools across Europe. Thus, I am a happy pioneer of this process.

My gratitude goes to my supervisors Richard Blythe and Marcelo Stamm for their encouragement and insight. I am much indebted to Pia Ednie-Brown, who invited me to contribute to the *AD* volume 'The Innovation Imperative: Architectures of Vitality', issued in 2013,[3] in which the manifesto reproduced in Section IV of this document was first published. It was also Pia Ednie-Brown who led to my intrigue in synthetic biology and introduced me to Oron Catts.

Throughout the entire PhD process I felt such strong support from the RMIT academic community at the Practice Research Symposia (PRS) held at LUCA in Ghent, Belgium, which were conducted first by Martyn Hook, and later by Marcelo Stamm. The vivid discussions, helpful advice and general support at each PRS have become precious memories: truly inspiring, crystallising and catalysing to say the least. Not to mention, I am immensely grateful to my family for their endurance.

I am grateful to the editor Ellen Jensen for her commitment, curiosity and attention to detail.

A big THANK YOU to all the others from around the world with whom I have worked. Every project described below was born in collaboration, thus it is my turn to dedicate this work to you.

ABSTRACT

When practice's activities propagate through a multiplicity of expressions (simultaneous drawing, model-making, installations, construction supervision, texts, and so on), the set of 'devices' with, upon and within which the designer operates could be called the practice's substratum (substrate). To evolve a practice, is it necessary to transform its structure, purpose or agenda, or is it a question of how to renew its substrate? The work evidences certain 'joyful' approaches to publicness in design activity, in which the search for functional realities not only incorporates but immerses itself in and builds upon other disciplines as well as on institutional, ideological and structural processes. A closer look at an existing practice reveals how a practice's substratum might shift in response to a contextual change. A multi-modal versatile practice bears within it the capacity to facilitate (positive) or to resist (negative) societal change.

ARCHITECTURE AS INITIATIVE (A MANIFESTO)

The practice Zizi&Yoyo was founded by Yoko Alender and I in 2005, and between 2007 and mid-2012 Helene Vetik took over Alender's share in the partnership. Over this time and through various practice constellations, we have gradually been developing an approach that might be called 'architecture as initiative'. This 'manifesto' draws on the research we have undertaken as Zizi&Yoyo, and develops the idea that practices of initiating (or generating 'the initiative') offer potentially open and affirmative ways to approach innovation through architecture.

WHAT IS AN INITIATIVE?

An initiative is the smallest unit of vitality in living environments – similar to the biological cell in the living organism. All change is catalysed by an initiative, from single concepts such as a shelter or stage (see Mikrouun), to complicated urban developments such as our cities, which are formed by multiplicities of initiatives.

In its role as the basic catalyst for change, an initiative might be considered as a relatively simple collection of components in a process, gently 'ticking over' to maintain itself and occasionally propagating new initiatives. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each and every initiative, from the simplest to the most complicated, is a self-contained ideas factory, like the molecular factory of the cell "working frantically throughout every minute of its lifespan." This is how we can think about formations such as the Weimar Republic and the Bauhaus School (1919 – 31), avant-garde architectural groups like Team X (the 1953 C.I.A.M. Congress), Archigram (the 1961 pamphlet), Superstudio (the 1966 Superarchitettura show), and others. A 'frantic' effort is needed to self-maintain, to nurture and to evolve not only the initiative itself, but also the day-to-day activity of ornamental structures of public interest that it touches or depends upon. Throughout its existence, much of its machinery is dismantled and rebuilt on a daily basis, ideally without any slowing of production levels. The difference between an architectural practice that is an initiator and one that is not, is that the initiating practice hides within its signatures of life: processual self-replication, open-ended evolution, flocking, consciousness and an autocatalytic process that builds on itself.

One might be tempted to think of iconic architecture as initiatives, like the Eiffel Tower that was a part of the 1889 World's Fair in Paris or the Skylon at the 1951 Festival of Britain. The Eiffel Tower has been the inspiration for the creation of over 30 duplicates and similar towers around the world. It has been used for TV and radio transmission, and it has been featured in films, video games, and television shows. Yet the initiative's signatures of life have nothing to do with formal replicas or representations.

One cannot, in fact, imitate or represent an initiative. In the case of the Eiffel Tower, it was seeded by the initiative to celebrate the centennial of the French Revolution in the format of an Exposition Universelle: a World's Fair. Despite various controversies, entrepreneur-engineer Gustave Eiffel finally signed the contract with the fair's organisers to build the tower while knowing he had to come up with three-quarters of the budget himself. The realisation of La Tour Eiffel

relied on certain shared initiatives generating the production of architecture. Such initiatives might drive its carriers (as through carriers of an idealistic – even somewhat fanatic – virus) to self-commissioning and mobilising diverse resources, among other things.

HOW ELSE MIGHT CONTEMPORARY INITIATIVES LOOK?

Initiatives, when driven by curiosity about spatial concepts, might involve actual design and construction, manifesto, and elaborate public debate. At a more complex level, they might start to look a lot like accelerated curating, launching explorative phenomena (Valgusfestival – like), promoting active involvement in emergent digital ecosystems and fund-raising, or implementing an array of skills in spatial arts and collaboration.

WHAT IS A 'TENABLE INITIATIVE'?

A tenable initiative is neither solely an experiment nor solely an experience, but a collaborative investment that allows something to come about – spinning off a tangent or a sideways trajectory. For that, one needs an open mind and the desire to define without having absolute control, and the ability to express this. Sharing comes with collaboration and with chaos. This is the case for both the process of designing and for how a particular project interacts with the world. For instance, in the case of the monument that we designed for the composer Eduard Tubin, the visitor can hear fragments of Tubin's music by knocking on the gongs on the back wall so that the monument starts to resemble a giant percussion set. A spontaneous on-site choreography of visitors emerges when people dance joyfully back and forth, playing the gongs.

The power to initiate is a phenomenal ability that helps us bring something from nothing, and to bring it about systematically. Discovery – a species of creativity – thrives on openness to difference. Working out a variety of ways to achieve something requires an ability to flexibly figure out multiple perspectives at once. Sometimes, it involves the challenge of describing the indescribable. The tenable initiative is all based upon a willingness to pursue different options, to instigate new forms of engagement – for example, with age, mobility or microclimate, as seen in works like 'Swinging in the Light'. Becoming a successful initiator occurs by being oneself, and by allowing for thoughts that form outside of time – for a re-scaling of time in the moment of necessity.

HOW CAN WE BE INITIATORS TODAY, AND TOMORROW?

Taking on many different roles during the day, our practice has both internal structure and 'unstructuredness'. We need to think across scales, drilling into structural barriers with initiatives like the symbiotic arts and sciences mobile lab 'Pleiades'. This project aimed to provoke communities by initiating new ways to value (art)work that is produced in an unauthorised way. This can happen via seemingly simple architectural moves. The 'Pleiades' could ideally go around the world forever, as if a 'perpetuum mobile' of some sort, and as an innovation hub still maintain its capacity for surprise by being adaptive to changing locations and their microclimates. It strives to be simultaneously temporal and permanent, posed with the question of whether we can ever escape the imperative of continuous 'progress' (which neither post-capitalism nor post-humanism seem to have achieved).

We need to remain cautious about scenarios driven by efficiency and by automatic processes. Concentrating on presence, we can look for the present moment, for intimacy, and for the previously invisible 'and/or' ambivalences, but can also retain the condition of waiting. We can cultivate decency and guide creativity by avoiding repetition and unlimited desire. For example, the 'piano stairs' project (see the Lasva Water Tower conversion) started for us with the proposition of a playful concept structured around fun, but acquired resonance among locals for its humility and simplicity.

Similar to installing a 35 – storey hotel (see Smotel) in the 85m – high Kultuurikatel chimney, we may need to retrofit our vocabulary to reach the public. Finding alternative ways to communicate and reach as many people as possible, with whatever means and technologies are available, gives us an opportunity to shift the way we think and operate together. When we trigger and support initiatives that fascinate many through strong relevance and contagious humour, people will want to spread them on their own.

Ultimately, practicing – and even approaching – 'architecture as initiative' requires channelling the resourceful current underlying the spatial arts' potential to forge meaningful connections between people, places and attitudes: this is the vitality that architecture can generate, and the architecture generated through vitalising initiatives. Contagious, alive and able to self-assemble, once 'released' – that is, realised as the built/living environment – our actions inside the life of the initiative continue to matter.
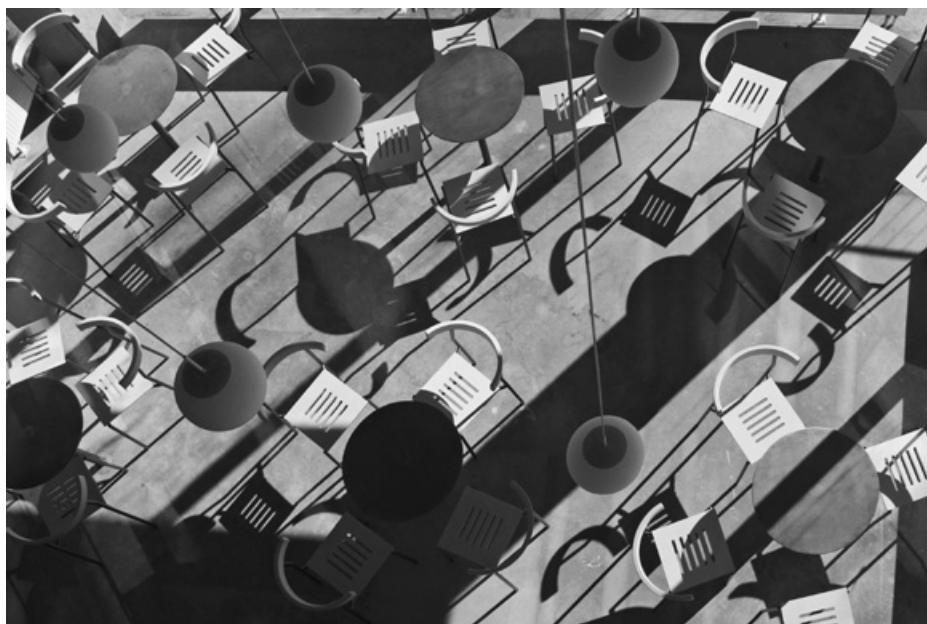
Suure-Jaani Sports Centre.
Photo: Ingmar Muusikus

SAMPLES

Section II presents projects from a tiny to an urban and even a regional scale: proposals for the coast of the Baltic Sea and for the Tallinn waterfront; completed buildings and a monument outside of Tallinn (in Suure-Jaani, Tartu and Lasva); an account of a variety of installations (each presenting a different collaboration setup), as well as observations from festivals of contemporary culture as tools to guide urban planning processes. The ten samples also vary from singular projects to 'bundles' of endeavours.

My practice is tightly wedded to the complexities of Estonia: its geopolitics, coastline and local microclimate. The chosen projects aim to display a specific 'joyful' and 'playful' approach in my work; to present the 'plasticity' of the practice; to weave a certain agenda through crossed contexts and to show how a family of ideas is evoked in those crossed contexts. Finally, the samples are chosen to explain what 'architecture as initiative' could look like.

WHAT THE 'SAMPLE' TEXTS ARE NOT...

I do not want the 'sample' texts to be read as an objective account of data, but rather for the reader to keep in mind that they have been written by a practitioner who has immersed herself for years in different endeavours, thus developing a very personal and subjective insight into the matter. The 'samples' are as though documentaries, stories, movie-scenes – being coloured vividly by my own personal agenda and thus not claiming any objectivity. In a sense, no work by an author can claim uncontested, ultimate objectivity.

...AND
WHAT THEY
ARE INSTEAD

What I do want to achieve with Section II's 'samples' is to provide certain kinds of insights which support the evidence in the 'Findings' in Section III. I have to stress that throughout the PhD process I have looked back at a much larger number of my projects than can be incorporated into this Research Catalogue, observing their targets and outcomes, their processes and their impacts, and distilling the essence of this research in Section III's 'Findings'. The samples are rich with description so that the interventions can be encountered and subverted in ways relevant to the PhD research. However, so as not to bore the reader with the lengthy descriptions of a hundred projects, I have carefully 'pipetted' the few that contribute most convincingly to the arguments of the 'Findings', approaching them from a variety of angles.

The samples can be read in 'bundles'. The constellations can, of course, be assembled in multiple ways. I am certain that they could very well be grouped in other ways, yet here I persist in one lineage which reads directly into the 'Findings' in Section III. Some of the samples themselves constitute a constellation of sub-projects which in turn can be associated with sub-projects from another 'sample'. (For example, Samples 8 and 10 have been assembled as a cluster of similar endeavours). Here, I offer a sequence in which all the projects should be considered as if taking place simultaneously. They inform and influence one another, as the practice itself is usually engaged in a variety of parallel activities.

For instance, Sample 1 (the Tallinn Waterfront) could be bundled with Sample 2 (Kultuurikatel) as well as with some sub-projects described in Samples 8 (Festivals of Contemporary Culture) and 10 (Linnahall as a monumental Soviet building). Samples 3 (the Suure-Jaani Sports Centre) and 5 (the Lasva Water Tower), together with the sub-projects of Samples 2 (Kultuurikatel) and 10 (Linnahll) target buildings. Samples 4 (the Eduard Tubin monument), 6 (the so-called 'roof-tope' shelter), 7 (Mikrouun) and 8 (Installations) deliver architecture as 'set design', emphasising the city as a stage for human action. Each sample concludes with references to Section III ('Findings') as well as to other samples. All of the samples target 'architecture as initiative' in Section IV.

I have tried my best to subdivide the ten samples as much as possible, for the ease of the reader as well as for clarity, yet have discovered that there is no way I could subdivide them further. The reason is very simple, namely that they would cease to exist as actions or observations on their own. To subdivide the samples further would mean to pulverise them completely. On such an atomic level, they become details or elements of insights from which other endeavours might be generated or accelerated, giving birth to future projects emerging from the 'substrate' of the practice, as discussed in Section III: 'Findings'.

I have considered a variety of scenarios for orienting the reader throughout the material – for example, as previously mentioned, reconstructing a linear narrative or clustering the samples in a hierarchical way. Since those structural moves would prove mislead, I have deliberately run the

risk of the document hinting in a multiplicity of directions simultaneously. That risk enables me to reveal the omnipresent iridescence in my work, and admittedly leads to a certain elusiveness. But how to read the 'samples'?

My practice – its operational profiles, 'devices' and outcomes – has always been tied to nuance and detail, rather than a conceptual monolith of linear argumentation. I therefore offer detailed accounts of my projects in this catalogue, not because of a wish to construct an artificial abstraction of the practice, but in order to discuss the practice as close to reality as possible. I hope this account helps to re-invigorate the experience and thus help the reader to better comprehend the reflections in Section III, 'Findings'.

The strategy for the level of detail offered in this section is therefore as follows: while one might assume that the practices are narrative-driven and that the practitioner is driven by this very narrative, the question may then arise whether there is a latent hidden hierarchy in the body of work and samples provided. However, here I must stress that none of the works described should be viewed as a goal or an end in itself, nor should they be confused with an infinite perpetuation of themselves – the practice evolves constantly and none of the projects is likely to recur in the future. This means that the samples do not constitute the practice per se, but that my observations in this section provide another kind of evidence, that of the multitude of parallel streams of interconnected activities which have a direct impact on the practice's design outcomes. Section III, 'Findings' engages further with my observations about the multilateral, intertwined influence of those parallel activities and experiences.

The samples are arranged according to their dimensions – from those that are fairly large to those that are quite small. They begin with Sample 1: The Tallinn Waterfront and the Baltic TurnTable, and the consequent Sample 2: The Kultuurikatel initiative. Since Kultuurikatel takes us to the 'building' scale, then this sample is followed by Sample 3: The Suure-Jaani High School Sports Centre, followed by other projects according to architectural size, such as Sample 4: The Monument for Composer Eduard Tubin, and Sample 5: The Lasva Water Tower.

As the projects diminish still further in size, Sample 6: The Catapult shelter can be characterised also as an installation, similarly to Sample 7: The Mikrouun installation. Since we have now entered the world of installations, it is time to look at a serialization of them – Sample 8 is about the Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture. We thereupon move to look at Sample 9: The Pleiades design proposition for a symbiotic mobile arts and sciences lab, which is just as much an installation as a proposed environment for learning, for arts and sciences workshops and displays. Finally, this leads us to the Sample 10: Architecture Workshops for research and concept development.

The accounts of the projects have been curated in such a way that each one differs experientially as far as possible from the previous sample. This is intended specifically to define the particular scope of activities undertaken during the course of the practice and to give the reader an idea of the 'versatility' discussed. The samples can be viewed in two groups: one is more inclined towards the agenda of the 'manifesto' (Section I – 'architecture as initiative') and the other towards the 'playful and joyful'.

SAMPLE 1
THE TALLINN WATERFRONT
AND THE BALTIC TURNTABLE

———————

Sample 1 is the lengthiest of the case studies presented in this research, intended specifically to provide the framework of the scenery in which I have been operating. The first paragraphs lay the background for the international setup discussed in the first subsection on the Baltic Riviera. I then zoom in closer to my hometown, Tallinn, and its complexities in dealing with its most prominent challenge: the redevelopment of its waterfront in the context of the emergence of the discourse on 'talent cities'. I then provide an overview of the Tallinn waterfront's urban ideas competition in 2000 as its outcomes lay the foundation of many of my practice's further pursuits.

The coastline of Estonia is long and intricate,[4] yet the ongoing privatisation of the shore – with signs stating that the land is privately owned – is somewhat similar to the situation during the Soviet times when the coastline served as a military border zone, owned by the state and denying access to locals.

More than half of the border of Estonia is the shore of the Baltic Sea.[5] For centuries this has determined the lifestyle, culture and identity of Estonians, and has also influenced the country's geopolitical and economic development. The planet's youngest sea, at less than 10,000 years old, the Baltic is unique in that it was formed after the last ice age. It is also one of the world's largest bodies of brackish water. The shallowness of the Baltic and its unusual mix of freshwater and marine species mean it is also especially vulnerable to environmental changes. Nowadays the Baltic Sea is considered one of the planet's most fragile and polluted seas. Meanwhile, Estonia is the 54th greenest country in the world (compared to the 2nd-position ranking of its neighbour Latvia), and is declining, according to the recent research of the Environmental Performance Index[6] carried out by Yale and Columbia Universities.[7]

The condition of the Baltic Sea continues to worsen and the main cause of this until today is the everyday activity of people living around it – the same people who admire its beauty, consume its products and place the sea at the heart of their identity.

THE BALTIC RIVIERA
ABOUT TO BE BORN

Here is a catch: what if global warming might be good news for some parts of the world? Global warming indeed puts large parts of the world at risk from the Biblical threats of famine, flood and disease but, in Northern Europe, agriculture will become more productive and the climate will improve. Amazingly enough, there were certain plans in progress on a regional level to investigate such future scenarios. For example, the Baltic TurnTable (BTT) was a 2006–2007 initiative set up by research and cultural institutions around the Baltic Sea that had the ambitious goal to highlight the potential of the Baltic coastline as the 'leisure landscape' of tomorrow. It included players from Tallinn, Helsinki, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Kaliningrad.

The BTT project, a dream of the future Baltic coast, was an example of venturous environmental thinking. What makes an initiative such as the BTT extraordinary is that it established a working structure to develop an urban planning tool, bringing politicians, grassroots designers and local inhabitants to the same table. As stated, the Baltic Sea environment is one of the most researched and yet polluted marine environments in the world. Thus, the BTT initiative was in fact not only about creating the 'new Mediterranean', but more importantly was an effort to rescue the region from environmental hazards and to point towards a happier future, focusing on enhancing the region's quality of life.
I wish to draw your attention to the Soviet past of the Estonian coastline and the resulting situation of the present: that is, large natural areas that are sprouting gated communities and summer houses converted into permanent private residences. This may be thought of in relation to the Swedish and Finnish coasts, which are so densely populated that Finns and Swedes are buying second homes in Estonia. The Baltic Riviera only comes to life if the concept finds fertile grounds on the local scale – among municipalities and inhabitants along the coastline itself, and with the help of landscape and urban designers who are willing to take on the challenge.

Looking from 21st-century Estonia, with Tallinn as the European Capital of Culture in 2011, the city claimed to open its centre up to the waterfront via efforts such as the 'Culture Kilometre'. From the overexploited worldwide perspective of 'talent cities', Tallinn has not been at the forefront of facilitating opportunities for grassroots creative synergies that might drive the development of the city. Looking at Estonia's geopolitical context, its Scandinavian neighbours often rely on existing, long-established administrative structures to brand their 'cool' aesthetic of clean quietness, while Tallinn's eastern neighbours seem to provide their cultural rebels with a much 'wilder' administrative and economic framework in which they may explore their capacities (even though financial resources for the local *avant-garde* are much more difficult to find there).

To the south, Riga is well-known as the regional capital of art-deco, but is also comparable to Tallinn in terms of its ambitions as a harbour-city, with the 36-hectare 'Riga Port City' project (Andrejsala) going forward at full steam, directed by the port and city authorities.[8] Where does this leave Tallinn on a scale of cool/hot and bottom-up/top-down? Tallinn's opportunity as a 'talent city' on the regional market can be characterised as the Scandinavian version of the 'Wild Wild East': it is operable and efficient enough for cultural rebels to test out their ideas, with the city administration collaborating with the upcoming new scene rather than simply overlooking, undermining or even rejecting it – with neither approach letting the emerging activists run completely loose.

This is the reason why Tallinn's waterfront and the 'new city' can, from the points-of-view of urban planning, infrastructure and landscaping, be perceived as a testing ground for Europe – if not for the world: welcome to the laboratory for

contemporary ethical creativity. Welcome to the laboratory for the emerging Baltic Riviera!

"TALENT CITY" TALLINN?

The predominant memory of Tallinn's construction boom is that there were many new buildings going up. However, due to an economic slowdown and the EU's regulatory pressures, more and more thought is being given to the energy efficiency of buildings and to integrating renewable energy solutions, as well as to opening up the real estate market to foreign designers. The Tallinn waterfront yearns to mean something to Europe, and even to the world.

Indeed, certain unique structures distinguish the Tallinn seashore from the waterfronts of other capitals in the region. For example, an event organiser could test his or her inventiveness by hosting a conference in the Tallinn City Concert Hall, Linnahall.[9] Future plans have envisioned Linnahall as the largest conference centre in Estonia; however, the whole structure was abandoned in 2009. It is a pity, since the premises of Linnahall, located next to Tallinn's main passenger port, would serve as a public venue of ideal prominence. The city also awaits an investor with a sense of diplomacy and a sensitivity towards history to renovate Patarei (Battery), a former prison and sea fortress that is a unique cultural heritage site and an architectural monument.[10] The Hydroplane Hangars – the first reinforced concrete domes in Europe, built in 1916–17 and representing the engineering genius of the time – have, on the other hand, already been refurbished as a Maritime Museum.[11]

Furthermore, Tallinn held an enthusiastic competition for the waterfront's new Town Hall, won by the Bjarke Ingels Group from Denmark. However, the spirit of the Baltic Riviera has not truly been present in any of the above. Developments outside Tallinn tend towards 'tidying up': selling the land and setting up villas (in between former Soviet border-guard stations, no less…). Perhaps the scale of things – the scale of the new Baltic Riviera – is in details, in disruptions of the everyday, and in the very local.
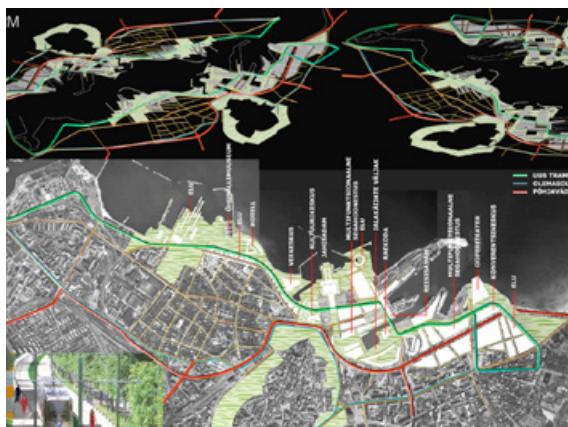
On a larger scale, the BTT initiative later gave birth to the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region,[12] launched by the European Parliament and co-ordinated by the European Commission. Additionally, the European Union's Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013 was born, promoting regional development through transnational co-operation in which partners from 11 countries around the Baltic Sea work together to find joint solutions to common problems. But to explain how I got involved in the BTT initiative, we must go back a few years to 2000, when the Tallinn city government held an urban ideas competition for the Tallinn waterfront.

THE TALLINN WATERFRONT

My colleague Villem Tomiste and I won this competition with an entry that linked up the seaside through a coastal tramline. The new tramline did more than merely connect different clusters in various parts of the city. It claimed an emotional quality, racing through a landscape of diverse urban events – an opera hall, a conference centre, a passenger terminal, Patarei (the former fortifications and prison), the hydroplane hangars, parks, and so on. The idea was simple: that the real estate projects when linked by tram and thus integrated into the city fabric would be much more vibrant right from the start than they would be on their own, without public transportation to provide access to the new developments.[13]

Novel programs were offered, emphasising the originality of the landscape and fully revealing the potential of the area. For example, the former heat-plant was to be developed as a culture hub (currently developed as *Kultuurikatel*); the Admiralty Basin was supposed to become a 'plaza on water' with a new Town Hall on its quay; the new Opera was planned for the currently closed-off port area; Patarei was designated as a specific hotel; a yacht harbour was added to the Linnahall venue, while we were proposing that the hydroplane hangars become a museum (today they are refurbished as the Maritime Museum).

Authors of the winning entry of the Tallinn waterfront's urban ideas competition in 2000: Veronika Valk, Villem Tomiste (image in upper left-hand corner)

Further programming scenarios for historic structures and public transportation along Tallinn coastline were introduced in the print media (*Eesti Päevaleht, Postimees, Eesti Ekspress*, etc.) between 2000 and 2008.

[4] The mainland's coastline length is 1242 km, with that of the islands totaling 2551 km (including the biggest island, Saaremaa, with 854 km). Estonia has approximately 1500 islands and islets.

[5] The official total border length is 1,450.2 km, with a sea border of 768.6 km and a land border of 681.6 km.

[6] http://epi.yale.edu/

[7] At the same time, other countries washed by the Baltic Sea are fairly highly ranked. An article published by the *National Geographic* in 2010 tells that the Baltic is now home to seven of the world's ten largest marine dead zones – areas in which the sea's oxygen has been used up by seabed bacteria: the organism that has affected the whole ecosystem of the Baltic's sensitive waters, sucking up oxygen and choking aquatic life. Microscopic algae known as 'phytoplankton' are fed by nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen from agricultural

fertilisers and sewage washed into the sea by the rains and from a great number of rivers. The algal blooms leave behind an ugly layer of green scum that fouls beaches and starves seaweed of light and is toxic to micro-organisms, plants, fishes, animals and humans.

[8] Preservation and Development Council of the Historic Centre of Riga, HCR.

[9] Built in 1980 for the events of the Moscow Olympic Yachting Regatta, the main concert hall seats 4,200 and the interior ice-rink used to seat 3,000 spectators.

[10] This defense structure was completed in 1840, by the order of Emperor Nicholas I, and has preserved its beautiful limestone façade. In 1920, Patarei became a prison (after World War II it was the KGB's political prison with the Soviet interior still somewhat present), and is today both a place for the beach parties of the local younger generation and a tourist attraction for visitors.

The entry stressed the importance of breaking up mono-functionality and aimed at a mix of dwellings, leisure, business and production. We considered it equally important that the industrial flair of the area be somewhat retained, but that the out-of-proportion and polluting industries of the Soviet era be replaced with resilient small workshops and production facilities, tied to the activities of the people who move to the area. Those businesses which required closed-off premises and posed threats to the environment were to be relocated outside the city centre.

The project also addressed housing issues and suggested that the housing should be developed together with the landmarks – either literally incorporated into the structures or planned right next to them. Later, I developed the concept of a Tallinn University campus (namely its student housing units) tied to the tramline and the landmarks, but I will come back to this proposal further on. First, we should look at the context of the competition and whether its outcomes – especially the winning entry – might still have relevance today.[14]

The aim of the competition was to establish a coherent plan for the Tallinn waterfront and to derive guidelines that would then be elaborated in the urban planning proposal to be implemented in the waterfront development. After the winners were declared, a committee was formed by the municipality to discuss the winning proposal with different stakeholder institutions and city departments. Later on, many of the guidelines became the basis for future plans, yet the municipality's dedication to addressing the waterfront development in a visionary, holistic way has been hectic and discontinuous due the prevailing political 'draughts' that tend to sweep politicians quickly in and out of office. This leads to one of the examples of the *Kafkaesque*, explained in Section III.

In 2005, the mayor of Tallinn, Tõnis Palts, declared the importance of the Sea Promenade in opening up Tallinn to the bay, and called me in to consult the project. In the following years, this strategy became the backbone of the European Capital of Culture 2011 agenda. Throughout this process, my goal has been – as an architect and as a planner – to invent spatial strategies that nurture the accumulation of the grassroots initiatives on the waterfront, as well as to focus broader public attention on the importance of asking not only 'when' and 'why' we need to open up the city to the water again but, more significantly, 'how' we might do it in a way that is meaningful and beneficial to future generations.

The Baltic TurnTable (BTT)

What if global warming might be good news for some parts of the world? Global warming indeed puts large parts of the world at risk from the Biblical threats of famine, flood and disease – however, in northern Europe, agriculture will become more productive and the climate will improve. The Baltic TurnTable (BTT) is an initiative set up by research and cultural institutions around the Baltic Sea that has the ambitious goal of highlighting the potential of the Baltic coastline as the 'leisure landscape' of tomorrow. The BTT project, a dream of the future Baltic coast, is an example of visionary thinking taken seriously enough by the scientific arena.

The Baltic Sea environment is one of the most researched and yet most polluted marine environments in the world. This idea is not only about creating 'the new Mediterranean' but, more importantly, is an effort to rescue the region from environmental hazards and to point towards a happier ending, focusing on enhancing the region's quality of life.

The first sign of Tallinn's booming construction was that there were many new buildings appearing. However, due to the current economic slowdown, the scenery of Tallinn's urban planning and design

activities has finally started to grow not just in quantity, but in quality. Wishful thinking? Tallinn's waterfront is something for Europe – and for the world – to keep an eye on.

The Baltic Riviera only comes to life if the concept finds fertile grounds on a local scale among municipalities and the coastline's dwellers, and has the help of landscape and urban designers who are willing to take on the challenge.

Looking from Estonia, then, our hopes lie largely with Tallinn's 'catalyst' powers...

Tallinn grasps the bay like a small crab: the sea connects most of the urban districts, from Rocca-Al-Mare to Merivälja. Stroomi, Pelgurand, Kopli, Kalamaja, the city centre, Kadriorg and Pirita are all different city areas by the waterfront. Nothing seems to have changed much when taking a walk or a photo, yet it is evident that a slight mind-shift has occurred in the way locals think about the waterfront, looking at the same site with perhaps different eyes, or through another lens – hopefully a sharper one. But the physical situation is largely the same, even for infrastructure and connections. In professional circles as well as on a political level, the locals are discussing the same agenda over and over again.

Years ago, the city made plans for extremely wide traffic routes, such as the Northern Bypass which would cut off the city centre from the seaside. Surprisingly and sadly, these plans found funding from the EU – just when a majority of successful cities are instead transforming their vehicular arteries into 'green rivers' or putting them underground. The local activists, as well as the professional community, have been in a continuous and rigorous fight for smarter solutions. Therefore, the waterfront tramline from the 2000 competition and the rest of the ideas presented in that entry might still prove relevant even now, some 13 years later.
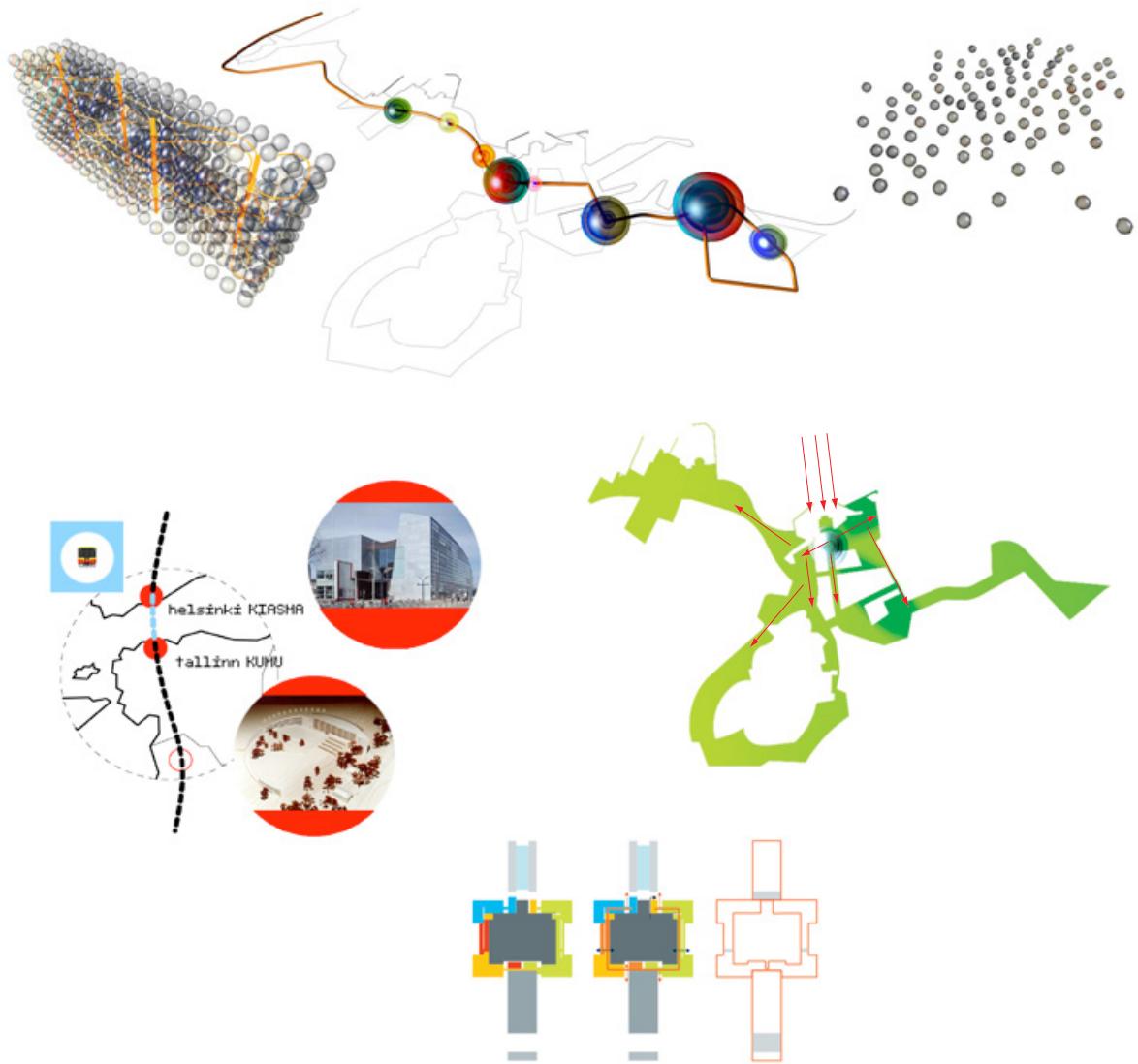
SAMPLE 1 CONCLUSION

I must point out that this sample targets most of the aspects of 'Immersion' discussed in Section III: 'Findings'. Here, the 'immersion' in the work takes on a certain colour in terms of cultivating the later predominant urge to 'disrupt the 'machinic'', as elaborated in 'Findings'. Sample 1 should be considered together with Samples 2 (Kultuurikatel), 8 (Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture, especially 8.2: Valgusfestival) and 10 (workshops, especially 10.2: the Linnahall workshop).

[11] It has a permanent naval exhibition, including the icebreaker *Suur Tõll* and the submarine *Lembit*, while the cupolas offer spectacular acoustics for musical events.

[12] http//:eu.baltic.net

[13] The main invention of the winning entry was a new high-speed tramline on the seashore. The tramline was partially adjacent to the green bastion belt around the Old Town, creating the possibility to extend the tramline all around the historic centre (a ring-route around the Old Town). As a result, a continuous green passageway was formed, connecting the main existing buildings – unique landmarks – on the waterfront, enabling their further development according to their historic features and contemporary societal demands.

[14] The development of the Tallinn seaside has been a burning topic throughout the history of the city, right from its birth. The harbour was a source of wealth for the Hanseatic Old Town centuries ago, while today some 7 million tourists arrive annually by sea, which is a number making even Helsinki jealous of our potential. As stated, practically all of the bayside was a military zone during the Soviet regime, with strict restrictions of access. Throughout the history of Estonia, generations of architects, urban planners and policy makers and many others have dwelt upon and offered various scenarios to redevelop the waterfront in such a way that it helps Tallinn to take a great leap – to introduce the contemporary and to make sense again of this *terrain vague*. Thus, in 2000, yet another urban planning competition took place, asking for comprehensive ideas to guide the development of the bay area in the city centre, from Katariina Quay to the Russalka Memorial.

[15] The leading agent in the transformation of the former industrial complex into a creative hub was the NGO Kultuurikatel. For the first five or six years (until Tallinn became the European Capital of Culture in 2011) this was mostly self-funded voluntary work. The activities of the NGO were financed through grants by the Estonian Cultural Endowment and the Tallinn Cultural Heritage Department (support for event-organisation). The NGO assumed the role of the developer, which means dealing not only with the planning, programming and architectural design, but also with the legal issues and financial scheme of the project.

[16] Already in the winning competition proposal from 2000, I had suggested that this location become a creative hub.

[17] As a curator, one can think of performances or art shows which have been staged in *Kultuurikatel* (a 'creative industries incubator', according to the Ministry of Culture). At the 'sea-gate' to Estonia, *Kultuurikatel* had the ambition to become an entrepreneurial model for the country's 'creatives'.

[18] The particular location of the Cauldron was drawing plenty of attention since the new Tallinn City Hall was to be constructed on a neighbouring plot. The controversial Linnahall, a grandiose concert hall from the 1980s, is also located in its immediate vicinity.

SAMPLE 2
THE KULTUURIKATEL INITIATIVE

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Sample 2: The *Kultuurikatel* initiative and urban development proposal to the City of Tallinn (2006) by NGO Kultuurikatel board members Veronika Valk, Peeter-Eerik Ots, Maria Hansar, Andres Lõo and Helene Vetik.[15]

Kultuurikatel was set up as an initiative for catalysing development on the Tallinn waterfront, as well as a laboratory of the contemporary, with its three main 'operating tools' – the triple 'S': 1) developing Synergy, 2) Symbiosis and 3) Synchronisation of the creative fields. The 10,000 square metres would host outdoor and indoor spaces, both experimental and experiential, for tacit learning and for performance – a multitude of facilities for the arts and the sciences. Upon reconstruction, Kultuurikatel was conceived as an open study-book on emergent resilience: the built environment learns from natural phenomena and becomes in itself a learning tool, to be explored, studied and evolved over time.

This sample resonates most strongly with the 'manifesto' on 'architecture as initiative' in Section IV.

KULTUURIKATEL
AS AN INITIATIVE

A project in a nutshell, Kultuurikatel ('Culture Cauldron') is an old thermal power station being transformed into a multipurpose cultural centre. Without a doubt, the building has great potential. It has plenty of interesting spaces, including a 20m-high main hall. Naturally, the starting point of the project was the year 2000, when Villem Tomiste and I won the open ideas competition for the waterfront.[16] In our plans, the thermal plant had been nominated as the future cultural centre. When the Tallinn mayor of the time, Tõnis Palts, termed the key development area 'cultural space' (2005), the ideas were reactivated and more people became interested in the topic.[17] This is how the idea of the Culture Cauldron took the form of an NGO.

The project was led by an inventive and energetic NGO that I called together in spring 2006 and that had plenty of grand ideas for how to make the concept work on the premises; however, no major financing for their implementation was as yet on the horizon. The thermal power station (heat-plant) was situated at a focal point of Tallinn's transforming

waterfront: the northern side of the Tallinn Old Town, at the address Põhja Road 27a/35. The size of the main building complex of the heat-plant was 10,000m² and there were another 10,000m² of unused structures right on the plot. The property was and still is owned by the City of Tallinn.

What triggered the whole initiative? I saw Kultuurikatel as a catalyst for urban change: the thermal power station is perfectly situated within Tallinn's transforming waterfront, and is a stepping stone from the centre (and the Old Town) to the waterfront, with proximity to both.[18] How the waterfront should be developed – and what the city could or should do about it – is a major planning question in Tallinn, even today. Since the urban development in Tallinn is to a great extent led by private developers, the Culture Cauldron represents quite a distinctive project, focusing on the development of public space and being a clever grassroots initiative for a place of creation, not just of consumption.

The city was slowly and unwillingly coming to terms with our arguments, thanks to our extensive lobby work and pressure through repeatedly expressing the NGO's opinion in the mass media, thus popularising the idea and gathering public support for the concept of Kultuurikatel. Having a 'creative council' of 25 of the country's most prominent culture professionals gave the proposal credibility and broadened its agenda, its rigour and its relevance in the society. Soon it could no longer be overlooked or neglected.[19] After 2011, the Culture Capital organisation Foundation 2011 (a municipal administrative entity of project managers) was reformed into Foundation Kultuurikatel.

FINANCING
THE INITIATIVE

The NGO envisioned four sources of income. Firstly, we saw the Cauldron developing as a 'creative industries' incubator (which could pave the way for EU creative industries funds). Secondly, developing the property was supposed to provide rental incomes. Thirdly, the NGO considered the Cauldron as a project-based educational institution focusing on creative entrepreneurship and art education. Fourthly, the NGO had ambitious ideas to develop renewable energies on the site. However, in 2005 the premises were in need of major investment, as a majority of the complex was troubled by

an asbestos problem, which increased the projected costs of renovation.

The asbestos removal has been completed, and various concerts, events and theatrical performances have been arranged in the building. However, as a non-comprehensive, step-by-step renovation project, the undertaking remains in a continuous phase of preparation. Currently, renovation works are still in progress. The building has three kinds of spaces: bigger halls that could be rented out on hourly/weekly/monthly bases; cross-use/workshop spaces that could be scheduled between theatres and private users; and smaller units (rooms) that scale from more public to more private space.

How did the project eventually receive funding? From the NGO's perspective, we argued that the City of Tallinn should invest in the Cauldron, potentially holding the central position in the European Capital for Culture (2011) program.

Even more so, because the buildings are the city's property, the place is a key point in the waterfront redevelopment, and a major development project of public space on the Tallinn scale. It was also emphasised that there is no other project of such immense scale in creative industries in the country. And, indeed, we were progressing the discussion of creative industries in Estonia.

The *Smotel* ('chimney-hotel') project by Veronika Valk (2000) is a proposal for an 85m-high brick chimney on the Kultuurikatel[20] premises to be converted into a 35-storey hotel. With one room per floor, each level can offer 360-degree panoramic views to the north over Tallinn Bay and to the south towards the historic centre, via brick-scale illuminator windows. The existing chimney has been placed under state protection,[21] together with an adjacent slanting gantry and the limestone façade of the main building of the former heat-plant.[22]
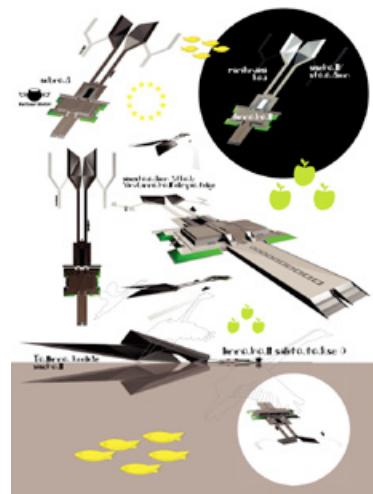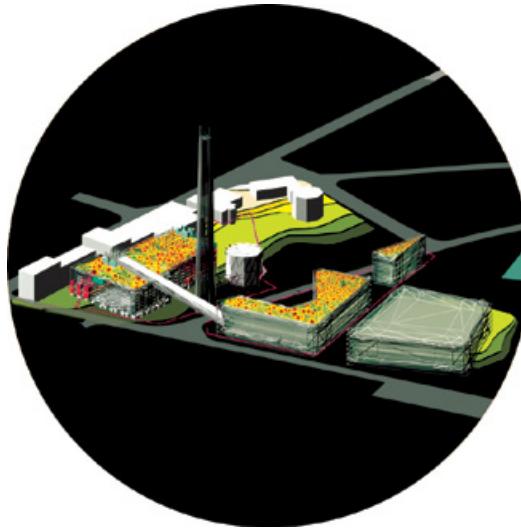
BACKGROUND

Historically, the first buildings in the west wing of the Tallinn Electricity Station complex (the machinery building, the boilerhouse and an owffice block) were completed in 1912–13 according to architect G. Schmidt's project.[23] Simultaneously, a brick chimney was built by J. Russwurm's engineering office.[24] In 1923 the town government decided to use oil shale instead of peat for heat production. This brought much trouble for the neighbouring inhabitants, namely smoke from the burning of oil shale polluting the surroundings. Refurbishing the furnaces and heightening the chimney did not solve the problem.[25]

The appearance of the area was altered by a 75m-high metal chimney with a diameter of 2.75m, which was produced in the factory Ilmarine in December 1934.[26] The air became considerably cleaner; however, the whole complex suffered during World War II, with the metal chimney being destroyed. The current red-brick chimney, built in 1947–48, was initially 102.5m high (today slightly over 80m).[27] As the heat-plant continued to burn oil shale, the chimney needed such height to guide the smoke as far as possible from the inhabited areas.[28]
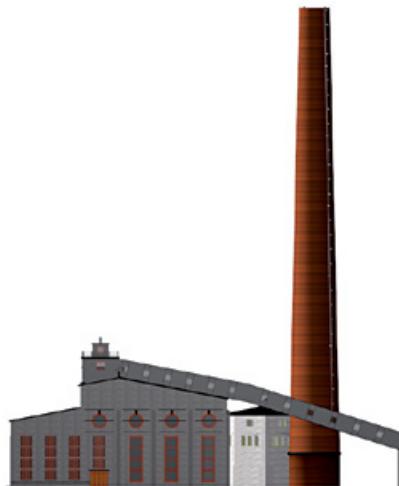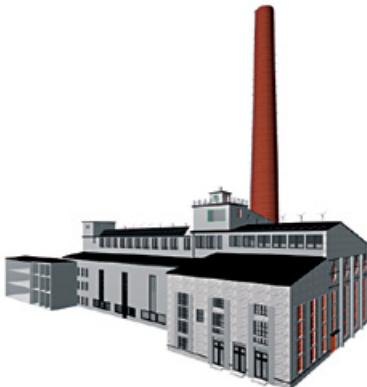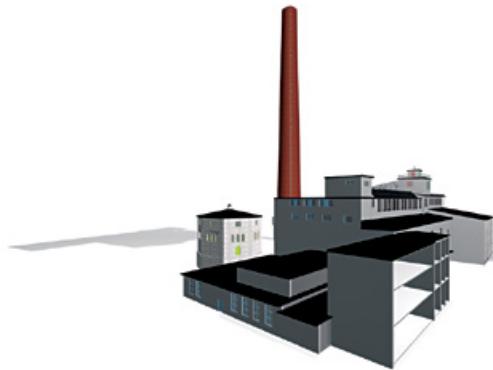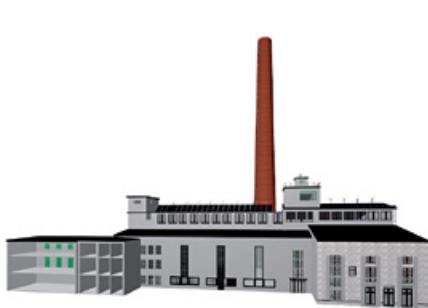
Kultuurikatel (transl. 'Culture Cauldron'), in the former heating station on Tallinn's waterfront, is becoming public space in the best and broadest sense of the word, because the industrial complex is currently being converted into Estonia's biggest creative industries incubator.

Situated in a key location (that of the meeting point between the UNESCO-listed Old Town and the Tallinn seaside), it exemplifies the controversy of Estonia's historic and ideological legacy. The Tallinn waterfront was previously a secluded border zone – however, it is now undergoing vast and rapid transformation with parts of the seaside, which used to be cut off from the city, now being given back to locals.

Installing the 35-storey Smotel in an 85m-tall disused chimney, as part of the Kultuurikatel redevelopment of the old Tallinn power-plant complex on the waterfront close to the Old Town and the passenger harbour, is about re-defining the architect's vocabulary in order to reach the public.

Finding alternative ways gives us an opportunity to shift the way we think and operate together.

Kultuurikatel Chimney
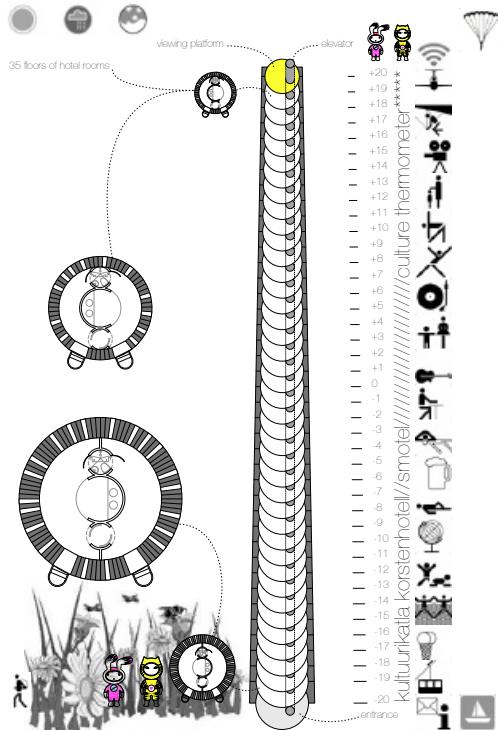
Kultuurikatel

Architectural concept, programming & preliminary design: Veronika Valk
Idea: 2000
Formation of NGO: 2006
Graphic designer: Helene Vetik

Kultuurikatel is an entrepreneurial model to catalyse the development of the waterfront as well as a laboratory of the contemporary, with its operating tools developing synergy, symbiosis and the synchronisation of the creative fields. At the Sea Gate to Estonia, it comprises the 10,000m² of a former

heating station that is to be reconstructed as a renewable energy power-plant. An environmental education centre, in combination with performance spaces and art facilities, is implemented in close collaboration with partners from the public and private spheres. Upon construction, Kultuurikatel provides an open study-book on sustainability: the history of the heating station, contemporary energy efficiency solutions used in reconstruction, and integrated renewable energy technologies are on display for local schools and visitors of all ages. The environment itself becomes a learning tool to be

monitored, studied and upgraded over time – as a curator, one can think of staging a performance or opening an art show in Kultuurikatel, the creative hub on the waterfront.

Founding members of NGO and current board members: Veronika Valk, Andres Lõo, Maria Hansar, Peeter-Eerik Ots.
This 'bottom-up' venture was taken over by Tallinn City in 2010.
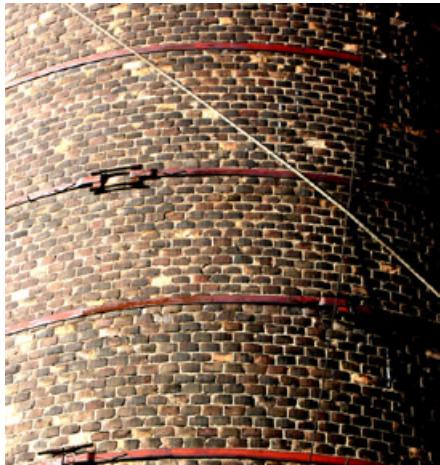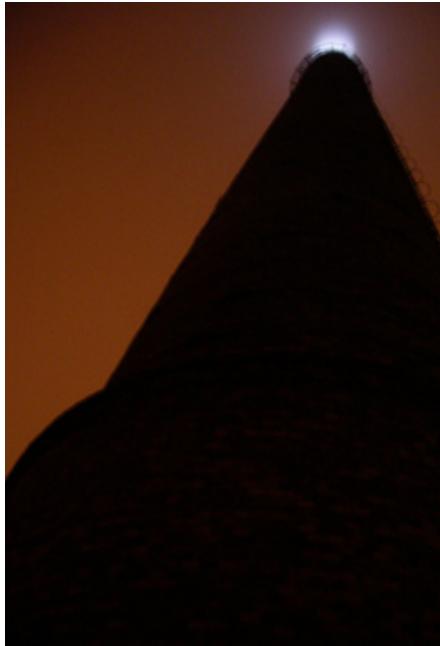
Kultuurituli showed the way (literally!) in January 2006, with a powerful 250m light-beam emitted from its 82.5m-high chimney, which was visible all over the city.

THE ANOMALY

Smotel, planned inside the chimney, had a round floor-plan with a diameter of 10.5m at the foot of the chimney, decreasing by half at the top of the chimney. The height of the structure would allow the building of at least 35 storeys of hotel rooms, one room per floor. Or it would also be possible to divide the floors in half, allowing for two rooms per floor. This would allow double the number of rooms in the hotel. The floor area varies from 21.5m² at the foot of the chimney, to 11.0m² at the top of the chimney.

The ground-floor was designated as a lobby and as communal spaces. The hotel would not need to accommodate restaurants, meeting places or other facilities since these are offered by the adjacent Kultuurikatel. Thus, the hotel rooms could be similar to the ones in a Japanese capsule hotel, equipped with the absolute essentials such as bedrooms and bathrooms. Windows are created as if by 'punching' bricks out of the wall, offering a 360-degree view (thus the windows are somewhat hidden).

It is clear that, despite the small size of the rooms, the hotel would be unique and attractive for a variety of international visitors with a certain aspiration for the 'peculiar' and a fascination for anomalies. Perhaps Kultuurikatel's guests (artists, performers, lecturers) could be accommodated here. Please do not tell this to anyone, but I promised the top floor of the hotel always to the current mayor (they shift each year). Smotel has the potential to allure.

SAMPLE 2 CONCLUSION

As said, this sample resonates most strongly with the 'manifesto' on 'architecture as initiative' in Section IV. Furthermore, the aims of Kultuurikatel and the process of its development are closely tied to issues discussed in Sample 1 (the Tallinn waterfront) and in Sample 8 (Valgusfestival, especially the installation Kultuurituli). This sample will be highlighted and further elaborated in Section III, 'Findings', where I talk about 'the opportunistic in the 'machinic''.

[19] In 2006-2007 I managed to author, co-produce and allocate the Valgusfestival 'light art' installations in and next to Kultuurikatel, to draw broader attention to this intriguing structure on such a potent site.

[20] The preliminary planning of Kultuurikatel suggested possibilities for new construction in the seaside parts of the premises. The volumes of the new buildings were to host the functions that the existing structures cannot accommodate. Thus, Kultuurikatel was meant to operate in both the existing as well as the new buildings. The ground varies in height, suggesting an urban park in the midst of the built volumes: a 4.5m height difference (slope towards the sea) creates an architecturally interesting challenge to merge the ground and the buildings on multiple levels, with appropriate access points from different ground levels. The chimney is located in the lower part of the premises, right next to the proposed tramline.

[21] Monuments #27916 (the chimney); #8199; #27918; #27917; #8196, and #8198 in the National Registry of Cultural Monuments.

[22] As was described in Sample 1, the winning entry in the Tallinn waterfront urban planning competition by my colleague Villem Tomiste and I in 2000 foresaw a culture hub on the premises of the former heat-plant in the central location between the bayside and the Old Town. Thus, the culture hub is offered the best location in the city – the crossing point – since the cultural realm and the

creative industries contribute to the city's persistent visibility in an international context. The creative hub itself (Kultuurikatel) was envisioned as original due to its programming and events, as well as adaptive: its role is to enhance the symbiosis and the synergy in the fields of culture, as well as to synchronise the ongoing activities and to catalyse new initiatives.

[23] In 1932, architect E. Habermann delivered the project for a new, more prominent headquarters with a limestone façade, as well as a switchboard building and pump-station. The many annexes include two octagonal limestone fuel storage towers, completed in 1913 and 1926.

[24] Nerman, R (1996), *Kalamaja ajalugu*, Tallinn, p. 70.

[25] *Ibid*., p. 142.

[26] Rausberg, H (1988), *Tallinna Linna Elektri Keskjaamast Tallinna Soojusvõrguni*, Tallinn, pp. 14-15.

[27] Raam, V (ed.) (1993), *Eesti Arhitektuur* 1. Tallinn, Valgus, Tallin, p. 174.

[28] The red brick chimney (the premises have three chimneys in total) is a peculiar structure on the plot: from its construction onwards, historians as well as architects and planners have disputed over its impact on Tallinn's silhouette of medieval towers as seen from the sea. (The silhouette has the nickname 'sardines-in-a-can', as it is printed on the label of an infamous Soviet-era product of canned Baltic sprats, popular among tourists as well as locals.)

SAMPLE 3
THE SUURE-JAANI HIGH
SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE

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Sample 3: The Suure-Jaani High School[29] Sports Centre project (2000) by Veronika Valk in collaboration with Kavakava architects (construction completion in 2005) features a climbable façade all around the building: the teachers therefore had to adapt to children climbing onto the roof (by teaching children how to fall safely, instead of merely prohibiting them from climbing). The Suure-Jaani Sports Centre's technical specifications were: surface area 1,988.4m²; net floor area 2290.0m²; floor area total 521.7m²; building volume 3,273m³.

According to locals, a 'vegetable soup'[30] has emerged in literally the 'middle of nowhere': in the rural town of Suure-Jaani in Southern Estonia. This playful and brightly-coloured sports complex features open-plan ball courts with sponge-like walls and felt-panel ceilings for acoustic comfort. Children are thrilled by the fully climbable façade – concrete slabs covered with a perimetric 'ladder' of untreated Siberian Larch. The canopy's slim steel supports, which separate the inner courtyard from the street, are in fact a bicycle rack. The interior design is full of integrated solutions, for example cupboards as drawing boards and exterior lighting giving interior illumination via glass cupolas.

BUILDING ON-SITE

The sports centre is on Vambola Street, with its main entrance at the corner of Vambola and Tallinn Streets. The plot is large enough for a future swimming pool (dimensions 37.2 x 28.5m) and for student housing (dimensions 14.0 x 28.5m). The new sports centre took this into account, leaving abundant options for the coming years, such as for new annexes that could encircle an inner courtyard. The lobby is designed in a way that it can also serve in the future as the main entrance to the complex.

The L-shaped foyer along the building and parallel to Vambola Street leads to the outdoor stadium at one end and to the school building (the existing classrooms), the dining room and the courtyard at the other end. The courtyard acts both as a casual extension of the interior as well as a festive

gathering space with a flag-pole and a canopy for protection during rainy or snowy weather. The poles that hold up the cantilevered canopy roof function simultaneously as a bike rack. All the existing vegetation on the plot has been respected and preserved as much as possible.

The floor of the sports hall lies 3.30m below ground level.[31] The foyer is, in fact, an open balcony to the sports hall.[32] The benefit of such a solution is that the foyer is the viewers' space during public sports competitions. The courtyard side of the sports hall is additionally equipped with removable telescopic tribunes. I suggested keeping the stands open also in summertime, since the whole of the glass façade towards the inner courtyard was intended to be openable. It would make perfect sense for a school in a rural setting to have its interior blended with the outside environment.

THE FIGHT

However, the issue of the glass façade caused one of the main quarrels with the construction company[33] (almost resulting in a physical fight between me and the site supervisor on the day of 'topping-out',[34] with both of us standing on the newly-poured roof plate while the client's representatives looked up at us from the ground, betting on which one of us would throw the other off the roof). The construction company was otherwise very supportive of the project and novel solutions were proposed, yet in this instance they argued that if the façade were open then the ventilation system would break down.

In essence, the construction company wished to install a cheaper ventilation system and did not want to take chances with warranty repairs. Against my will and without my approval, the construction company installed a fixed glass wall, with just two emergency exit doors that could be opened only occasionally. This solution does not support the original concept of the sports centre's interior having a continuous flow into the courtyard – and *vice versa*: of the feeling of playing sports outdoors even when inside the building.

Photo: Arne Maasik

LÕIGE 1-1
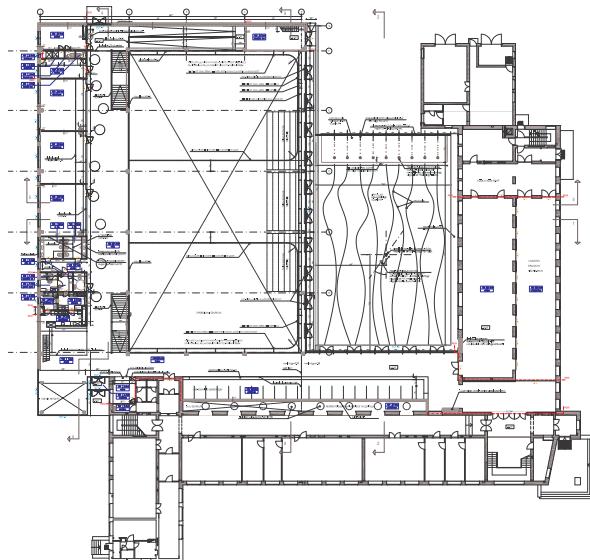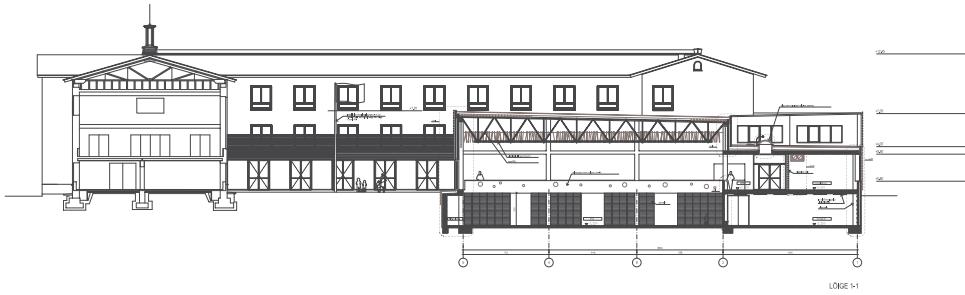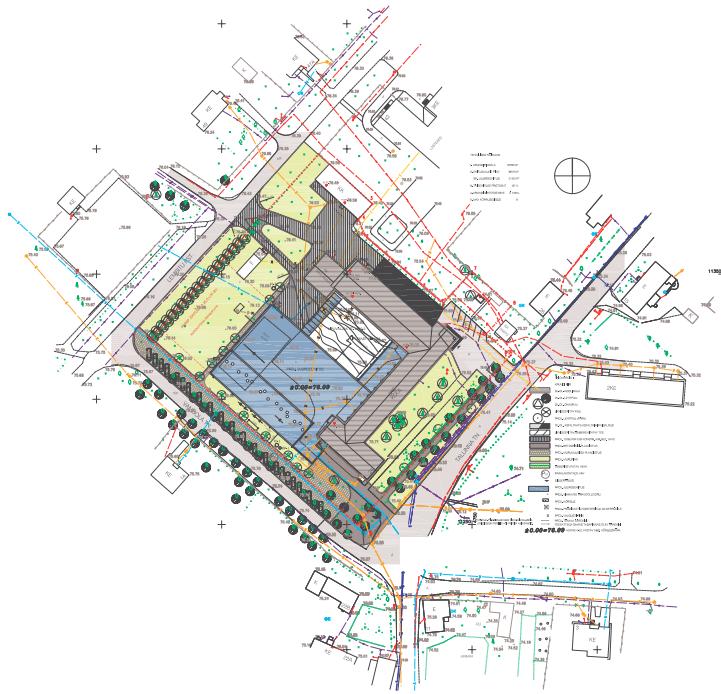
On another note, one of the main challenges of the project was its acoustics. The noise from the sports hall had to be kept away from the classrooms, offices and other spaces that needed quietness. This issue was solved by a suspended felt ceiling in the sports hall, invented specially for this project. Another topic was the joining of the old school building with the new annex: here, an 'in-between' space with skylights was created, with no functional designation. It became the favourite recreation space of the students.

The building is made predominantly of reinforced concrete. The surfaces emphasise the natural features of the materials, thus the whole building bears the notion of authenticity. The façade is covered with elements of Siberian Larch, which run mainly horizontally all along the façade. These siding battens are fixed to the exterior concrete panels with colourful wooden 'distance cubicles' that are placed at random intervals and, on first glance at the elevation drawing, as if without any recognisable pattern-logic.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SCHOOL[35]

'The Most Beautiful School' was visited by Karin Paulus, one of the editors of Eesti Ekspress, the main weekly in Estonia which has an occasional fascination with architecture.[36] She wrote: "It is a school where every child wants to study. There is no other school environment in Estonia as comfortable as this. And it is not located in Tallinn or Tartu [two main cities in Estonia], but in Suure-Jaani. The director of the school, Peeter Sadam, admits the small size of his hometown and says ... that the existing school building typology from the 1960s already needed an extension a long time ago."

The competition for the sports centre took place in 2000. However, it took several years for the school to acquire the necessary funding to build the project, although it is a central school in the region, with students flocking here from the neighbouring counties and towns. During the construction, we also tragically lost two of the project's main supporters, with both mayor Rein Valdmann and vice-mayor Peedu Voormansik passing away.

But the project was realised, the design emphasising an appropriate scale to the small town as the sports hall is sunk partially into the ground. The 'load-bearing holes' in the interior walls create a play of shadow and light. The director's office overlooks the roof, to respectfully greet the children who have climbed joyfully up on the ladder-façade. The felt ceiling created acoustics suitable for concerts, thus the sports centre is currently one of the best performance venues in the region. Hence, it is operating happily for the general public and the broader good.

Suure-Jaani Sports Centre

Architect: Veronika Valk (ZiZi&YoYo)
Co-authors: Katrin Koov and Siiri Vallner (Kavakava)

Project: May 2000
Completion: March 2005
Client: Suure-Jaani Municipality

According to locals, a 'vegetable soup' has emerged in literally the 'middle of nowhere' – the rural town of Suure-Jaani in southern Estonia.

A playful, neo-pop, brightly-coloured sports complex features open-plan ball courts with sponge-like walls and felt-panel ceilings for acoustic comfort.

Children are thrilled by its fully-climbable façade – concrete slabs covered with a perimetral 'ladder' of untreated Siberian Larch. The canopy's slim steel supports that separate an inner courtyard from the street are, in fact, a bicycle rack.

The interior design is full of integrated solutions, for example cupboards as drawing boards and exterior lighting giving interior illumination via glass cupolas
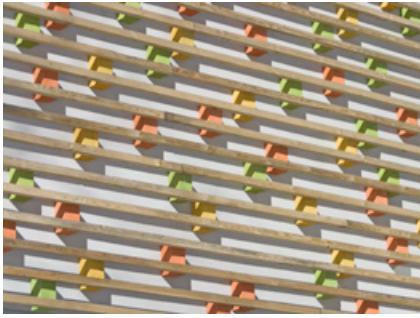
SAMPLE 3 CONCLUSION

*This sample presents a unique confrontation with the construction company
(among many others that have taken place during the course of my practice but
are not discussed in this document), which prompted me to search for alternative
methods of communication.This topic will be raised in Section III, featuring par-
ticularly in the subsection 'Multi-modality' and in the discussions on 'immersion'.
On the other hand, this sample is also a case study of the 'joyful' and 'playful'
design approach which is at the core of my practice.*

[29] The existing school building was also partly refurbished as part of the project. For example, the dining hall was given a fresh look, enlarged by adding the former wardrobe to its dining hall.
[30] Architecture magazine A10, #4 July/Aug 2005, http://www.a10.eu/magazine/issues/4/
[31] This helps to prevent heat-loss. Adjacent to the sports hall are the changing-rooms and bathrooms; other halls with more specific programs (gym, wrestling arena, etc.); equipment storage areas, and technical spaces. The sports hall can be divided into either two or three separate fields, according to need. The partition curtains are white, to create an airy, light and more festive or 'elevated' atmosphere in the interior.
[32] The foyer connects the sports hall, the new and old classrooms, the administrative offices, the inner courtyard and the dining hall. The sports hall with its changing rooms and bathrooms, the dining hall and the foyer form an autonomous block, in case this is needed, at which time it can be used separately from the rest of the building. In the foyer, there is also a café next to the main entrance. Both are connected to the administration block (director, secretary, accounting) with spaces for meetings and seminars, as well as a joint recreational space for all the teachers at the school.

[33] Skanska, a leading international project development and construction company.
[34] The rite of placing the last beam at the top of a building.
[35] Other interesting school buildings in Estonia include: Pärnu Saksa Tütarlaste gümnaasium (Vanalinna põhikool; Nikolai 26; arhitekt August Reinberg; 1902), Jakob Westholmi erakool Tallinnas (Kevade 4; Karl Jürgenson; 1913), Tallinna 21. Kool (Raua 6; Artur Perna; 1924; juurdeehitus Raul Järg, Toomas Korb; 2003), Tallinna Pelgulinna algkool (Ristiku 69; Herbert Johanson; 1929), Tallinna Lasnamäe algkool (Tallinna teeninduskool; Majaka 2; Herbert Johanson; 1936), Konstantin Pätsi nimeline Eesti Punase Risti vabaõhukool Tallinnas (Vabaõhukooli tee 7; Konstantin Bölau; 1937), Rakvere gümnaasium (Vabaduse 1; Alar Kotli; 1939), Pärnu Elisabethi tänava kool (Kooli 13; Olev Siinmaa; 1940), Tallinna 46. keskkool (Mulla 7; Udo Ivask, Herbert Rüütlane; 1963), Uhtna põhikool (Maarja Nummert; 1986), Aravete keskkool (Ignar Fjuk; 1980–91), Tallinna Rocca al Mare Kool (Vabaõhumuuseumi tee 8; Emil Urbel, Ülo Peil, Indrek Erm; 2000)
[36] *Eesti Ekspress*, 07.04.2005

SAMPLE 4
THE MONUMENT FOR COMPOSER EDUARD TUBIN

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Sample4: The Monument for Composer Eduard Tubin, by Veronika Valk (architect), Aili Vahtrapuu (sculptor) and Louis Dandrel (sound engineering), is designed as an interactive outdoor musical experience.

This monument (completion in 2005) in Tartu, Estonia, honours composer Eduard Tubin's 100th anniversary.[37] It emerged from an architectural competition held in May 2004, won by Veronika Valk (architect) and Aili Vahtrapuu (sculptor). Sculptor Aili Vahtrapuu set Tubin in a 'flying' pose, truly conducting the inspiration of coming generations.

According to the press, the site has become something of a destination of pilgrimage among locals. Within this interactive light- and sound-installation, visitors can hear fragments of Tubin's music by knocking on the gongs of the back wall, then sitting back and relaxing on a field of black 'rubbery-feel' concrete seats, which emit light from underneath onto white ground and wall surfaces.[38]

French sound designer Louis Dandrel from Diasonic used a variety of Tubin's musical phrases for pre-programming. Four rows of speakers create a waving soundscape on a grassy slope between the theatre and the river.[39]

THE DRUMMING SET

Although a small-scale project, it is located in a very prominent spot in a city of 100,000 inhabitants and has acquired an important role in the citizens' daily lives.

Ever since its opening in June 2006, I have been going there 'undercover' to document how people use the site. The photos attached are not posed, and reveal a strange phenomenon: the monument resembles a giant drumming set, where one sees people joyfully dancing back and forth 'playing' the gongs, igniting fragments of Tubin's music. As a result, an on-site, real-time choreography of young and old, students and office workers, unfurls.

The bronze figure of the composer has his back to the city as the sculpture faces the theatre instead, conducting an imaginary orchestra on the round black seats. These seats offer music teachers an opportunity to explain to students where the violinists, percussionists, etc. find their places in the orchestral setting. Just as the local teachers are invited to hold music or history classes at the monument, the site now offers locals a place to rest, have a snack, and play with Tubin's music in this 'pocket' of light and sound that is inscribed into the slope.

THE POLITICAL CONCERN – AN ANECDOTE

"The Vanemuine slope is an extremely complicated location for a sculpture – if it were facing the city, then it would have its back to the theatre," explained vice-mayor Hannes Astok at the time. He continued: "But we hope to make the arrangement intriguing enough so that the people will come to visit out of curiosity." Tartu City invested 1.8 million EEK (€120,000) in the building of the monument. One of the main concerns of the city was vandalism. "Public sculpture requires compromises," stressed Astok. "The sculpture must be such that none of its parts can be broken off and this is already up to the ingenuity of the artist to combine the technical side with the artistic."
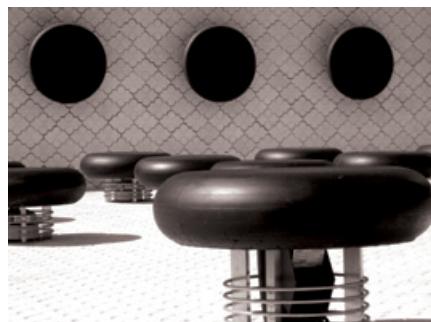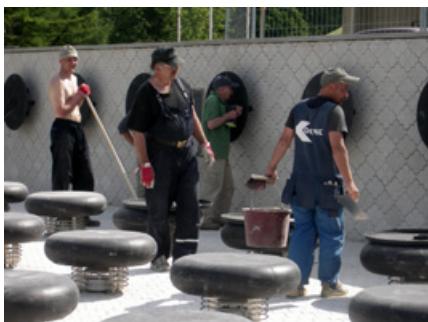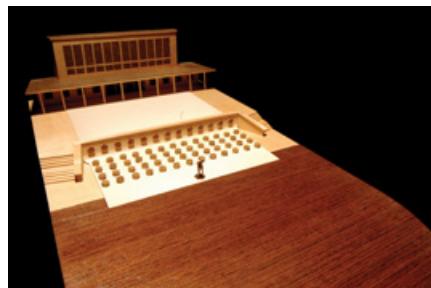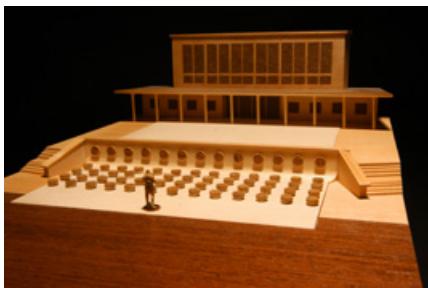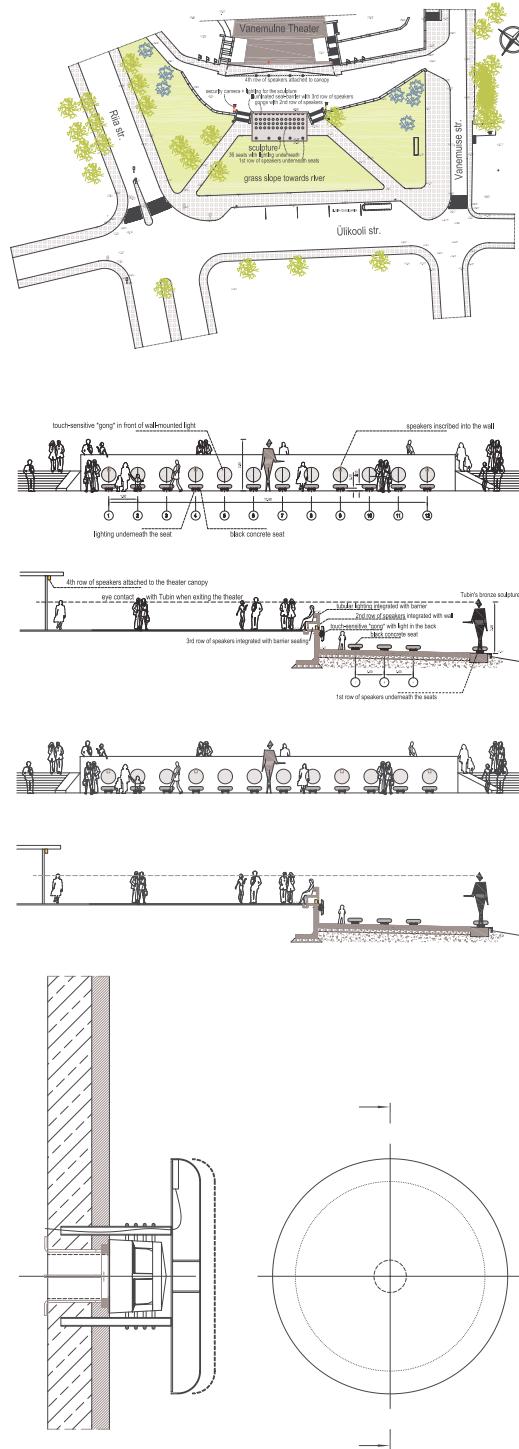
Composer Eduard Tubin's monument

Architect: Veronika Valk
Sculptor: Aili Vahtrapuu
Sound design: Louis Dandrel
Client: Tartu City
Project: 2005
Completion: 2006

**Location:** in front of the Vanemuine Theatre in Tartu, Estonia.

This monument operates as an interactive soundscape installation in front of the city's main theatre. The monument resembles a giant drum set, where visitors can knock on the round black steel gongs on the back wall in order to hear excerpts of Tubin's music. Such activity often results in people joyfully dancing back and forth, truly 'playing' the gongs.

The spontaneous choreography of visitors highlights the interactive nature of the monument, aiming also to improve the outdoor learning opportunities for the students from adjacent schools and offering teachers an inspiring public space as an urban 'study book'.

Three rows of speakers are installed along the sloping site in a way that allows one to produce a spatially 'wavy' urban soundscape, as the pre-programming of musical fragments incorporates slight delays. An array of 36 round black concrete seats in front of Tubin's figure can host an orchestra, as if to be conducted by the sculpture.
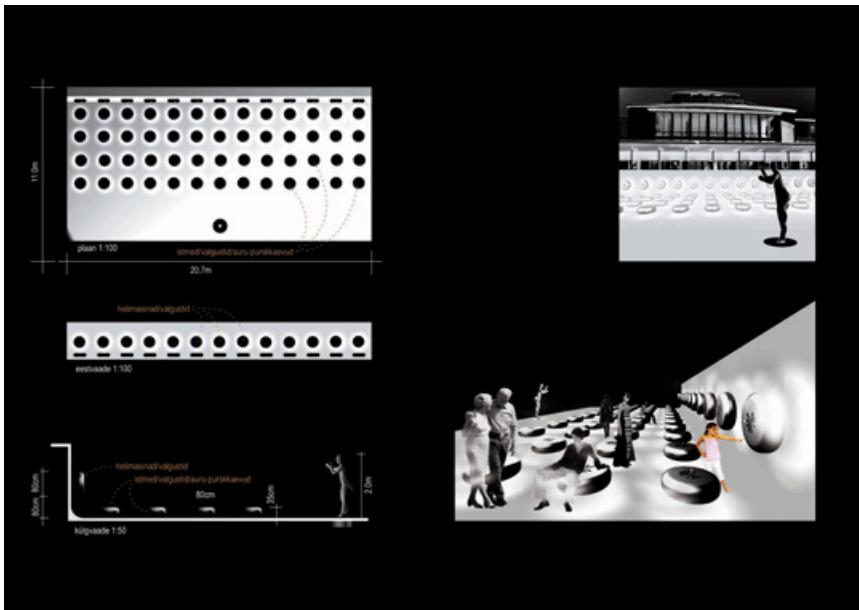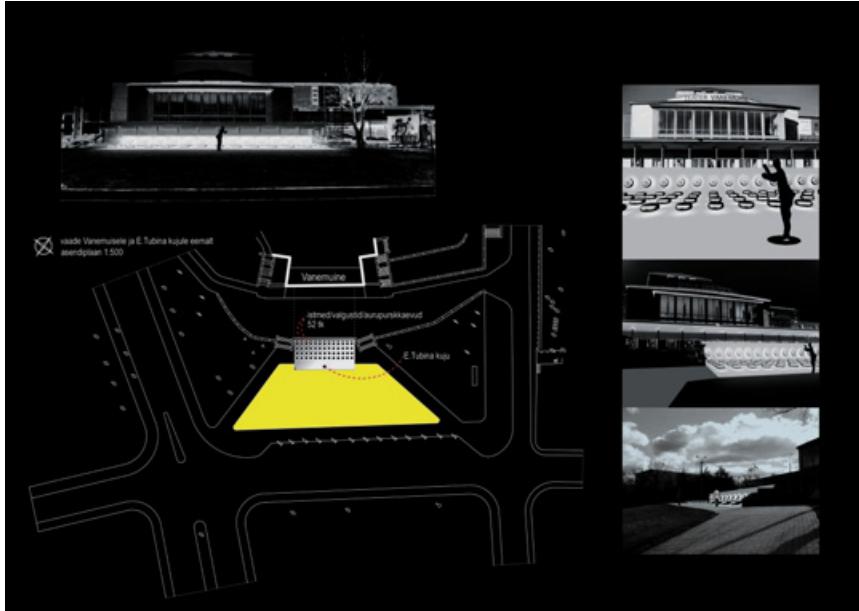
SAMPLE 4 CONCLUSION

Similar to all the other samples, this case study points to one possible tactic in the 'joyful' and 'playful' agenda of my practice. This project resonates well with the next sample (the Lasva Water Tower) as they both address (urban, public) soundscapes. It touches on a confrontation with politicians, where the poetic or artistic often collide with the brutally pragmatic. Thus, there is also a thread of the 'Kafkaesque', discussed in Section III, 'Findings'.

[37] Eduard Tubin was a highly popular Estonian composer whose legacy in the country's cultural heritage is of greatest importance. Tubin's specialty was choir music.

[38] Both light and sound are programmed in such a way that the visitor plays an active role; for example, the sequence of the musical fragments is up to the

visitor. Yet light and sound also correspond with what is happening in the theatre: light intensifies towards the beginning of a performance, then drops right away when the play or concert starts.

[39] The site was formerly a grassy slope in front of Vanemuine Theatre and Concert Hall in Tartu, a university town.

SAMPLE 5
THE LASVA WATER TOWER

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Sample 5: The Lasva Water Tower by Veronika Valk (architect), Kadri Klementi, Kalle-Priit Pruuden (sculptor), Kalle Tikas (sound engineer), Peeter Laurits (artist). This project features stairs which can be played like a piano.

The conversion of the Lasva Water Tower into a performance space, a visitors' centre, an info-point and an art gallery in southern Estonia (project in 2006, completion in 2009) has helped this formerly desolate rural community next to the Russian border to make a difference to the whole countryside of Estonia. The main attraction of the building is its piano staircase leading up to a grass roof. Besides analogue sound, the stairs use also electronics and prerecorded sound samples.

On January 16, 2010, Zizi&Yoyo received the Annual Award of the Estonian Cultural Endowment for outstanding architectural design in the category of small projects for its conversion of the Lasva Water Tower into an art gallery. Located in a desolate and yet culturally distinct part of rural southern Estonia, the design is distinguished in its capacity for raising regional awareness, its minimalist outlook and its brave and inventive interior design.

THE PLAYFUL –PIANO STAIRS

The main attraction of the building is its unique staircase leading up to the grass roof – stairs that can be played like a grand piano. The barrier of the stairs consists of steel trusses, varying in thickness and length, which give each step its own tone. In addition to the analogue sound solution, the stairs are also equipped with electronics and prerecorded sound samples (of wild animals, of opera singing, etc.), making it possible to alter the acoustics and to play a theme according to a user's own wishes.

THE OPERATIONAL –
POTENTIAL FOR VERSATILITY

On the upper level, the existing water tank is converted into yet another acoustically intriguing space via cutting three oval doorways into the rusty steel tank. The steel cutouts were re-used outdoors as bench covers for the audiences of summer shows and concerts. A mirror-well with bright LED lighting in the bottom and a glass plate at the entrance level extends the verticality of the interior.

The white brick with its ethnic pattern contrasts acutely with the pitch black interior of the gallery. The black colour renders the interior of the tower a seemingly endless space, helping the visitor to submerge completely into the atmosphere of the building as if in a theatre or a cinema, in order to focus on the art on the walls, on an event, or on a musical performance on the stairs. It helps to build a strengthened sensitivity to the fresh, open views from the upper level and the rooftop terrace.

A beehive inhabiting the south wall survived during construction and is now looking for a happy new keeper. It is with great anticipation that we also expect the first artist-in-residence to make full use of the performative qualities of the building, as well as to extend artistic activities to the whole neighbourhood, and to nature and travel paths. This project has started a larger process for the local community, who will continuously and resiliently improve their living environment.
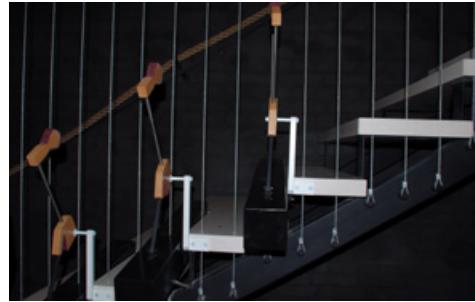
Lasva Water Tower

Architect: Veronika Valk
Assistant: Kadri Klementi
Sculptor: Kalle-Priit Pruuden
Artist: Peeter Laurits
Sound engineer: Kalle Tikas
Client: Lasva Municipality
Project: 2006
Completion: 2009

The conversion of an existing Soviet-era water tower in southern Estonia into a performance space, visitor centre and art gallery has helped the historically desolate rural community next to the Russian border to invigorate its daily life. Its newly converted water-tower has become a landmark and an attraction for visitors. Estonia as a country is struggling with an 'emptying-out' of its countryside, and Lasva, which lies in the proverbial 'middle of nowhere', is no exception. The local municipality has realised, among other measures, the potential of design to address this negative demographic trend. To date, the water tower has received warm recognition on a national level for its regional awareness-raising capacity, its minimalist outlook and its brave and inventive interior design.

The number of guests is greatly surpassing the parish's normal visitor numbers. The locals have thus enlarged their WiFi broadcast area throughout the municipality, so that foreigners feel 'at home' and connected to the rest of the world while they are in Lasva.

As a location, Lasva lies off the beaten track. The traditional path for young people born in these outlying regions would be to move to a nearby urban centre, then to the capital and maybe to a wealthier city as part of the survival strategy. Those who do not wish to follow that route miss out on opportunities to present their talent and to receive attention even on a national level, much less internationally.

Thus, the Lasva Water Tower seeks to turn this logic upside down and to create a 'wormhole' effect from here to the rest of the world, by means of architectural design.The main attraction of the building is its piano staircase leading up to grass roof – stairs which can be played like piano.

The barrier consists of steel trusses, varying in thickness and length, equipped with small wooden hammers set in motion by footsteps, thus giving each step its own tone.

In addition to analogue sound, the stairs also use electronics and prerecorded sound samples (for example, an opera singer, wild animals from local and exotic forests, and so on), and one can thus alter the soundscape according to one's wishes.

On the upper level, the existing water-tank is converted into an acoustic space: three oval doorways cut out from the rusty steel tank found re-use as outdoor benches for summer performances.

On the ground level, a 'mirror well' is covered by a glass plate, so as to extend the verticality of the interior. The white brick exterior wall with its red-and-blue ethnic pattern contrasts acutely with the dark matte-black interior. The black colour blurs the scale of space and extends the horizon for a more immersive spatial experience.

One is embraced by the building's performative atmosphere as if in a theatre or a cinema, so as to focus on the art on the walls or on an ongoing sound performance on the stairs, and to strengthen one's sensitivity to the aerial views from the upper level and the roof terrace.

Although the tower is tiny in scale and in terms of the footprint that it occupies, was built with the absolute minimum construction budget available, and has a capacity for just 20 visitors at a time, it has nevertheless paved the way for playful architecture as well as for integrative multifunctional and performative design in a rural context, for an experiential approach in problem solving, and for delightful ways to invite the artistic community to join forces to fight negative demographics.

It has prompted the locals to consider modern technologies as an asset and to have greater trust in novel ideas.

When looked upon as a prototype, it illustrates the potential of alternative design strategies for Europe's furthest periphery.

EMERGENT PROTOCOL –
A PROTOTYPE

The Lasva Water Tower lies somewhat 'off the beaten track'.[40] The traditional route for young people born in this peripheral are on the outskirts of Europe would be to move to a nearby urban centre, then to the capital and maybe onto a wealthier city in order to survive. People who did have not wished to follow that route have missed out on opportunities to present their talent and to receive attention in a national context, much less internationally. Therefore, the Lasva Water Tower seeks to turn this upside-down and to create a 'wormhole' from here to the rest of the world by means of architectural design.

The Lasva Water Tower's performative piano stairs have brought national attention to this place: TV and radio programs have been here to capture recordings of the stairs and to conduct interviews with the locals. The number of guests who are eager to see the tower is surpassing by far the parish's normal visitor numbers. This has prompted the locals to develop exhibitions and information panels on the tower's gallery walls, to seal their roads, to hold classical concerts by an adjacent lake, to create guides to the local wildlife and travel paths, and to enlarge the broadcast area of cableless WiFi throughout the municipality so that foreigners feel 'at home' and connected to the rest of the world at the same time.

Although the tower is tiny in scale and in terms of its footprint on the land that it occupies, and although it was built with an absolutely minimal construction budget and has the capacity for only 20 visitors at a time, it has opened people's eyes to playful architecture, to the potential of multifunctional and performative design in a rural context, to an experiential approach toward problem-solving and to delightful ways in which the artistic community may be invited to join forces in order to fight negative demographics. It has brought the locals to consider modern technologies as their best friend, to have greater trust in novel ideas and to feel dignified as 'design guides' for the rest of Estonia, ever prouder of their home.

Although the idea was presented and the project documentation started in 2006, and although construction commenced in 2008 and the majority of construction work was finished in 2010, enabling the opening of the building to visitors, the project is still somewhat incomplete and is awaiting additional funds for outdoor lighting, for renewable energy systems and for a telescope to be installed on the rooftop platform. Yet when looked upon as a prototype, it exemplifies the potential to make a difference to those who need it – people among the impoverished and struggling rural communities on the outskirts of Eastern Europe. The Lasva Water Tower has made a difference to the lives of locals, yielding a capacity to become a 'lighthouse' for a certain courageous architectural design approach, turning the tables in terms of development perspectives for Europe's furthest periphery.

SAMPLE 5 CONCLUSION

*As one of the most significant samples of the research, this case study resonates with all the 'Findings' in Section III, except for the 'disruption of the 'machinic'' and the 'Kafkaesque' – for here, the collaboration with the local municipality took place in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and appreciation. In that sense, and in terms of the design and construction process, this sample is very similar to Sample 3 (the Suure-Jaani Sports Centre), even though I pointed out the confrontation with the construction company in Sample 3. It is certainly one of the key projects for my practice and, even though it is not directly touched upon in the 'Findings', it is included in the 'manifesto' in Section IV.*

⁰ Estonia is struggling ever harder with the 'emptying-out' of its countryside, as the rural population is migrating to nearby urban centres. The Lasva parish, in the 'middle of nowhere' in southern Estonia, is no exception: the local municipality has realised, among other measures, the potential of design to reverse this negative demographic trend. The Lasva Water Tower conversion into a performance space, a visitor centre and an art gallery has helped the historically desolate rural community next to the Russian border to invigorate the whole parish. Lasva has a population density of 10 people per square kilometre, with 37 villages, archeological findings from the ninth century, and a captivating vastness of magical virgin wilderness. Today, it also has its newly-converted Water Tower, which has become a landmark and an attraction for visitors from across the county borders.

SAMPLE 6
THE CATAPULT SHELTER

Sample 5: The *Catapult* shelter, by Veronika Valk (architect), Tõnis Arjus, and Niek Schutter (designer), considers inhabiting the rooftop as a 'second skin' of the existing urban fabric, exploring the urban rooftop 'headroom' as a domain for innovation. The Flower Catapult, made of sail-battens and bright yellow mosquito net, not only catapulted 'seeds' (i.e., it 'fertilised' the city with ideas and scenarios), but fished for answers from local dwellers, triggering their minds and expanding their imaginations as to how to take over the city.

This lightweight mobile tent in the shape of a flower, performing as a catapult, was designed and constructed on the rooftops of the Pudding Factory in the city of Groningen in Holland, on the occasion of the City On A Roof (COAR)[41] workshop in August, 2006. Together with the catapult structure, an 'Urban Self-Help Guide'[42] was designed around further possibilities to domesticate public space.

THE PHENOMENON OF 'ROOF-TOPES'

COAR was embarking on an experiment to explore the so-called 'roof-topes'. The brief stated: "Just as the mind has a special place, so the attic of the city or roof could provide a special space. Many cities have not really understood this dimension and most of the high-cost real estate quite naturally is on the ground leaving upper floors often under-utilised, and then there is the roof, a wonderful potential for creativity." The workshop coincided with the public events of the Noordezon Festival in Groningen.

The workshop promoted an 'open' creative city, not a closed one that benefits only large players. Thus, the organisers emphasised that it would be more beneficial to create a domain for creative innovation that can encourage multiple benefits for many, many individuals and organisations so that they may grow and thus benefit the city as a whole. It aimed to generate a 'collective wealth' of creativity.
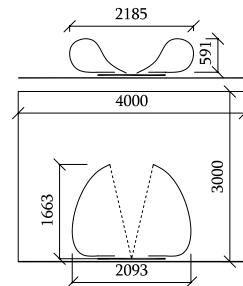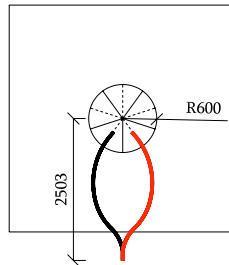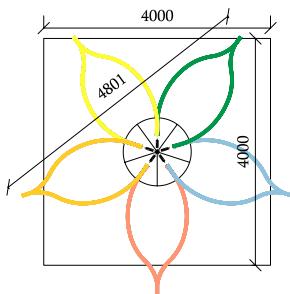
Catapult

Zizi&Yoyo + Spoetnik
Design team: Veronika Valk (architect), Tõnis Arjus, and Niek Schutter (designer)
Idea & completion: 2006
Venue: City On A Roof (COAR) workshop in Groningen, Netherlands

A lightweight mobile tent in the shape of a flower and performing as a catapult aims to inhabit the rooftop landscapes of spread-out cities. Made of sail battens and bright yellow mosquito net, it catapulted 'seeds' (urban self-help guerilla guides) into the city and fished for answers from local inhabitants on how to take over the city.
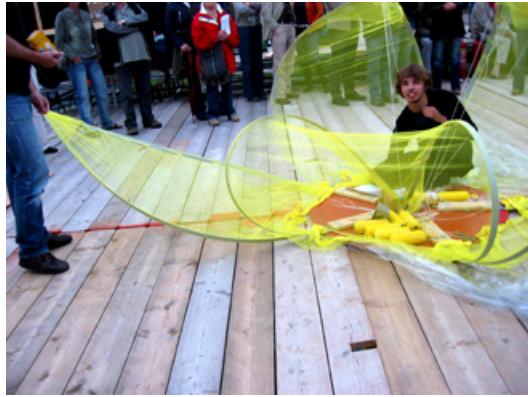
SAMPLE 5 CONCLUSION

This sample targets the 'Findings' of Section III such as 'operational profiles' and 'versatility', 'substrate' and 'multi-modality', and also 'disrupting the 'machinic'' to a certain extent. This sample bears resemblance to installations presented in Sample 8 (Festivals of Contemporary Culture), although this sample introduces an additional set of ideas related to Sample 8. As it presents the framework of a workshop, it is related to Sample 10. However, Sample 10 speaks about workshops that have been initiated by my practice, whereas here the focus is on the participation in and outcomes of a framework that was set up by my Dutch colleagues.

41 The workshop was a week-long 'do-and-think' cultural experience during the summer of 2006. COAR addressed rooftops as the hidden domain of the city, offering unexpected qualities and possibilities. The COAR foundation invited architects, designers and artists to explore this headroom for urban development. On the rooftops of the Groningen Pudding Factory, participants explored the urban rooftop environment as a new domain for creativity and innovation. Each team built structures and spaces (hardware) that helped to generate and enable their own creative activity and industry (software). The workshop was organised by Stichting COAR, with the help of Pavlov Medialab, S333 Architecture+Urbanism, Estheticon Projectadvies and Vlasblom Projectontwikkeling BV.

42 This 'guerilla'-design 'self-help guide' was designed as a manual for everyone, young or old. The toolkit aimed at inspiring locals to implement simple interventions, providing action mechanisms to arm the citizens with the weaponry of 'upgraded democracy', according to the motto that nothing should stop the dweller from taking over public space in order to improve the quality of urban life from the perspective of the inhabitants.

SAMPLE 7
THE MIKROUUN
INSTALLATION

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Sample 7: The *Mikrouun* installation by Veronika Valk (architect), Kadri Klementi, and Andres Lõo (audiovisuals), or 'Transparent Black Box', was originally a theatre-set design. It was invented at the COLINA laboratory in the Kanuti theatre in Tallinn (2006), and has also been presented in Cardiff, Wales (2006) and in Lyon, France (2007).

This pneumatic architectural form as a mobile urban 'breathing animal' is a space for workshops, for a 3D-videodrome, for shows and for other experiential events, while it can also serve as a stage-set or as urban accommodation. Functioning as space for 'showing' and a 'stage', the cube is suitable for dance performances, drama, installations and presentations of video work: it is an invitation to play. Its aim is to offer both performers as well as audiences the possibility to stay overnight in a space that would function as a so-called 'social sculpture' or 'participatory performance'.

Creating 'Mikrouun' at COLINA is a relevant case study, especially in terms of its process: its collaborative nature with the field of performing arts and the potential of such a collaboration to reach out into its urban setting. This sample is one of the lengthiest in this research, for certain very specific reasons. It is crucial to explaining the mechanics of creative collaboration with other fields that are normally considered to be outside the boundaries of architecture, yet that fuel the 'initiator' in me. Studying this sample during the PhD process allowed me to clarify how such collaborations occur, how these processes unfurl, and where they might lead. It has been a unique experience for me, leading to further collaborations in the performing arts, forging my take on the 'urban' and offering an alternative viewpoint that rediscovers Tallinn – the city I thought I knew so well.

TAKE ONE: COLINA

What is COLINA?[43] The 'Collaboration in Arts' international platform was set up as a playground for different art fields, a place for 'contamination' between specific languages, aiming to reflect and reinvent the very idea of the 'artistic object' in our times. "In a fast world, the arts are in a constant evolution. Creative ideas follow the pace of change and adjust to new developments, mostly in city environments. Time is short for reflection and those cities that generate outstanding inputs and inspiration are not often places of reflection. It is crucial that 'safe havens' exist for artists that allow for new ideas to be developed."[44] COLINA achieved this through bringing the power of some of Europe's most established production centres together with the inspired vision created by Rui Horta.

In other words, I felt literally like a tourist in my own hometown for two weeks when the COLINA Tallinn Lab brought together artists from Portugal, Germany, Denmark, France, England, Estonia and other countries. The Tallinn Lab was curated by Silke Bake, and COLINA had previously taken place in Newcastle, UK (2006), in Düsseldorf, Germany (2005), and in Montemor-o-Novo, Portugal (2004). After Tallinn, another lab was scheduled to take place in Marseille, France.

The project started among a group of partners who introduced a curator and then created an extensive network of communication with organisers, numerous artists and partner institutions. A team of organisers, artists, technicians, video-documenters, a scribe, and guests then gathered together in a theatrical space. The entire team was confronted with many questions, from very simple and basic ones to more complicated and artistic ones. In the end, this set-up system had generated a sort of community, something of a 'theatre'. (This makes one again think: what is theatre, what is contemporary theatre? – the artwork, the institution, the representation of it?) In Silke Bake's words:

"...creating a project like COLINA is similar to building up a theatre and its program. But here we are missing the representative part of it, the final and presented product. Because COLINA is a laboratory project we do not have the obligation to explain why we are working for two weeks without heading towards a product, why we keep it closed (with around 40 people being involved) and why we are not necessarily searching for an audience. The project is funded only because somebody made the effort of verbalising why this would be a good idea. [---] Usually the process of

working in performing arts has no real place. In most of the existing institutions the conditions for a creative work fail to serve and do not correspond to the needs of a dynamic process. This would ideally include research and the exploration of performing arts. The variety of possibilities for creation is seldom part of the institution called THEATRE. Generally, the entire system of organising the production of an artwork, financing and co-producing it is mostly focused on the final product, and less on different aspects of the process of creation. [---] Using research as a means to widen ones perspectives and the scope of knowledge is not situated in the THEATRE, because it is fundamentally separated from the space of a final product. A theatre production is cut away from its traces; it does not echo the work of all the people involved on its long journey from an initial idea to a product.

Contemporary performing arts are fuelled by the doubts of its protagonists – doubts about their own field and questioning of their own practice. These doubts lead to looking into other art forms, practices, and aesthetic strategies that could be learnt about and adopted. In COLINA Tallinn the artists involved are from visual and performing arts, some who are also authors, writers, but who do not make a distinction between being a practitioner or a theoretician. There is probably no need for labeling oneself anyway because everybody has to find and create his or her position in every collaboration. 'Collaboration' is a central term in any work of contemporary performing arts, and this cannot be separated from a social involvement and social practice. [---] The project is about sharing a certain time, space and consciousness. The people involved have not met each other previously. They are throwing themselves into a situation where they have to connect, make, negotiate and find ways of collaborating. As contemporary performing arts are continuously less concerned with differentiating between discourses and more about joint practice, this work will explore the possibilities of transferring artistic approaches and perspectives. The encounter is based on a pool of competences and ideas, guided by a variety of interests and questions.' [45]

On Day 1,[46] all we COLINA participants – the 'Colineers' – met for the first time in our lives. Almost. Some were still on their way; others were stuck in Frankfurt. Soon an exercise took place in a room with 24 chairs: 12 of those who sat down facing the window had to ask questions and 12 of those who sat down facing the wall would answer...: seven minutes, seven changes of chairs and positions, lots of talking. If somebody had entered this room, which was full of sunlight though very little air, they would have probably taken this for a bizarre sound installation. But in fact this mathematical configuration gave us the chance to get to know each other. The topics were everything from politics to cooking, and from edible plants to the history of the hula-hoop.
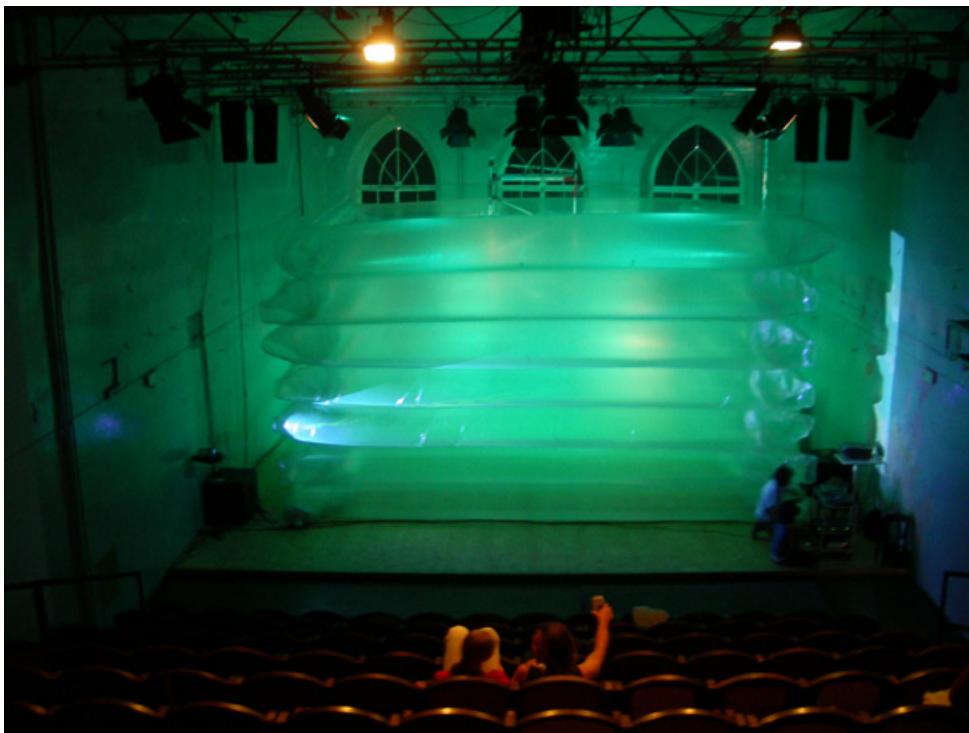
Mikrouun

Architect: Veronika Valk
Assistant: Kadri Klementi
Graphic design: Helene Vetik
DJs / VJs: Andres Lõo & SS Fabrique
Project & completion: 2006 – 2007

MIKROUUN ('microwave oven' in Estonian) is a theatre set, invented at the COLINA cross-cultural workshop in the Kanuti SAAL performance centre in Tallinn. It has been presented by Zizi&Yoyo at three other venues: firstly, as the set for Chekhov's Seagull in Endla Theatre in Pärnu, Estonia; secondly, at the symposium 'Urban Legacies: The New Babylon' in Cardiff, Wales, and thirdly, at the Fête des Lumières festival in Lyon, France.

This pneumatic architectural form as a mobile urban 'breathing animal' provides space for workshops, for a 3D videodrome, for shows, and for other experiential events. Functioning as a 'stage', it is an invitation to play. Its aim is to offer both performers as well as audiences the possibility to configure the structure's behaviour, so that MIKROUUN functions as a so-called 'social sculpture' or participatory performance environment.

MIKROUUN aims at architecture being an inventive process that attempts to break through into the world of performing arts with novel possibilities for a mutual exploration of creative expression, orchestrating contemporary audiovisual (technical) possibilities in synthesis with low-tech solutions.

**Andres Lõo writes
about this experience:**

"Already after the fourth round the energy to talk begins to fade and a need for a cigarette creeps in. A moment after that myself and Jens, a Danish musician and video artist, rush towards a nearest window in another room with chairs in our hands. Jens mentions something about breaking the rules. This triggers my thought. Breaking the rule has a progressive nature, it is a form of displacement, that brings to an initiation of something like a project. Crossing the borders is one of the ideas behind COLINA."[47]

If ideas are freeware and COLINA is a melting pot, then at some point the Colineers started to introduce their ideas to one another. The scribes continued in their blog: "In the evening meeting artists proposed three smashing ideas. Two of them from Veronika Valk. At first she wants to start working on a transparent black box, and next week she will engage people with her project of a catapult. Davis Freeman's idea was to walk around the block..."[48] The Colineers have a fairly clear understanding about the kind of work they want to do – or at least they have an idea where to start.

COLINA operated on the principle that artists are not working towards a result – 'a product' – unless they choose otherwise. However, not everyone went along with other people's initiatives. Some expressed joy when they were specifically approached to participate or to have an in-depth discussion about a developing idea. All this is part of getting to know each other as artists, and getting used to each other's working habits, and finding a rhythm for the day. The artists concentrated on finding spontaneity, and avoiding falling into self-repetition and automatism. Lõo continued: *"Before falling asleep I started thinking about COLINA as a children's playground. And of course, performing artists and artists in general always appreciate playfulness. But today, on the fourth day, there is a big bright atmosphere of co-operation, and the mood is something like children building a sand castle. [---] COLINA Tallinn is a playground: someone wants to ride a horse, others sing, dance, play hide-and-seek and a detective game, there is also a masquerade… creating general confusion for the tourists on the streets. Playfulness is expressed in these child-like and joyful forms. On the other hand this does not mean that the so-called 'serious projects' could not prevail in the coming days. [---] The child's work is play, but the artist's work is not only play but life. Play and positively distorted reflection. [---] The fourth day has proved to be more serious and to an*

extent more resourceful in ideas. Now that Veronika Valk's 'Drumming' is still a work in progress but has already been through a recording session it is crucial to decide on the next step and the outcome of this wild recording. Should she focus on the arrangement, composition or the aspect of installation and participation? Many projects are still gushing into the city space. Katrin Essenson's 'Detective Game' attempts to engage random people from the streets involving them in an extended version of Chinese Whispers where everyone who finds a notebook has to write in it and then to place it somewhere else, secretively. A social sculpture! [---]

Veronika Valk and Maria Goltsman's research on the 'trace in the fog of spray-paint'[49] *to the sounds created by Jens Mönsted. [---] I was suddenly struck by Katrin Essenson's realisation that ideas have begun reappearing in different projects, and their origin has become blurred. Once again, ideas are freeware. It is really captivating how artists from diverse disciplines really try to understand others' methods of work and to see what those are based on. And more importantly, they try to position themselves as 'the other'. This gives self-confidence. Many things that previously seemed impossible have now become comprehensible. There is less fear towards the indefinite. [---] In COLINA ideas are as if flying on the hot stove of a sauna. Most of it evaporates, the rest falls down again. This is also called 'the distillation of ideas'. Have you ever been to sauna? Well, then you should understand. Being in a sauna is comfy, warm and a bit tight, but still very cosy. COLINA is a sauna. The moment water lands on the hot stones breathing is important, calm and sustained breathing. At that moment everyone breathes to the same rhythm. We breathe in and out of the ideas. Sergei Pristas visited COLINA today, and in his talk he touched upon the same topic while talking about the nature of projects like COLINA. He said that they are often about the expenditure of ideas. However, it seems that COLINA participants are realistic about and respectful towards ideas. They do not take and leave, but rather explore and develop. They deal with their own work in a dynamic way and are inventive when it comes to the development of the process. They also realise when an idea has exhausted itself and when it's time to move on. As an aftermath of the talk with Sergei Pristas there are Colineers behind every corner of Kanuti having discussions on aesthetics – which has happened before as well but not to this extent."*[50]

On Day 6 our 'Transparent Black Box' was growing hour by hour, and even though it faced some difficulties in sustaining its form, choreographer Oksana Titova and many others had
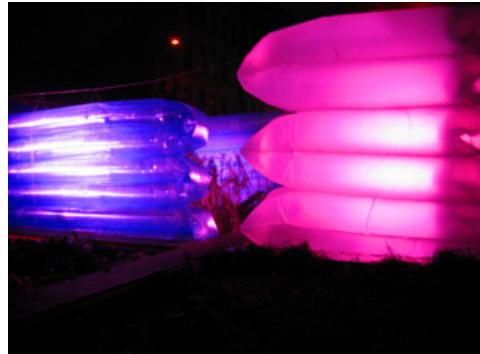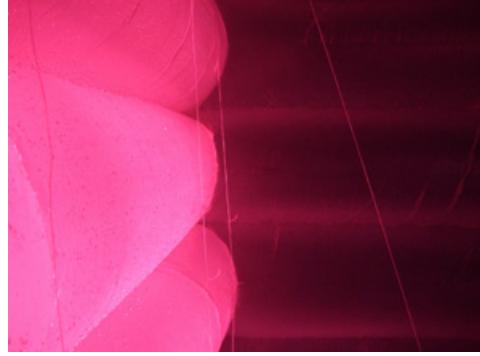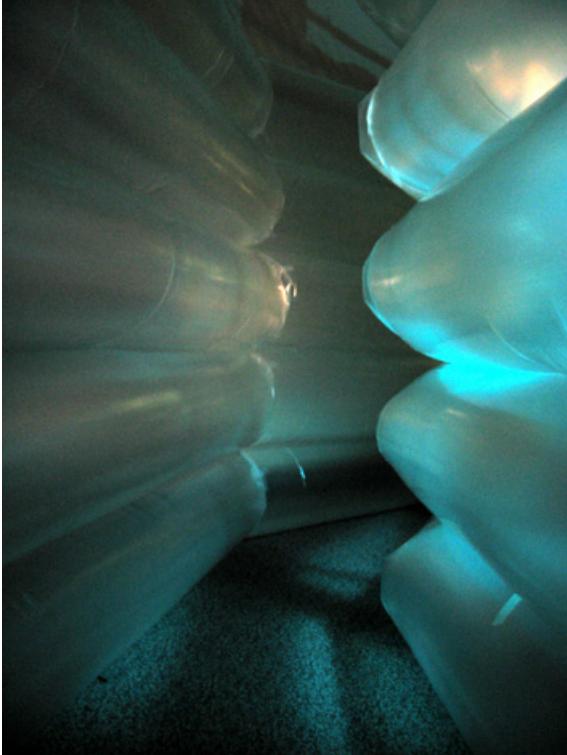
already begun thinking what kind of a performance could take place inside and outside this alternative 'black box'. On Day 8 it became absolutely clear that trying out and playing around with ideas is one of the main principles of COLINA: this laboratory is an opportunity for the artists and we should not forget that how the artists use the opportunity is completely up to them. On Day 10, Lõo commented:

"The biggest bubble of the day turned out to be the return of the 'Transparent Black Box' by Veronika Valk and her brave assistant Kadri Klementi. The spiral plastic tube was inflated and once again it took a quadrant form. But helping hands were needed to keep it standing, and those were plenty as nobody wanted to miss the inception of this miracle. Even the artistic director Raud turned up. As the wall was arising it was clear that the tube of the black box should be manually controlled in order for it not to collapse. A jolly action indeed! It was like witnessing the creation of the world. [---] Somewhere deeper, however, the day is spiced up by different kinds of discussions. First of all, do Colineers need a more serious conflict for co-operation, in order to achieve more intricate results? Some of us feel that the environment is too 'nice' and placid. And because of this the core of ideas is not reached or the most intriguing topics uncovered. Jens, Sofie, Patricia and Nelson vote for 'conflict'. Siret votes for 'discussion'."[51]
On Day 12, Rui Horta arrived in person.

TAKE TWO: CARDIFF

As part of the conference 'Urban Legacies II: Another New Babylon' in Cardiff, Wales, a selection of young artists was asked to make special artwork commissions on the theme of the talks. Marjetica Potrc from Slovenia and I were specially commissioned to exhibit artworks alongside work by Welsh artist Anthony Shapland. Potrc constructed an urban farm made up of a vertical hydroponic garden through which people would be able to pass and purchase fresh vegetables grown in Cardiff Bay. The steel structure that was erected in one weekend aimed to join the urban and rural worlds.

While Potrc's was a staged structure, Shapland's film work was projected onto the walls of the city. He documented moments of transition in daily city life that are usually over-looked or thought invisible. Through their capturing and editing on film, these mundane, everyday events (the lighting of a street lamp, the daytime sleep of night-shift workers, drunken encounters after a nightclub has shut) were played at incongruous times of the day to create a jarring experience. Shapland said, "If the New Babylon is a place to play, a flexible place where rules no longer apply and we can be even more creative, then it is the city at night that most demonstrates this capacity for play."

In contrast, my piece was a much more playful installation. I installed a temporary inflatable hotel into the former NatWest Bank in Cardiff Bay. Built from basic materials and inflated by simple desk fans, this 'Black Box Hotel' hosted events and offered accommodation over every night of the conference in a unique hotel experience. In addition to artworks and installations cropping up in unexpected parts of the city, the conference held a series of talks. Other keynote speakers at the conference included, for example, Lebanese architect Bernard Khoury.

SAMPLE 7 CONCLUSION

This sample forecasts directly into many 'Findings' in Section III, predominantly into techniques to invent 'playful' and 'joyful' approaches as a designer, which is liberating to the extent that it might become the key to overcoming the 'Kafkaesque' (elaborated in 'The Opportunistic in the 'Machinic''), due to its impact on the 'Dynamics of Immersion' and its ability to morph the 'substrate' of the practice (and I must admit that the experience described in this case study has had a fundamental impact on the collaborative aspect of my practice). All of the pointers mentioned here are at the core of the discoveries described in Section III.

[43] '*Colina*' translates from Portuguese to English as 'a hill'. However, the project COLINA is more of a field, a landscape, dealing with potentialities.
[44] Vision for COLINA by Rui Horta.
[45] Quote from the original invitation from Silke Bake for me to participate in the project.
[46] Siret Paju and Andres Lõo were COLINA 'scribes' throughout the process, making observations of the work in progress.
[47] COLINA report, 2006.

[48] *Ibid.*
[49] Goltsman and I collaborated on a performative piece where Goltsman as a dancer and choreographer danced in a room followed by me with cans of spray-paint, tracing Goltsman's movement and thus creating a permanent paint trace of her body in space.
[50] COLINA report, 2006.
[51] *Ibid.*

SAMPLE 8
URBAN FESTIVAL FOR CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

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Sample 8: Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture. The resource potential of urban festivals is revealed by their ability to challenge the status quo of a city:

- They fascinate in an immersive way.
- They create memorable multisensorial experiences. They offer a potential to transform experiential living qualities.
- They comprise the idea of urban space as speculative public forum
- They focus on arts, sciences, (architectural) design, urbanism simultaneously.
- They are based on the relevance of human biological need(s).
- They are not about more experiences, but smarter ones.
- They offer an experimental way to deal with and sustain change.
- They help to discover future ways.

This is another lengthy sample (for obvious reasons) as the framework of urban festivals allows the investigation of the correlation between the temporary and the 'permanent', the experimental and the conventional, the 'playful' scenarios and the often hostile microclimate – to name a few. This 'sample' is a dense cluster of a multiplicity of events, actions, installations, networking, collaborations, artistic approaches, agendas and so on. All of them possess a similarity in that they are laboratory settings for immediate discoveries – offering exposure to the broader public and instant feedback, which are vital to develop a practice as part of a society.

8.1. *BIOEST* FESTIVAL

Borrowing its name from the vintage Estonian washing powder Bioest, the festival introduced a new generation of Estonian artists and performers to New York City in 2011. The inaugural edition began at the waterfront area of Dumbo in Brooklyn and from there moved to Manhattan with events at Scandinavia House and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. In addition to two musical world premières by Ensemble U:, the edition held screenings of rarely-seen vintage Estonian films, a solo performance by Mart Kangro and a photography exhibit by Ulvi Tiit. The festival was co-ordinated by New York-based Estonian curator Karin Laansoo.

8.2. *VALGUSFESTIVAL*
(THE TALLINN FESTIVAL OF LIGHT)

'Festivals of light' are celebrated around the world among many cultures and religions. Traditional religious festivities featuring special light activities include Hanukkah, Christmas, Diwali, Loy Krathong and St Martin's Day, while Scandinavia celebrates St Lucia's Day, the 'festival of light', on December 13. Some of the internationally-known festivals of light focus on photography, while others offer a platform to further activate and enliven a city's nightlife. The Tallinn Festival of Light in Estonia, however, is a reaction to the lack of daylight during the wintertime.[52]

Today a proud member of the International Network of Festivals and Exhibitions Spaces of Light in Art and Design (INFL), with partner cities such as Lyon, Varna, Torino, Glasgow, Lisbon, Eindhoven, Helsinki, Geneva, Lisbon, and others, Valgusfestival's longest and closest collaboration is with the Helsinki Valon Voimat Festival in Finland. Between 2006 and 2008, we – the Valgusfestival team – were happy about the Hansaflux process, i.e. an exchange of light-art first between the cities of Lyon and Tallinn. To set up this project, I visited Lyon in 2005 – the cornerstone was lain through an exhibition of architect Benoit Fromentin's work in Tallinn the following winter.

HANSAFLUX

For Hansaflux 2007, Valgusfestival sent five Estonian artists to Lyon, whose projects were displayed in Lyon in December 2006. Within the framework of Superflux, the team of Gallery Roger-Tator selected five French artists to work in Tallinn in January 2007. The Hansaflux name is inspired by the historic 'Hansa' or Hanseatic League, an old network of harbour-cities across Europe to which Tallinn belonged. Our international collaboration aimed to allow young and talented artists to work in other contexts of production, arranging artistic encounters in the field of light and links with foreign artists.

Metaphorically speaking, we were building 'a trajectory of light' through Europe. We set out to do this via poetic public events, as well as through scientific research on street lighting innovation and energy efficiency. Historically, the Hanseatic League had been a route for merchants and merchandise throughout the continent. Hansaflux therefore offers a route of experiences with other Festivals of Light across Europe and real-life artistic interventions in public space.

THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK
OF FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

Before joining the Valgusfestival team in 2005, I had already started in 2004 to contact other organisers in the field of 'light art' in former Hanseatic towns, to find ways to establish an international collaboration network.[53] Later on, the INFL[54] was born as an informal network of curators and producers, artists, lighting designers and architects, researchers and technicians, organisers and sponsors, and was without any institutional backup.[55]

The aim of such international collaboration is to encourage the emerging artists to 'export' their work, while facilitating the circulation of works in areas where the local artistic scene is not well developed. The dynamics of exchanges dealt with socio-cultural structures on the very local and site-specific urban level, as well as on the European level, by broadening the scope of the INFL's activities and research.

MICROCLIMATE

The INFL partner festivals vary according to their local context and microclimate. For people in a Nordic country, both natural daylight conditions as well as artificial public lighting affect everyday life.[56] Almost half the population in Estonia suffers from SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder). Little daylight, loneliness and reduced physical activity have negative impacts on people's minds and bodies. Statistics show that psychological depression, alcoholism and suicide rates skyrocket in winter. These affects are noticeable in both rural as well as urban areas. For years, the Tallinn Light Festival has been striving for a happier wintertime for the whole population.

But before going further, I would like to remind you of one of the many questions about the future that I posed in the introduction to this PhD: how might we architects and designers start to have answers to questions pertaining to 'age'? How long will the life-span of future generations be? Imagine: the semi-zombies of the Nordic lands may suffer through not 80 but 150 years (or more) of Seasonal Affective Disorder due to age-enhancement technologies that may be available in the future...

THE CURATOR POSITION

My contribution as curator was to use the festival events as an urban planning tool, in order to push the festival concept further. My aim was to focus on town planning projects that draw attention to activating and enlivening different areas of the town, as well as sitting down with the city officials and politicians to help the town achieve a common purpose: for example, channelling public attention toward several under-used parks and spaces, especially on the waterfront, via promoting the seafront and opening it up for the public – which also happened to be one of the priorities of the Tallinn Cultural Capital 2011 agenda.

The art of light not only deals with aesthetic improvements in the bleak mid-winter, but also aims for positive impacts on health: smart street lighting might help to put a smile back onto people's faces during their winter blues. I took it as my task to trace the 'trajectory of light' onto the map of Tallinn, so that the artists are in contact with the public, taking the citizens literally by the hand and guiding them through the city, opening their minds to alternative scenarios for 'terrain vague' and giving new meaning to the dark and sombre winter months.

As the artistic director of Valgusfestival between 2005 and 2008, I managed to make a few installations myself, as well as helping to produce others. A key ambition was to test resilient, low-cost, natural materials and low-tech solutions for urban design. For example, we built the vault of an 'igloo' by pouring powdered snow onto a meteorological balloon. All in all, Valgusfestival suggested that the streetscape of a Nordic city become as social and lively and thus as 'warm' as those of southern climates. My work included preparations for Hansalite from 2005–2008 and an analysis of similar undertakings in other cities. An important part of this work was the Hansalite 2004 workshop,[57] described in Sample 10.

Hansalite 2004 suggested the active inclusion of (young) creatives – architects, designers, landscapists – in city-planning processes.[58] Our main concern was to address Tallinn's lack of a future street lighting plan by proposing bold visions, as well as to raise a broader debate about the impact of light on local populations. The Hansalite 2004 workshop made a strong effort to tackle the predominant 'engineering mindset' in resolving urban issues such as the planning of road or street lighting networks.

The workshop also gave birth to the Light Dome installation (Sample 8.2.4) on the Town Hall Square in the following year, which allowed the further exploration of one of the stimulating questions under investigation: that of the impact of light on human behaviour. Scientists believe that one of the main causes of the high suicide rate among Estonians is linked to depression that is caused by darkness during the colder periods of the year, which is due not to the long, dark evening hours but to the lack of bright morning sun.

LIGHT AND LIBIDO – A JOKE?

Slogans like "Light Lights the Libido" might sound exaggerated, but they do have relevance in Estonia where the native population has been declining during the past decades. "The notion that long, dark, cold winter nights make couples nudge closer and intimately together – increasing the incidence of conception – apparently isn't true in the world's coldest and darkest climates. Among the Intuit Eskimos of Arctic Labrador, where the birth rate is much more noticeably tied to the calendar than in other parts of the world, births peak in March, indicating that summer is the most intimate season," report the *Time-Life* editors in their book, *Mysteries of the Human Body*.[59]

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[52] It started in the nd of 1990s as a very small event, and was initiated by Indrek Leht and Yoko Alender who were inspired and supported by the Valon Voimat Light Festival in Helsinki. Valgusfestival allowed the combination of various distinct events under the same name and notion: light.

[53] For example, during the Middle Ages the city of Braunschweig was an important centre of trade, one of the economic and political centres in Northern Europe and a member of the Hanseatic League from the 13th century to the middle of the 17th century. By the year 1600, Braunschweig was the seventh-largest city in Germany. And it also happened to be the location of an innovative 'light art trail' – *Lichtparcours* – in the year 2000, coinciding with the Hannover EXPO. The old city of Braunschweig is quite similar to that of Tallinn; however, Braunschweig is surrounded by water. Thus, the water is crossed by bridges and those bridges were the sites for light installations by internationally-known artists and designers. The usual street lighting was dimmed down in the surrounding park area, to heighten the effect of the artworks. I remember crossing the park in complete darkness, with the sound of my shoes varying according to the surface I was walking on...and then catching a glimpse of light between the trees: "It must be one of the installations!" Each artwork was augmented by the reflections on the water, some installations cleverly playing with the context of the bridge – the context of 'crossing'.

[54] Interestingly enough, the INFL still does not have a website. The communication is based on a mailing list and depends on the activities of the partners. It is led by designer, educator and curator Bettina Pelz.

[55] They meet during their exhibitions and events to discuss experiences, to exchange insights, to consider qualities, to combine efforts and to support each other in the further development of their diverse activities.

[56] November until February is the coldest and darkest time of the year at our latitude. The sun only seldom shows itself and the days are considerably shorter than the nights. The end of the year is one of the most active periods for many young people. January follows, quiet and fairly boring – a month in which nothing really happens and winter depression can set in. In January, night falls at around 4.30pm and lasts about 16 hours, with the sun not rising again until about 8.30am.

[57] The Hansalite 2004 workshop agenda pointed out ways in which Valgusfestival addresses the issue of 'light'. Certain specific research areas that are relevant in the Nordic climate emerged from this workshop, focused largely on the topics of street lighting. It is important to note that the 2004 workshop specifically targeted the decision-makers and the municipal authorities, creating a participatory format for focused debate between the artists, designers, architects and planners and the authorities.

[58] The workshop was successful in engaging both the Estonian Academy of Arts as well as the municipal authorities. It resulted in an exhibition of proposals in the Architecture and Design gallery next to the Drama Theatre.

INSTALLATIONS:
HANSALITE 2007 AND 2008

Hansalite 2007's installations included, among others: 'G-LOV(V)E BOX'[60] by Microclimax architects Benjamin Jacquemet-Boutes and Caroline Wittendal (France); 'De Pong GameTM'[61] by Benjamin Gaulon (France); 'Breathing Shadow'[62] by Yoko Azukawa (Japan); 'Open-air Living-room'[63] by Teemu Nurmelin (Finland), and 'Air-Life-Light'[64] by Margus Mekk (Estonia).

Hansalite 2008's installations included, among others, 'Shining Field'[65] by Cecile Babiole (with the help of Interface-Z, Emmanuel Geoffray and Luc Larmor, France); 'Heijastuksia/Reflections'[66] by Liisa Kyronseppa (Finland); 'The Smile of My Girlfriend, the Wind'[67] by Raoul Kurvitz (Estonia); 'Long Streets for Short Stories'[68] by MOOV architects and artist Miguel Faro (Portugal); 'Light, Color and No Sound'[69] by Pedro Cabral Santo (Portugal); 'Gymnastique lunaire'[70] by Catherine Garrett (France); 'Lacrime di Madre'[71] by Selja Raudas (Finland) and 'Lighthike'[72] by the Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA) architecture students (co-ordinator Katrin Koov, Estonia).

[59] *Time-Life* editors (1990), *Mysteries of the human body* (library of curious and unusual facts), New York: Time-Life Medical. The book cites a 1980 study by American physician Joel Ehrenkranz. It showed that exposure to light determined the libido levels of the Eskimos. He found that the pineal gland, a peanut-sized lump deep in the brain, responds to light through the eye's retina and controls the release of the hormone melatonin, releasing more during darkness. And the higher the melatonin, the lower the Eskimo libido. Melatonin levels decreased during the four-month summer season of the Arctic, corresponding to a heightened fertility period which reached a peak around July. Thus, one of the promotion strategies for Valgusfestival was to emphasise its potential impact on human behaviour, thus to stimulate broader curiosity about the festival.

[60] G-LOV(V)E BOX was an equivocal object, a wooden cubicle pierced with hundreds of illuminated inflatable latex hands, to welcome light as well as passersby. The authors explained in their introduction to the work how a personified light being emitted from the timber box offers handshakes and strokes. Yet the cloned latex gloves, being symbols of hygiene for our highly secured contemporary society in which human connections are protected and anonymous, refer to our condition in which life is genetically controlled in laboratories' 'glove-boxes'.

[61] 'De Pong Game' was an interactive installation made of the game Pong. This new version had been computerised in ActionScript by Arjan Westerdiep and Benjamin Gaulon. The project used the concept of Augmented Reality by using an urban building as game space. The virtual ball was projected on the building and bounced on the wall edges as well as on the windows.

[62] This artwork was interested in how design can include human action or reaction to its design process, and how nature in urban settings might be perceived as a meaningful form of existence. The trees provided the opportunity to find something universal through their rare and precious presence in the cities, or they provided guidance to discover an unseen scene of everyday life. The trees' shadows created another atmosphere of the town, as the trees' normally calm silhouettes became animated, even wild.

[63] Public space in Nordic cities is not often considered the normal extension of one's private living room, due to harsh wintertime conditions. But why not? Teemu's simple, human-friendly installation invited both local inhabitants and visitors to spend more time outdoors, even in the bleak, cold mid-winter. The solution provided an intelligent lighting system together with a convenient seating arrangement, giving a hint for future urban landscaping in the public spaces of contemporary Nordic cities – a mixture of intimate and open, in constant flux.

[64] The artwork came with instructions whereby, should a visitor suffer from SAD, he or she was invited to breathe in light. Similarly to an artificial enlivening breathing machine, this artwork presented a light-breathing machine. According to the artist, people from the Nordic countries as well as from the Baltic lands, Russia and Canada need light to survive as much as they need air, to sustain them through the winter.

[65] This installation in Kultuurikatel was an environment of sound and light, evoking the science fiction-like activity of an imaginary airport. Invisible yet pervasive, it carries our imagination to the crossroads of the Nazca geoglyphs of the Incas and the runway of the UFO in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. The installation was located in Kultuurikatel main hall, shrouded in darkness. On the floor, there was a carpet of LEDs, some reacting to aerial sounds, others blinking in their

own signal patterns. The visitor was invited to trek out along an elevated runway, crossing the exhibition space to arrive at a vista-point with a panoramic view of the luminescent motifs. The installation included a sonic ambiance torn from time to time by crashing spatialised landings or electronic liftoffs. 'Shining Field' was a co-production of Les Ondes and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Rennes.

[66] This light installation was made of hundreds of reflectors, located in an urban environment which is dark at night. The idea of the installation was to offer a huge light source and a great moving reflector in the dark place, to give a sense of security and also beauty in the darkness. In Finland and Estonia, reflectors are very common and important articles attached to clothing. They are therefore used especially during the dark season of the year, when the pedestrians are requested to use reflectors primarily for visibility in traffic. Since every reflector has hundreds of little prisms inside, the reflectors used for the installation functioned during daytime by projecting reflections of sunshine into their surroundings.

[67] The object belonged to a series of wind-sculptures by the artist, playing with the fact that the wind is invisible and yet we are aware of its presence. The wind is moody and unpredictable, bringing pleasure but also trouble.

[68] This installation allowed for a series of narratives to inhabit public space, involving the passers-by along the street's entire length. Pikk jalg and Lühike jalg, two emblematic streets of Tallinn, hosted the first implementation, presenting a love-and-death story brought to life from quotes of two antagonistic 'rule-breaking classes': plastic artists and criminals.

[69] This was installed in a shop window and is an homage to American poets Adrienne Rich, Bob Kaufman, Amiri Baraka Ka'ba and T.S. Elliot, who have in common the capacity to create multisensory atmospheres and to pay attention to the social dimension, exposing injustice, poverty and exclusion. Conceived in 2004 and presented for the first time in Luzboa 2006, 'Light, Color and No Sound' throws a dynamic light onto the urban environment, presenting the scrolling verses of the poets in a set of coloured bars – but there is no sound, just colour, light and poetry.

[70] Who has not dreamt of going to the moon? As a distortion in space, a gap within reality, this installation appeared as the translator of a poetic carriage and displacement, proposing a shortcut to the moon. The artist asked that as we stand at the threshold of an imaginary world – then where are we headed? This invitation to an imaginary journey made the visitor dizzy.

[71] This work, 'Tears of a Mother', was based on one of the most popular metaphors in art history. During the daytime, the work was visible as a transparent, etherised illusion, with its intensity increasing during twilight and interconnecting the work with the urban light environment. The piece pointed to the suffering we can endure as individuals among crowds. Despite the tears, the face of the Madonna was consoling and graceful.

[72] This endeavour asked, "How long is Groundhog Day?" The anthropometric experiment of the students of the Art Academy performed a hiking expedition within the boundaries of Tallinn from dawn till dusk. Eyes, ears and body-cells, plus appliances like a pedometer and a sphygmograph registered relationships between body, space and light. The hike investigated undiscovered places and new connections in the urban landscape. The hike concluded with a bonfire.

8.2.1
SWINGING IN THE LIGHT

8.2.1. The *Swinging in the Light* installation by Veronika Valk consisted of insulated super-sized white hammocks which are illuminated with the light of infrared lamps. This 'hot' installation was originally developed for the Festival of Light – Valgusfestival – in Tallinn (2006), and was additionally presented in Eindhoven, Holland, at the GLOW festival (2007).

In wintertime Estonia, the nights last for about 16 hours. As a mobile hotel, this installation aims at a brighter and happier wintertime by changing the appearance and use of public space in an aesthetic and joyful way. It is an open invitation to spend time outside despite the cold, wintery weather.

SWINGING in the LIGHT

Architect: Veronika Valk
Project and completion: 2006 & 2007
Photo: Bettina Pelz

Originally developed for Valgusfestival (the Festival of Light) in Tallinn, Estonia, where in the wintertime the nights last for about 16 hours, the installation as a mobile hotel aims for a brighter and happier winter period by changing the appearance and use of public space in an aesthetic and joyful sense. The insulated, super-sized white hammocks are illuminated with the light of infrared lamps and are an open invitation to spend some more time outside. The installation was also presented at the GLOW festival in Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Festivals as hybrid urban laboratories are inspiring tools to guide urban emergence. Urban festivals further the idea of urban space as a public forum. They focus simultaneously on a variety of disciplines, such as arts, sciences, design, urban planning and architecture. They offer an experimental way to welcome change in urban space. They help to suggest tenable urban futures. They enable us to take the existing parallel urban initiatives further as synchronised activities, mutually benefitting from and contributing to one another.

version 1

4 handles

insulation + folium between
2 layers of waterprof outer shell

edge tunnel for reinforcing tube

sewing

3.0

2.0

version 2

2 handles

insulation + folium between
2 layers of waterprof outer shell

edge tunnel for reinforcing tube

sewing

3.0

2.0
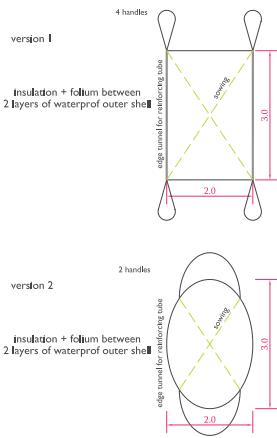
Photo: Bettina Pelz

Photo: Bettina Pelz

8.2.2
THE IGLOO

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8.2.2. The *IGLOO* shelter by Veronika Valk (in collaboration with Valgusfestival team members Kalle-Priit Pruuden – sculptor, and Helene Vetik – graphic designer) used the natural material of snow, pouring it into a concrete-casting formwork (steel moulds). Notes that I wrote "after a night spent in the igloo" (alone) on February 25, 2006, reveal the experience of an inhabitable shelter made of natural material, and its potential for a 'hotel' or for 'outdoor camping':

"...morning,as promised, spent the last night in my igloo. stepping into a taxi just 10 minutes ago watched the railway station vagabonds and thought how i had slept in such extremely gorgeous conditions, similarly *homeless*.

...observations for the next winter's igloo village -- it is actually feasible to rent them out for a night as hotel suits, but the security issue is huge. overheard graffiti scribing onto the igloo all throughout the night. drunk russian youngsters aggressing, as they were desperate to see what's inside the igloo. *why can't we?!??* without a security guard(ess) in a car in front of the entrance of the igloo i would've been dead. of course there was also an estonian madame who called down on her mate: *come take a look before they yell at us!* (then pulling the cover and noticing my toes and an edge of my sleeping bag: *look there's a corpse as well!?!!*) all in all -- the danish king garden would make much more sense as a location next year in terms of security. three access points which can be guarded. the whole garden could be reserved only for the guests during hotel hours eg from 7-8pm until 10am. quick photo montage attached...

...generally speaking, it was an anxious night, about to dial 112 for 3 times, though never had to make that call. thus also next year the guests are going to be alert due to extremist situation. yet, the hush acoustics inside the igloo create superb calmness. complementing the awareness that the snow wall is ca 1m thick -- it takes the villain some time to reach you and first he or she needs to find a sharp shovel.

...of cold and protection against it -- i had 3 *light swings* and a layer of sheep skin underneath me, there's no hope without sheep skin, while the light swings isolated majority of the temperature difference and created a soft white festive 3x3m bed. i'd say a family could fit. the opening in the roof is somewhat a problem as there's a slight draft. on the other hand it's such a super luxurious experience to watch stars and clouds. visual lullaby.

...felt great waking up in the morning, hot coffee and fresh papers fit perfect :) getting out of the sleeping bag discover that a layer of ice had formed onto its outside surface. the clothes which i'd taken off before going to sleep were all wet. but i'd put my boots under the swings so they were all dry -- it didn't matter that they were cold as i could put them on. lesson learned -- sponsorship from decent sleeping manufacturers needed + somewhere must be an air and sealable box for clothes and boots.

...and a DOOR must be designed! this hanging plastic joke has to be the last time :) a reverse effect happened when street lighting was switched off at 7.30am -- normally one switches the lights ON when waking up in the dark on a winter morning. all nightly enchantment swept away in an instant, but woke me up indeed!"[73]

IGLOO Hotel prototype

Team: Veronika Valk (architect), Kalle-Priit Pruuden (sculptor), and Helene Vetik (graphic designer)
Idea & completion: 2006
Venue: Valgusfestival at Tornide väljak

Highlighting eco-friendly, low-cost natural materials in contemporary architecture, the IGLOO suggests the streetscape of a Nordic city becoming as social, lively and inviting as those of warmer climates. IGLOO offered its ten thousand visitors a place to rest and to drink hot tea.

[73] Notes "after a night spent in the igloo", Veronika Valk, 2006.

8.2.3
KULTUURITULI

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8.2.3. The *Kultuurituli* installation by Veronika Valk showed the way in January 2006, with a 250m-high light-beam pointed towards the clouds from Kultuurikatel's 85m-high chimney, visible across the city.

Kultuurikatel (transl. 'Culture Cauldron'), in the former heating station on the Tallinn waterfront, is becoming a public space as the industrial complex is being converted into Estonia's biggest creative hub. It is located at the meeting point of the UNESCO heritage-listed Old Town and the Tallinn seaside, which was previously secluded as a military zone. However, the waterfront is now undergoing a vast transformation, with parts of the seaside, which used to be cut off from the city, now being given back to city-dwellers.

This sample is closely tied to Sample 1 (the broader context of the Tallinn waterfront) and to Sample 2 (the Kultuurikatel initiative). Beyond the description, it is important to point out the underlying course of thoughts and the cultural climate at the time, hence the following paragraphs refer firstly to the discourse of 'talent cities' (raised already in Sample 1) and secondly to the need for the 'joyful' and 'playful' which is at the core of this research, in order to overcome the painful legacy of the city's historic burden and to approach afresh the reinvention of publicness. The project was also a learning process regarding co-operation between multiple stakeholders – from politicians to schoolchildren.

A LIGHT-YEAR CLOSER

"A Light-Year Closer" was the motto aimed towards the realisation of the Kultuurikatel concept, and a crisp January weekend witnessed the inauguration of Kultuurituli. It looked as if there were smoke coming out of the chimney, yet in reality we (the Valgusfestival team) had dragged a xenon[74] beamer into the chimney and pointed the beam into the sky. The beamer[75] was powerful enough to reach 250 metres and to project a spot onto the lower clouds in the atmosphere. The 'smoke' was in fact the light reflection in the fog.[76]

In Estonia, the event reverberated with the 'creative cities' agenda. The well-known urban theorist Richard Florida had visited Estonia a year earlier, holding a lecture at the Tallinn Vision Conference 2005. "So in the new, creative economic organization the competitiveness of the regions is directly connected to the capability to attract creative people," said Florida. "So the potential of the smaller regions has grown tremendously. A small country can become a regional magnet as it may be easier for this country to concentrate its resources, execute changes faster."[77]

Cities compete for talent – and cities which do not attract talent are less competitive. Yet what attracts the young and talented? Perhaps it is the actual possibility of realising one's ideas, of making dreams into reality. For the city government, this is about making strategic decisions about the image of the future of the city. Is Tallinn a place that enhances imagination, that catalyses initiatives? The nomination of Tallinn as the European Capital of Culture helped to stimulate this debate. The Kultuurituli installation emphasised that local visionaries are needed to trigger action in the fields of culture, guiding urban development.[78]

The project also carried the idea that public spaces have the ability to recover from a painful historic legacy and can be returned to citizens via positive art and happy events, relieving a public space of its ideological or political load and filling it with inspirational new emotions and memories. Positive, accessible imagery and optimistic identity guarantee both political success and financial investment, as evidenced by artist-villages and creative clusters worldwide. This project confirmed the choice of initiating such a creative cluster as Kultuurikatel, taking the Festival of Light events to the former industrial complex and crossing disciplines to achieve the objectives.

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[74] Xenon is used in flash lamps and arc lamps, and as a general anaesthetic. The first excimer laser design used a xenon dimer molecule (Xe2) as its lasing medium, and the earliest laser designs used xenon flash lamps as pumps. Xenon is also being used to search for hypothetical weakly-interacting massive particles (WIMPs) and as the propellant for ion thrusters in spacecraft.

[75] This was borrowed from Aare Baumer, the head of Energiakeskus, a science venue next door to Kultuurikatel.

[76] It was difficult to get the chimney to draw a draught due to an overwhelming meteorological cyclone that caused the humidity to descend rather than to ascend, as we had hoped for when we rigorously heated up the foot of the chimney with diesel engines. Just in case, we had also invited a pyrotechnics squad to burn some heavy smoke candles that are used for outdoor film-making or on stages for performances and other special effects. Still, the smoke kept

pouring down the sides of the chimney. It was an impressive sight, symbolic in many ways.

[77] http://www.hillside.ee/visioonikonverents/tallinn_vision_conference.pdf

[78] In relation to the European Capital of Culture agenda, a proposition was delivered to the city officials on the margins of the Kultuurituli event: the year 2011 could carry the idea of a 'light year' on all cultural fronts. As a 'light year' designates distance, not time, then 'a light year in a year' would stress the importance of enlivening the city's cultural life throughout the year 2011 to its maximum capacity – that is, at the speed of light, pushing it a 'light year' forward. Metaphorically speaking, a 'light second' equals 300km, which is the distance between the state borders of Estonia...could we think of 'talents' as photons, activated throughout the year?

8.2.4
LIGHT DOME

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8.2.4. The *Light Dome* installation by Veronika Valk and Yoko Alender (Zizi&Yoyo), Winy Maas (MVRDV) and Rogier van der Heide (Arup Lighting) had the ambition in 2005 to experiment with architectural 'light-therapy' in public space.

Since almost half of the local population in Estonia suffers from SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder, as brought up in *Valgusfestival*, Chapter 8.2) then the Light Dome tested the possibility for an architectural installation to operate as a mood-moderator. White meteorological balloons formed a light-reflective particle cloud, allowing viewers to interpret the cupola as a fog-screen above the city that could radiate light downward during the dark winter days.

To those who witnessed the production of the installation on the Town Hall Square in February 2005, the rising of the bright white dome of 400 big meteorological balloons was a definite highlight.[79] The event and installation involved local art school students, who had the unique opportunity to collaborate with foreign designers and technical teams (an experience not normally granted through the regular school program). These students also comprised a team which was able to tackle the project with energy and enthusiasm. The project's implementation required co-operation between urban planners, architects, designers, scientists, politicians and many others – it was an exercise that taught me some vital tactics in communication.[80]

THE WORSE THE WEATHER,
THE BETTER

The idea was to have a 'light cupola' lit over the Town Hall Square in Tallinn, making the dark and wintery scene awash with a floating light structure. Arup Lighting worked in collaboration with MVRDV in order to help Zizi&Yoyo bring to life this idea of a light cupola above the prominent square in front of the Town Hall.

At first, Winy Maas of MVRDV interpreted the cupola as a foggy cloud above the city that could radiate light downward during the dark winter days. Arup's Rogier van der Heide argued that the concept was to create a reflective medium up above the city when lit from underneath so as to resemble an ethereal self-illuminated cloud. The event provided a perfect setting for local government officials to discuss with artists and designers the potential of 'architectural light-therapy' as a mood-moderator in public space.[81]

The balloons and smoke clouds were tested separately as well as together, and there was also experimentation with different sources of lighting.[82] Depending greatly on the weather, all atmospheric phenomena present were integrated into the process. From a social point of view, the aim of this unprecedented light installation was to bring some joy to the people amidst the dark winter period in northern Europe. The Light Dome aimed not only to make aesthetic improvements to Tallinn in the bleak mid-winter, but also to have a psychological effect. It was an art project that literally and in a cultural sense enlightened the old city centre during this winter week, benefitting the public image of the city, cheering up locals and attracting tourists.

The Light Dome was crafted with an ambition beyond Tallinn's borders. The ideology of a Light Dome is "the worse the weather, the better!" as the lighting effects intensify enormously in fog, smog, rain and other substantial atmospheric phenomena – thus, all cities with climatic conditions similar to Tallinn could prospectively benefit from this knowledge. An excellent proposal came from Alain Sagne, Secretary General of the Architects' Council of Europe in Brussels, who also visited Tallinn during the event. Namely, he suggested following the line-up of European Capitals of Culture and to have a Light Dome in each of them.

Photo: Taavi Piibemann

Photo: Taavi Piibemann

Video still: Rein Kotov

Photo: Taavi Piibemann

Video still: Rein Kotov

Light Dome

Project team: Zizi&Yoyo, MVRDV, Arup Lighting
Images: Rein Kotov/Allfilm + Zizi&Yoyo
Idea & completion: 2005
Location: Town Hall Square, Tallinn, Estonia

A semi-permanent art installation was lit over the historic centre of the city of Tallinn, Estonia, making the dark and wintry Tallinn awash with light.

Arup Lighting worked in collaboration with MVRDV in order to help Zizi&Yoyo bring to life the idea of a 'light cupola' above the city. Winy Maas of MVRDV interpreted the cupola as a foggy cloud above the city that could radiate light downward during the dark winter days.

White meteorological balloons (each 2m wide and with 'smoke' diffused around them) were used to create a light-reflective fog. This concept created a reflective medium up above the city when lit from underneath and resembled an ethereal self-illuminated cloud.

The Light Dome was not just an aesthetic experiment, but had a direct biological influence: almost half of the local population in Estonia suffers from SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), thus the Light Dome was an example of architectural light-therapy in urban public spaces as a mood moderator.

Photo down left: Taavi Piibemann
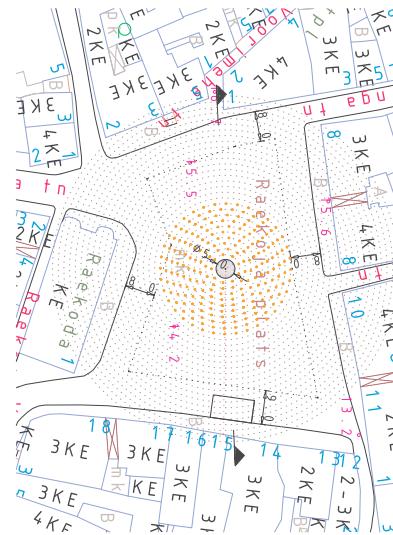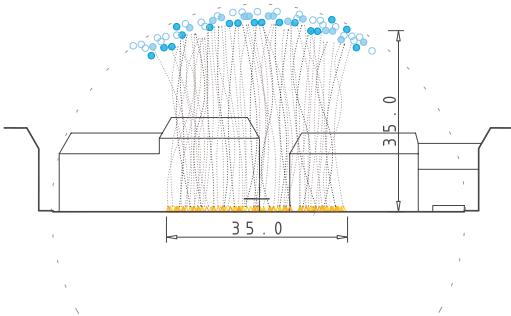
Video still: Rein Kotov

Video still: Rein Kotov

[79] The Town Hall Square, right in the middle of the Hanseatic Old Town, is a public pedestrian plaza of 50 x 80m. It was filled with 400 bright white balloons. Smoke imbued into the sky from surrounding rooftops formed a cloud underneath the 'bubbles'. Light projectors on a platform in the centre of the plaza were pointed onto the cloud of balloons and smoke. To many, the most beautiful moment was the rising of a big dome on a net structure with the white meteorological balloons. Another net structure (dome model 1:100 for London) was tested, in which the artists also used 1000 reflectors to intensify the effect. Various domes were created with smoke candles, depending on the weather conditions, but also 'natural' domes were formed by fog, snow, etc.

[80] The whole process was followed by Allfilm cameraman Rein Kotov. Thus, a 15-minute film, A Tale of a Light Dome, was captured as a documentary. Media coverage of the project both in Estonia and abroad included TV, radio and news-

papers, as well as weeklies and professional magazines. The project was supported by ARUP, Philips Lighting and the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Tallinn.

[81] The light cupola over the Old Town as a temporary installation was intended as a test for a reflective shield to 'bounce back' street lights onto the city streets, to prevent light pollution and to protect dark skies. Although it started out as a grand idea with immense aesthetic attractiveness, its aim was also to enliven a wider discussion about street lighting as well as to bring together architects, lighting designers, city government and lighting manufacturers, working towards a resilient strategy to illuminate the public space. Indeed, the administration of Tallinn City was very keen to discuss street lighting and city illumination at an adjacent seminar.

[82] Philips Arena Visions and theatre lighting solutions.

8.3
THE URBAN FLORA
INSTALLATION

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8.3. The Urban Flora installation for Tallinn's Vanalinnapäevad (Old-Town Days) Festival,83 by Veronika Valk in collaboration with Kavakava architects, featured a 12m-high steel flower, propelled by wind. The reflective fabric of the flower blossoms was woven from recycled black-market CDs that had been collected during police raids.

The project was born almost simultaneously with the co-founding of the Kavakava office by four young female architects (Siiri Valner, Katrin Koov, Kaire Nõmm and myself) – a 'girl band', as put cunningly by the Estonian press. (This founding is tied to the 'sprinter' period turning into 'marathon years' referred to in the introduction of Section III, 'Findings'). The aim of the office was to bring emotional qualities into urban settings – 'eventing' through exploring the sensual qualities of architecture and of nature, incorporating friendliness and intrigue.

This sample offers an abundantly detailed description of an almost anecdotal process of production, and is worth keeping in mind in terms of the 'joyful' and the 'playful' that are at the core of this research.

We – the Kavakava architects – wanted to create a new kind of urban nature with the aims of abundant experiences (more reasons for local residents to come into the city); of visual effect (the Old Town Days Festival as a grand tourist attraction and a good way of promoting the city); of variety (light shows by day and by night, the play of winds), and of an economy-ecology (powered by wind and solar energy, and occupying little space). Entering the Old Town was supposed to become an event in both a geographical and a seasonal sense.

I thought of a giant propelling steel flower to sprinkle the Town Hall Square with light-reflections – 'sunnybunnies'. City officials laughed skeptically, asking: "By what magic do you sprinkle sunnybunnies onto city streets and make the flower propel, with our budget?" Well, I thought, the propelling force would be wind…and I had the idea of using pirated CDs that had been collected by the police during raids on black markets over the years. Finding out how to get them from the police was not difficult (we were given altogether 24,000 pirated CDs). It took an entire day to load them at the central police station and unpack them in our workshop. The boxes took up a space of 27 cubic meters.

Taking the CDs out of their boxes took us three days. (While doing it, one develops a certain skill and routine of movement, accompanied by the specific sounds of opening the box, sliding out the cover, removing the disc and throwing it into one of the designated cardboard boxes, while piling the plastic CD cover in a geometric stack). The strange fact emerged, browsing through the CDs, that the most popular artist on the Estonian black market was a Finnish singer named Kaija Koo (none of us had ever heard of her before). There were loads of software, flight simulators, games, and so on. Meanwhile, information about our decorating the Old City with illegal CDs had leaked into the press. Many people were commenting about the idea on the internet – they hated it…

Some of the discs were plainly ugly. Spray-painting these took another three days. The reflective, clean side with information was left untouched, while the other side was covered with many coatings of paint (a lady at the Drama Theatre workshop who helped us was in a constant daze from spraying). Testing the colours and combining the hues, we realised that we wanted the CDs to be as bright as possible. Finally we decided on a yellow/orange/grass-green scheme. Meanwhile, the construction of the flower's telescope-stem had begun in a Russian welding workshop. The stem consisted of two steel tubes 6 + 6m in length, diameters accordingly 150 + 100mm. The welding of the blossom's steel structure was all good-quality Russian craftsmanship. Arguments with testosterone-fuelled adolescents trying to steal some of the
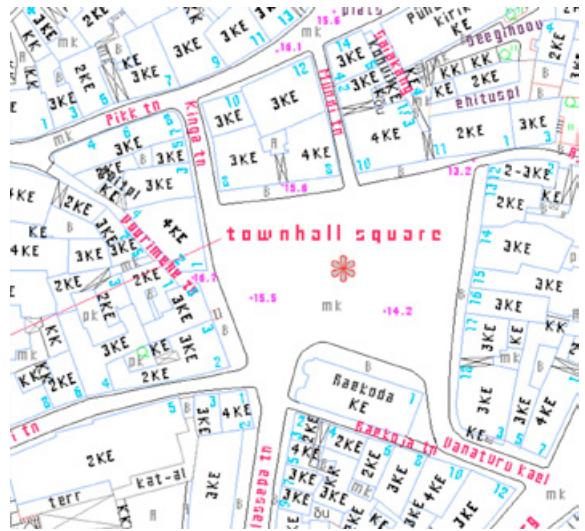
Photo: Mariann Valk

Urban Flora

Concept: Veronika Valk
Completed in collaboration with Katrin Koov & Siiri Vallner
(Kavakava) in 2003
Location: Town Hall Square
in Tallinn, Estonia
Photo: Mariann Valk

This giant propelling flower installation, made for the Tallinn Old City festival, sprinkled the Town Hall square with 'sunnybunnies'. Recycled pirated CDs collected from black markets during police raids were woven into the reflective fabric of the blossoms which would spin in the wind.
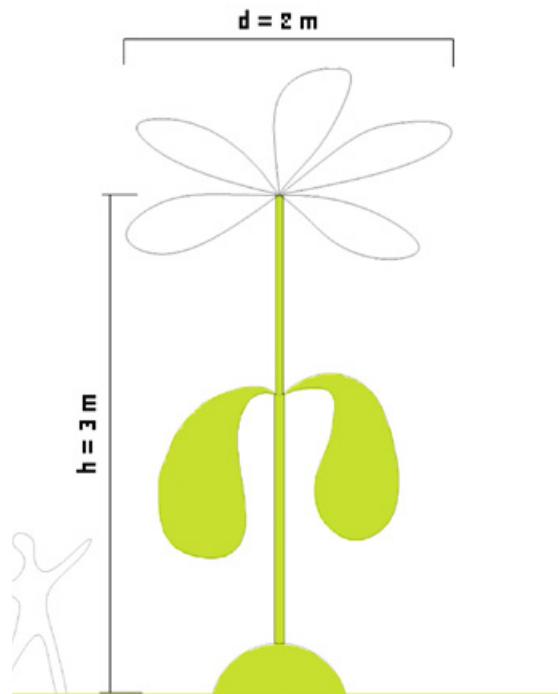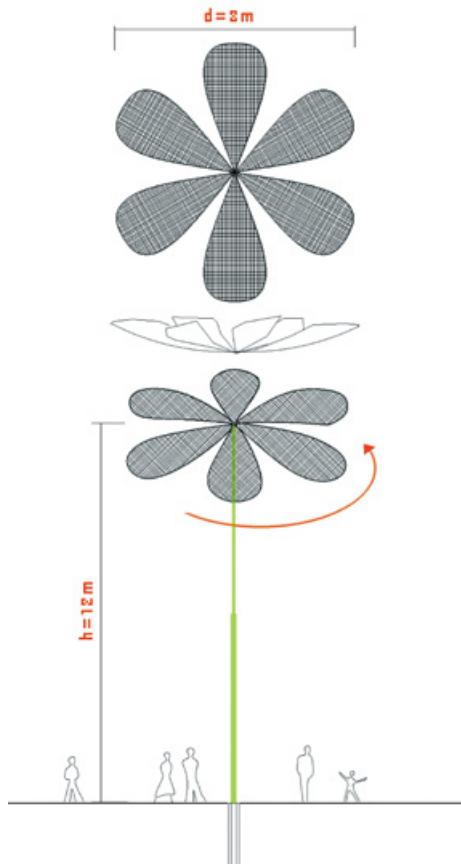
CDs as we brought them into the workshop finally ended in a settlement.

Weaving the CDs onto the blossom took all four of us three days, working next to a man from the workshop who was drilling holes into the CDs as they had to be 'neutralised' before being woven onto the flower (in case the 12-metre flower fell over, or the string broke in the wind – none of the illegal CDs could make it into the hands of passers-by). Intellectual Property Rights agents were calling us constantly, and negotiating with them about the best way to make the CDs illegible consumed much valuable time. However, the feminine techniques – weaving and knitting to create a reflective blossom surface that would also act as a sail for the wind to get the flower propelling – made us happy.

The montage took place at night, from 9pm to midnight. The crew consisted of seven men, a crane and two basket-heavers. We used a hole or former well (in which the Christmas tree is placed in winter) to support the flower. The foundation was a steel cylinder, with a depth of 1.5m. Ramming the cylinder into the hole with wooden logs was quite a spectacle. Everyone held their breath for the blossom's take-off from the ground and its landing on the top of stem – will it really stand up? And – more importantly – will it propel? As the sun came up, the flower glittered in all its glory and the warm summer breeze blew the blossom into a spin.

On the morning of June 6, the Old Town was filled with thronging crowds. The mayor opened the festival and named the turning flower the symbol of the Old Town Days Festival. The flower swayed frighteningly in the wind as if it were actually part of nature. At night, a spotlight was directed at

it from the stage (that is, from below), and thus the flower glowed over the entire spectrum of colours visible to the human eye.

Tourist groups visiting the Old Town have a longer stop at the Town Hall Square (it is a 'must-see'). Here, they take photos of the Town Hall (and of themselves, of course). With the flower up, an interesting phenomenon occurred: half the tourists started to take photos of the flower, instead of the Town Hall. Meanwhile, as the Town Hall arcade is a meeting point for young people, the flower-stem also became a pin-point location to set up dates. Stage projectors illuminated the flower at night, someone passing by muttering: "Disco!"

The big propelling flower was accompanied by seven smaller 'info-flowers', also made of steel tubes and spray-painted in a grass-green shade. The height of the info-flowers was 3m, with the blossoms' diameters being 2m. The leaves of the info-flowers were for stick-on posters with schedules of events taking place nearby. Altogether, the info-flowers either blended into or added to the greenery of the Old Town. They were almost invisible, many people being surprised afterwards that they had not noticed them. Attaching posters onto the leaves proved to be a problem, as they were ripped off and stolen. (Well, the graphic designer Katri Karing did make them quite eye-catching!)

One of the info-flowers ended up in our office and, as it was quite heavy (for girls) to lift, we did not move it about too much, but instead moved ourselves and arranged our meetings and work around it…

SAMPLE 8 CONCLUSION

This cluster of samples points directly to the 'multi-modal' and 'versatile' operational profiles discussed in Section III, 'Findings'. This bundle is an account of a large part of the practice, observing its 'substrate' shift in crossed contexts. It also marks a fundamental 'immersion' in related topics from Samples 1, 2, 6, 7 and 10. I could even say that everything in the conclusions is – at least to some extent – closely tied to the insights from the observations of the above.

[83] Tallinn is an old Hanseatic city with an extraordinarily well-preserved old town, parts of it dating back to the thirteenth century. The Old Town is the main tourist attraction in Tallinn, and the Town Hall Square in its centre is also a well-known meeting point and the location of the main Christmas tree in winter. Due to our geographic location on Nordic latitude, we Estonians have four distinct seasons (even though the majority of the year we enjoy simply lousy skiing weather – autumn, winter and spring are cold, rainy, cloudy and muddy). Statistics show that of the approximately 400,000 residents of Tallinn, 42.5% have experienced symptoms associated with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and 65.2% have at some time suffered from excessive cold whilst outside during the winter. This dictates our way of life, except for the two or three brief summer months. The Tallinn Old Town Days Festival typically takes place during the first weeks of June. This event marks the beginning of summer for Tallinn residents and is most likely the first summer festival, which is why the event is extremely popular. As far as Kavakava is concerned, summer is sun, air and flowers. In other words, we sought opportunities for amplifying these three elements in synergy between themselves in Estonia's most dense urban environment.

SAMPLE 9
THE PLEAIDES DESIGN
PROPOSTION

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Sample 9: The Pleiades design proposition for a symbiotic mobile arts and sciences lab, by Veronika Valk, consists of six shipping containers, aiming to act as an agent between art and science in the public realm. It is important to point out that this proposal has not yet progressed beyond the design stage, yet its agenda and line of thought is closely related to the Synthonia workshop described in Sample 10.1.

The structure was meant to be an experimental learning space: a tool for the hybrid curricula of arts and sciences, for both of them to follow the same creative process. Four shipping containers constitute the main structure and two additional containers serve as a reception and an outdoor exhibition area. The containers are cut into two parts, and the resulting eight cubicles are assembled in a flexible way such that they allow for site-specific adjustments and adaptations to local conditions[84] throughout the whole itinerary of the SANA campus.[85] Clean laboratory spaces provide work tables, shelving, storage and equipment to carry out bioArt and other projects, to experiment with and to test cross-disciplinary ideas.[86]

VERSATILITY

This low-cost biological laboratory was meant for artistic and scientific research and exhibitions where outputs could range from bioArtworks (for which the design provides dedicated gears), to nanoArt, digital art, math-art and the CAVE environment for non-stop programming via cost-efficient Mirror Dome technology (for an immersive exhibition experience located in one of the two extra containers), and to interactive games for science learning. The reception area was located in one of the two extra containers, connected via an entrance and display area with an office adjacent to an ICT lab, with seminar and exhibition spaces via a shelf-wall for a small library with sci-art references, equipment manuals, etc.

The design accommodated for seminars to be taking place in both the laboratory spaces or in the exhibition rooms, depending on the need: during the intense ongoing workshop phase the labs are a restricted area, only later converted into publicly-accessible showrooms. The design utilised recyclable, lightweight, easy-to-maintain finishes such as Corian, which is an advanced blend of natural minerals and acrylic polymer. Besides Corian, the design integrated a variety of advanced materials from SentryGlas to Kevlar to Teflon, depending on the function of the space. The design also integrated ICT solutions into the partition walls between seminar spaces and exhibition spaces, and enhanced the exterior/interior interactivity via intelligent OLED technology for lighting and displays.

AN AGENT

The 'Pleiades' laboratory had the ambition to act as an agent between art and science in the public realm and to further the understanding of diverse methodologies of production from both sides. PLEIADES had the goal to provide grounds to influence and challenge the actual relevance of science in contemporary culture, by offering a symbiotic environment, in which art is used to showcase the personal or human relevance of science and to improve the understanding of science as a body of knowledge.

Pleiades
Veronika Valk, 2010

The 'Pleiades' design proposition for a symbiotic mobile arts and sciences lab consists of six shipping containers, aiming to act as an agent between art and science in the public realm.

The laboratory was supposed to go on an expedition and travel through five European countries, from the north of Sweden to the south of Greece.

SECTION 1_1

solar energy

In case the rooftop area is used as additional seminar/exhibition/lounge space, safety railing and disabled access are provided according to regulations.

6000 6000

rainwater collection

HOST building

library / connection to host facility displays

infoseats

exhibit · interactive · display · shelves discussions · exhibition

2975

SECTION 2_2

solar energy

rainwater collection

6000

outdoor exhibit / displays 5.5m2

outdoor exhibition

visitors in · outdoor exhibit / displays 1.0m2 · emergency exit

interactive · shelved table · lab · equipment

outdoor exhibit / displays 5.5m2

RECEPTION 13.75m2

outdoor exhibit / displays 1.0m2 · emergency exit

visitors in

EXHIBIT

LAB storage / cold

services maintenance · supplies in

waste out

display wall

outdoor seminar area / displays 65.0m2

workshop participants · DRY lab session

circulation route

WET lab session

work table

outdoor exhibit / displays 5.5 m2

IMMERSIVE EXH 13.75m2

emergency exit · outdoor exhibit / displays 1.0 m2 · WS participants in

EXHIBIT

LAB semi camera

HVAC BLDG AUCOM

library / connection to host facility displays · print info · seating

library / connection to host facility displays · info

HOST building

visitors in · to facilities · participants in · to auditoriums

SAMPLE 9 CONCLUSION

On a broader scale, both this sample – the 'Pleiades' project – as well as the 'Synthonia' workshop (presented in Sample 10.1) address hybrid practices, crossing the borders of arts and sciences. Therefore, although this particular case-study points predominantly to the 'manifesto' in Section IV, it also relates to the "operational profiles" discussed in 'Findings' in Section III, namely from the 'versatility' point of view.

[84] The 8 cubicles are insulated lab spaces, fitted with stairways, windows, doors, electricity and a water supply, and are ready for the installation of relevant furniture and lab equipment. 'Pleiades' could be set up both outdoors (attached to an existing building, in a park, on the roof, etc.) and indoors (large exhibition/ fair hall, auditorium, theatre stage, interior plaza, etc.). The 'Pleiades' design emphasised efficient packing possibilities: it had to be lightweight, durable, and with integrated equipment. It was an extendable structure which could be unfolded into a multiplicity of forms. The clean laboratory spaces provided work tables, shelving, storage and equipment to carry out bioArt projects, to experiment with and to test the ideas of workshop participants. The stationary equipment was fixed and secured onto the containers to reduce the risk of harming the equip-

ment during transportation and use.

[85] The laboratory was supposed to go on an expedition and travel through five European countries, from the north of Sweden to the south of Greece, stopping to implement science-art education pilots in ten different locations. An EU application was submitted but the project was never funded, which is the reason why it is still unrealised and 'on-hold'.

[86] 'Pleiades' was an ideas project that had an ambition to build a mobile (caravan) laboratory space for cross-inspiring mixed curricula for teachers of both arts and sciences, aimed at the true symbiosis, synchronisation and synergy emerging in the society of tomorrow, a society on its way towards 'creative, life-long learning'.

SAMPLE 10
ARCHITECTURE
WORKSHOPS

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Sample 10: Architecture Workshops for research and concept development.

10.1. The Synthonia workshop on synthetic biology, by Veronika Valk in collaboration with the Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA), the Tallinn University of Technology (TUT) and Tartu University (TU), explored how the rapid advancement of the field of synthetic biology may significantly alter our perception and inhabitation of the living environments of tomorrow.

This sample refers back to the 'Pleiades' proposal presented in the previous chapter. More importantly, the agenda of the 'cell' that is highlighted in this sample resurfaces in the 'manifesto' presented in Section IV. Furthermore, the discussions on developmental biology that start with this sample are further observed in Section III, under 'Tagged'.

The cell is a biological computer and 'living materials' offer a new approach to building materials. The workshop investigated whether it is possible for our future buildings to share some of the properties of living systems. Leading scientists in the fields of the biotechnologies provided elaborate presentations on the topics of algorithmic architecture, scale and structure, synthetic genomics, morphogenesis and visualisation techniques. The lectures were accompanied by hands-on laboratory practice, through which master's- and doctoral-level students of architecture, design and new media proposed ideas projects for evaluation.

The Chair of Jewellery and Metal Arts at the EAA was the first person whose eyes were to glow when I said that I would like to organise a workshop on synthetic biology. I was asked whether the architects would also be interested in the workshop. It turned out that they were, was was the new media department. And so a synthetic biology workshop – Elumärgid ('Signs of Life') – took place in January 2012 at the TUT Institute of Chemistry and at the Competence Centre of Food and Fermentation Technologies (CCFFT[87]) laboratories.

About a week of lectures and laboratory experiments offered architecture, design and new media students the opportunity to take a look at the latest biotech line of thought, which had fascinated me for years – an opportunity to gain insight into some of the questions that I posed in the introduction to this thesis. The world speaks of Synthia[88] and of self-reproducing machines. Biological engineering iGEM[89] competitions are held at MIT. Synthetic life is focused on the construction of cells with a completely new set of properties. Unwittingly, mankind has reached not only transhumanism, but also the era of posthumanism, where in the coming years it is precisely synthetic biology that might make possible ab initio cells and the synthesis of organisms similar to creatures from the wilderness.

Nanotechnology, the predecessor of synthetic biology, brought new thinking, which treats atoms and molecules like ordinary affairs that are used in various technologies in order to achieve self-replicating machines and products. The synthesis of new cells from chemical components on the one hand, and nanobots and bionics developments on the other, sets us upon a threshold in the world of science and technology; in an era when synthesising bacterial DNA and getting it to work is technically a great piece of art, then the true construction of the new cell is an even bigger challenge.[90]

To unlock the common points shared by synthetic biology and architecture, Martin Melioranski spoke in his lecture at the beginning of the week about algorithmic biology. Subsequently, Professor Raivo Vilu[91] gave an introduction to biomolecules and cells. He has, together with his young adherents, experimented for years with constructing living cells,[92] engineering cells by optimising them as though chemical plants – developing the foundations of metabolics. The engineers at CCFFT try to make self-replicating nanobots from components of cells.

THE CELL

'Cell' as used here means a self-replicating microscopic bubble reactor that performs a variety of particular tasks and consists of biopolymers. Although a eukaryotic cell's size is of the order of 10µm and a prokaryotic cell (for example, bacteria) is 1µm, it is today possible to explore and understand the role of all the molecules in a cell factory. Without exaggeration, the future of biotech in Estonia is in the hands of Professor Vilu.[93]

One important point where art, design and biology can meet is that of visualisation. During the workshop Pille Säälik, the TU Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology's (TÜMRI) developmental biology researcher, explained the ways to make the cells visible. Using different types of microscopy as tools, with specific software assets, it is possible to understand how cells attach (to, say, a surface or structure) and move about, as well as how the cell structures operate during cell reproduction.

SYNTHETIC GENOMICS FOR ARCHITECTS

TÜMRI Professor of Molecular Biotechnology Ants Kurg had been asked to open up the world of synthetic genomics for us. He spoke of genes and their synthesis with art, giving a good overview of the 'ABC' of genetics and what one can do with genes today – covering topics from both natural and synthetic organisms, to synthetic genomes. Synthetic Genomics does not necessarily use genes from the wild, but rather series of base pairs with a special design. In that way, we can build long and accurate chains of base pairs cheaply, quickly and in large quantities. Therefore, great potential lies in the research, especially when we consider the help of protein compression models.

Here you can see the links to developments in biorobotics, and from here on it is important to think about what synthetic genomics[94] can offer in terms of the future of bioenergy, biomass and biofuels. Thinking about cells as the raw material for self-replicating nanobots, we must have knowledge about cell cycles, and this was the topic of the TÜMRI Director and Head of the Department of Cell Biology, Professor Toivo Maimets. Cell-death is a genetically well-

Synthonia workshop
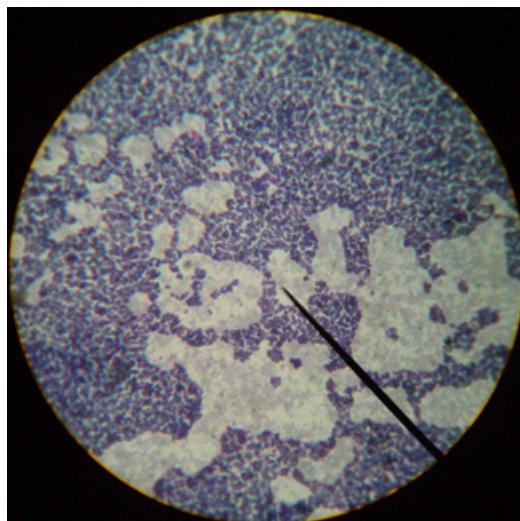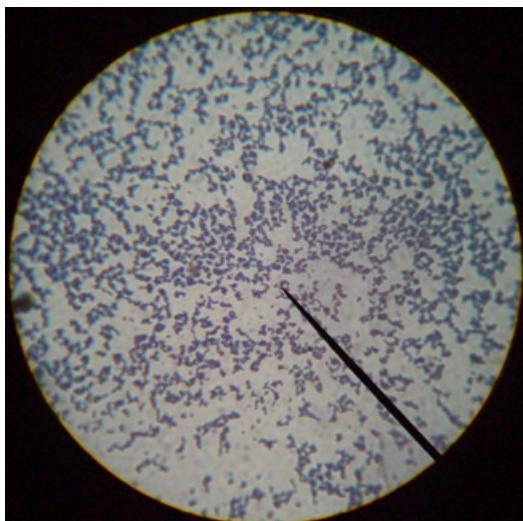
Photos: Johanna Jõekalda

Photo: Johanna Jõekalda
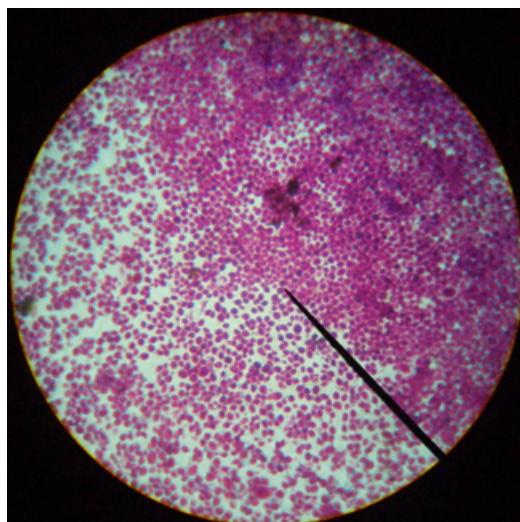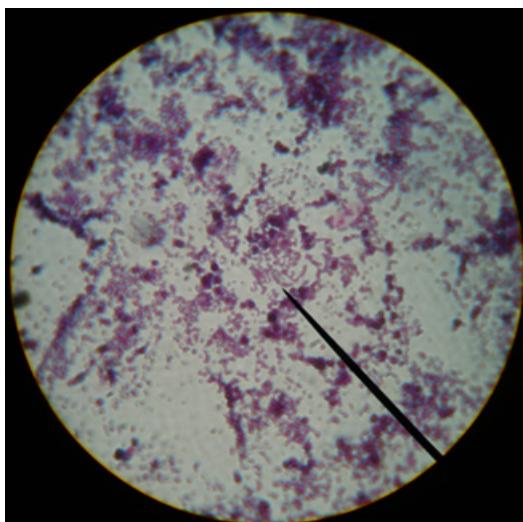
Photo: Mari Hunt

Photo: Johanna Jõekalda

orchestrated process, which ensures that the death of cells does not upset the organism as a whole.

The role of genes – and what is decided by random variability in gene expression – is probably necessary information for architects, designers, and other shapers of the environment. In other words, it is a question of how much the environment affects the development of an organism – that is, how does the biochemical lesion (from the environment) impact the cells and the cell cycle? I must admit that architects should be better informed about the concurrent research directions in developmental biology in Estonia today, especially given that TÜMRI is a globally-recognised centre of excellence in the field.

BIOETHICS FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Upon reaching the topic of 'stem cells', it is no longer possible to get around the issue of bioethics. Synthetic biology as an emerging branch of science is gathering relevance all around the world and is an engineering paradigm which promises us new (construction) materials, medicines, fuel and chemicals not found in nature. These can have a profound impact on how we perceive, use and shape the world around us. Is a synthetic cell alive? What are the scientific community's agreed-upon 'signs of life' today? The emergence of a synthetic life-form in laboratory conditions, and its spread from the laboratory into the world, faces us with significant ethical issues.

Biohackers, spontaneous DIY labs and bioterror are particularly prevalent themes in the US, but also increasingly in Asia and Europe, where the history of religion plays a role in developing taboos in relation to these endeavours. Professor Raivo Kelomees, the head of new media at the EAA Fine Arts Department, introduced the word 'biomedia' in his lecture. His examples in bioArt presented how engineers, artists and scientists share a similar mindframe when it comes to experimentation: what is the role of 'testing' as an inseparable part of daily creative activities? How are discoveries born? Can the artist contribute to the development of science?

HANDS-ON

Parallel to the lectures that were held during the week, a laboratory practice was set up to reinforce the knowledge gained at the lectures. Synthetic biology often uses bacteria

as modified machines, so that the ordinary petri-dish can serve as a simplified biosensor through turning the invisible into the visible. The laboratory work began by explaining the basic rules of seeding and incubation, and what colony growth patterns look like.

In subsequent trials, it was also tested how (human) DNA can be extracted with simple tools. Thanks to Tartu researcher Signe Värv's energetic guidance, the students gained an idea of how a gel electrophoresis machine works, a machine that is known to the art world as 'Paul Vanouse's tool' because of his work 'Latent Figure Protocol' (2007). A comparative crystallisation experiment was conducted, continuing the discussion about the 'signs of life'. Additionally, the 'machine' was tested against the sensorial values of a human being (the sense of smell in recognising certain molecules). Essentially, all participants of the workshop acquired a new biochemical beginning and a fresh viewpoint to reflect upon 'life'.

SYNTHETIC EVOLUTION

The new challenges for architecture and design emerging from synthetic biology lie primarily in the material technologies, where a number of architects and researchers have already successfully experimented with the so-called 'protocell' technologies. 'Synthetic life' (cell) design and construction techniques are aimed at enabling new functionality with classic engineering strategies – standardisation, differentiation, abstraction. It is thus necessary to adjust the preconceptions of the predictable and reliable, in order to get used to the so-called cell (biological modularity) language.

Such 'synthetic' or directed evolution is committed to the optimisation of systems, using 'cell colonies' (metazoans) and individual cells (single cell organisms) as tools of abstraction. Conceptualising biological systems can help to analyse the novel assembly variants of biological molecules and to discuss their application possibilities in everyday life. Discoveries in the 1960s about the mathematical logic of gene regulation (e.g. prokaryotes, and the lac operon (Monod and Jacob, 1961)[95]), and the predecessors of artificial DNA in the 1970s, have pioneered today's synthetic biology that studies the full potential of genes and their products, and therefore has much in common with systems biology which analyses biological organisms as a whole.
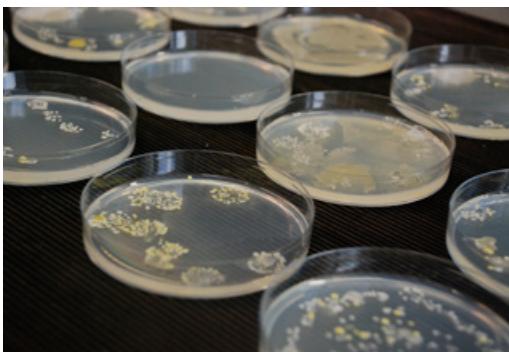
Photo: Mari Hunt
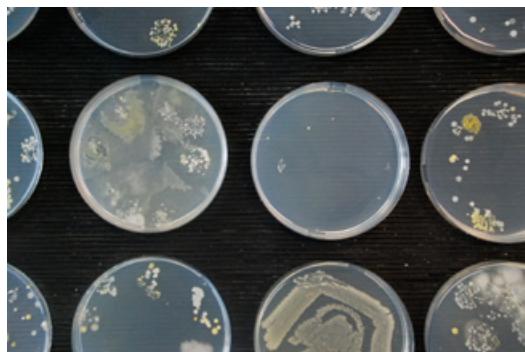
Photo: Mari Hunt

[87] www.tftak.ee
[88] J. Craig Venter Institute, jcvi.org
[89] The Registry of Standard Biological Parts, igem.org
[90] Professor Raivo Vilu in radio program 'Tarkade Klubi', the Estonian National Broadcast, 15.6.2010.
[91] CCFFT and TUT Institute of Chemistry, Chair of Biotechnology.
[92] Õpetajate Leht, 26.10.2001,
http://www.opleht.ee/Arhiiv/2001/26.10.01/elu/2.shtml

[93] His main long-term area of research is systems biology and physics for food production. He has also for many years supervised doctoral theses on a variety of topics, from metabolic flow pattern analysis software, to an evaluation of substance flows related to the oil shale industry.
[94] Synthetic Genomics Inc., J. Craig Venter, synthetic yeast Mycoplasma genitalium
[95] Jacob, F & Monod, J, 'Genetic regulatory mechanisms in the synthesis of proteins', Journal of Molecular Biology, 3.3 (June 1961), pp. 318–56.

10.2
LINNAHALL
WORKSHOP

10.2. The Linnahall workshop on gentrification in post-ideological urbanism was conducted in collaboration with Oaas Architects. Participants included BA- and MA-level students from design, architecture, film, scenography and the social sciences. (The future scenarios for Linnahall have captivated me since my thesis project at the EAA in 2001). The workshop was conducted in collaboration with Oaas architects Maria Pukk and Ivar Lubjak.

The workshop 'Dream. Sense. Adapt. Feed. Five Visions for Linnahall' asked the participants to imagine that we are not just part of the information society, but part of a dream society characterised by reverie and a constant thirst for dreams. While postmodernism and deconstructivism attempted to satisfy the intellect, today we place more importance on the visual, spatial and tactile senses. Every individual – just like a building – may adapt to its environment within the constraints of its hereditary traits. Adaptation is the primary process in bioevolution. Participants proposed adaptive re-use scenarios for the Linnahall Concert Hall. The building's future genetic code depends directly on today's memes. The workshop asked: what protects structures such as Linnahall from their own ideological legacies?

This 10.2 sample is significant as the workshop delves into the problems of Linnahall, discussed in this research from the first introduction to the final conclusions. The results of the workshop were included in the Estonian Pavilion (Padiglione di Estonia) at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition (13. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura) in Venice in 2012.[96] The Pavilion asked, "How Long is the Life of a Building?" and was searching for the contestable futures of the modernist architectural legacy. The focus of the Estonian exposition was precisely the case study of Linnahall: a monumental Soviet-era proto-postmodernist complex under metamorphic pressure for change, but also under heritage protection through the DOCOMOMO initiative, in its key location in Tallinn.[97]

On one hand, the exposition investigated the deterioration of remarkable buildings, as everything man-made that is not in use breaks apart. To preserve a building, is it necessary to transform it? If so, then how do we renew its purpose? A historic building is a work of art, and yet is our common ground. On the other hand, this posed the question of the 'dignified aging' of the built environment. As the spine of the society's physical identity, how can the existing structure accommodate simultaneously all of the identities of different generations and cultural backgrounds, which are nurtured by shifting times, memories and tacit accumulated knowledge? And how can it still prove desirably 'profitable' in neoliberal terms?

USE VALUE

The exposition highlighted the values of adaptability and flexibility in this building's functionality, contrasting undocumented case studies of abandoned modernist architecture in Estonia and Eastern Europe with the currently predominant patterns of reformist thought. Such nonconformist architectural icons require re-evolution of the term 'use value', which is of worldwide urban concern. This 'futurespective', as well as retrospective, aimed to evoke the sense of the responsibility of critical thinkers within a broader international community, in order to enable reflection on possible links between the socio-economic paradigm of 'deregulation', and the emergence of the post-capitalist condition. How is the art of negotiation benefitting the creative reuse of an aging pile of stones – gracefully?

Recorded moving images – rejuvenating 'best-of' flashbacks of the story of Linnahall, including interviews with designers and end-users – became instrumental devices, inviting the visitor into an exploration of inner sensations – intimate human contact – evoked by 'ageless' architecture, in order to unlock memories of one's own familiar settings, home context, and similarly abandoned yet dignified and extraordinary buildings and places. The city's functioning is characterised by its 'plasticity' or its capacity to re-appropriate vital parts according to experiences undergone by the society. The exposition was, in this sense, an eclipse: a search for functional realities, incorporating institutional, ideological and structural processes, bringing architectural fragments, urban events and spatial concepts into tenable meaning.

DREAM. SENSE. ADAPT. FEED.
FIVE VISIONS FOR LINNAHALL.

The workshop itself was set up on the sequential process 'Dream. Sense. Adapt. Feed.' whereby the participants from different fields (architecture, design, sociology, landscaping, urban studies and so on) produced altogether five narratives for Linnahall. The opening session, 'Dream', asked the participants to imagine that they are not just part of the information society, but of a dream society characterised by reverie and a constant thirst for dreams. What would happen if we 'opened up the space'?[98] Or could Linnahall be transformed into a 'power station', a conduit for currents?[99] But what if everything were to be left the way it was...?[100] There were multiple answers.[101]

The next session, 'Sense', posed that whereas postmodernism and deconstructivism attempted to satisfy the intellect, we today place more importance on the visual, spatial and tactile senses. Might the sensuous aspect be amplified by Linnahall's pipes?[102] A new, sixth sense was also found.[103] And the ghost of the Popular Front was sensed.[104]

[96] The exposition was commissioned by the NGO Estonian Centre of Architecture (commissioner: Ülar Mark) and curated by interior architect Tüüne-Kristin Vaikla. Exhibitors included Urmo Vaikla, Ingel Vaikla, Maria Pukk, Ivar Lubjak and myself. The exposition was supported by the Union of Estonian Architects and the Estonian Ministry of Culture.
[97] The jury of the Estonian exposition competition selected this concept due to its integration of a clear message and intricate contexts, but also for its potential to produce an experiential spatial atmosphere in the Venice Arsenale exhibition space. Furthermore, Linnahall is controversial in its historic and ideological

legacy, likely to invoke a multiplicity of associations for viewers. Completed in 1980 when the Moscow Olympics yacht races were held in Tallinn, the building won a Grand Prix from the Interarch 1983 World Biennale in Sofia and, in 1984, a Soviet Union State Award. Linnahall, originally named after Lenin, succeeded in reconnecting the city with the sea and returning some of the waterfront – a closed-off industrial and military zone – to the public.

The third session, 'Adapt', stated that every individual (and, in the metaphorical sense, also some buildings) may adapt to its environment within the constraints of its hereditary traits. Adaptation is the primary process in bioevolution. Participants proposed scenarios in which the Linnahall was a power station – a conduit for currents like a hibernating 'smart building' where the processes of healing and growth take place during sleep as they do in other living organisms.[105] Linnahall was seen as the catalyst for events and for eventlessness. Or, as a giant canvas and jaws that 'sensentice' creative people from everywhere. One of the proposals saw Linnahall as a zoo and/or columbarium and/or refugee camp (a 'Guggenheim with a twist').

The fourth session, 'Feed', said that Linnahall's future genetic code depends directly on today's memes. What protects Linnahall from its own ideological baggage? Pipelines,

'Sensenticers' or bioenergy?[106] Participants A. Staškevitš, G. Niin and J. Penjam concluded that Linnahall is a magnet by which the surrounding city fabric aligns itself. Various urban power vectors converge in the multi-layered network of empty streets and public areas, but they do not open up to reveal themselves completely. Linnahall could develop into a separate city-within-a-city. The city and Linnahall are kept together by unique tectonics whereby the complex offers space for streets and plazas, locations for film shoots, coastal meadows and jungles – space where recording studios, meeting rooms, cafés, nursery schools, and government departments are all entwined. It is a place for a multitude of experiences: romantic, nostalgic, dramatic, ecstatic...

Photo: Ivar Lubjak

Linnahall from air

98 Participants Keiti Kljavin and Brett Astrid Võmma offered an architecture competition scenario whereby a competition is held and is won by a collaborative entry called 'Linnakodu' (City Home) by leading Nordic architects. It envisions the Linnahall as a high-class retirement home, aimed at the elderly of the Baltic Sea region. In the concert hall, retirees will watch their favourite TV shows and at night there will be bingo, while in Linnahall's legendary bar they will queue cafeteria-style for food. An employment centre for seniors will also be opened to provide them with a livelihood within their abilities, such as mentoring children from orphanages.

99 Kairi Kuuskor & Katrin Koovit offered that the building measures, tracks, analyses, reacts and communicates, reflects and amplifies itself and the surroundings, in both digital and analogue form, with the medium being sound and light. It is at once a landscape of light, shadow and sounds, where the sounds of stairs are translated into birdsong or darkness, certain sounds are amplified, and the sounds from the sea are audible on the side of the building facing the city – a half-kilometre away, where absolute artificial silence reigns. Thus, Linnahall becomes an acoustic instrument.

100 Iris Jägel & Merilin Jürimets suggested leaving Linnahall as a spatial perception theatre: a large toy, a spinning striped top, secure in its exterior, able to be silent. The top is given colour by the parallel worlds within it, of which some are in the 1980s ESSR, others in the 1990s, and a third contingent are questioningly inappropriate. They are united into a whole by the meshwork of disintegration and dreaming, known as 'nostalgia'.

101 According to participants Artur Staškevitš, Gloria Niin & Jaan Penjam, cities develop on landscapes – and they disappear from landscapes. Linnahall as a landscape building at the meeting of land and water is no ordinary building. The huge layout of rooms has been stretched out over a large parcel of land to make the skin covering the structure traversable, thus connecting the sea and city. The city and Linnahall are a rich matrix of urban culture in space-time.

102 Participants Eve Komp & Imgela Viks offered that there could be two atmospheres sensed through sounds. Inside Linnahall: silence, abandonment – only crackling circuit box sounds cut through the gloom. Outside, however, there could be a rich medley of colours. Each side of Linnahall could have sound-generating sites of different nature – the port, traffic, the sea. The inner and outer soundscapes should not meet.

103 Jägel & Jürimets suggested that, in terms of its form, Linnahall is a structure that bounces people around. Those who climb over it are 'sensenticed' or they are cast smoothly over the building into the sea. As they are 'sensenticed' – that is, sensitised and enticed – into the building, the walls bounce the visitor from smaller rooms to larger spaces, from rectilinear ones to round ones and from dark

to light. By closing one door or axis and opening others, the visitor on the journey can experience the space in a surprisingly independent way. Under, atop and next to the hall at the heart of Linnahall, are long corridors and endless spaces that proceed around a so-called deep hall, 'sensentice' visitors into itself, spinning around the visitor's sense of place and space in a playful way.

104 K. Kljavin & B.A. Võmma came up with three scenarios: 1) the open interiors of Linnahall are threatened by looting. Some speak up in defence of the Linnahall. Ways of stopping vandalism are found. Quietly, life in Linnahall returns to normal. A campus or city is developed within Linnahall, where a 'developers' camp' takes shape. The city has found the long-awaited suitor for Linnahall. 2) Tallinn as an abidingly popular destination for cruise tourism. The former cooling pool in the ice hall is deepened, cruise ships calling right in the heart of Linnahall. The adjoining wings have 'tourist worlds' aimed at different target groups. The hall is adapted into a large-scale food court and business centre. 3) Linnahall is sold to a chain of aid organisations operating on the US West Coast, transforming it into an official transit stop for immigrants making their way from Africa and the Middle East to the Nordic countries. A refugee camp is set up in the interior of Linnahall.

105 K. Kuuskor & K. Koovit thought that the contents of Linnahall should be left asleep, forgotten and protected, until a new 'spring' comes. The vegetation would conceal the characteristics of the building, covering up the entrances and windows. There would be no more opportunity to loot and pillage, the bars would be removed from the terraces – the entire exterior surface of the building would be accessible. As sufficient population density develops, a gradual natural flow of humans from the outside to the inside could start to take place. Linnahall is in a dysfunctional situation: every day that it stands empty, not generating rental income, means less money for someone. The heating bill is like a concrete block around its ankles, pulling the value and future potential of the building down into the deep. But those who do not burden others are the ones that survive. If Linnahall became a small, autotrophic power station, it could then await the day when a natural need develops for it to exist, rather than a contrived one grafted onto it. The income generation models would change so that new social and cultural values could become the basis for choosing tenants.

106 K. Kuuskor & K. Koovit suggested that, as electricity prices rise, the station becomes the feeder for the entire area in both the figurative and the literal sense: the beneficiaries who receive a 'charge' are the people on the roof, installations, equipment and buildings – there is a flow of people and the sea, as charged particles. Perhaps a Linnahall bioenergy algae farm will end up providing in entirety for the future energy-starved Tallinn?

10.3
HANSALITE
WORKSHOP

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10.3. The Hansalite workshop on innovative street lighting and its energy efficiency in the colder, darker wintertime of the northern hemisphere, by Veronika Valk, asked participants to suggest illumination strategies and methods with a strong environmental agenda, reducing the maintenance costs of lighting systems and increasing energy-saving in street lighting. This workshop relates directly to the issues raised in Sample 8, in which I talk about festivals of contemporary culture.

Rogier van der Heide from Arup Lighting kindly consulted a follow-up event in which one of the proposals was realised as an urban installation on the Town Hall Square in Tallinn. Upon many tests, various 'light domes' were created with diverse special effects depending on the weather conditions, while natural light cupolas were also formed by fog, snow, etc. Experimenting with different sources of lighting, almost all atmospheric phenomena present were integrated into the process. The results of the workshop have proven valuable for similar festivals of light events in other cities.

The Hansalite 2004 workshop included participants from Estonia and from elsewhere in Europe. In the preparation phase, we investigated together with the Tallinn municipality the existing street lighting situation in the green bastion belt surrounding the medieval Old Town, which was the focus area of the workshop. We clarified where new street lighting was needed or already planned, as well as the state of affairs in terms of the ownership of the land (legal issues were concerned).

EXPECTATIONS
AND OUTCOMES

As one of the results of the workshop, the landscape architecture studies at the EAA started to plot more thorough research on light, especially on aspects of natural light. However, the background of the Hansalite 2004 workshop was broader: it aimed to establish a collaborative design network between former Hanseatic cities who were interested in light-art and interventions in street lighting. Young Estonian architecture offices were invited to participate and they contributed worthy proposals.

What does street lighting in the 'contemporary Hanseatic city' look like? The workshop asked the participants to analyse current trends in street lighting and experimental projects in outdoor lighting, and to come up with a proposal for Tallinn's future street lighting in the bastion belt around the Old Town. The ideas generated were supposed to fuel activities in the area of street lighting in Tallinn during the coming years. The results were exhibited in the format of an exhibition of idea-projects at Arhitektuuri- ja Disainigalerii in Tallinn the same year.

We originally wished to test the proposals with temporary projectors, so as to attract public attention and to visualise the results for the funding bodies. Yet in reality the process took longer and we were able to test only one of the proposals – the Light Dome – the next year (on Town Hall Square in 2005). Part of the problem concerned the Christmas lighting, which consumes significant financial resources each year and yet has repeatedly produced conventional outcomes of poor artistic and design quality. However, the success of the workshop was evidenced by the presence and interest of officials throughout the process.

The Tallinn Central Administration had high expectations for the workshop. The officials were interested in illuminating the medieval architecture and the historic milieu that is under UNESCO heritage protection, yet were looking for feasible solutions ready for implementation. The goal was to receive ideas that would help to highlight the value of the historic centre and its protection zone. At the same time, we investigated the possibilities for Christmas lighting that would go beyond the standard (and banal) temporary decorations.

The proposals had to be feasible, contemporary, visually suitable to the historic context, and comprehensive. The municipality wished for the proposals to consider implementation in phases, as well as the technical aspects of maintenance, electricity consumption and weather, in addition to the prevention of vandalism, which is a major concern in Tallinn's public space. The solutions had to be flexible with the possibility to use parts of them in different combinations in a variety of locations.[107]

[107] The chosen sites were the following: 1. Vabaduse Square – Harju Hill; 2. Tammsaare Park; 3. Viruvärava Hill - 'Musumägi'; 4. Kanuti Garden; 5. Margareeta Garden - Estonia Monument surroundings; 6. Tornide Square; 7. Schnelli Pond surroundings, Toompark; 8. Hirvepark; 9. Roheline Market; 10. Issandamuutmise Church; 11. Siimeoni Church; 12. Oleviste Church lighting reconstruction; 13. Lighting the spires in addition to the towers; 14. Toompea Castle; 15. Laboratooriumi Street; 16. Pikk jalg Street and Gate: 17. Lühike jalg Street and Gate; 18. Suur-Kloostri Street and Gate; 19. Kaarli Boulevard; 20. The arch of the Singing Arch (outside the bastion belt, located by the bay).

10.4
FORESTART
WORKSHOP

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10.4. The Forestart workshop in April 2005, by Zizi&Yoyo architects Veronika Valk and Yoko Alender in collaboration with NOD, Onix, Peter de Kan, Pavlov Media Lab, Kütioru Open Studios, focused on forestry, wood design and construction in Estonia – a country in which more than 50% of the land is covered by forest and yet where much speculative lumber-cutting takes place, endangering forests and their bio-habitats in danger.

Similar to the previous sample (Hansalite), this is also an exercise in co-operation and communication, which lie at the core of my practice's 'operational profiles', described in Section III, 'Findings'.

Governmental institutions actively fight for their remaining woodlands, re-planting huge areas with thousands of new trees every year. The workshop proposed to include artists and designers in the re-forestation process. The on-site outdoor workshop was about inventing and questioning the means of human intervention in natural settings. As an emergent form of environmental (land) art, it also provided a framework to discuss the role of nature and forests in contemporary spatial discourses, asking how art and architecture can be present in nature without interrupting its functions. Wood construction technologies, which

were explored at the Forestart workshop, might contribute effectively to the evolutionary architecture of the future. Participating students had backgrounds in forestry, biology, landscaping and design.

Forestart targeted environmental awareness. The aim was to broaden the social understanding of forests not just as 'chunks of nature' that provide us with fresh air and energy, but rather to suggest possible future scenarios crossing scientific, artistic and architectural agendas (e.g. evolutionary architecture). As for the forests, Estonia has been facing other problems in addition to illegal forestry and fights against it: over recent years, the phenomenon of 'brushwood' and its fast-spreading process has gained a lot of attention.

Brushwood is a modern element in Estonia's otherwise traditional landscape, a twenty-first century pioneer that creeps over vast areas of unused lands that were previously agricultural. Its uncontrollable and seemingly unstoppable spread decreases the biodiversity of our landscapes while offering, according to locals, little in the way of aesthetic or sensory worth. Forestart suggested that, although brushwood is of poor economic and ecological value, it holds possibilities for interesting and unique brushwood art, combining elements

Photos: Peeter Laurits

Forestart

LLC Zizi&Yoyo in collaboration with Onix architects, NOD (Sweden), Kütioru Open Studios, Peter de Kan and Pavlov Media Lab (Groningen, NL)
Idea and completion: 2005
Location: Kütioru Open Studios
Haanja Nature Park, Estonia

In one week, students of landscape architecture, forestry and biology built two nest-shaped structures. The shelters were not 'built' in the traditional sense of construction, but rather the technique

involved using living brushwood or trees as pillars onto which the cut-down brushwood lumber was 'woven'.

First, methods of bending smaller beech trunks were studied closely, and then ways of fastening were investigated. Local beavers inhabiting the surrounding virgin forest proved to be a source of inspiration, as their nests exhibit a great deal of sophistication in terms of smart and efficient ways of construction.

Finally, the structures emerged using participants' bare hands and natural weed-rope from a nearby factory. One shelter opens up towards the sky in a bowl-like manner, and can withstand the weight of at least 20 people. The other is introverted and provides a sleeping place during the colder, windier and rainier seasons of the year.

The whole process was filmed by Dutch graphic designer and filmmaker Peter de Kan.

of limiting its spread and at the same time creating new 'brushwood-spaces'.

TRANSDISCIPLINARY

Low-tech construction technologies explored in the Forestart workshop are probably relevant in woodlands all over Europe. (Even the current President of Estonia asked for a Forestart shelter at his country home.) Thus, as exemplary units, we 'built' (wove, knitted) two nest-shaped structures in one week. The technique involved using living trees as pillars, while local beavers inhabiting the surrounding virgin forest proved to be a source of enormous inspiration, as their nests exhibited a great deal of sophistication in terms of smart and efficient ways of construction. Finally, the structures emerged using the participants' bare hands and natural weed-rope from a nearby factory. One of the

shelters opens up towards the sky in a bowl-like manner, and can withstand the weight of at least 20 people. The other is introverted in its character and provides a sleeping place during the colder, windier, rainier seasons of the year.

The entire process was documented in a film, while the installations are still part of the Kütioru Land Art hiking path, and are thus open for everyone to visit through the year. Due to the transdisciplinary nature of the project, it touched a wide range of people from different backgrounds, such as environmental conservationists, foresters, forest owners, forest industries, artists, architects, students, and local governments – that is, all those interested in best environmental practices. The project helped to raise public awareness about the situation facing deforested areas, the problem of brushwood, and possible solutions via sustainable construction methods.
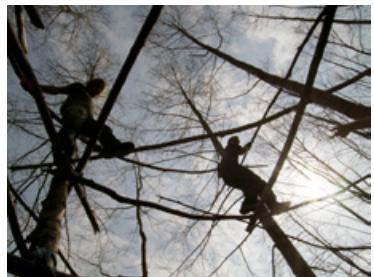
Photos: Peter de Kan

CONCLUSION

The workshops described in the Sample 10 cluster of projects have all been initiated by my practice. Therefore, it resonates strongly with the 'manifesto' in Section IV. Additionally, many of the workshops are tied closely to other samples, such as installations (Sample 8) and the waterfront agenda (Sample 1, for instance). Furthermore, the subsamples presented above are excellent markers for all of the 'Findings' in Section III, including 'multi-modality', 'versatility', 'substrate', and so forth. It is also important to stress that these workshops have allowed me to tackle the larger questions that I touched upon in the introduction.

FINDINGS

"Luuavarrest võib ka pauk tulla. A big bang can come from a broomstick."

Lia Rajalo, 1984

The following has surfaced through the RMIT PhD process, the Practice Research Symposia (PRS) events and interactions on this front with my supervisors and the panel members at the presentations, as I looked closer not only at the sample works presented in Section II but reflected especially on the development of the practice as a whole, as a collaborative multi-instrumental process. One of the first observations was that there is something anomalous about the various roles that I have taken on throughout the years to produce the work. It also became clear at the very first PRS that there is a specific undercurrent of 'joyful' and 'playful' evident in the projects.

Yet what puzzled me was that, in actual practice, the general ambience – the struggle to pull off the work – resembled for me the Kafkaesque.[108] The first contribution of the PhD process itself, in relation to my practice, was that it helped me to see more clearly how these different attributes – the versatility, the 'joyful' and 'playful' and the Kafkaesque – are intertwined and interdependent in my practice. Furthermore, as I was listening to the presentations and witnessing the progress of other candidates, it became very clear that I was not alone in this 'agony'. Since these observations did not occur in isolation, the PhD process gradually made me realise what I can do now, that I could not do when I began the PhD.

Thus, to start from what I consider the beginning of my practice, the second prize in the Väike-Munamäe ski-centre competition in 1998 came as a huge surprise. Little did I know that there were more of those 'bangs from a broomstick' ahead. A year later I was part of a small team which won the Rakvere town centre urban planning contest, and in 2000 I co-authored the winning entry for the Tallinn waterfront's urban renewal. Estonia was fast-forwarding into an economic boom, and taking part in national open competitions became a way of life: straight out of school, I went headlong into 'sprinter'-mode during these competition years.

As expected, some of the winning proposals began to be realised, and works were being built. The rhythm of the practice switched from 'sprinter' mode to that of a 'marathon runner'. 24/7 workdays were soon split between detailed drawings, site visits, project management meetings, budget discussions, software issues, and everything else that we consider a usual part of any contemporary architectural practice. This period coincided with the co-founding and partnership of the Kavakava architectural 'girl band', and it began to gain public recognition.

Co-founding the Zizi&Yoyo office in 2005 helped to evolve the practice's scope of activities and shift its agenda, setting up a framework that added curatorship and event-making to the previous modes. Still taking part in design, architecture and urban planning competitions, as well as completing buildings and actively participating in the Council of the Union of Estonian Architects, the practice was closely involved with Valgusfestival (the Tallinn Festival of Light) and with initiating Kultuurikatel (the proposal for a creative hub in an abandoned industrial complex on the Tallinn waterfront).

In parallel to the above, more than a hundred essays on architecture, urbanism and contemporary culture have appeared in Estonia's main dailies and weeklies, as well as in professional architecture, design and art magazines. Even though a majority of completed projects and installations are recorded in the specialist media of Estonia and abroad, I have always been driven to communicate the underlying architectural and urban issues of societal relevance to practitioners from other fields – to learn from response, to discover allies, to push the practice further and to reach beyond disciplinary borders.

A closer look at my work reveals how, with each sample provided, the practice first takes a position (=conception) on an urban or an architectural scale, thereupon giving in to a multiplicity of professional obsessions studying the feasibility of the concept in order to further convince stakeholders, and forming and utilising a multiplicity of instruments (legal entities, mass media, etc.). The following interrogates what potential there is for some specific protocols to arise from these observations.

In the following subsections I will go through the observations of the operational profiles, aspects of versatility and multi-modality, and the dynamics of immersion in topics and projects – altogether, the very 'substrate' of the practice itself. I will make an observation about how my practice is perceived in my community and its closest vicinity in Estonia and conclude with the essence of my main struggles with the machinic and the Kafkaesque, offering – I hope! – some ideas about how to liberate the practice from the Kafkaesque and how to disrupt the machinic.

The way to present and structure the following sequence of observations owes much to the process of investigation throughout the phases of my PhD. The core driver during that process was – as emerged only over its course and could not have been formulated in advance – whether I could identify and foreground a number of emergent protocols, following a hunch as to their open-ended nature: it became only gradually clear that I was obviously pursuing an investigation of a double nature.

On the one side, I was seeking to put forth and carve out those potential 'protocols', yet at the same time I had to avoid presenting these protocols as being in any way 'closed' or formulaic. Thus, the second challenge was to find ways to express their open-endedness, true to the nature of my actual practice. The strategic insight into this double-task now allows me to cast new light on my overall perspective and research preoccupation, as I have formulated it at the very outset of the present document. In the introduction (Preface, 'To the Heart of the Research'), I stated that my central concern revolves around creativity: capturing creative potentials and designing environments that catalyse creativity or provide conditions for creativity to emerge.

What follows can thus be read as a recasting of my global 'creativity agenda': it is a translation of this global concern into a sequence of findings as to how I have come to understand my specific ways of channelling 'creativity' in my own practice. It can also be read as a sequence of analytic études around creativity at a manifest level, which is why I made it a prerogative to consistently reference into my actual practice through the set of samples. My particular task was to translate my observations into a structured presentation that would at all stages preserve the closest possible connection between my more generic formulations and the actual body of work into which they are meant to articulate (and out of which they emerge).

In what follows, therefore, each subsection is prefaced by a paragraph that aims to highlight those key samples that have spoken to me in the strongest or most articulate way upon my discovering the specific protocol at issue in that subsection. The sample pool thus serves in a structured way as my evidential repository from which the reader is invited to go back to Section II's samples at any time. Beyond serving as technical cross-references, the 'preludes' are, however, also meant to highlight the type of research into which my investigation falls: design practice research based on a manifest specific practice.

The reader of this document might expect the observations or 'findings' to be situated in a theoretical-historical framework. However, I must point out that in this case the more valuable framework to keep in mind is a particular sociocultural geographic context present at a certain period of time: the body of work discussed in this document has emerged in post-Soviet Estonia, from a design practice operating in "crossing contexts".

For example, think of the Tallinn waterfront – formerly a closed-off industrial and military zone – and the issue of returning some of it to the public (e.g. the Kultuurikatel initiative). It points to the dilemma of the "post-traumatic" in urban development as well as the "dignified aging" of some of the monumental buildings on the shore (e.g. the Linnahall concert hall), which are often loaded with ideological legacy.

Here, may consider similar situations in other cities, but it would be wrong to implant those foreign ideas in a straightforward way. Bearing in mind the complex history of Estonia, this research demonstrates the autonomy of design and its affective potential in a cultural context that is in constant flux – i.e. during a Post-Soviet period of unprecedented change. Rather than presenting a historical-theoretical account, this research forecasts a future Estonian condition in which the forecast itself has inevitably impacted the emerging reality (see"The Ticklish Subject of Architecture", lecture by Richard Blythe at Institute of Advanced Architecture Catalunya public lecture series in Barcelona on 26.11.2014).

I regard it to be a greater contribution to the field to investigate how the practice, much like the city itself, as our common ground, could simultaneously accommodate and build on all of those activities dealing with identities (e.g. of different generations in crossing contexts), which are affected by shifting times, memories (often horrific) and layers of tacit knowledge, and still prove desirably "profitable" in neo-liberal terms. Think, for example, of Kultuurikatel (a former heating plant turned into a creative hub) or Linnahall as landmarks of the Tallinn waterfront – there are of course many more, such as the hydroplane hangars (the Maritime Museum) or Patarei (a former political prison). We operate at a time when nonconformist architectural icons require a re-evaluation of the term "use value", which is of worldwide urban concern. Thus, even though here the local meets the global, and the conventional theoretical-historical framework could further translate or interpret the situation, it could hardly get us closer to the issues at hand; and this is why this exercise would not be conducive and might distract from the real space of insights gained through the propositional work of designing.

What is then the 'real space of insight'? The work itself – the very act of designing that occurred, and my reflections on it – is full of traces of 'theorizing' in very particular ways. I have aimed to explore the act of designing – the practice – as a place of manifestation of a very different sense of theorizing. This embedded and manifest theorizing is very different from speculative thinking targeted at some general abstraction or historical derivation, in that it is oriented at the absolute specificity of the situation of a project.

In other words, the design practice research is in fact a different paradigm in which 'theorizing' is embedded within the activity of designing. Furthermore, the historical framework also does not help much in proper 'design practice research' as such, even though knowledge of history is in my opinion a self-evident prerequisite to practice architecture.

I am also aware that there might arise a request for greater clarity in terms of the apparent 'lack of narrative' in this section. The 'narrative' here is a different one – it is the narrative of parallel, coinciding streams of activities, tools and methods used. My catalogue is in fact not about one clear central concept, but is rather a cloud of notions that feed into each other and that have helped my practice to produce certain outcomes that are, in some sense, all in fact material theories.

Forcing the work into pointing toward a single clear 'intent' would result in a catalogue that would be removed from the reality of the practice, a document that would not be authentic but would become excessively artificial. Designers theorize in the mode of the concrete, the actual – the actual site, the actual construction, the actual detail.

How to engage with this Section? Since hierarchy or lineage would be misleading, the cognitive journey here may not satisfy readers who are looking for underlying narratives, concepts and primary motivation. Furthermore, the 'Findings' do not explore any hierarchies that might appear to exist, although some fundamental observational currents may be centered around the notions of 'architecture as initiative' and the 'joyful and playful' (as mentioned in the introduction to Section II, 'Samples') and also 'provocation', 'disruption' and others.

I have not discussed 'creativity', 'concept' or even 'narrative', because I have come to understand that this is not a helpful way of presenting the findings. Although many of my projects start-from or develop a 'concept' or strategy for a specific design task, the insights concerning the practice do not sit with any particular 'concept'. In the course of the research it became evident that it is more appropriate to organize the findings around the 'operational profiles' and 'devices' or 'tools', rather than 'concepts', 'narratives' or 'creative drive'.

A cluster of 'findings' below relates to 'operational profiles' – 'Versatility', 'Multi-Modality', 'Immersive to the Point of Ephemeral', 'Tagged', 'The Opportunistic in the 'Machinic'' and 'Disrupting the 'Machinic''. In between discussing the facets of those profiles, I introduce contextual 'devices' or tools that nourish the profiles and with which these profiles operate, and which help to further explain the inherent nature of my practice – I call these 'devices' the 'Substrate' and the 'Dynamics of the Heuristic'.

My research contributes to the field of knowledge associated with multimodal practice. My contribution is not in the area of history or theory but rather offers insights into practice itself, and technique and processes relevant to multimodal practice in the Post-Soviet Estonian context, which has relevance for other multimodal practices dealing with similar cultural, economic and political change.

I am not claiming to have told the final story about the 'operational profiles' or use of 'devices' for a versatile design

practice, but if there is anything at all unique about the following 'Findings', then I have not come across the description of the practice through the notion of the 'Substrate'. In fact, one might even say that the 'Substrate' to a large extent captures the essence of the 'Findings'. However, alone it does not reveal the full scope of observations. Altogether, I hope to have brought to the surface some reflections that might resonate with fellow practitioners whose work revolves around similar questions.

Each subsection is closed off by a brief 'post-lude' which uses a recurring formula interrogating the 'open-endedness' of each specific protocol. The reader is also invited to engage with the 'preludes' and 'postludes' in extracted form.

[108] Elaborated later in 'The Opportunistic in the Machinic'.

OPERATIONAL PROFILES: VERSATILITY

Regarding the first profile discussed here – versatility – most of the samples in Section II can claim relevance, as the vast majority of them evidence my parallel engagement in multiple initiatives which have required adhering to different roles (an architect, a curator, a columnist, etc.).

However, there are a number of prime examples in which the versatility of my practice plays out in the most instructive ways. My roles as a developer of urban scenarios, an architect, a designer and a collaborator, as well as that of a promoter of an urban and cultural agenda in the media, were essential in the Tallinn Waterfront and Baltic TurnTable projects that feature in Sample 1.

In the Suure-Jaani High School project of Sample 3, I highlight my role as the principal architect at the construction site while at the same time publishing articles in daily media.

Sample 8 (Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture) contains cases in which I played the roles of an artistic director, a curator, a producer of installations, and also a media campaigner and fundraiser, among others.

Methods of how (or in what way or to what extent) the venturous practice conceivably contributes to the production of new knowledge are best evidenced by their ways of enhancing urban environments, designing public interventions that offer people opportunities to develop varied possibilities of creative expression, and catalysing activities in a multitude of stimulating ways. The goal of facilitating (positive) social change situates the practice within larger cultural, political, economical and social conditions, which might radically change over time.

By 'versatile', I mean a practice rich in variance or diversity – one that readily changes its appearance, character, or even principles. Or it may mean a practitioner who readily assumes different forms or characters, and who is perhaps even extremely variable and changeable in shape or form. Versatile points to a venturous practice or practitioner who is loyal to an inherent versatility. The different ways for a practitioner to engage – for a practice to have an impact on people's behaviour – may vary from sketching and diagram-

ming to detailing, from organising public debates to the construction work on a building site.

For example, while working on the construction of the Suure-Jaani Sports Centre, I published an article[109] in Eesti Päevaleht about the benefits of natural ventilation systems in public buildings, criticising the standard (and often simply cheaper) solutions of the mechanical ventilation used in everyday construction practice. This resulted in 58 comments to the online version of the article, yet the construction company could not care less and proceeded with what best suited its budgets. A side-effect of such activities is that, due to my frequent appearance in public media, some of the audience is confused as to whether I am an architect or a columnist (or something else).

In the summer of 2005, Tõnis Palts, who was the Mayor of Tallinn at the time, took me to Tallinn Bay on his yacht together with a group of journalists. Upon circling the bay, he pointed the boat firmly towards Kultuurikatel and, as we approached the shore, he pointed to the chimney: "Isn't this ugly!" he prompted. In his mind, it was unheard of that such a monstrosity could exist on the Tallinn waterfront. "It must be dismantled!" A few hours later I was making photomontages of the chimney with a reflective shield to blend it into the sky, to convince Palts that he was seeing ghosts – for me, the chimney had to remain on the seashore.
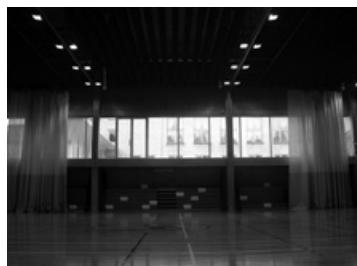
There are a few reasons for such persistence. Firstly, this particular chimney in its prominent location plays well together with the Hanseatic spires of the Old Town. Secondly, it reminds us of the industrial history of the city. Thirdly, it is currently forbidden to erect any new structures of similar height on the waterfront. Due to 'silhouette protection', all new developments may rise only 24.0m above sea-level. Thus, the chimney is unique in its magnificent height and taking it down would mean that Tallinn loses an opportunity to offer 360 degree views over the sea and towards the Old Town from such a height in the city's very epicentre. Thus, the sequence of events caused our NGO to make serious (and successful) political efforts to push the city to bring the chimney under historic protection.

[109] 'Torusid täis avalik ruum', Veronika Valk, Eesti Päevaleht, 14.10.2004.

The importance of versatility was discovered during the PhD process while I started to analyse the confluence of various simultaneous activities. It was revealed especially through examining sample projects like the Valgusfestival installations, the Forestart project and so forth coinciding with media work and also with other projects under construction – all evolving together, influencing one another and my realising how one of the activities morphs the outcomes of another, with some of the parallel activities disappearing and reappearing at certain points in the process.

Furthermore, I discovered that this specific kind of versatility is vital to my practice. I have not tried this out (yet), but it is likely that my practice would cease to exist without its peculiar versatile nature. The initiator needs the journalist who needs the event-maker who needs the builder who needs the architect…etc., etc. Even though this versatility is ideally extended due to variegating partnerships and clusters of collaboration, the versatility described in this research is not limitless, as we are looking at a defined set of sample projects, surfacing only some of the potential outcomes of my practice.

**AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL
IN 'VERSATILITY'?**

For the benefit of the practice and the specific endeavours undertaken, it may be highly important and appropriate to adhere to roles other than 'the architect' and thus exhibit a degree of operational versatility. This in turn poses the question of the boundaries of the profession and the need to consciously restrain or liberate oneself in assuming certain roles.

I have come to realise this as being not a formal requirement of restraint or freedom at an operational level but, rather, the strategic requirement of being fully aware of, and constantly reflective upon, the role's spectrum and its expansion. This is crucial in regards to retaining a strong relation to the core of the practice so as to sustain its consistency and coherence.

While the variety of roles that the practitioner could assume is in principle unlimited, the way that versatility pans out will be bound by her skills and capabilities, as well as by her curiosity to expand those skills and capabilities to venture into new fields. The overlaps with other disciplines on the fringes of the profession of architecture (or urbanism) are full of potential for experimentation and venturous exploration.

The open-endedness of this feature is both at operational level as well as in terms of outputs directly related to the core motives of our investigation as they are centred around the 'disruptive', the 'joyful' and the 'playful' as notions that point toward deliberately crossing boundaries on several levels.

SUBSTRATE

The findings presented under the heading 'Substrate' – the spectral diversity in multi-instrumentalism and simultaneous use of 'tools' or modes of expression – draw heavily on Sample 1, which showcases a set of 'devices' that include drawing, event-making, writing etc., utilised for the Tallinn waterfront and the Baltic TurnTable projects.

The configuration of the 'substrate' is also central to Sample 2, in which the set of 'devices' at issue includes the formulation of urban regeneration, architectural design, the founding of an NGO, the calling together of a Creative Council to set up the Kultuurikatel initiative, and so forth.

When investigating Sample 7 (Mikrouun), creative collaboration techniques together with 'installation art' and 'set design' tools come to the fore.

Sample 10 articulates into this subsection in a different way as it adds (among other 'devices') educational tools, discourses in hybrid arts and sciences, and 'round-tables' and seminars for an enlarged circle of interest groups to conduct architecture workshops.

Despite these more specific scenarios, the insights that sit with the idea of a 'substrate' refer back to the entire pool of samples as they present my parallel engagement in multiple initiatives where it became necessary to invoke a variety of 'tools' and different ways of expression – from construction drawings to organising events – while at the same time adhering to and being faithful to the role of an architect and my architectural and/or urban agenda.

When a practice's activities propagate through a multiplicity of expressions (for example, simultaneous drawing, model-making, installations, construction supervision, texts, and so on), the set of 'devices' with, upon and within which the designer operates could be called the practice's substrate (substratum). To preserve and develop a practice, is it necessary to transform its structure, purpose or agenda, or is it a question of how to renew its substrate? While scientists know that their work positions itself in the global context, architects are always from a specific geographic location: their work belongs to a specific place.

For example, I first wrote about the potential future of the Soviet-era concert hall Linnahall on the Tallinn waterfront in 2004 with one specific set of ideas,[110] yet I happened to be part of the curatorial team for the Estonian pavilion at the 13th Venice Architecture Biennale in 2012, focusing on the same building from quite a different point of view. In 2004, I wrote in leading daily newspapers, while in 2012 I was devoted to a lengthier study, crossing generations, in the academic cultural monthly Akadeemia.
In 2004 I wrote that the proposal by Danish and Swedish architects to replace Linnahall with 'comfortable' and 'reliable' (yet ordinary, anonymous and boring) apartment blocks was presented under code-word 'Tallinn City Grey'. It must

certainly be a self-ironic joke, as 'grey' (in Estonian) is not merely a colour but is also a sustained boredom, which kills the original and the unique. No matter how 'grey' the foreign projects infiltrating Estonia get, Linnahall must be preserved, so as to preserve the strength of the landscape and the strength of the Tallinn identity, which is reborn through augmenting its authenticity in the peculiar.

In that essay, I offered ideas for the future of Linnahall, excluding its demolition. The underlying message was that every problem that Linnahall has can be solved, and that the solution is not destruction. The solution is in an 'explosive urban mix' of multilayered use and symbiotic synergy between various programs – or, in other words, a mix of multiple views of the world (dwelling, business, life). I thereupon described how the business street is formed, how the internal transport system would function, where the housing units could be located and what kind of atmosphere they would carry.

But, more importantly, I suggested that we could accommodate the local music and ballet schools in Linnahall – particular schools that have been looking for ways to relocate for several years now. Many architecture competitions have been held yet no productive solution had been discovered by 2004. Both Linnahall as well as the schools would need public funding for their development. Yet by moving the schools to Linnahall, the public sector could achieve multiple aims with one stroke, renovating Linnahall and offering the schools more spacious new premises with a proper concert hall and rehearsal spaces.

To verify my suggestion, I drew up full-plan drawings to see whether the schools would fit into Linnahall. They would fit easily. The community of musicians would create a social 'safety-net' for Linnahall, while the schools could also operate autonomously from the concert hall. Yet all space could potentially end up in cross-usage which enhances the chance for the survival of the Linnahall complex as a whole. Since Linnahall also has an ice-rink, then the added bonus could be that all Estonian musicians would be extraordinary skaters in the future.

The continuation of this line of thought was presented a few years later, in 2007–2008, when I brought the topic up again, though in a shifted context. In those years, the Estonian National Broadcast was searching for a new building and, again, an architecture competition was set up, though it did not eventually lead to a feasible result. Here, I suggested that Linnahall could accommodate the National Broadcast facilities. The logic was the same – to find ways to collide two aims in one project – while also considering the options for integrating renewable energy sources for heat production. Eventually, all the agendas presented here as well as earlier in the 'samples' (the Tallinn waterfront; Kultuurikatel; Linnahall; synthetic biology; light-art; festivals as tools to guide urban planning, and so on) might resurface in my

practice again in the future in a variety of 'joyful' and 'playful' ways, in parallel with new research agendas surfacing overnight. Renewing the practice's substrate happens sideways, on multiple levels simultaneously, as the contexts shift while ideas develop and cross-fertilise one another. One of the keys here is to stay open-minded to novel ideas – curiosity! – accompanied by a plasticity that allows for the cross-fertilisation of diverse concepts. The other important element is the publicness of the practitioner and the practice, which determines the reach of ideas despite the system. The versatility and the self-transformative properties of the practice must be understood in terms of both individual projects as well as the embedded poetic.

Rephrasing one of the thoughts from COLINA, the practice emerges through diverse (design) proposals sharing a certain experience and consciousness. The ideas involved have perhaps not met one other previously. They are throwing themselves into a situation where they have to connect, make, negotiate and find ways of collaborating. As contemporary architecture is increasingly unconcerned with differentiating between discourses and more concerned with joint practice, my practice explores the possibilities of transferring 'joyful' and 'playful' design approaches between shifting contexts. The encounter is based on a pool of experiences and ideas, aimed at resilience, and guided by imagination and curiosity for contestable futures. These 'tools' or techniques for practice have been refined through the projects described in Section II's samples.

For instance, the practice might occasionally delve into a seemingly new terrain. As an advisory board-member of the 'Estonian Long-Term Energy Strategy 2030+', I became more aware how recent developments in the transdisciplinary hybridisation of the arts and sciences are forcing the contemporary technological culture to rise up out of its self-deception, in which it has been deluding itself about the extent of its eternally positive impacts. Instead, it should take up more honest and more critical positions with regard to its overall weakness in addressing broader issues. It is time to exit the last page of the 'humanities-versus-real-sciences' battle. It is time to bring the community of practitioners in the arts and sciences together.

I have been trained to model the world for the better. Thus, I can be but an incurable optimist, even though we are suffering from the mindset of the Anthropocene era. The new generation of Estonian architects shares a commitment to opening up the discipline and making it part of the wider public. In that sense, I see Estonia as a precious hive-mind, although it is struggling amid global turbulence. Yet my participation in the '2030+' energy strategy also pointed out that Estonia certainly needs an integrated spatial strategy – an inclusive one, engaging the wider public.

Perhaps it is about inviting the public at large to play and work on the project, using third-sector initiatives and research platforms as 'living-cell enriched materials' in a metaphorical sense, to invent techniques in order to treat urban matter differently – to treat it in such a way that it starts to fire up certain processes that work with 'enzyme-based cellular structures', like (grassroots) societal initiatives.

Material scientists and systems engineers are looking at such innovation on a biological scale, yet the scale difference is here the major issue to overcome. For this reason, biomimicry is not going to help. The emotional effect of a potential national spatial plan is related to specific encounters between the locals and their context, their non-global set of sensations. And these sensations change over time, as they are evoked by crossing contexts.

Thus, the morphogenesis of the spatial strategy needs to remain in correlated flux. A closer look at the complex behaviour of human networks, habitat patterns and collective choreographies across scales, assembled into the spatial strategy, could teach us how to overcome the constraints that come with 'computational' models trapped in Excel-sheets. At the level of consensus, the spatial strategy needs to prioritise co-operative forms, with the architect becoming, once again, the intermediary.

Architectural practice in Estonia needs to rethink the robustness of the discipline at its core, to stop the avalanche of non-natural interventions and interferences to which it is vulnerable. The superimposition of a transcendent idea or an ideological superstructure makes architecture and urban planning highly unstable, if the 'abductors' (i.e., the performers of the subculture of 'parametricism') speculate in the fog of hypothetical factors and opportunistic circumstances.

There is an extensive amount of tacit knowledge in local architectural practices and, at its best, the spatial strategy should capitalise on this potential, to possess ways to observe and respond to collaborative processes emerging from respective discourses in the society. It goes without saying that the spatial strategy has to be as transparent as possible. In essence, it is not a question of improvisation anymore, but one of having a vision, in order to understand what the identity of Estonia is, and how it is performing.

AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN 'SUBSTRATE'?

My practice evidences the potential gains from a parallel utilisation of a variety of 'tools' or ways of expression, be they construction drawings or the organisation of events. It is of particular importance to contextualise this operational 'polyphony' in relation to the agenda of 'architecture as initiative', since this very agenda requires handling a multiplicity of simultaneous tasks, often asking one to go beyond the traditional boundaries of architecture or urbanism. At the same time, my prerogative has been to remain faithful to the core role of the architect and to adhere to my architectural and urban agenda.

Key factors in addressing this challenge are the practice's ability to fully grasp the potentials of novel 'devices', but also to be prepared to venture into innovative ways to use tools beyond their first or primary intended application.

Nevertheless, I regard it as essential to retain a balance between the means and the ends, which also means keeping the focus on the specific 'architecture as initiative' at hand and not getting lost in or entirely absorbed by the abundance of attractions or distractions presented by the 'tools' at issue.

Multi-instrumentalism is not the target per se here, but should be seen as a means to a further end: it thus requires the practitioner to keep a close eye on her overall endeavour (concept) and agenda.

110 'Linnahalli taassünd plahvatava kokteilina', Eesti Päevaleht 18.03.2004

MULTI-MODALITY

The subsequent observations and findings pivot around the notion of 'multi-modality' and derive predominantly from Sample 3 (the Suure-Jaani High School); Sample 4 (the Eduard Tubin monument), Sample 5 (the Lasva Water Tower), Sample 6 (the Catapult shelter), Sample 7 (Mikrouun) and Sample 8 (Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture). This subsection builds on those samples' constructive duality and seeming polarity within their multi-modal approach.

For instance, the mutual impact of a careful consideration of the microclimate, alongside offering the 'joyful' and 'playful' approach to publicness through design; the balance between the global and the local: internationalisation and feedback from the immediate community; the pragmatic and the poetic; the efficient and the artistic; large-scale urban scenarios set in motion through small-scale initiatives; the building of 'insides' through disruptions on the surface, etc.

The focus of the samples provided in Section II is on specifically 'joyful' approaches to publicness in design activity. These approaches aim to enhance public space, concentrating on the mutual impact of microclimates and playfulness. The search for functional realities – which not only incorporate but immerse themselves in, and build on, other disciplines and institutional, ideological and structural processes – guarantees that a multi-modal architectural practice becomes versatile. The benefits of a versatile practice come forward in the physical implementation of (design) ideas, (architectural) concepts or (urban) scenarios: in the practice's ability to tease visions into tenable, physical existence.

A closer look at the samples reveals how a practice's substrate might shift in response to contextual change and how a practice maintains or continually re-invents itself to maintain its authenticity in those crossed contexts. Critical links between the socio-economic paradigm of "deregulation" and the emergence – as well as the erosion – of the post-capitalist condition, point to the "the scientific spirit of adventure — the adventure into the unknown, an unknown which must be recognised as being unknown, to be explored."[111]

To begin to illustrate this point in very simple terms, when the constructors were first faced with my façade proposition for the Suure-Jaani Sports Centre, they absolutely refused to mount such a façade, as the randomness of coloured cubicles appeared to them completely illogical, complete nonsense, even though I had produced detailed drawings with proper measurements for all the positions of the colourful cubicles. Yet the phenomena of having no standardisable lineage or logic to mount the façade seemed incomprehensible to the workers.

To solve this problem, I invited the workers to imagine themselves as artists: I asked them to take the position of an artist in placing the cubicles on the façade. The cubicles came in orange, yellow and green, thus the first rule was that no two cubes of the same colour could be next to one another. The second rule was a certain distance variation from one cubicle to the next. The rest was left up to the workers. Soon enough they started to send me pictures taken with their phones: "Look what I made! Does this work?" they said, feeling proud of their artistic endeavours.

From an idealist position, as was pointed out already in the previous chapter, 'Substrate', the practitioner is trained to model the world for the better. Provided samples of architectural interventions might help the end-user to identify with the place, the scale and the milieu of a daily living environment, as the priority is given to projects' relevance in crossing contexts and shifting microclimates. A multimodal versatile practice possesses the capacity to facilitate (positive) or resist (negative) societal change, situating and in fact rooting the architecture practice deep in a wider (global) and yet specific (local) political, economic, cultural and demographic context.

My experience with Valgusfestival evidences that it is possible to use the framework of a 'festival' as a tool to guide urban planning. For example, it is possible to locate events in certain strategic locations. By locating the French installation 'Valguskuup' by French architect Benoît Fromentin in Kultuurikatel in January 2006, it was possible to highlight the idea of Kultuurikatel in the context of Tallinn's urban development, but also to draw attention to the desolate state of the waterfront and the rundown condition of the buildings.

We mounted 'Valguskuup' in freezing minus-30°C weather. As the cold had completely come through the walls, the whole interior of the main hall was covered with an amazing, glittering frost. Visually, it was a gorgeous sight, yet it reminded me that these buildings had never been built to be used by humans but simply for the production of heat: these buildings were meant for machinery. Thus, such design processes are not only targeted outward – for the communication of certain ideas to the larger public or to politicians – but they also catalyse internal reflection and contribute to tacit knowledge.

Underneath the frost, asbestos sat silently, posing a problem which was eventually solved through the help of many financiers and parties from the city to the ministries. Altogether, 'Valguskuup' was the first effort to draw wider public attention to the complex and to the premises, with all its joys and troubles. Other festivals (film, jazz, etc.) could ideally make other similar suggestions on a daily basis; however, they would need a curator who had an agenda in urban development in order to arrive at such decisions.

Allocating cultural events to specific and novel sites in a well-considered way might help to catalyse property (real estate) development and the area around it is then likely to benefit from the 'cultural injection' that activates and enlivens the neighbourhood. With Valgusfestival, I had planned to keep on activating and enlivening different parts of Kultuurikatel over the years, as Kultuurikatel offers a great variety of spaces with various typologies – from the chimney to the main hall, from the gantry to the fuel-storage building, and so on.
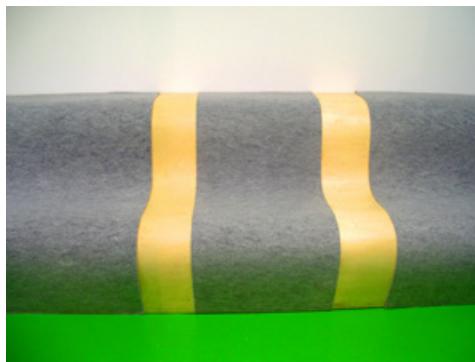
AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN 'MULTI-MODALITY'?

At the centre of the notion of 'multi-modality' as it is discussed here is the idea of an approach that is inclusive of a variety of angles that are invoked simultaneously from the very outset. To argue for such a multi-modal approach not only as optional but as strongly recommended addresses the complexity of the design tasks at stake. The multi-modal approach enables the practitioner to respond to or to explore the task at issue with a higher degree of sophistication; it also allows the practice to arrive at more comprehensive proposals or solutions that consider multiple concurrent perspectives. In my case, multi-modality has played out in illuminating ways: for example, with regard to the collision of the microclimate and the 'playful', or to the tension between large-scale urban scenarios versus small-scale initiatives.

However, as regards the notion of open-endedness at issue in this summary, it is important to bear in mind that the setup and unfolding of angles, of concrete modal perspectives, and of polarities and dichotomies (seeming or actual) at work not only vary quite obviously from project to project, but also vary significantly within the community of practice, from one practice to another. 'Openness' here also means that it is up to the individual practitioner to find her own unique methods and strategy to construct, work with, leverage or dismantle the angles and polarities as needed in crossing-contexts.

111 Remarks at a Caltech YMCA lunch forum (2 May 1956), Richard P. Feynman.

IMMERSIVE TO THE POINT OF EPHEMERAL

The prime group of samples from which the following insights have been derived, regarding the degree of immersion, include Sample 8 (Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture) and Sample 10 (Architecture workshops). While the 'immersion'-principle is of course operative throughout the entire sample pool, these two samples are particularly instructive with regard to a specific dynamics of immersion. They show how an idea or initiative might at first be generated by an individual or by a small group of people, yet might then be promoted to the point at which a larger community of 'believers' is forged through inclusive social immersion and a process of participation that supports the advancement of the concept and its implementation. Such communal 'ownership' (for example, of intellectual property) can reduce and even minimise the workload of the initial catalyst.

The two samples specifically chosen here also evidence how the collaboration with a number of professionals from other fields on a topic of overlapping interest may lead to a deeper degree of immersion, i.e. may allow the practitioner to plunge deeper into the subject or task at stake, as supporting tasks are addressed by the extended community of practitioners.

Aiming towards a practice's (instrumental) efficiency, project tasks are often delegated to the society – to the extent that the practitioner is able to streamline the practice in such a way that it might end up relying on only a few lean means of communication. In some ways, it can be considered a refer-

ence to Buckminster Fuller and his note on 'ephemeralisation' – that is to say, 'how to do more and more with less and less, until eventually you can do everything with nothing'.

"The design of something small in an urban space is like the work of a jeweller: the body is given (the volume of the buildings along with the street space between them), and the question is in the accessories – in their sensitivity, precision, mood and variety. In practice, the relationship between something small and its users becomes important because it is on a scale that is more similar to the human body. Social factors are ultimately what accepts, subverts, pisses on or leaves 'something small' unnoticed in an urban setting. [---] One way or another, the design of 'something small' in urban space is a continuous process, conformation and dialogue. The keyword is variety in terms of both geography and time. Christmas decorations have to be something entirely different from the design of the Old Town Days Festival and you cannot use the same devices in Lasnamäe as you can in Nõmme. 'Something small' is by nature short-term and thus it is a better idea to create it as constantly changing social art and not to design finished final products."[112]

The coldest and the darkest season in Estonia lasts from November to February. To alleviate the population's Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), Valgusfestival has learned from the experiences of our Scandinavian colleagues who have invited artists to challenge the winter condition in public space. Hence, Valgusfestival has for years focused on events and projects that use light, sound, fire and performances to offer inspiring experiences during the most depressed time of the year. In doing so, Valgusfestival has targeted contemporary art practices to simultaneously influence urban planning processes in Tallinn.

Following the principles of openness to experimentation and novel solutions, a long-term collaboration with the Valon Voimat festival in Helsinki since the end of the 1990s has enabled Valgusfestival to engage both international know-how as well as local talent and students at the EAA who have ambitious ideas and the firm enthusiasm to build their projects in public space. Via the Hansaflux collaboration framework, Valgusfestival exchanged light-art projects with the Lyon program Superflux in both 2007 and 2008. On each occasion, the focus was on urban matters, enlivening the ambiguous marginal areas in the city – areas that are nevertheless full of potential and intriguing in their ambiguity.

These efforts have proved that the sophisticated allocation of public art events has an impact on the local population and might instigate the urban development of the neighbourhoods. In Tallinn, Hansaflux marked the trajectory from the historic centre to the waterfront with light-art installations and thus led a person by the hand to the sea, emphasising the urban potential of the waterfront in all its vernacular poetics. In Lyon, our partner Galerie Roger Tator is based in Guillotière – a once-forgotten and yet spectacular locality that is today full of artistic activity.

The collaboration was born upon my preliminary visit to Paris in 2006, where I saw Galerie Roger Tator's Superflux program. In the same year I proposed to exhibit the installation 'Valguskuup' by Lyon-based architect Benoît Fromentin in Kultuurikatel in Tallinn. At the same time I also made the installation 'Swinging in the Light' on Lindamäe Hill in Tallinn. This installation of super-sized warm, hanging hammocks caught the eye of Bettina Pelz, curator of the GLOW[113] festival of light in Eindhoven, Holland. Thus, 'Swinging in the Light' was also taken to the Netherlands, to the first edition of GLOW in the city which has the headquarters of the lighting company Philips.

Simultaneously, all of the activities were presented to LUCI,[114] the international association of street lighting, operating in Lyon. In 2007, I visited Lisbon's festival of light, Luzboa (meaning 'good light' in Portuguese) and, since I greatly enjoyed the quality of work produced, I invited the Portuguese artists, designers and architects to contribute to Hansaflux 2008 in Tallinn. Hence, step-by-step, via personal contacts and through the exchange of artworks, doing 'everything with almost nothing' and with more and more agents joining the movement, the International Network of Festivals of Light (INFL) was born.

Yet, considering the Synthonia workshop described in the samples of Section II, the immersive aspect becomes more complex. Joe Davis, hosted in Estonia by the Plektrum festival in September 2011, has been one of the most brilliant examples of an 'artist-in-laboratory' (in 'Microvenus', presented at Ars Electronica 2000, he inserted the human genome into bacteria that was flown into space). Interest in 'synthetic aesthetics' is common among both artists and architects, who are simultaneously intrigued by the applications of advances in materials sciences and of developments in biotechnology, as well as in the new simulation and visualisation techniques. The impact of bioArt on today's culture and tomorrow's (wished-for) developments will be revealed in the works of the students who participated in the workshop, in their subsequent endeavours in the fields of biopoetics and biomedia.

Just think of Terreform's environmental visionary Mitchell Joachim'i and his project for a home that was grown from muscle tissue, 'In Vitro Meat Habitat', which probably meets the requirements of the so-called 'passive housing' better than today's conventional 'energy efficient building'. Or take the example of British designer Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg's 'E. chromi' or 'Growth Assembly' projects that create a new so-called 'synthetic kingdom' on the fertile ground of evolution. Synthetic biology aims to develop or even to change the behaviour of organisms and to design them so that they are able to perform new tasks. Our ambient living environment (including buildings) assisted by synthetic organisms in an ecosystem filled with user-centric 'design processes' might become an essential part of ourselves, at a cellular level.

AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN 'IMMERSIVE'?

As much as we have to observe the correlation between immersion and focus, there is a double question: firstly, to which degree of 'obsession' – including insistence on responsibility and ownership (of intellectual property) – any immersion may lead and, secondly, how immersion taken to extremes can open up new possibilities. With regard to the latter, it suffices to note the correlation between degrees of playfulness and degrees of immersion in relation to the search for venturous practice.

Clearly there is a degree of extreme immersion that has to be reached before a deep and venturous playfulness can emerge, as opposed to deliberately disengaged playfulness.

On the other side, this summary also allows the discussion of a very different aspect of the open-endedness of the immersion-principle. With regard to the self-understanding (self-esteem and 'ego') of the architect, the practitioner as 'author' may find it difficult to let go of, to delegate or to hand over an initiative. It is particularly instructive to discuss the necessity of being able to 'let go' and to dissolve one's own participation in the further development of the initiative in question.

The awareness of the gravitational forces connected with immersion scenarios calls forth the necessity to keep the project fresh, reinventing and renewing itself through the inclusion and participation of other practitioners.

While it may seem as if this move indicates a step towards potential disengagement, such collaborations may on the contrary allow the practitioner to focus on the experimental, novel and stimulating elements of the project and hence to concentrate and channel her immersive energies afresh, while tasks in a shared project are distributed among colleagues and delegated to the community of practice or even to the society at large.

[112] 'Urban Nature. Design of the Tallinn Old Town Days Festival 2003', Veronika Valk. Estonian Architectural Review MAJA, 1/2004.
[113] www.lichtstad.eindhoven.nl
[114] www.luciassociation.org

DYNAMICS OF THE HEURISTIC

The following observations focus on 'ways of searching', with a particular emphasis on the dynamic nature of the practice and thus its heuristic of creativity. Insights into specific ways of searching for design solutions – what we call here a 'heuristic', a 'search' – are linked intrinsically to all samples in Section II.

However, it is my claim that my research and form of enquiry lends itself to a specific take on such a heuristic due to the specific nature of my practice. The samples of my practice – compared with other practices – show that the heuristic of this practice sheds important light on the role of the 'joyful' and the 'playful' when applied to the original (e.g. commission or design) brief. It allows the formulating of a heuristic in terms of 'generosity' to recast or transform an existing brief, or to invent one's own brief such that it exhibits and brings forth the 'embodied generosity' of the practice and concrete situations alike.

This subsection also draws from samples which evidence the practice's flexibility and its adaptability to shifting contexts, as well as its capacity to persist in curiosity. The set of samples in its entirety features a readiness to jump into the 'unknown' and evoke 'disruptions', partly in order to alter the perception of the living environment which might often be loaded with ideological or other historically traumatic legacies.

There exist certain key notions or designators which can be evidenced throughout my practice – key features of 'my territory' or an essential part of the 'checklist'. These are:

- joyful & / playful: embodied generosity
- plasticity: multi-instrumental expression (manifestation)
- evoked: crossing contexts
- disruption: unpredictable, in that it is synthetic

The 'joyful' and 'playful' are not usually mentioned in any of the briefs for commissioned work. The architect is typically asked for pragmatic solutions: for the building to function in the best way possible, for the construction to be energy efficient, for the design solutions to be easily maintained, and so on. In my practice, I have demanded from myself far more than that: I have searched for ways to integrate the 'playful' and the 'joyful' into buildings (e.g. the Suure-Jaani Sports Centre), in public spaces (e.g. composer Eduard

THE JOHAN23

Architect: Veronika Valk
Assitants: Siim Tuksam, Johan Tali
Film crew: Cube Productions LLC
Camera: Heiko Sikka
Project & completion: 2009

Location: Kanuti SAAL 'Flightcase'
Pühavaimu 5, Tallinn, Estonia

The JOHAN23 installation series
('Optimiser', 'Body Planner' and
'Poet') was constructed as a test
model space with reflective acrylic
bond panels. Three consecutive
tests with varying lighting and ICT
solutions developed concepts for the
interactive display and performance
spaces of tomorrow to dwell
upon the role of an architect under
the current economic crisis. For
example, what is efficient in archi-
tecture and urbanism? What if the
increasing complexity of architecture
and urbanism is best served by
simple models?

There are many ways to benefit from
genetic architectural algorithms, but
first one needs a plan. A Body Plan.
An architectural causality and effect.
Maybe we can start by asking what
it is that we, the architects, can do
that is effective.

Tubin's monument[115] and urban installations for festivals of
light) as well as in my teaching and my curatorships, and so
on. I call it the 'embodied generosity' of practice, something
that inherently increases the quality of solutions for a built
environment even if no-one asks for it to start with, in the
commission briefs.

A practice's success is directly dependent on its 'plasticity':
its capacity to re-appropriate its operational tools or instru-
ments over the course of a specific project. This observation
is based on the fact that the majority of my projects have
required an activation of other forces (political, scientific,
etc.) around them. This has often called for the spontane-
ous, improvised, simultaneous multiplicity of manifestations
of the original concept or the overall idea, using a variety of
means to hand (drawing, model-making, events, media) in
order for the ideas to be implemented. It means that parallel
processes of designing, constructing and public discussion
transform and feed into one another, allowing for a reflection
on and the development of design approaches. There exists
a necessity for all of these operations to occur simultane-
ously (though, while some of them have a shorter cycle,
others take longer to complete). The notion of 'serendipity'
arrives with the coincidental confluence of different streams
of activity.

What is meant by 'evoked'? and by 'crossing contexts'?
Here I refer to the issue of returning some of Tallinn's water-
front – a formerly closed-off industrial and military zone – to
the public. It points to the dilemma of the 'post-traumatic'
in urban development as well as the 'dignified aging' of the
built environment, which, bearing in mind the complex re-
cent history of Estonia, is often loaded with ideological lega-
cies. Focusing on an existing built environment – our cultural
heritage and the spine of the society's physical identity – my
practice investigates how the city as our common ground
can accommodate all the identities of different generations
and cultural backgrounds, which are affected by shifting
times, memories (often horrific) and accumulated tacit
knowledge, whilst simultaneously proving to be desirably
'profitable' in neoliberal terms. The nonconformist architec-
tural icons require a re-evaluation and an evolution of the
term 'use value', which is of worldwide urban concern.
Using architectural interventions to create space for
emergent culture means that one creates 'disruptions' in
the surface of everyday experience – disruptions that are
unpredictable in that they are synthetic. If 'disruption' is
defined as the interruption (usually deliberate or intended)
of normal work or practice, and also as a method of disabling
an explosive device by shooting it with water at high veloc-
ity, then architectural practice as a disruption in the surface
of the everyday has much to do with venturing into public
space. What kind of promise can our urban environment
make: does it magnetise social capital? If so, then when
and how does it become a catalyst for collective creativity?
Who takes care of public space in a market-driven (rather
than a culture-driven) condition? The market has only one
value – or demands, at least, that all values are subservient
to economic value. This is an artificial condition. My work is
in the attempt to revoke this condition.

All four characteristics above are evident in my writ-
ings for the main dailies and weeklies in Estonia. Yet the
interventions have been nurtured by a cross-fertilisation
of the concepts with ideas from other fields of culture.
For example, the COLINA experience was a 'leap into the
unknown', facilitated by the fact that in the beginning the
fellow Colineers expressed their confusion and uncertainty.
A professional choreographer, for example, said: "I am very
much seduced by theory...but still dance"; while a film-maker
stated: "I don't have a background. I can just say that I'm
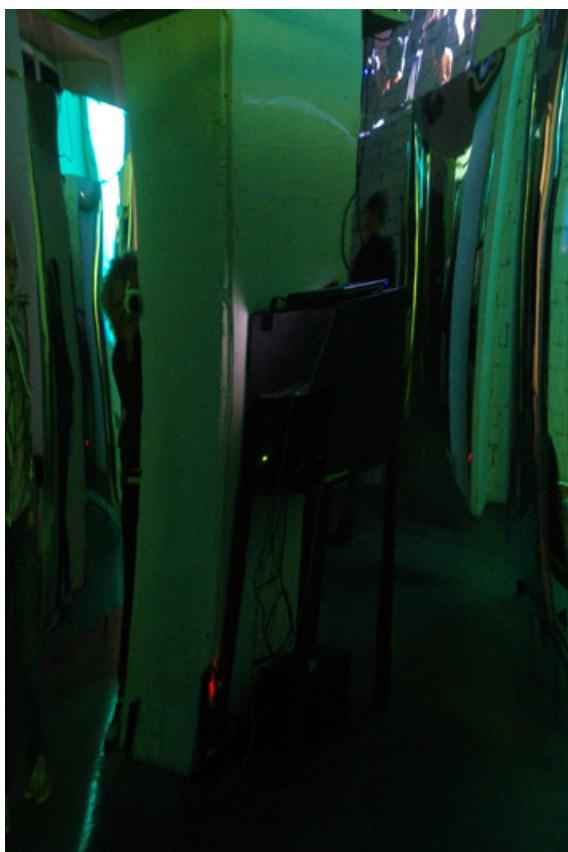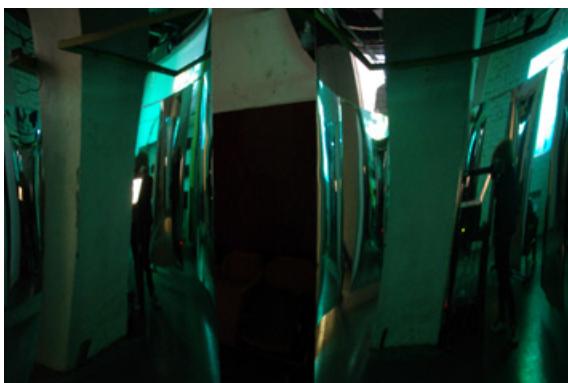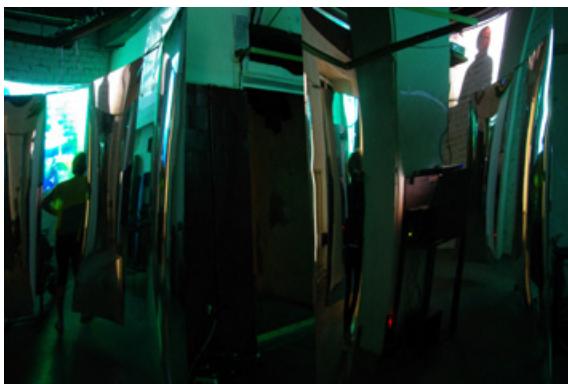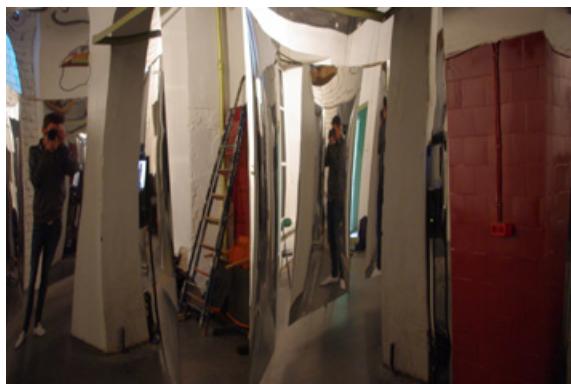
young and fresh." We all began the journey together. To be honest, I broke the ice by prompting: "I will try to turn you all into architects – I have tried this on my cat."

Speaking of trying certain ideas out on other creatures, I have been taking my students along some unexpected paths. Thanks to the Linnahall workshop and other endeavours (such as the Maribor 2112Ai project led by Tom Kovac), students at the EAA – for the first time in the history of the academy – had the opportunity to participate actively in the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale, which is by far the most important professional event in the field. It happened that my students from the fields of architecture, design, new media, urban studies, etc. were simultaneously engaged with two national pavilions – the Estonian and the Slovenian. This was certainly of symbolic relevance for the Faculty of Architecture at the EAA, as well as sparking a venturous spirit in further research among the students.

Comparing the Estonian exposition with other expositions at the Venice Architecture Biennale, it built on the topic of the Biennale that was offered by the curator David Chipperfield: 'Common Ground'. The amusing and futuristic outcomes of the Linnahall workshop ('Dream. Sense. Adapt. Feed. Five Visions for Linnahall'), as well as some other components of the program ('Linnahall as part of a cell cycle', brought forward in the next chapter) adhered well to the general theme. They synced with the 'Torre David / Gran Horizonte' café-installation in the Arsenale, as well as with some of the films that were presented at the Biennale (for example Unfinished Italy by Benoît Felici (2011) and Unfinished Spaces by Alysa Nahmias and Benjamin Murray (2011)). The exposition 'Forum for Alternative Belfast' in the UK's pavilion also resonated strongly with me – more precisely, with the similar initiatives in which I have been involved in Estonia.

To conclude the dimension and the dynamics of immersion referred to above, my work as a designer, journalist, curator, artist, promoter, educator and so on is instrumental for immersing myself in the topics at hand. All these different activities propagate throughout the work in progress, in order to discover alternative solutions to the problems, and to invent techniques of implementation and invite others to participate along the way. Throughout the PhD process I have found out how these various tools have been used as part of the practice (informing the substrate of the practice) from one project to another, in developing different levels of immersion. In my experience as a practitioner, the more immersive the process, the less remains eventually on the shoulders of the practitioner, since at a certain point the community becomes involved in the process to the extent that the initiative takes on a life of its own. It might even be the ultimate goal – to initiate, yet in the end to let go – for the initiative to keep on evolving.

AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN THE 'HEURISTIC DYNAMICS'?

For the practice to remain dynamic in its 'ways of searching', I claim that it is vital to nurture the practice's flexibility at all levels. A prerogative would be for a practice to be able to adapt to shifting contexts and thus to respond to situations and challenges with an acute awareness and 'openness' to prospective process but also to foster and to consciously stimulate one's own curiosity.

To translate this agenda into the quest for a venturous practice means to enhance and cultivate a specific 'fearlessness' – the readiness to break boundaries and dissolve problem-solving routines in favor of a heuristic protocol that actively reaches out for uncharted ground. Where such a heuristic helps to catalyse 'architecture as initiative', to set forth spaces of inception and provide impulses that may evoke 'disruptions', such a protocol is by its very nature open-ended.

The potentially 'disruptive' nature of the work can be seen as a key heuristic in altering the routinised perceptions that have been ingrained by a legacy of ideological bias, and that are under the spell of historic traumata. How such designed 'disruptions' pan out in their own right is essentially open-ended. The idea of an open-end in the practice's heuristic extends also to the inclusion of collaborators and the ongoing search for ways to invite others into the creative process. [115] Within this interactive waving soundscape installation in front of the main theatre, a visitor can hear fragments of Tubin's music by knocking on the gongs on the back wall, as well as by resting on rubbery black concrete seats emitting light from underneath onto white ground and wall surfaces. The monument starts to resemble a giant drumming set when people dance joyfully back and forth, playing the gongs. Hence there emerges the spontaneous onsite choreography of visitors.

TAGGED

Sample 10 (architecture workshops) serves as the main source (but not the sole one) that lends itself to insights concerning the phenomenon of being 'tagged'. The observations and claims made in this subsection are derived from the experience of how the practitioner is potentially perceived by the society at large and by his or her immediate community. This research perspective is particularly interesting in regards to practice, on which this investigation is directly based, as the questions of 'perception' and 'tagging' run potentially counter to the diverse roles central to the creative practice at issue, as described in 'Operational Profiles'.

Should the habitual perception and conventional tagging be challenged (if not fought)? 'Tagging' or labeling can be expected when a variety of 'tools' are used by the practitioner to implement the projects, as described in the 'Substrate'. 'Tagging' may arise due to the shifts in agenda as described in 'Multi-modality', or due to the varying collaboration networks as described in 'Immersion'. 'Tagging' issues may accumulate when all factors discussed occur together, or when they recur with a certain frequency and rigour.

Receiving the Young Architect Award 2012 was the highest national recognition of my practice. Yet in Estonia, I have been referred to more often as an 'independent thinker' or a 'futuristic visionary' than as an architect. Indeed, I have persistently become involved in different disciplines – from biology to performing arts – that are able to inform architecture, and to expand the field's range of interest. I have been tagged with 'creativity', with 'boldness', and with 'proactivity', that are evidenced by my organising of lectures, seminars and workshops as well as by writing articles in both popular and professional media, presenting architectural and urban ideas that are said to be 'ahead of their time' (though to me, they are not).

How or why do these labels ('creative', 'futuristic', 'vision-ary', 'bold', 'proactive') come about? On one hand, I have interviewed some 80 contemporary figures, looking closely at how such demarcations can be viewed and related to by other practitioners involved in architecture as well as in other fields of culture, in order to observe the potential value of those distinctions in defining a critical practice. As the vocabulary mentioned is often overexploited and found in multitudes of different contexts, designating a variety of phenomena, I have gradually learned to extract its relevance for my particular practice.

On the other hand, such 'tagging' is probably also the direct result of the versatile nature of the practice itself. Various streams of parallel research often collide in a semi-architec-tural discourse, aiming to push the boundaries of the disci-pline. To explain what I mean by this, the following interview presents an example of how the 'architectural', the 'urban' and the 'biological' come together on the topic of the future development of Linnahall ('as part of a cell cycle'), which has already been used as a sample and looked at from different angles in previous chapters.

In 2012 I conducted the following discussion with the head of the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology at Tartu University, Professor Toivo Maimets.[116]

Veronika Valk (VV)

If we were to compare Tallinn's Linnahall convention centre to a living organism, it would be a protagonist in its thirties, fighting for survival and a new lease on life. Biological existence constantly faces a similar battle, and has for a very long time. If a building is to a city as a cell is to the body, can we draw a parallel between a building's lifespan – lifecycle – and the cell cycle?

Toivo Maimets (TM)

It isn't too far-fetched to liken the life of the cells in our body to a battlefield. An adult human is made up of 1014 cells (not including the bacteria in the body), all of which came from a huge number of divisions of one single cell – a fertilised egg cell. But this building consisting of a hundred trillion cells is no constant entity. New cells constantly come into existence and old ones are destroyed. Every second, about a hundred thousand new cells are added and, naturally, just as many die.

VV

How does the cell cycle – division, death – take place exactly? What happens during this process? What controls it?

TM

A number of Nobel Prizes were awarded in the first years of the 21st century precisely to scientists who studied the mechanisms of cell division and death. In 2001, the Prize went to Leland Hartwell, R. Timothy Hunt and Paul Nurse, who determined which molecules trigger cell division – the cell cycle – and what mechanisms control it. The cell cycle – in other words the cycle of cellular division – is a chain of events where the cell doubles and then divides into two daughter cells. A year later, Nobel honours went to Sydney Brenner, H. Robert Horwitz and John E. Sulston for their contribution to the study of

mechanisms that cause cell death. It turns out that cell death is genetically a precisely orchestrated process that ensures that cell death disrupts the organism at large as little as possible. This type of controlled cell death is called 'apoptosis' and it is extremely important for the development of the organism in forming various structures and eliminat-ing damaged cells. If apoptosis does not work as it should, cells damaged by radiation or chemicals will not be cleared from the organism. Their cell cycle no longer is subject to control by the body, and the result may be uncontrolled proliferation of cells – a cancerous tumour.

VV

And yet it is pretty much self-evident that all living organisms die. In the case of cities or buildings, the sustainable thinking ethos is extremely reluctant to accepting that some city, or a part of a city or a building, will simply disappear or die ... Even though they are under constant economic, social and cul-tural pressure, they must be cared for, used and lived in to keep them alive. The human body – its internal organs, tissues and cells – is covered by skin: we know how to protect ourselves from certain dangers. Compared to cities and buildings, living organisms – thanks to evolution – seem to be in quite a well-defended state.

TM

But in fact, cells constantly live in a fairly hazardous environment. On one hand, there is the ever-present danger of being exposed to radiation such as that favourite of the sunbathers – ultraviolet radiation from the sun, which damages cells and the DNA within cells. Exposure to harmful chemicals is another possibility. And even if we were in a completely sterile and protected environment the whole time, there would still be no escape from the oxidising effect of free radicals – a result of our consumption of oxygen. That is the price we pay for our distant evolutionary ancestors gaining more mobility and better reaction time due to the switch to aerobic respiration.

Thus it is clear that cells are in constant danger and from time to time their DNA structure becomes damaged. But DNA is, as we know, the medium of heredity in cells, to be passed on to heirs in un-changed form. DNA contains much of the program-ming for cells, and is clear that if the instructions are incorrect, the behaviour of cells will also be flawed. The result can again be a cancerous tumour.

VV

The current development logic of urbanisation is reminiscent of that of cancerous cells. It is logical that a cell goes through a certain number of cycles, but it is often presumed of architecture, especially in Europe, that it will last forever. Is there any phe-nomenon in nature or in the laboratory where cancer cells could be used by a body to gain some benefit?

TM

I think so. In the early phase of human develop-ment, where we are embryos consisting of only a few hundred cells, reproduction of cells very much resembles the type seen in cancer cells – rapid, un-differentiated, divergent and uncontrolled. Like small

children. Later on, these cells will be increasingly constrained into a framework, with checks placed on their activity and reproduction.

VV

The extent of randomness and information (noise) in urban construction and architecture is often so great that it contributes to the inception of a certain playfulness. One encounters unexpected, downright paradoxical manifestations next door to each other in cities – so-called anomalies that help us generate new associations, occasionally leading to explosive development, directional changes, surprising out-comes in urban construction. What role do 'random-ness' and 'noise' have in cellular development?

TM

In recent times, more attention has been turned to randomness in genetic expression. Scientists such as Max Delbrück were interested in it already sixty years ago. The randomness of how genes are expressed is an important evolutionary resource that does not depend (at least not at first glance) on the boundaries laid down by DNA or the environment. Randomly arising differences in phenotype may become favoured by natural selection. And finally it is very likely that random expression processes play an important role in the foetal development of organisms – here, too, cells with very different

functions and structure must somehow develop from cells that are genetically completely identical. Many biologists have started studying the reasons for randomness, in co-operation with mathematicians and physicists, and there is no doubt that the future will bring new unexpected and interesting results on this front.

VV

Such cross-disciplinary collaboration requires one to have a certain sense of the big picture. It is becoming increasingly complicated to plan an adequate integral picture all at once, in the form of an integral organism developing in time and in space. The tendency in urban construction is to envision a human community as a set of individual buildings, streets, blocks and activities, insofar as we are used to explaining complicated urbanist processes in the language of ever-smaller objects.

TM

Any biological system processes, interprets and selects information. It is clear that without informa-tion (DNA) there is nothing to interpret, but we get essential answers to our questions about life only by asking how the transformation of the informa-tion (resources) into life actually works. The most elementary level of organism in nature is the cell. If we want to ask fundamental questions about the nature of life, we can technically reduce things to a subcellular level, but we must not forget that the

[116] Professor Toivo Maimets (b. 1957) is a developmental biologist. He has worked as an engineer and as a scientist at Tartu University. He was the Estonian Minister of Education from 2003–2005.

[117] 'Linnahall as part of a cell cycle': http://issuu.com/vaikla/docs/ how_long_is_the_life_of_a_building
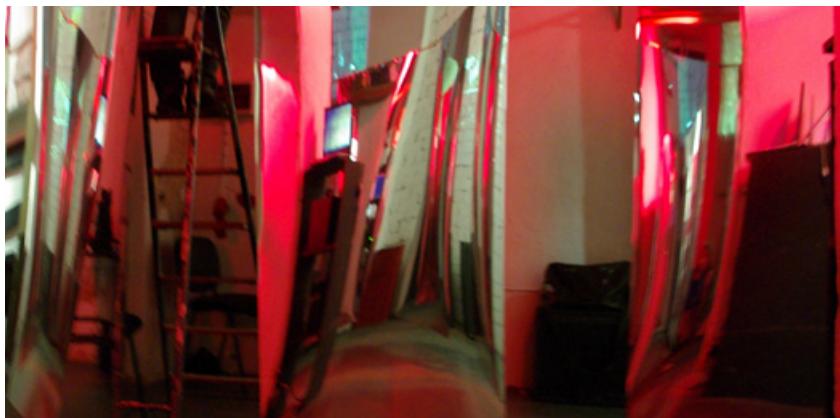
whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In the last few decades, a leap forward has been made in the field of methods for studying the entire cell, such as fluorescent techniques and some microscopy solutions that are in principle completely new. Thanks to this, we can study 'randomness' and 'noise' in the processes of development of individual cells.

Steve Rose, a well-known English scientist who studies molecular mechanisms related to brain activity and is an enthusiastic popular science writer, writes the following (2005): "Science asks questions about the world, but the questions we ask and the answers we accept as being meaningful to us obviously reflect our cultural expectations...." I think that even reductionism is tied to our traditions. We see the world as consisting of parts and the function of science is to explain very complicated processes in the language of much smaller things. In this manner, we want to explain life using the terminology of cells, molecules and ultimately even atoms. This is a reductionist approach. The roots of reductionism go back to the 19th century, to the days of the Industrial Revolution, when it was very necessary to reduce the world to its constituent parts and quantify them so that everything could be measurable and reducible to numbers on some consensual scale.

VV

What are today's 'cultural expectations' in developmental biology that hinder the advance of science? What should we focus on instead?

TM

We could deal more with processes and dynamics than concrete elements... For instance, more and more data are being gathered about hereditary effects not encoded in DNA. It's possible that one day DNA-based genetics will prove an exception to the general genetic theory, just as Newton's model of the universe turned out to be an exception in physics.

VV

In architecture and urban construction, strategic design and urbanism as well, there is talk of environments being in continual transformation, in a process where the orientation should place the user in the centre. The needs of users themselves are constantly transmuting, just as the everyday needs of inhabitants change due to the aging of the population or other demographic processes. For us, the changes seem to take place extremely slowly, as baby steps. Architecture based on a specific spatial function – even urban construction – has turned out to be an exception in the general context of urbanism, considering that the changes in social system have led to the fact that our current way of life cannot be forced into a monofunctional space in the same extent as was possible in the 19th century during the Industrial Revolution... What would be the dynamics of the 21st-century Linnahall cycle as a process?[117]

How does 'tagging' influence the practice? Delving into other disciplines that might not even appear to border on what is traditionally considered architecture reveals certain threats of distraction and diversion from the main goal (for instance, an architecture project). However, such excursions into other fields are necessary for two-way communication. It enables the practitioner to simultaneously communicate an architectural or urban agenda to other disciplines, while mapping out potential points of overlapping interests or possibilities for a future collaboration with other fields. As long as the practitioner is aware of the risks and is able to return more informed to the main issue (e.g. an architecture project), the 'tagging' enhances rather than obstructs the practice: the 'tagged' practitioner is more likely to be approached by professionals from other fields, to discuss potential novel forms of research and collaboration.

AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN 'TAGGED'?

Given the versatile nature of the practice and its multi-modal approach, it becomes self-evident that such a practice might be perceived by both the society at large and the immediate community as something else – something that is not traditionally considered to be architecture or design. My claim against the cliché here is that the task at issue is not primarily to disrupt or eradicate the perceptual convention and tagging habit but, rather, to turn it to one's advantage. Thus, the key here is to acknowledge such 'labeling' and even the perception that it rests upon with an open – venturous – mind and to be opportunistic in the best sense of the word by using specific 'tags' and 'labels' to the benefit of the practice and its endeavours within the 'architecture as initiative' agenda. It suffices to point out here that such 'labeling' could even be leveraged when approaching professionals from other fields or stakeholders within the public and private spheres. To work 'with' tags and labels rather than 'against' them may also be crucial in order to invent, develop and propel discourses on the borderlines of different disciplines.

THE OPPORTUNISTIC IN THE 'MACHINIC'

The claims and insights related to the quest for opportunism with regard to what we call the 'machinic' are predominantly derived from the three samples in the pool: Sample 1 (the Tallinn Waterfront and the Baltic TurnTable); Sample 2 (Kultuurikatel) and Sample 8 (Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture).

The three samples have been chosen as they allow for particular insights into the nature of the struggle of the practitioner when immersed in practice. The specific struggle at stake that can be foregrounded in the selected samples calls forth an attitude not dissimilar to the one discussed in the previous sub-section that looked at perceptions and tags.

The main perspective here, however, relates to challenges of the broader societal and political system within which the specific practice is operating and into which particular projects are launched. The samples partly feature scenarios of the 'fate' of such projects, including the situations in which bottom-up initiatives are eventually taken over by the authorities.

The horror and allure of the machinic lies in the concept of the Kafkaesque, a term inspired by the writings of the

German-Jewish author Franz Kafka. The Kafkaesque denotes concepts and bureaucratic situations in which people are overpowered by the system – by the (manmade) machine. Kafka's characters appear in a surreal, nightmarish milieu that evokes feelings of senselessness, disorientation and helplessness, and of lacking a clear course of action to escape the situation. We encounter Kafkaesque elements today in real-life occurrences and situations that are incomprehensibly complex, bizarre or illogical.

Our understanding of the Self, projected into the future – our comprehension of the future 'human' – is an elongation of the yearning and rigorous search of past decades for a revolution of (human) sensibilities. Yet, no matter which way this 'human' is being reshaped, we still seem to be perplexed by the common deterministic and mechanistic view of both end-users and of design (architectural, urban) within the ruling system. The ways in which art, architecture and film have envisioned, critiqued, or challenged this 'new human' have not entirely helped us to overcome the Kafkaesque.

Films like Mon Oncle, Play Time and Trafic by the French comic and film-maker Jacques Tati have eloquently ridiculed the Western consumer culture's obsession with commodities that lends superficiality to its social relationships. Tati's criticism attacked the nature of space-age technology and design, which is brought to us as entirely impractical and inhumane, as if the futuristic is meant for someone else other than the human being. Or, in Cedric Price's words from 1979: "Technology is the answer, but what was the question?"[118]

Kafka was born in Prague, and today's emerging democracies in Eastern Europe provide an intriguing case study of societal transformation from the former Soviet regime to the capitalist market-driven system, and its implications on architectural procedures, urban planning and design rules and (de-)regulation. Today more than ever before, those emerging democracies witness the impact of the Kafkaesque of both systems on our living environment; however, the way out of the current situation has not yet been fully addressed by practitioners and researchers in the field of architecture, design and urban development.

The innovations of recent decades within cognitive imaging, computer interfaces, communication technologies, surrogate natures, sensory mediators, and global tracking are mere disruptions on the surface if they do not reach deeper into the redesign of the societal system as a whole, offering a way out of the Kafkaesque. The practitioner engaged in design innovation, able to pose the critical questions, has the capacity to envision and empower an alternative collective model organism – in other words, an organisational model for (parts of) the society. But can the 'embedded practitioner' (the designer embedded in practice) do so from within the system?

"Economic crises, debt crises, floods of refugees, climate change, and terrorism. Every day the media reports on crises, catastrophes, and global hazards. Given such media-driven and real threat scenarios, there is a diminishing sense of trust in the capacity of governments to act. Political control mechanisms are apparently insufficient, and political alienation is growing. The result is a feeling of powerlessness. The powerlessness of a society can lead to dictatorships and wars. Individual responses range from internal withdrawal to political radicalization towards the left or right."[119]

Kultuurikatel provides an example of overcoming this 'feeling of powerlessness'. As our NGO and I were to a large extent pushed aside from the further progression of the project, the following is an account of how the initiative took on a life of its own in the hands of the municipality. Thus, it is the direct result of our initial input. Due to the proposal documentation that we delivered to the Tallinn Cultural Heritage Department (the owner of the real estate), there are today several European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) grants linked to this project: [120]

- investment in the Cauldron (City Space at Cultural Cauldron): €601,448
- investment in neighbourhood development (opening up Tallinn to the sea – spatial plans for the neighbourhoods of Cultural Caldron and Linnahall and construction of the first phase): €1,157,120
- creative industries content activities: €95,867
- Tallinn City's contributions to the investment projects are respectively €273,767 and €204,198
- other funding from Tallinn City: approx. €6 million
- the estimated total cost of the Cauldron's development is approximately €13.7 million (first phase approx. €7 million).

There are three points that make it a good case in the eyes of the City. First of all, Kultuurikatel is not simply about renovating a physical space, but the concept was generated as a platform to stimulate partnerships, knowledge-transfer, collaboration and a broad European network to create synergy between various cultural trends and organisations as well as between creative industries and businesses. Secondly, the renovation of old industrial factories into cultural factories often ends up creating a closed space used only by the tenants. In such a case, little 'creative mixing' happens between the tenants. Kultuurikatel aims instead to create an open space for the general public – it aims literally to be public space in the best sense of the phrase. Thirdly, it is an excellent example of cultural development based on inclusiveness. The project idea and initiative in developing and pushing it forward came from the creative community itself.

The project comprises of activities can be divided into two groups: on the 'hard' side, the old buildings will be renovated into a modern cultural centre. The large space of 10,000m² will combine different studios, black boxes, galleries, an architecture centre, rooms with future development capabilities and public attractions like restaurants, shops and a tourist centre. It will include one large performance hall and smaller rooms that can be used for many different purposes. The formats of available space include: exhibitions, performing arts, conferences, workshops, meetings, studio space and public event-space. Learning from experiences of building cultural factories, this project aims to open the space to the general public. The idea is to divide the space into three parts as follows:

- 1/3 of the space: 24/7 open public space with a roof (given the temperate Nordic climate)
- 1/3 of the space: tenants and residents, who basically 'pay' through the value of their very presence (and have to cover the costs of their own activities)
- 1/3 of the space: commerce (cafés, ticketed events, art galleries, etc.)

On the 'smart' side, Kultuurikatel aims to enhance synergy between various cultural trends and organisations as well as creative industries and businesses. The platform includes a wide range of partners (e.g. Contemporary Art Promotion Centre, Design Centre, Architecture Centre, New Media Prototyping Centre, etc.). It is certainly remarkable for the city that the idea of Kultuurikatel surfaced from a group of just 4–5 people at the beginning of 2006. This NGO, called

MTÜ Kultuurikatel, was dedicated to the development of a cultural hub in the area of the Cauldron, serving Tallinn at large. The background of the initiators (the members of our NGO) was diverse, from architecture and urban planning, to theatre, education, and more. We took the job of communication extremely seriously, publishing articles and lobbying various decision makers and stakeholders, as well as the local cultural leaders.

The city agreed in principle that a cultural centre should be located in the Cauldron and at the end of 2006 the NGO became an official partner of the city. In spring 2007 the NGO presented its approach to the Cauldron's development in the so-called 'black book'. The city requested from them a more detailed technical and financial analysis. In 2008 the NGO presented a feasibility and profitability study (phase I) which was put together by several partners, including one from the Netherlands.[121]

The project was funded as one of the 13 projects of the first phase of a creative industries development program which is managed by Enterprise Estonia and funded by the ERDF. It received the maximum amount of support. The selection was made by the program committee whose members included representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication, Enterprise Estonia and the Estonian Development Fund, as well as some experts from creative industries.

The management and steering of the project has changed over the years. Initially, the team that ran the project consisted of NGO Kultuurikatel and the city's Cultural Heritage Department. The leadership role and the 'smart side' activities were undertaken by the NGO. The latter was advised by the Creative Council. The city did not finance these activities, yet because the city owns the buildings it had the final say regarding the direction in which the Cauldron was going to move.

Afterwards, when the construction part became more important, the Foundation 2011 took over the project's management. It is a pity that in the Foundation there is only one full-time project manager (responsible for the construction) and fewer than 10 people working in the Tallinn Creative Hub Development Centre, which is in charge of (among other things) the 'smart' side of the Cauldron. Even though their activities are undertaken in partnership with many different actors, there are no long-term co-operation agreements and the 'smart' side is regressing instead of progressing.

The Kultuurikatel Creative Council included at different times between 25 and 40 top leaders from Estonia's cultural arena. Among them there were theatre directors, designers, architects, artists, curators and critics, several heads of universities and colleges, members of Parliament, performers, and directors of festivals, as well as municipality officials alongside heads of community organisations in the field of culture. Yet certain truly innovative ideas in the Estonian context have not been taken on board. For example, in terms of the actual reconstruction of the buildings, there was initially a plan to refurbish the complex into a powerhouse (literally), with annual productions of solar power totaling 195MWh and of wind power totaling 67,600kWh, according to our NGO's calculations.

Yet the important part of the whole process is that the city finally acknowledged that the innovative aspects of the project were initiated by the creative community itself, namely the Kultuurikatel NGO. The city has also admitted that it was novel that both the idea of the initiative as well as its public promotion came from the NGO.

The NGO played the key role in developing the project. It was a first time that this kind of project had an advisory body, a so-called Creative Council, bringing together experts and representatives from a wide range of organisations and fields (e.g. universities, several associations of artists, business community, architects etc.). No other projects taking a similar approach have been initiated in Estonia.[122]

An example of an unforeseen problem and how it was overcome lies in the case of a kultuuritehas ('culture factory') that was in need of new space and was trying to 'squat' in the Kultuurikatel premises. In addition to legal ownership problems, it soon became clear that there would not be enough funds to properly build and maintain such a place with this kind of agenda. At the same time, since the NGO was in close contact with the Ministry of Culture, it became very clear that there was an increased interest in the emergent notion of 'creative industries' in Estonia, with correlated EU funds opening up. It was in the public interest for the project to become financially sustainable in the long term.

The economic crisis has impeded the realisation of the project, thus Kultuurikatel has taken longer to implement because the city's budget capacity decreased. Nevertheless, the project still has multiple strengths that support 'smart growth' in Tallinn and Estonia.[123] Kultuurikatel had a rather spontaneous start with creative people themselves initiating the process. But soon the NGO was confronted with a dilemma in producing a business plan: Kultuurikatel was morphed into more business-oriented and self-financing centre, under the threat of the city dumping the idea altogether. We chose to enter the 'more challenging business game'.

The Kultuurikatel team has considered it crucial to develop a strong educational component, including programs of informal education and tacit learning as well as innovation-orientated features. But the main target is still to bring life and people back to the former industrial neighborhood and to the seashore. It is an important link in the development of this strategic area in Tallinn that is growing in importance and will hopefully catalyse other new hubs. To make it all happen, the project has been developed by engaging a wide range of partners and it will continue, with hope, to build on its strengths. The public interest is expected to generate additional private investments in new small businesses.

The project has struggled enormously with finding a good (administrative) project manager and a suitable institutional (municipal) framework that would suit the novel concept. I never intended to run Kultuurikatel or to become its director – however, there were and still are capable colleagues in our NGO who could have taken on this position. But the city never allowed this to happen, as the position was and still is (for no obvious reason) considered political. Thus, a good management system is still to be discovered.

One of the most difficult tasks of such a job is that it is usually difficult to communicate the new concepts in the 'old' language (language that is familiar to the authorities, administration, municipality, etc.). The NGO team has kept up its active communication work, and has been continually promoting and explaining the idea over the years. It must be emphasised that it is utterly important to keep doing this consistently since the people in key decision-making positions change and the message tends to transform over time if it is not repeated in its original form.

To conclude, Kultuurikatel as an initiative – from its inception to its current state of affairs – is an example of overcoming the Kafkaesque. The first of the initiative's set of five success-factors is its openness, though this does not necessarily mean entertaining every idea from every interested

party. There was an initial screening of ideas and a synchronisation of agendas before welcoming those parties to participate. In that sense, Kultuurikatel has been a carefully curated initiative. The project has had its obstacles and difficulties with changes happening in the city management, with the economic recession, with increasing construction prices and with legal cases, but its openness has maintained the broader community's support for the project.

Without this support the project might have been abandoned by now, yet people have connected with the original idea thanks to publicity, endless communication and the careful orchestration of the Creative Council: the people involved felt part of some larger and more important project, and felt that they were serving the greater good. This has guaranteed the support and enthusiasm of the public even after so many years. It is important to keep in mind that good communication has played an important role in achieving this.

Secondly, it is clear that every old building has a legal owner. For a city administration it might seem easy and obvious to have the owner (in this case, the Culture and Heritage Department) running the project. However, the owner may not have the right knowledge, skills, incentives, etc. to run this kind of novel urban development project. Thus, in essence, the city has acknowledged that the project manager must not only be a good administrator, but also a visionary leader.

Thirdly, Kultuurikatel has emphasised its international dimension from the very beginning, as culture is not solely a local phenomenon but involves the international community, helping to create the necessary leverage for financing and making the project more attractive for potential creative and funding partners.

Fourthly, it is not often that such a large area in a great location is available for development. This 'window' opening was reinforced by excellent timing: the cultural sector was looking for this type of opportunity. For example, in the idea-generation phase there was already more interest in tenancies than there was space available.

A final factor is the flexibility of the platform, as Kultuurikatel needs to keep on developing even after the renovation is finished. For the Cauldron, being 'ready' would mean being out-of-date and losing its edge.

A difficulty is that the construction usually takes up a majority of the funding, requiring systematic long-term planning, yet it is the 'pouring concrete' part that is most easily understood by officials. Therefore there is a risk that the 'hard' side may take over the project and its requirements may push the 'smart' side into the background. Even small cutbacks can have a big impact on the progress of the project: politicians and public officials are often under pressure to cut the funding of ongoing projects. The underlying assumption

Photos: Katri Karing
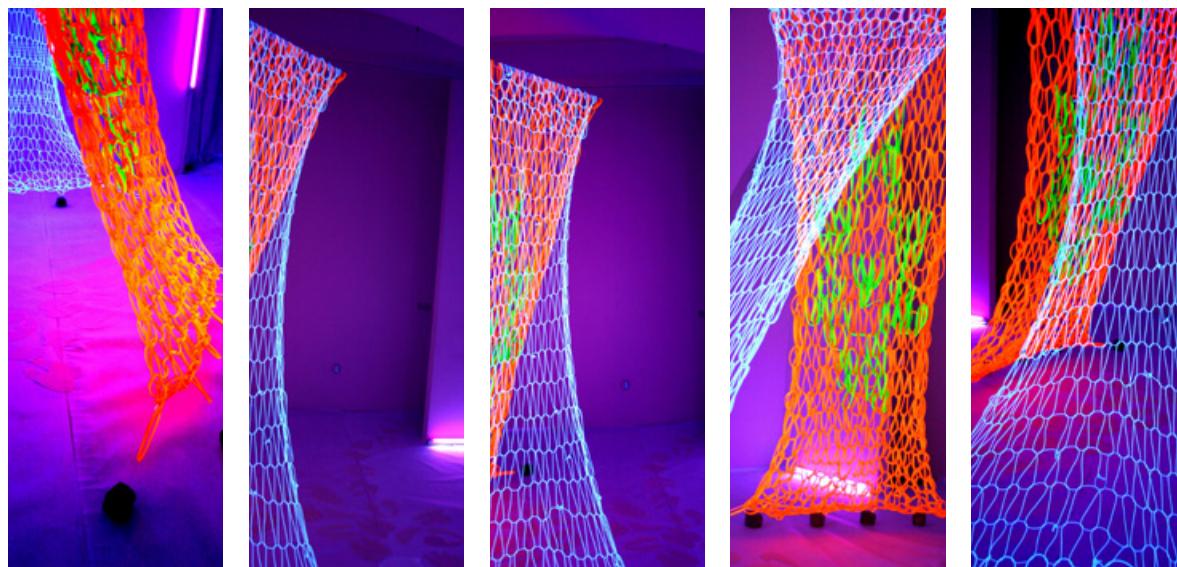
Patterns

Architect: Veronika Valk
Graphic designer: Katri Kikkas
Project: 2009

Created for the Svetlobna Gverila (the Festival of Light in Ljubljana, Slovenia), the installation builds on the world of patterns being an endless, perfect world with exciting laws.

For every new project, the designer creates a new pattern: he or she creates a balance and an order between the elements, and sets them on a specific location based on their structure, which often the designer alone can comprehend. In a sense, it is like reduction in mathematics, in which minimalisation takes place until one is left only with primary numbers.

'Patterns' is an installation that relies on ancient Estonian mitten patterns, using contemporary materials. It reutilises old handicraft techniques, emphasising the cycles of nature and life: old is new.

Our great grandmothers' pattern is today not only a mitten pattern from a tiny locality, but a cross-culturally appealing and visually binding tool for spatial intervention.

Venue: The Svetlobna Gverila Festival of Light encourages the artistic creation of lighting objects and re-examines the position of the artist at co-designing urban space and consequently improving the quality of living.

Photos: Katri Karing

in such situations is often that cutbacks can be made linearly (i.e. we will cut 10% of the funding, you will do 10% less). However, even small cutbacks may well require a re-thinking of the concept, of the construction or, in the worst-case scenario, of the whole project.

It is equally important that the procurements are carefully planned: when dealing with larger projects, it is often tempting to proceed with the construction and procurement in phases, before all plans are properly finalised. With complicated projects like Kultuurikatel, certain unexpected obstacles may emerge during the construction period that eventually have an impact on the progress and costs of the work. Therefore, the procurement rules must allow for flexibility. Original initiatives tend to lose some of their 'edginess' along the way. New ideas are often evaluated as risky, or are found to be hard to grasp by people who are not familiar with the specific topic. This can have two consequences: firstly, decision-makers might pursue their own understanding of the novel concept – a less 'risky' one. Secondly, they would prefer to be reassured by some established institution taking over the project management, as they tend to think that an NGO might not have the capacity, skills and authority to lead a large-scale construction project.

AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN 'OPPORTUNISM'?

The cases discussed here profile a practitioner who is immersed in the practice and is thus challenged in different ways. On the one side, she may be struggling 'to be heard', so the struggle might mainly be one of communication facing certain systemic, societal and political constraints. On the other side, she may be struggling to protect the project from being taken over by the 'machinic', the 'Kafkaesque', the automatism-driven, or the pragmatic and efficiency-seeking 'common sense' which often overlooks or disregards the original authenticity of a project that is born from a local context, yet driven by global concerns. While this cannot always be avoided, the projects under consideration here evidence how the course of events can become an important learning tool for further action; practice-based research that looks also at actual project-lineages provides extremely valuable insights here into how such project-experiences lend themselves to crucial strategic adjustments in relation to new projects and allow reflection upon the open-ended nature of the process of 'lesson-learning' and the dynamics inherent in 'lessons learnt'.

DISRUPTING THE 'MACHINIC'

The following subsection suggests itself as a natural follow-up to the considerations and insights summarised in the previous subsection related to opportunism, and also suggests ways of working 'with' a system.

Here, however, and evidenced interestingly through the same set of samples – namely, Sample 1 (the Tallinn Waterfront and the Baltic TurnTable), Sample 2 (Kultuurikatel) and Sample 8 (Urban Festivals of Contemporary Culture) – the focus is on strategies of 'disruption' rather than of assimilation. The fact that the same set of samples is operative in this subsection of my practice-based research reflection signals that these two considerations – the opportunistic and the disruptive – are

[118] Price, C (1979), *Technology is the answer, but what was the question?*, London: Pidgeon Audio Visual.
[119] 'Powerlessness – a situation: democracia, revolutie & potlize', Felix Trautmann, Frankfurter Kunstverein, 2013.
[120] Kadri Kuusk, Kultuurikatel case study, May 2012.
[121] *Ibid.*
[122] *Ibid.*
[123] 'Smart growth' is an urban planning and transportation theory that concentrates growth in compact walkable urban centres to avoid sprawl. In the EU terms, 'smart growth' means improving the EU's performance in: 1) education (encouraging people to learn, study and update their skills); 2) research/innovation (creating new products/services that generate growth and jobs and help address social challenges), and 3) digital society (using information and communication technologies).

by no means mutually exclusive (beyond the idea that 'to disrupt' may be regarded as an opportunity).

What needs to be carved out here, however, are how the examples chosen manifest specific strategies to overcome a feeling of powerlessness in the face of the 'machinic' or the 'Kafkaesque'. I claim that 'the system' at large is marked by gaps that need to be identified by the architect – a feature of opportunism as discussed previously – and the architect can then take advantage of these gaps in order to evoke certain 'disruptions' in the system, using the gaps as entry points.

Working on projects for the Tallinn seaside, I began to realise the practitioner's position in shaking-up and subverting the underlying *machinic*. Estonia regained its independence in 1991 and has since witnessed an ongoing privatisation of the coast, resulting in a spatial situation somewhat similar to the one during the Soviet occupation. The coastline had then been serving as a military border zone, owned by the state and denying access to locals. An important obstacle to its efficient development is that the years of independence have also been marked by rapid political rotation (as an example, Tallinn has had 13 different mayors since 1991), which considerably impedes the implementation of ideas.

In the eyes of an architect, certain unique structures distinguish the Tallinn seashore from waterfronts in other (European) capitals. The winning entry for the Tallinn waterfront urban ideas competition (2000), by my colleague Villem Tomiste and I, tied the areas's historic buildings together with a tramline along the coast. However, the winning scheme was never fully implemented due to the collision of two different types of the machinic.

One of these was reminiscent of the Soviet era, which saw the waterfront as a hopeless 'brownfield' area whose land was still owned by the state (not by the city or by private developers), hence it was taken for a 'collective' common ground, a 'no-man's-land' that was uninteresting to develop. The other mindset – the market-driven way of thinking about the city as a set of commodities – disregarded the idea of a variegated seashore with a tramline along the coast as it was seen to be potentially non-profitable, though it required a substantial investment from the city, both in financial as well as operational terms. Neither of the two mindsets was at the time able to recognise the waterfront as a gateway to the country, not to mention appreciating it as an inherent part of our original culture, built on our co-existence with the sea, and thus full of potential for a meaningful rehabilitation and re-inhabitation of the coastal landscape. Such a situation urged me to ask whether it would be possible to find alternative (unofficial, remote, parallel) mechanisms for urban interventions on the Tallinn waterfront, regardless of the prevailing system.

An initiative born outside the machinic might become lucrative to the system to the extent that it wants to get hold of its concept or its design, to swallow it, to make it part of the system. The paradox is of course that no initiative is in fact 'graspable' by the system without altering it, morphing it to fit that system. Yet the elegance of submission (e.g. of an initiative to an authority) is revealed in the initiative's (or, more specifically, its design's) potential to rework the system from within. Other ways of successful subversion might involve 'reverse-action' – for example, engaging with a public commission and offering a solution that reworks the assignment: one that disrupts the brief.

Equally intriguing are the urban festivals of contemporary culture as platforms for immediate interventions. For example, Valgusfestival is precisely such an initiative that is born outside the machinic of the municipality, yet is nevertheless appetising for the city to take over. Valgusfestival addresses the social qualities of streetscape, aiming for a brighter and happier wintertime by changing the appearance and use of urban space in an aesthetic and joyful way. It constitutes an open invitation to spend time outside despite the cold wintery weather and has hence become truly popular among the locals.

Altogether, the resource potential of such initiatives like Kultuurikatel or Valgusfestival – both laboratories for contemporary culture – is revealed by their ability to challenge the status quo of a city, especially when they fascinate in an immersive way, creating memorable embodied experiences. When they are venturous and further the idea of urban space as a speculative public forum. When they focus on various disciplines – arts, sciences, (architectural) design, urbanism – simultaneously. When they are based on the relevance of the 'human'. When they are not about more experiences, but smarter ones. When they offer an experimental way to deal with and to sustain change and thus help to formulate the 'futuristic'.

AN OPEN-ENDED PROTOCOL IN 'DISRUPTION'?

One of the claims to emerge within the set of research results discussed here is that the feeling of 'powerlessness' in the face of the 'machinic' or the 'Kafkaesque' can be addressed through communication and through the practitioner's publicness. It seems to be of particular importance to observe here that the practice under scrutiny responds to the ideological challenges embedded in the 'machinic' and the 'Kafkaesque' precisely not through a counter-ideology at the same level, as this would represent a closed circle. Rather, the idea of an open-endedness resides in the responsive leap, namely into the 'joyful' and 'playful' as ways of reinventing publicness, if necessary. Once it is understood that every system offers gaps and entry points for potential 'disruptions', the practitioner may develop ways to exploit those gaps in highly innovative and resilient ways. As soon as such a dynamic has been installed, the practice's interventions and impact potentially have the chance to spiral up as they draw from and feed back into the social and cross-disciplinary relations on which they are built. The quest at stake here, however, is how to stimulate a culture of asking critical questions which push creative practice further. In many ways, artists today seem a long way ahead of architects in finding ways to fight against mechanisms impeding life. It is one thing to evolve the vision and experience of an individual practitioner or evolve her future practice; it is another matter to understand and act upon the urgent need to focus on possibilities for collective (rather than individual) adventures that are able to gather spatial intelligence and strategic (design) thinking, so as to set up a society less absurd than the present system. In order to invent the future, today's practitioners may be faced with the task of disrupting the present in specific ways, which are discussed in this research.

A CONCLUDING REFLECTION ON THE OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

My investigation has reached a point of conclusion, discussing a set of protocols derived from and evidenced through a select set of samples. My aim has been to probe each protocol put forth in relation to its open-endedness, and not only for operational reasons. As I have stressed before (Preface, 'To the Heart of the Research'), I see these protocols as considerations that articulate directly into the wider notion of creativity at large. The emphasis on the actual practice has allowed me to chart a way to unpack the multi-faceted notion of 'creativity' in more meaningful ways than would have been possible had I launched only into a detached discussion around creativity. As I have emphasised in the Introduction, I regard my specific research findings at least as a partial contribution to a culture of criticality that is willing and able to ask 'big' and possibly 'hard' questions at a larger scale.

The paradigm in which this research took place – namely research by practice – has allowed me to make discoveries in an important sense. They deserve readily to be called 'discoveries' because they have been made in the course of the PhD, as I was observing the practice and investigating the projects from multiple perspectives. My insights were not 'up-front' research questions that I had formulated in order to be tested. Rather, they emerged only gradually as possible aspects of my enquiry during the process of ongoing observations, arising through deliberately approaching the body of work without a preset agenda of interrogation. I started making observations regarding the switching modes of my practice, which made me aware of how the practice had grown more complex over time, adding to the versatility of the practice's profile. The Practice Research Symposia (PRS) then prompted me to look back at the very beginning of the practice – how the 'sprinter' years turned into a 'marathon' and what this shift brought with it.

The contributing findings were connected to the effort to capture the very nature of the versatility of my practice – the interdependence of an array of simultaneous activities on one side, and the subtle relationships between projects that overlap with or follow one another on the other side. I started to become acutely aware of more than one way to draw connections, so as to see the potentials operating. On a metaphorical level, I started to compare such a multi-instrumental practice to the complexity of the Estonian language, seeing the versatility of my practice as resembling the phenomenon whereby a word is spoken through a variety of 'cases'. I likened my practice to such word-use. Only through the PRS discussions did I then become aware of a different and more literal sense of my engagement with 'the word', as my peers helped me to understand the significance of my active involvement in the national press as a tool to 'disrupt the machinic'. Looking back at the body of my published essays, the PhD process helped me to realise the common underlying characteristics of the majority of those texts – that they were always pointing to the future in a constructive way, engaging in 'joyful' and 'playful' phrasing that was often taken by the public as 'utopian'.

This point is worth making not only with regard to my writing. As described in the conclusions addressing the 'proto-

cols', the most important insights I have gained through my research are related to the fact that my practice represents specific experimental ways to respond to the machinic and the Kafkaesque. The response lies often in a constructive multi-modal approach, building on the 'joyful' and the 'playful', utilising a variety of 'devices' and adhering to different roles as a practitioner, while evoking 'disruptions' in the system, using the found 'gaps' as entry points. Furthermore, the venturous practice can be opportunistic in the best sense of the word by using its substrate and its endeavours to catalyse and evolve the 'architecture as initiative' agenda.

The thread of participation at the PRS events throughout the PhD process also added to the clarity of what constitutes my community of practice. The final section of this document – 'Architecture as Initiative (a manifesto)' – was first published in an AD issue on 'The Innovation Imperative: Architectures of Vitality'.[124] The manifesto is repeated here in the final section of this Research Catalogue, Section IV, since it was integral to my wider PhD enquiry and represents an attempt to explain my practice. It made me investigate more closely whom the other practitioners were whose work could be called 'architectures of vitality', and to ask in a critical way how their practice(s) may potentially impact upon, or vary from, my practice. While my direct and actual community of practice is understandably and quite properly tied closely to Estonia, there has been a second, virtual layer of communality to be discovered, in which I might learn from other practitioners who 'share' my concerns in more oblique ways.

The perspective of looking at my actual community of practice brought forth important differentiations. Admittedly, there are plenty of other Estonian 'disrupters of the machinic', both younger and older, from architect-artist Leonhard Lapin, Group b210 and some city architects to the leaders of the Union of Estonian Architects, the EAA Faculty of Architecture and the Estonian Centre of Architecture, to name but a few. In general, Estonian culture is distinctive due to its numerous and extremely vibrant 'creative unions': in addition to the architects' union, we have at least a dozen more organisations – for artists, designers, sculptors, actors, theatres, cinema, writers, composers, and so forth. They all voice their opinions actively in the media. Similarly, it is clear that the new generation of Estonian architects shares a commitment to open up the discipline and make it part of the wider public. As a general observation, the voicing of opinions and public leadership has become more and more institutionalised – yet this has also led to better synchronisation and co-ordination in recent years.

However, I see in this context an important factor that sets my practice apart from my actual community. Other individual practitioners do not engage in the media in the same way or on the scale that has been characteristic of my practice to date. This may be partly due to the fact that both the older as well as the younger generations of architects in Estonia have been raised according to a specific code of conduct, whereby speaking up is considered to be a form of 'marketing', which in general has been considered a taboo among architects in Estonia. Certainly fellow practitioners and peers do offer their views in the media; however, the majority of them tend to do so in a way that is very restrained compared to my practice. They do so to a much lesser extent and less frequently, or in other cases perhaps with less personal engagement, and less passionately.

If I look at the community of practice at an international rather than a local level, I must point out the impact of the work conducted at SymbioticA under the leadership of Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr at the University of Western Australia in

Perth. As the first research laboratory of its kind, SymbioticA enables artists and researchers to engage in 'wet biology' practices[125] within a biological science department. It also hosts residencies, workshops, exhibitions and symposia. With an emphasis on experiential practice, SymbioticA encourages a better understanding and articulation of cultural ideas around scientific knowledge at large, and an informed critique of the ethical and cultural issues of life manipulation.

SymbioticA opens up new means of artistic inquiry where artists actively use the tools and technologies of science not only to comment on each other but also to explore further artistic possibilities. For me as an architect, and from the 'architecture as initiative' point of view, it has been inspiring to compare my practice to SymbioticA's and to seek ways to evolve my practice as an architectural inquiry in which my colleagues and I actively use the tools of design and public engagement not only to produce buildings but also to explore the possibilities of 'architecture as initiative'. What is different, however, is that SymbioticA has a strong affiliation with its host university, whereas I have made a conscious effort to keep my practice away from institutionalisation.

ON PROTOCOLS AND OPEN-ENDEDNESS

The specific contribution of this research arises from the statement in the introduction (Preface, 'The Local Context') in which I referred to the fact that it was simply not possible to revive the Estonian culture to what it had been before the Soviet period. Therefore, my practice's strategies to reinvent an Estonian publicness were and still are offering a critical yet constructive basis for open-ended protocols. In the ultimate act of resistance, as my personal context has been caught in the very difficult territory of a post-war, post-modern, post-Soviet and even (considering the Russians as colonists) post-colonial condition, the suggestions in the 'protocols' are open to reinterpretation as to how we, as practitioners, can design our way out of this complex situation, in which the identity of the 'local' is in constant redefinition.

These 'protocols' offer certain unique ways of designing public space and publicness in such a context where the practitioner is embedded in a problematic 'ideological' environment. I have looked at 'ways out' from the point of view of an individual practitioner, emphasising that I have deliberately kept my practice from becoming institutionalised. However, in terms of the open-ended protocols to emerge from this research, it would be interesting to follow it up by investigating the potential for an 'institutionalised' practitioner – for instance, working in a ministry, a publishing company, a local administration, or an SOE (State-Owned Enterprise) – acting as a catalyst for generating 'architecture as initiative'. However, as stressed in the 'protocols of disruption', the matter at stake here is how to stimulate a culture of asking critical questions that push creative practice further. It is vital to do this not only among individual practitioners (the private sector) but across the whole discipline – across sectors.

To invent the future on the level of collective (rather than individual) ventures that are able to gather spatial intellect and strategic (design) thinking, a merger of the non-institutional 'initiative' and the institutional framework might be necessary. This is of particular concern when targeting the broader questions raised in the Introduction (Preface, 'The Not-So-Local Context') – the questions that have motivated me and that have fuelled my own work, but that interest many. To allow ourselves to linger in the 'machinic' and the 'Kafkaesque' in an ideology-driven post-traumata

state might mean that, for the majority of society (practitioners among them), life ends up outside the culture, as the members of the society are increasingly surrendered to the automata and the bureaucratic. Therefore, as stressed in the 'multi-modality' protocol, the 'openness' here also means that it is up to the individual practitioner to find her own unique methods and strategies to construct, to work with, to leverage or to dismantle the 'devices' in order to overcome the 'feeling of powerlessness' in crossing contexts.

In the neo-liberal context, we might be curious about how those who have access to advanced technology subvert their own cultural systems – and how the society arrives at its decisions about when or where to intervene, at both an individual as well as an institutional level. Although the research already interrogates to a certain extent what kind of contributions some specific (bio)technological tools (Sample 10, Workshops: 'Synthonia') might bring to the future practice, then the 'protocols' point to open-ended possibilities on how to take certain hybrid practices even further. For instance, the core of architecture or design practice is morphing significantly today due to the impact of contemporary technological advancement: CAD-CAM processes and artificial intelligence are already part of the game and the living environment is designed to become more and more responsive (to human behaviour, to climatic conditions, etc.). It would be interesting to investigate how to challenge and subvert those processes, building on the 'Findings' of this research.

As evidenced by this research, the multi-modal versatile practice features the capacity to facilitate (positive) or resist (negative) societal change. Architects and designers who have the ambition to design the future need to be aware of the shift at the very core of the profession: this research has provided certain multi-modal ways (instrumentally 'joyful', 'playful', 'disruptive', etc.) to look at what an architect does and what is considered 'architecture' in today's world. As pointed out in the 'versatility' protocol, the overlaps with other disciplines on the fringes of the profession of architecture (or urbanism) are full of potential for experimentation and venturous exploration. It is up to every practitioner to recognise this potential for 'architecture as initiative' and to use it in a resilient way, as a collective venture, for the benefit of the future venturous practice and its community at large.

[124] See the January 2013 issue of *AD* (Wiley), titled 'The innovation imperative: architectures of vitality', edited by Pia Ednie-Brown.

[125] The terms 'wet lab' or 'wet laboratory' distinguish classical benchtop experiments handling biological material from *in silico* (computer analysis) or other theoretical work.

CONCLUSION

This PhD offers an alternative way to research a versatile practice in the realm of 'architecture as initiative'. I have provided an account of what my practice is fundamentally based on, through data as well as through stories about projects, hinting at where such a practice might lead or how it might evolve. I started by providing a more global picture of my driving concerns and of the socio-political and geographical specificity of my work, followed by selected illustrative projects ('samples') in which I showed how my research proceeded and what led to the discoveries and clarifications in Section III. Thereupon, I teased out conclusions and provided a manifesto for future versatile practice.

The core findings are two-fold, since my practice is both vision-driven, whereby I have aimed with every project at a variety of urban or architectural concerns, as well as mission-driven. Before starting the PhD process I was not so aware that, through my practice, I have been (unwillingly) re-inventing an Estonian 'publicness' relevant to those fields of architecture and urbanism. The PhD process helped me to crystallise how I have been searching for opportunities to do this in a 'joyful' and 'playful' way, using a multiplicity of 'tools' to do so; and how I am thus now able to offer back to the discipline an explication of one creative practice's 'joyful' and 'playful' tactics for the reinvention of 'publicness'.

The body of work presented offers ways for architecture (as a field of behaviours) to accommodate and to recognise a species of architect: the architect as initiator. These initiatives tend to unveil alternative ways of tackling challenges, thus blurring some of the traditional discipline boundaries and using accessible 'devices'. These initiatives emerge by creating transdisciplinary spaces of professional collaboration. 'Architecture as initiative' occurs in a loosely-defined (open) transdisciplinary intersection where it can serve as a strategy to strengthen, evolve and expand practice.

The search for functional realities – which not only incorporate but immerse themselves in, and build upon, other disciplines as well as institutional, ideological and structural processes – guarantees that a multi-modal architectural practice becomes versatile. The benefits of a versatile practice surface in the physical implementation of (design) ideas, (architectural) concepts or (urban) scenarios: in the practice's ability to tease visions into tenable, physical existence. But the research also points out the importance of tools of reflection, such as workshops, carried by "the scientific spirit of adventure – the adventure into the unknown, an unknown which must be recognised as being unknown, to be explored."[126]

The research reveals how, with each sample provided, the practice first takes a 'position' (= conception) at an urban or architectural scale. It thereupon gives in to a multiplicity of professional 'obsessions' – studying the feasibility of the concept in order to further convince the stakeholders, forming bodies (for example, legal entities such as NGOs), and utilising a multiplicity of instruments (such as designing, construction, mass media and so forth). The research presents how a practice's substrate might shift in response to contextual change and how the practice continually re-invents itself to maintain its authenticity in those crossed contexts. Finally, the research points to the potential for some specific open-ended 'protocols' to emerge from these observations.

Altogether, the PhD provides insight into 'architecture as initiative', through a variety of 'samples' (case studies), offering multiple angles on how a multi-modal versatile practice possesses the capacity to facilitate (positive) and resist (negative) societal change.

[126] Remarks at a Caltech YMCA lunch forum (2 May 1956), Richard P. Feynman.

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2014 Tampere (FI) Architecture forming society, NordMatch conference

2012 Dublin (IE) Biopolitics and weatherwars, Biopolitics, Society and Perfomance, TCD

2012 Belgrade (RS) Compact City, BLOK conference

2011 Dublin (IE) Domino Effect to the Future, Dublin Contemporary

2010 Aarhus (DK) Practice-led PhD, Aarhus School of Architecture

2010 Gent (BE) Sint-Lucas School of Architecture, Fragile conference

2010 Melbourne (AU) RMIT University Affirmative Architecture conference

2010 Tallinn (EE) TEDx Tallinn, KUMU Museum of Estonian Art

2009 Tallinn (EE) Inclusive by Design, Tallinn Design Festival

2009 Melbourne (AU) Politics of Urban Engagement, Parallax conference

2008 Beijing (CH) Integrative Urban Futures, Tsinghua University

2008 Tallinn (EE) Energy and Public Transportation Urban Perspectives 2050, Tallinn Vision Conference 2008

2008 Tallinn (EE) III Baltic Sea Region Energy Dialogue: Possibilities and Necessities for Energy Efficiency in Urban Development

2007 Tokyo (JP) & Patras (EL), New Trends of Architecture in Europe and Asia-Pacific 2006-2007, Showa Women's University, AGENDA of Architects

2004 Tokyo (JP) Pecha Kucha, Superdeluxe

SELECTION OF AWARDS
date I city (countrycode) I Institution, title and/or collaborators

2013 I Tallinn (EE) I Young Architect Award 2012, http://nap.arhliit.ee

2012 I Tallinn (EE) I Estonian Cultural Endowment "Ela ja sära" stipend

2012 I Tallinn (EE) I Estonian Exposition at the Venice 13th Architecture Biennale 2012, La Biennale di Venezia, concept and design competition, co-authors Oaas LLC and Vaikla Stuudio, 1st prize

2009 I Lasva (EE) I Estonian Cultural Endowment National Annual Award for the Lasva Water Tower conversion into an art gallery, co-authors Kadri Klementi, Kalle-Priit Pruuden, Peeter Laurits, Kalle Tikas

2008 I Tallinn (EE) I Poetess M. Under Monument design competition, co-author Kirke Kangro, Honorable Mention

2007 I Viljandi (EE) I Arkaadia promenade landscaping competition, 1st prize

2007 I Tallinn (EE) I Maakri District urban planning competition, co-authors Leena Torim, Kadri Klementi, Tõnis Arjus, Eerik Kändler

2005 I Tallinn (EE) I Pae recreation park landscaping competition, co-author Kerli Raamsalu, 1st prize

2005 I Tallinn (EE) I Virgin Mary Russian Orthodox Church design competition, co-author Yoko Alender, Special Mention

2004 I Viljandi (EE) I Metsakalmistu Cemetery Chapel design competition, co-authors Yoko Alender and Tuuli Köller, Special Mention

2004 I Tartu (EE) I Composer Eduard Tubin's memorial design competition, co-author sculptor Aili Vahtrapuu, 1st prize

2004 I Tallinn (EE) I Estonian Interior Defence Academy urban planning competition, in collaboration with Kavakava architects, 1st prize

2003 I Tallinn (EE) I "New Sakala" arthouse cinema architecture competition, 1st phase winning entry

2003 I Tallinn (EE) I Music Centre architecture competition, in collaboration with Kavakava architects, Honorable Mention

2003 I Tallinn (EE) I Kalev Chocolate Factory and Tallinn Dairy Factory urban planning competition, 3rd prize

2002 I Tallinn (EE) I Mustjõe dwelling area urban planning competition, 3rd prize

2002 I London (UK) I Pilkington Glasshouse architecture competition, 1st commendment

2002 I Tallinn (EE) I Tallinn entrance sign design competition, co-author Mariann Valk, 1st prize

2001 I Pärnu (EE) I Pärnu High School sports hall architecture competition, co-author Viilem Tomiste, Honorable Mention

2001 I Võru (EE) I Olympic Park reconstruction landscaping competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, 1st prize

2001 I Tallinn (EE) I High School No. 21 reconstruction architecture competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, 3rd prize

2001 I Pärnu (EE) I Steiner Garden landscaping design competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, 1st prize

2001 I Narva (EE) I Narva City Centre urban planning competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, Honorable Mention

2000 I Tallinn (EE) I Tallinn Waterfront Area urban development competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, 1st prize

2000 I Tartu (EE) I Ecological Building architecture competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, 2 Honorable Mentions

2000 I Tallinn (EE) I Lasnamäe Sports Centre architecture competition, co-authors Villem Tomiste and Ott Kadarik, 2 Honorable Mentions

2000 I Suure-Jaani (EE) I Suure-Jaani High School Sports Centre architecture competition, 1st prize

2000 I Tartu (EE) I Baltic Defence College Square landscaping competition, 1st prize

1999 I Tartu (EE) I Tartu University Dormitory architecture competition, 3rd prize

1999 I Põlva (EE) I Põlva City Centre urban planning competition, co-authors Villem Tomiste and Ott Kadarik, Honorable Mention

1999 I Võru (EE) I Võru City Centre urban planning competition, co-authors Villem Tomiste and Ott Kadarik, Honorable Mention

1999 I Kaali (EE) I Meteoritics Museum architecture competition, co-author Villem Tomiste, 2nd prize

1999 I Rakvere (EE) I Rakvere City Centre urban planning competition, co-authors Villem Tomiste and Ott Kadarik, 1st prize

1998 I Väike-Munamäe (EE) I Väike-Munamäe Ski Centre architecture competition, 2nd prize

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2005 Ed. Hans Ibelings, *Suure-Jaani Sports Centre*, Amsterdam (NL), A10 Publishers

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2008 Tallinn (EE), *Külaskäik Draakon-Lilli majja* by Riken Yamamoto, paperback

2009 Tallinn (EE), documentary *JOHAN23: Optimizer & Body Planner*, in collaboration with Cube Productions LLC, DVD

2009 Tallinn (EE), Hanila windpark planning proposal visualizations for Nelja Energia OÜ, DVD

2005 Tallinn (EE), *Tale of a Light Dome*, in collaboration with Allfilm, DVD

2005 – present: animations and videos for various architectural, artistic, research, urban intervention and town-planning projects

SELECTION OF CURATORSHIPS AND ARTWORKS

2011 Paris (FR) Liberte/Vabadus Estonian contemporary art group show at Estonie Tonique festival, Chateau d'Asneieres

2010 New York (US) Brooklyn Ad Night screening in public space, PointB worklodge

2010 Stockholm (SE) Building Blocks, Färgfabriken

2009 Tallinn (EE) JOHAN:23 for Tallinn Design Night, with Johan Tali and Siim Tuksam

2009 Ljubljana (SI) Pattern at Svetlobna Gverila festival of light, with Katri Kikkas

2008 Beijing (CH) Creating Spaces – art bridge between EU and China/artworks Beijing Tricycle, Creativity Stamp, Scrubber

2007 Pärnu (EE) Set design for Kajakas (The Seagull, by A. Chekhov) at Endla Theatre

2006 Eindhoven (NL) GLOW festival/urban artwork Swinging in the Light

2006 Cardiff (UK) Urban Legacies II: New Babylon/ (indoors) Mikrouun

2007 – 2006 Lyon (FR) Fetes de la Lumiere: Superflux/ (outdoors) Mikrouun

2008 – 2005 Tallinn (EE) lighting design installations Light Dome, Igloo, Swinging in the Light etc. for the Tallinn Festival of Light, Valgusfestival

SELECTION OF WORKSHOP TUTORING

2012 Tallinn (EE) Estonian Academy of Arts, Linnahall: adaptive reuse of the built environment

2012 Tallinn (EE) Estonian Academy of Arts, Synthonia: synthetic biology

2011 Cork (IE) Every Way Out, Cork Institute of Technology, with sculptor Maud Cotter

2010 – 2011 Tallinn, Narva, Tartu, Ahtme (EE), City Forums, Estonian Centre of Architecture

2009 Melbourne (AU), Parallax, Education in Digital Age, with Dr. Pia Ednie-Brown

2008 – 2005 Tallinn (EE), Estonian Academy of Arts, Arhitektiprojekt

2008 Östersund (SE), Färgfabriken Norr, Östersund at Large

2006 Stockholm (SE), Färgfabriken, Urban Turntables, Stockholm Region Remix, Stockholm Energy and Public Transportation Futures Scenarios

2006 Tallinn (EE), Estonian Academy of Arts, Urban Guerilla Design for the Tallinn Waterfront, with the Department of Graphic Design

2005 Tallinn (EE) Home for Homeless, with the Union of Estonian Architects

2005 Kütiorg (EE) Forestart initiative on Estonian forestry, wood design and construction

2005 Tallinn (EE) Hansalite street lighting innovation, with MvRdV, Onix and others

2004 Tallinn (EE) Komm On! On the future of food, with Kalev factory

2000 Paldiski (EE) tutor at historic fortifications landscaping, Estonian Academy of Arts

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12.05.2004 I Eesti Ekspress I Unistus paremast tellijast I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

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30.08.2004 I Eesti Päevaleht I Kabuhirm kõige võõra ees I Eesti Päevalehe ASV.Valk

01.09.2004 I Eesti Päevaleht I Tallinnasse sobib rahvuslik tivoli lõbusas võtmes I Eesti Päevalehe AS I V.Valk

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08.11.2004 I Eesti Päevaleht I Euroopa vajab disainitud koostööd I Eesti Päevalehe AS I V.Valk

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07.03.2006 I Eesti Päevaleht I Õnnelik Eesti? I Eesti Päevalehe AS I V.Valk

11.03.2006 I Postimees I Kultuurikomm: President ja kultuur, utoopia I AS Postimees I V.Valk

27.03.2006 I Eesti Päevaleht I Tallinna rannaala kui operatsioonisüsteem I Eesti Päevalehe AS I V.Valk

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2007 – 2 I Kes-Kus I KULTUURIKATLA VEERG I Originaalne Keskus OÜ I V.Valk

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18.10.2008 I Postimees I Akadeemia kuplite all I AS Postimees I V.Valk

16.09.2011 I Sirp I Kus õppida arhitektiks? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

20.09.2011 I Eesti Ekspress I Kui uus arhitektuur tuleb Viinist I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

24.09.2011 I Eesti Päevaleht I Kiriku ülestostmisest I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

08.10.2011 I Eesti Päevaleht I Arhitektuur tahab suhelda I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

10.11.2011 I Sirp I Kõik paneelmajasõbrad, ühinege! I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

13.01.2012 I Sirp I Näitus "Ruumiline stoppkaader. Noblesse oblige" I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

23.02.2012 I Sirp I Toetagem loovust! I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

05.04.2012 I Sirp I Kui kaua elab maja? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

07.04.2012 I Eesti Päevaleht I Bruns: Tallinn ei tohiks anda linnahalli käest I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

20.04.2012 I Sirp I Kas kogu võim lendrobotitele I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

26.04.2012 I Sirp I Hooned hingama I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

22.06.2012 I Sirp I Arhitektuur, tootlik põrumine ja tulevikufossiilid I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

26.07.2012 I Sirp I 25D-arhitektuur: aegruum pluss kohanemine I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

11.08.2012 I Eesti Päevaleht I Narva – kus kõik inimesed on? I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

25.08.2012 I Eesti Päevaleht I Neeme Raud: New York on liikumine, elu I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

13.09.2012 I Sirp I Arhitektuurimõte aastaks 2112 – Eestist? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

15.09.2012 I Eesti Päevaleht I AAA ehk alustas arhitektuuri avatud akadeemia I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

27.09.2012 I Sirp I Arhitektuur – rikkuse genereerimise kunst?I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

04.10.2012 I Sirp I Integreeritud lahenduste võti I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

11.10.2012 I Sirp I Kes juhib elukeskkonna kavandamist? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

16.10.2012 I Eesti Päevaleht I Linnahall ei ole süüdi oma näruses olevikus ega tumedas tulevikus I AS Ekspress Grupp I V.Valk

25.10.2012 I Sirp I Sulavalu-arhitektuur: voolata vabalt ja püsida koos I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

2012 – 11 I kultuuriajakiri Akadeemia I Unista > taju > kohane > toida ehk mida teha Tallinna linnahalliga I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk, I.Lubjak, M.Pukk

09.11.2012 I Sirp I Sümbioos, sünergia, sünkroniseerimine: kohaneda ja omaks võtta I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

13.11.2012 I Äripäev, Ehitusleht I Loov arhitektuur toob disaini inimestele lähemale I AS Äripäev I V.Valk

2012 – 6 I Horisont I Kunstnik, kuller tulevikust? I MTÜ Loodusajakiri I V.Valk

23.11.2012 I Sirp I Materjali tehe, protoarhitektuur ja teised "õnnelikud juhused" I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

29.11.2012 I Sirp I Kandvatest aukudest helde linna poole I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

17.01.2013 I Sirp I Harilikult eriline, eriliselt harilik I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

31.01.2013 I Sirp I Mis veel? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

07.02.2013 I Sirp I Üks ühele arhitektuur, 10% metsikum I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

28.02.2013 I Sirp I Eemal ja kohal I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

14.03.2013 I Sirp I Paramaja leiutaja I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

27.03.2013 I Sirp I Kas väljasuremisohus? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

11.04.2013 I Sirp I Arhitektuur, suhtluse tulem I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

10.05.2013 I Sirp I Õppetööta kool, parveloogika ja pikaealisuse saladus I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

06.06.2013 I Sirp I Tuleviku arhitekt – kirglik, kriitiline, süsteemne? I SA Kultuurileht I V.Valk

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

The following projects are as if 'twins' to the examples provided in Section II, 'Samples' – these projects are equally important to the body of my work and they almost made it to the pool of 'samples'. These additional projects support and complement not only the cases discussed in Section II, 'Samples', but each of them also provides further material to evidence the discoveries that are presented in Section III, 'Findings'.

As complementary projects they nuance the potential of the multi-modal venturous practice from the perspective of 'versatility' that has been argued throughout this research. They also further diversify the range of heuristics in the practice. Furthermore, these projects substantially contribute to the 'open-ended protocols' – each of them has led to a certain confirmation of one or many 'protocols' described in Section III, 'Findings'.
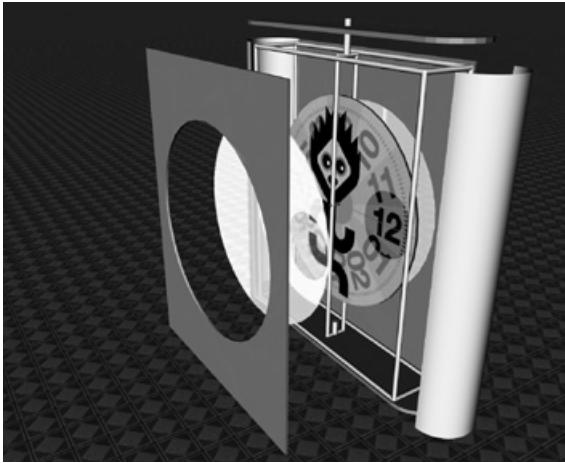
ZULU

Architect: Veronika Valk
Graphic designer: Aadam Kaarma
Project: 2004

Zulu is a Natal province in South Africa, with a population of approximately 3 million people speaking the language of Kwazulu. Although the Zulu are officially ruled by the government of South Africa, they often act as a dissenting voice against apartheid on both the national and international scene.

ZULU work day night club emphasises the courageous nation's traditions and beliefs, voicing human rights and the necessity to protect the endangered cultures of the world.

The revolving clock mechanism of the front door to the club evokes 'Zulu' time – as though entering a hypothetical timezone. The interior design of the spaces from the basement to the attic follows the biotope layers of the jungle: the emergent layer, being the tops of the tallest trees (i.e. ceiling acoustics and ambient lighting); the canopy layer as an umbrella over the other layers for a sound system and integrated wall graphics; the understorey layer for furniture and wildlife, and the forest floor of an easily-maintained surface for low seating and flood-lighting.

Furniture is predominantly bio-lacquered (exudation of the lacquer tree) veneer, integrating LED lighting which plays with the patterned etchings of glass layers, creating hypnotic animation effects. This project was stopped, yet the design is there, ready for implementation.

Location: Tallinn city centre, Estonia
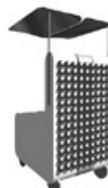
BOLDAGE

BoldAGE by Veronika Valk

This integrated accessibility tool aims to empower the elderly, whose share in the society of an aging Europe is growing considerably. Also known as 'the greying of Europe', this is a social phenomenon characterised by a decrease in both fertility and mortality rates, and a higher life expectancy. It refers specifically to an increase in the percentage of Europe's elderly population relative to its workforce.

The median age in Europe will increase from 37.7 years in 2003 to 52.3 years by 2050. The elderly are in better health during their later decades, yet they still appreciate integrated accessibility tools – to help them not only to move around freely but also to continue to enjoy life as they did when they were young.

boldAGE elongates the investigative lifestyle of the elderly of the future, by offering three modes of utilisation. Firstly, it can be used as a normal, movable (wheel)chair with integrated advanced navigation, lighting and ICT. Secondly, its armrests fold up to form a sunshade. Thirdly, when the chair is rotated 90 degrees onto its back, the ball-bearing system allows the user to navigate the urban landscape in a more adventurous way, as if in a sleigh.
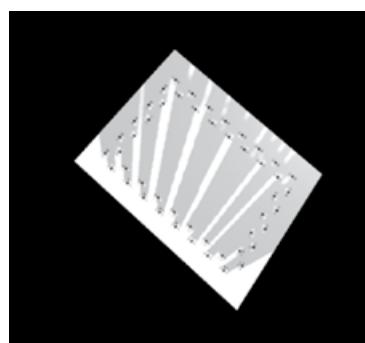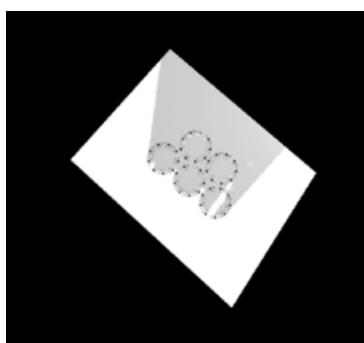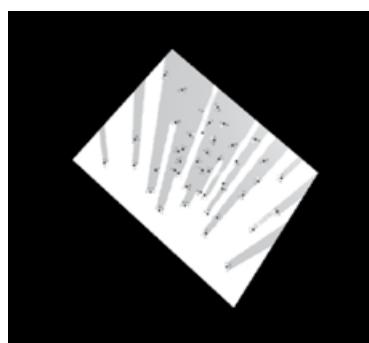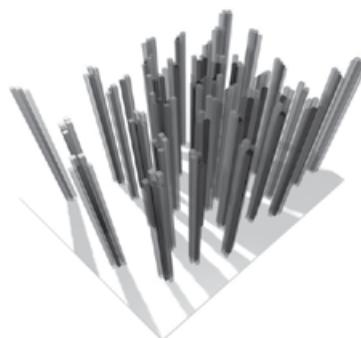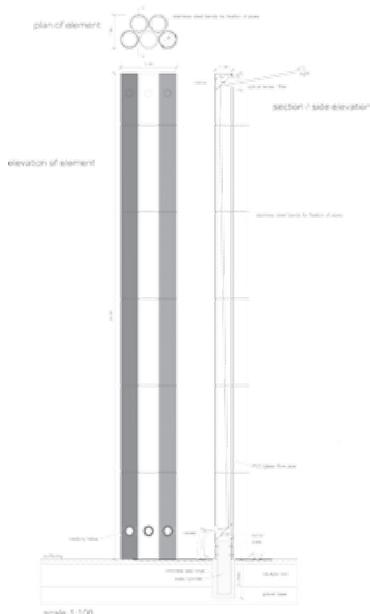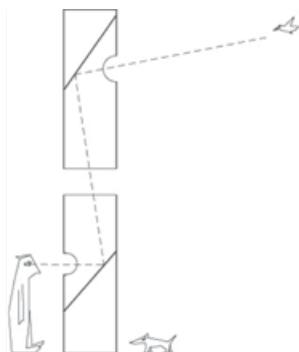
PARISCOPTER

Architects: Veronika Valk, Leena Torim
Project: 2004
Occasion: periscope-forest proposal for the Paris 2012 Olympic Landmark

This project observes the future: the spirit of the Olympic Games is represented through the landmark's extroverted curiosity and its openness to the public. As a flying machine, it raises the viewer over the rooftops in one instant. As a conjurer, it blurs and distorts the usual tourist-views. Periscopes can be arranged in many ways: some can be developed into kaleidoscopes, or used as sources of artificial light to illuminate the square at night.
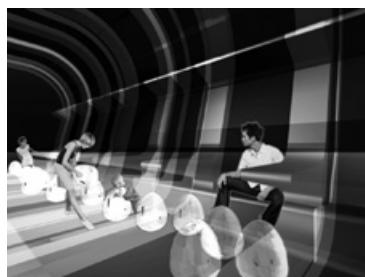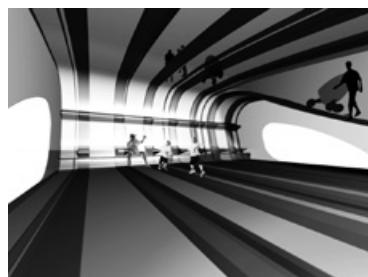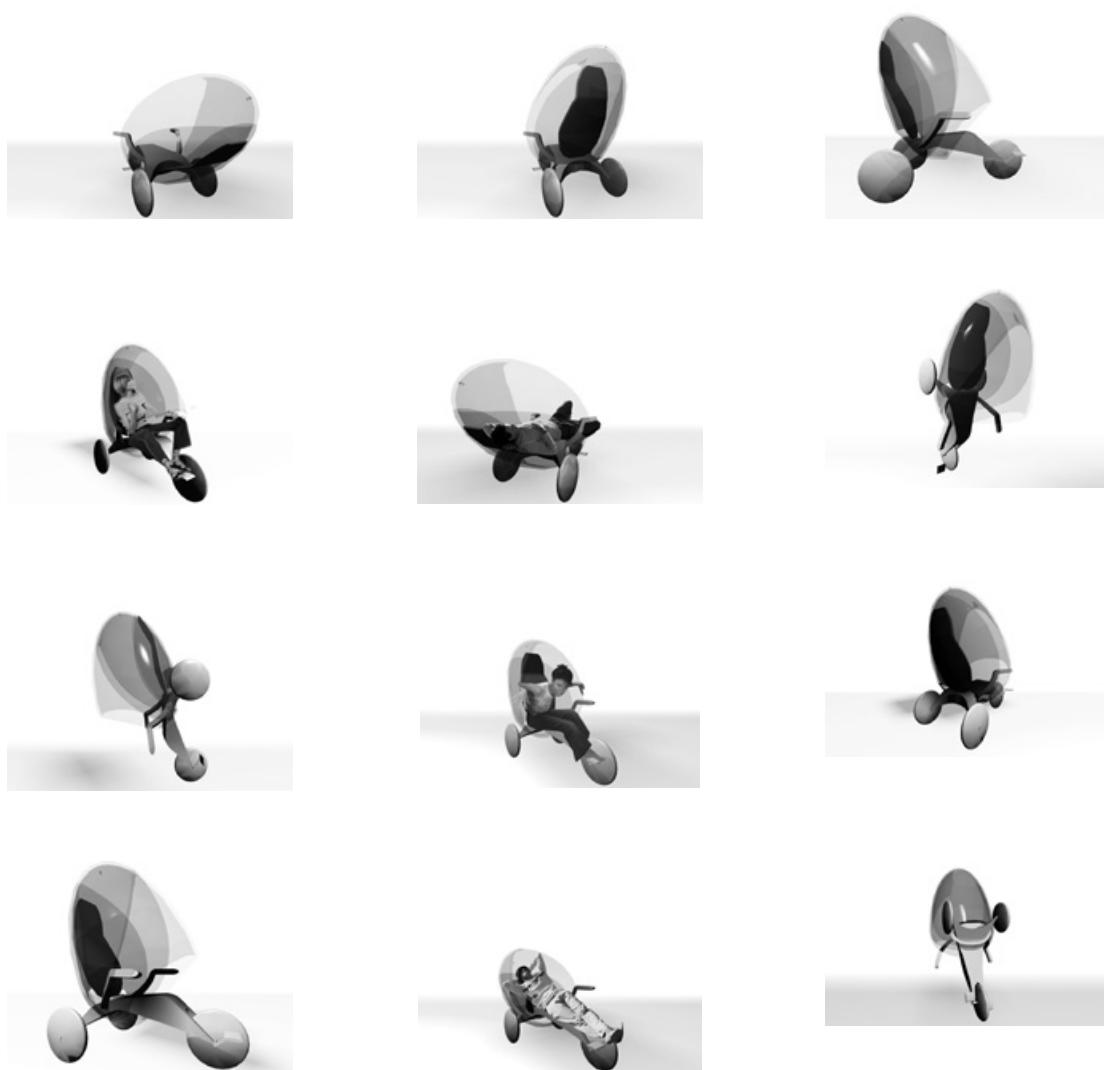
ROLLER EGGS

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Mariann Valk
Future Vision Leisure design
contest 2002

A 'roller egg' is an urban toy – it triggers playfulness in the cityscape, allowing for new discoveries and promoting synergy between people and the living environment. The roller egg can be covered with a variety of smart materials; it is set in motion by pedalling and the surplus energy is accumulated and used for the head-lights and for a reading-bulb during late hours – thus the egg glows during the night.

The frame connecting the wheels is at the same time a seat, with a separate backrest allowing different positions at 15-degree angles. The front wheel and pedals act as footrests when it is in the chaise-longue posi-tion. The steering-wheel is replaced by a joystick system that at the same time acts as arm-rests. If one needs to take the stairs, the egg can be mounted as a backpack. Eggs come in various sizes to suit investigative urbanites of all ages.

All the eggs originate from a 'nest' – a loop-shaped 'egg-ramp'. A rented egg can be taken up to the roof-top along the sloping outdoor ramp: the user sits inside and gains acceleration by sliding down. The nest is an urban centre of gravity, capable of enlivening derelict urban areas. The blurring of public and private applies both to the 'egg' as well as to its 'nest'.
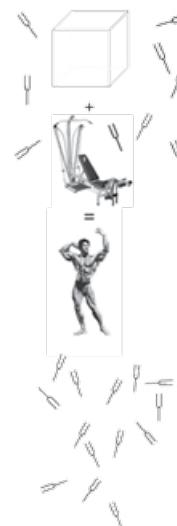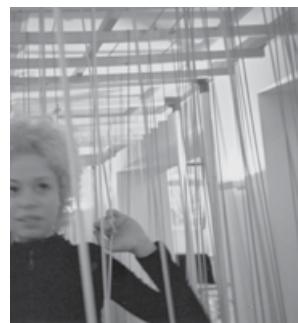
HUMAN HARP

Architects: Veronika Valk & Yoko Alender
HUMAN HARP: Gallery as Acoustic Gym

To live and work as 'a Creative' is a challenge for both body and soul, similar to the proposed Acoustic Gym/ Gallery space for experimental interactive and performative contemporary theatre. Physical effort is needed to transverse a jungle of rubber bands stretched between the floor and the ceiling, a jungle which is at first glance impenetrable: the experience is designed not only as physical training but also as therapeutic activity.

The 3000 rubber straps are all equipped with metal plates of varying parameters: when tightened and then released, they bounce against a metal plate and create a sound. A visitor affects approximately 100 to 300 rubber straps at any one time, thus evoking a bodily trace, an acoustic echo. Visitors create simultaneous soundscapes in flux.

The installation was presented in the Endla Theatre at Pärnu Contemporary Music Days in 2005, in honor of Iannis Xenakis.
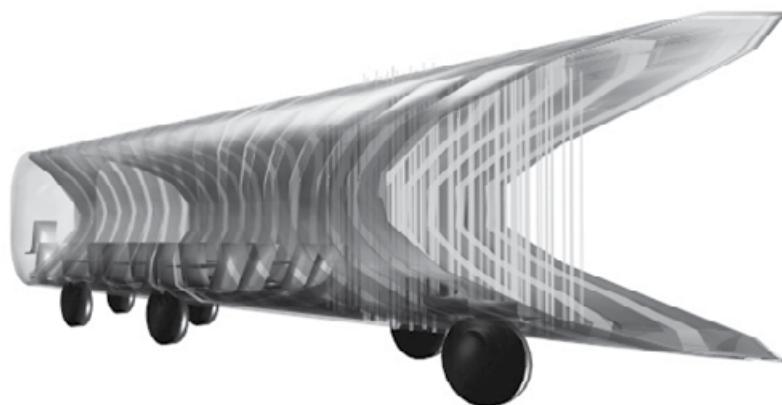
THE RE?BUS

Re?BUS co-author: Tuuli Kö

The Re?BUS concept is a public transportation system with enhanced adaptability and availability. The vehicles are equipped with spaces for work, communication, leisure, meditation and a fast-service get-on/drop-off zone. The bus design utilises the HUMAN HARP prototype for public space as an Acoustic Gym.
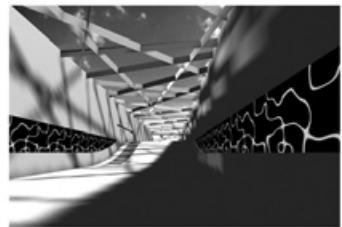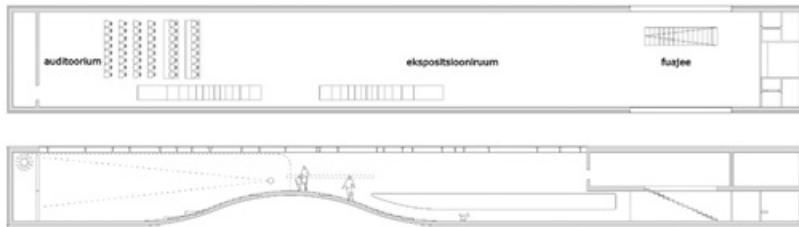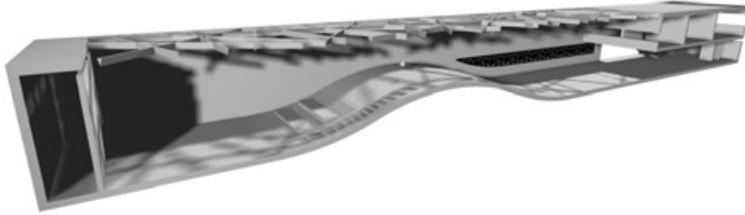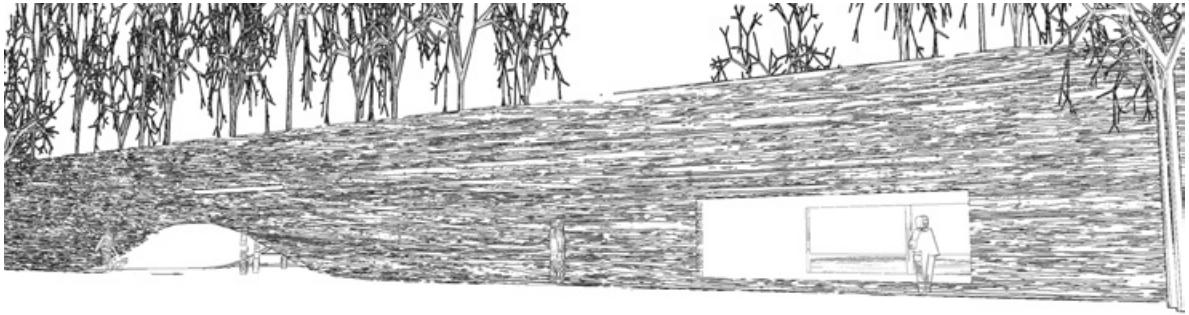
KAALI METEORITICS MUSEUM

Kaali Meteoritics Museum architecture competition entry, co-author Villem Tomiste. 1999.
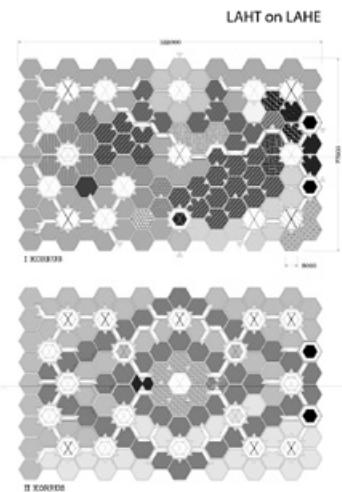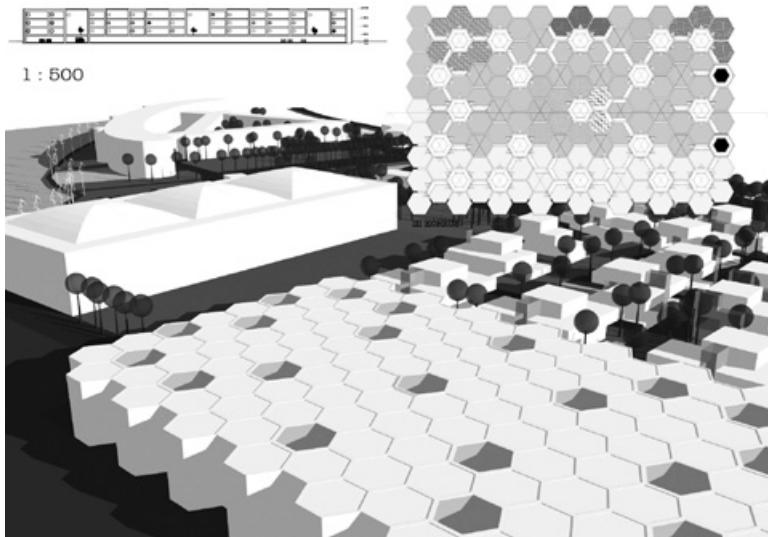
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Competition entry for the Ministry of Justice on the Tallinn waterfront. In collaboration with Kadri Klementi. 2006.
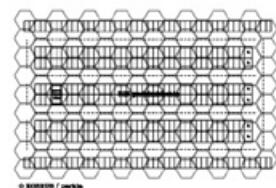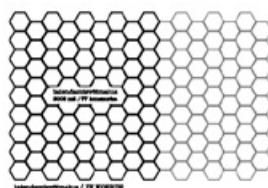
EUROPAN

EUROPAN competition entry for
Salzburg, in collaboration with
Kavakava architects. 2003.
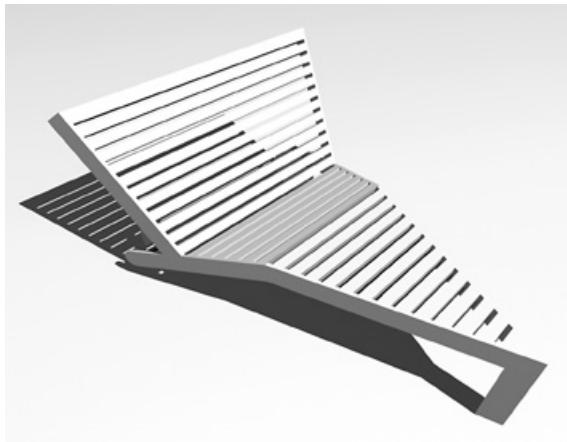
NARVA CITY CENTRE

Uban planning competition entry
(in collaboration with Villem Tomiste).
2001.
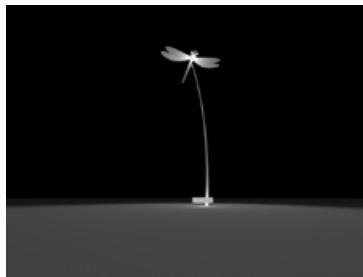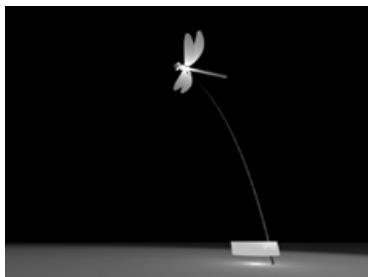
KILI

Street lights for Kiili (Dragonfly)
parish. 2004.
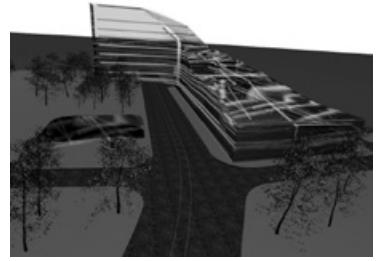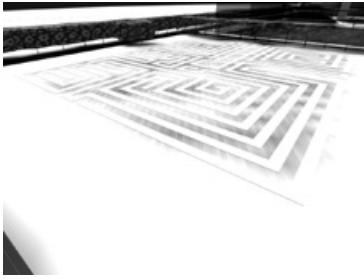
KALEV CHOCOLATE FACTORY

Kalev Chocolate Factory and Tallinn Dairy Factory. Urban planning competition entry. 2003.

MUSIC CENTRE

Music Centre architecture competition entry, in collaboration with Kavakava architects. 2003.
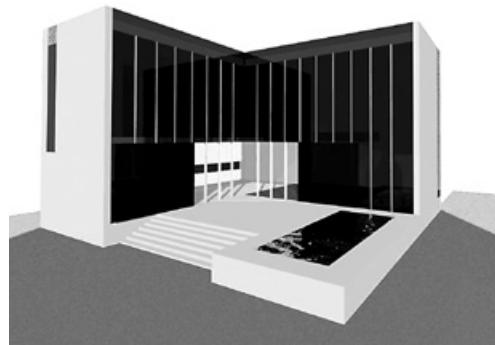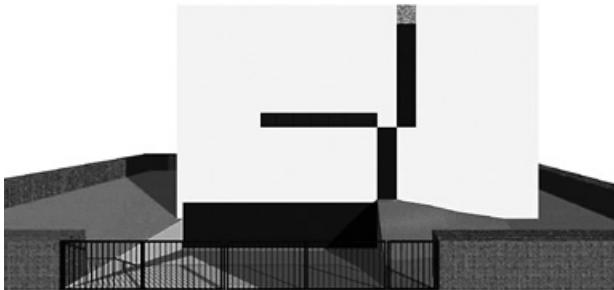
SINILADVA VILLA

In collaboration with Kadri Klementi. 2006.
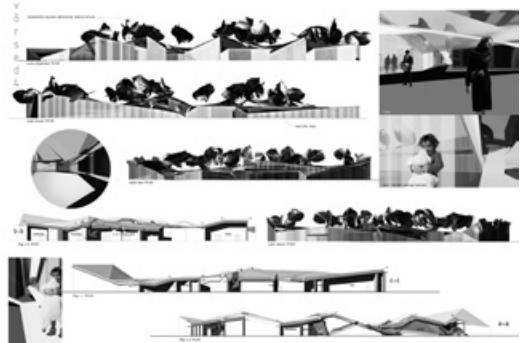
RANDVERE SCHOOL

Randvere school architecture competition, co-author Kaiko Kivi. 2005.
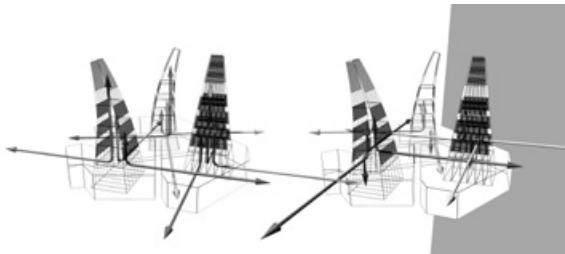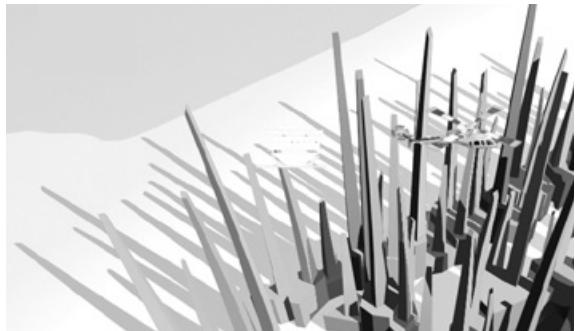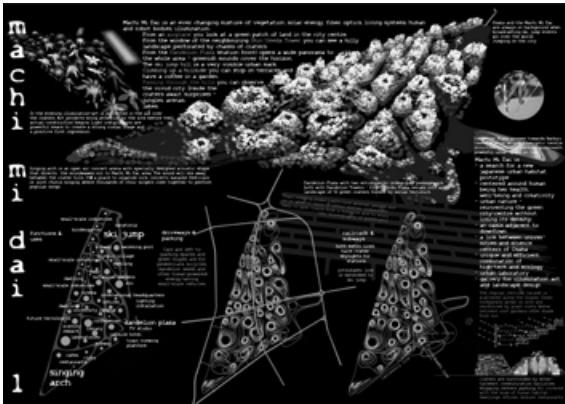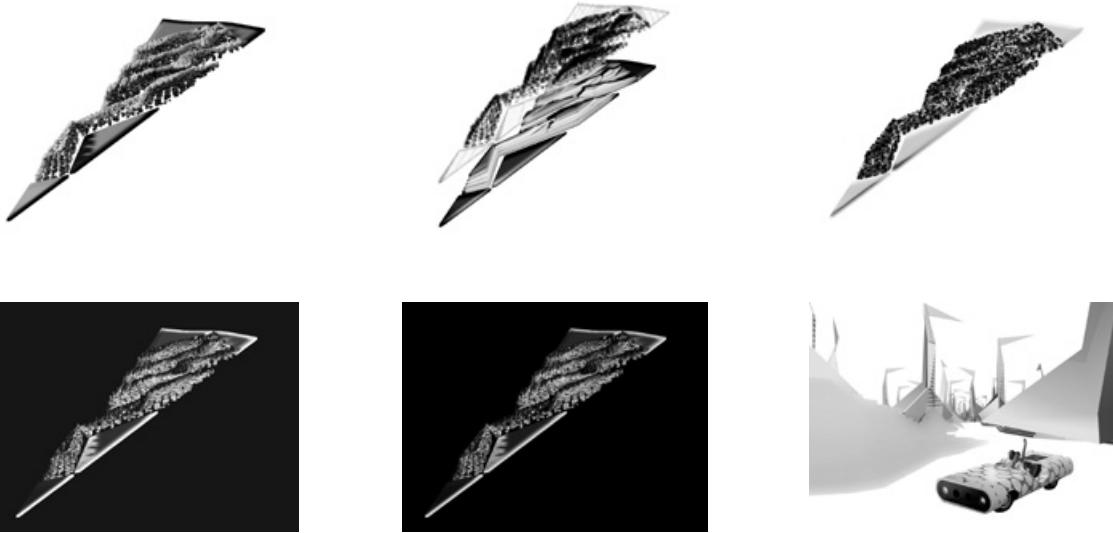
VARIOUS PROJECTS
BETWEEN 1999 AND 2005

Architect : Veronika Valk

A variety of urban projects have addressed habitat growth, learning from natural systems. My '400,000 Barcelona Habitatges' competition entry (2004) looked at the forming of the Earth through glacial retreat, while in my 'Osaka North Railway Station Area' competition entry (in collaboration with Leena Torim, 2003) fifty craters were formed by social tectonics. The slopes of the craters are public parks with an open character, whereas the insides are more private spaces –

jungles, event stadiums and much more. The shape of the mixed-use buildings for the Paljassaare eco-village (below), inspired by albatrosses, refers to a nearby Natura 2000 area that is famous among ornithologists. The positioning and layout variation of buildings gives the area an air of play, diversity and surprise. Similarly, Kadriorg Park is a link in the continuous walk along the Tallinn coastline: here, two elements – the greenery and the water – provide the most striking

experiences of nature. Initially proposed for the 'Europan 6' competition in 2001, the housing system is comprised of 'grass blades' that blend together at root-level. The rotational arrangement of houses allows for views through the blades. It captures the idea of a shared experience of the local microclimate: exposed yet protected...
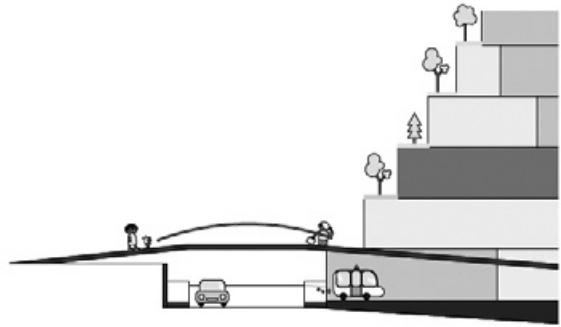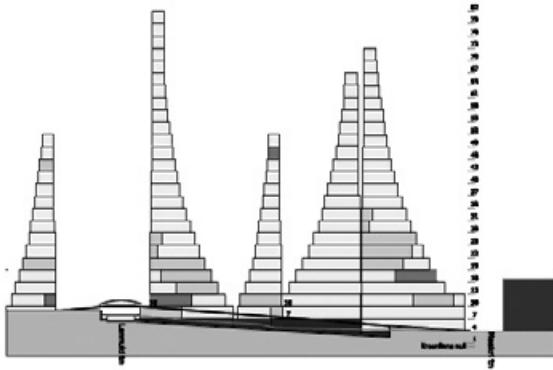
Leenaki vinarah keeab ala sisse kaheraspinche Tornindo vinava slandas liklastuand, mis annab jaurdepääsu ala sissemsne ja Maakri tn kirda jäävunde maa-almunde parkinmirkaorunsle.
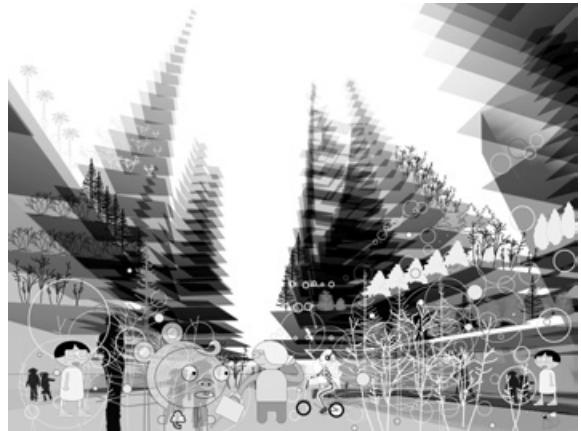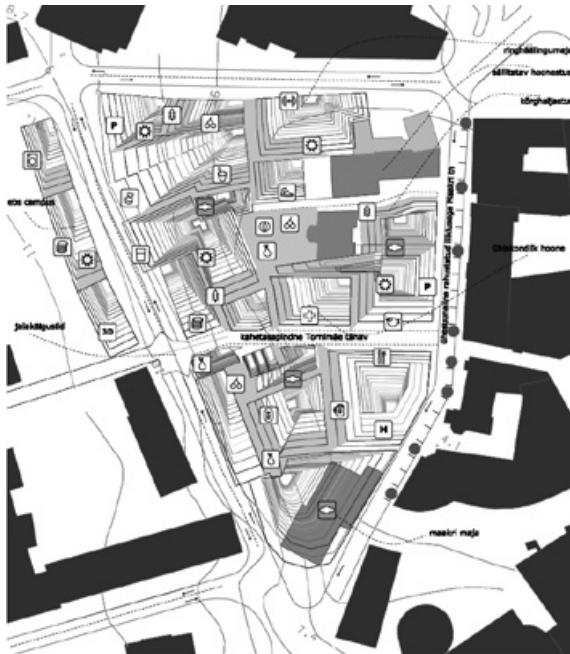
MAAKRI DISTRICT

Project team: Veronika Valk, Leena
Torim, Kadri Klementi, Tõnis Arjus,
Eerik Kändler
Project: 2006

In this urban planning proposal formally inspired by icicles, light has a direct impact on our sense of our surroundings: we experience space as 'bright' when it is full of broad daylight. On our latitude, which experiences dark winter periods, the environment should allow for a maximum harnessing of sunshine and natural daylight – but this is a dynamic phenomenon. It is not an easy task to consider coherently all aspects of daylight in urban planning.

Direct sunlight adds up to 50% of daily irradiation, the rest being diffused light coming from the sky vault. The intensity of light coming from the sky vault depends on the weather conditions. Tallinn is positioned on a latitude where the trajectory of the sun varies greatly throughout the year.

'Density' is often referred to as a tool of sustainable urban development. In Maakri, we are facing the creation of probably the densest district in all of Estonia. The ratio of floor-area to room-height affects daylight access and views across the city, sky and landscape. The rooftops of lower levels become the terraces of the upper levels. The first three floors are public spaces with a diverse pedestrian environment.

Location: Tallinn, Estonia
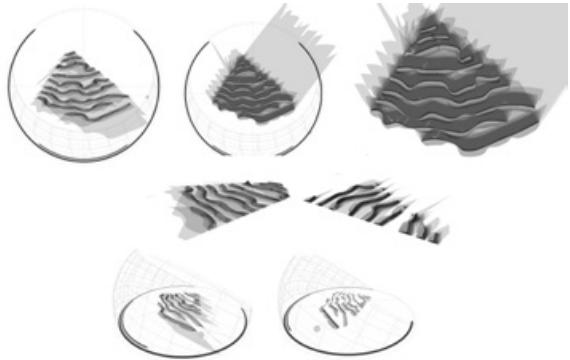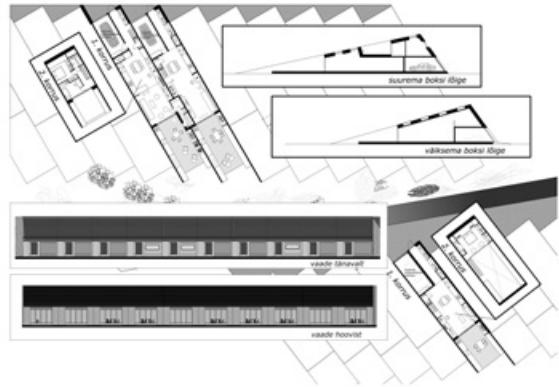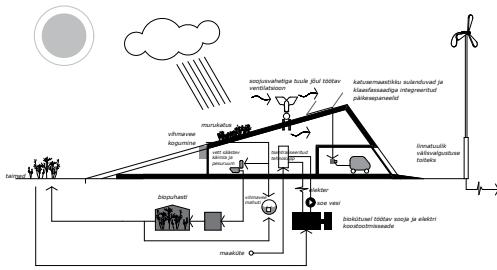
DYNAAMIKA

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Johan Tali
Client: A&A Kinnisvara
Project: 2009

The eco-village proposal implements 'passive house' standards and renewable energy sources throughout the landscaping as well as for the buildings. Inspired by the poetry of sand dunes, the dwellings are arranged into a smooth, waving pattern of shadow and light. Solar insulation simulations reveal a full capacity for autonomous living: maintenance costs are kept to a minimum.

The luxury condominium settlement constitutes, in terms of annual expenses per household, low-cost housing.

Row-house units are developed as lofts refurbished according to a client's wishes. Partition walls between dwelling units accommodate stairs and storage spaces, together with household appliances and equipment from central vacuum cleaners to stoves and fridges.

The 'passive house' concept is developed into an active energy landscape, facilitating also a kindergarten and sports centre, playgrounds, and public and semi-private pathways. The usual outside wall of the gated community is broken down into a wide 'health-route' as a peripheral link to nearby settlements.

Location: Rae Parish near Tallinn, Estonia

section of the crater
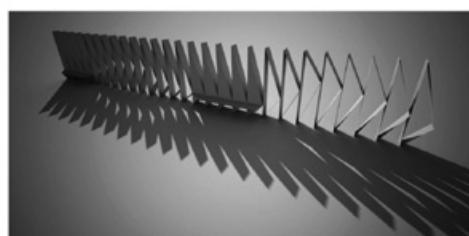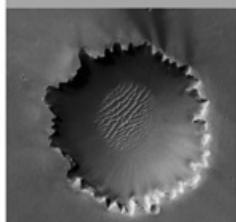
elevation of the separating wall

section of the site

section of the site

QUILOPODE

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Johan Tali
Project: 2009

This is a proposal for a cratered landscape of multiple uses in both habitation and tourism: working at home, adult learning, the creative co-existence of elderly and children – all of these allowing for a balance of privacy and social integration. The diffused layout of buildings is pierced with public, semi-public and private courtyards and terraces of multiple heights and dimensions.

QUILOPODE means 'centipede' in Portuguese: such landscaping configuration allows for vehicle access (including access to a regional hospital). Meanwhile, playground craters of different tempos are created: from one of quiet meditation to an enthusiastic sports area. The height variation protects people from the wind and offers seating niches, while added greenery catalyses biotope regeneration, as well as presenting a variety of shaded spaces with delicate shadow conditions and hidden spots to nurture

plants with edible fruits and berries. Belvedere parking along the noise barrier is equipped with solar energy outlets, to promote alternative energy use for cars and other private vehicles and light transportation.

The evolutionary urban and architectural design speaks in this context of diffused urbanity.

Location: Cascais, Portugal, Europan10
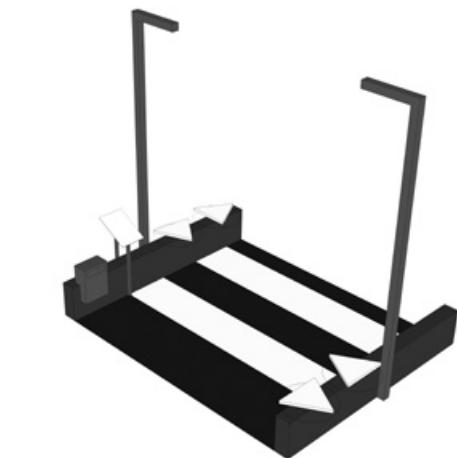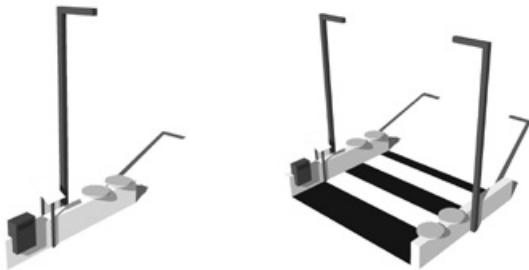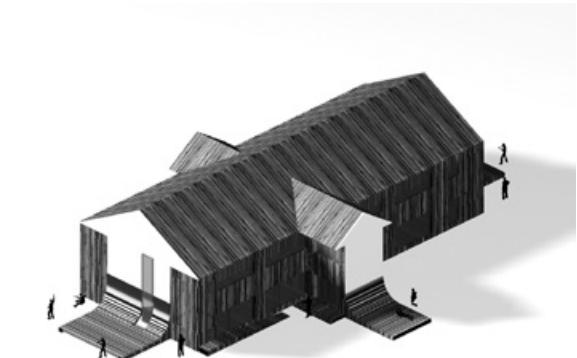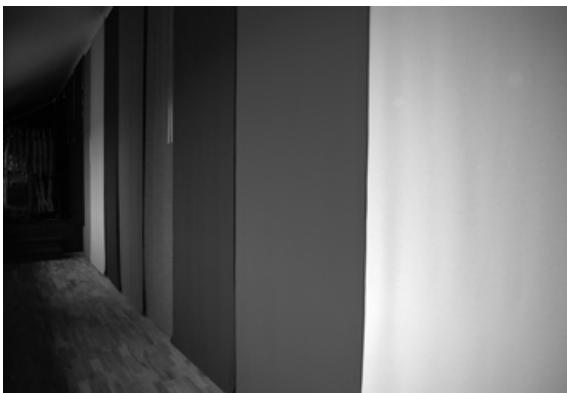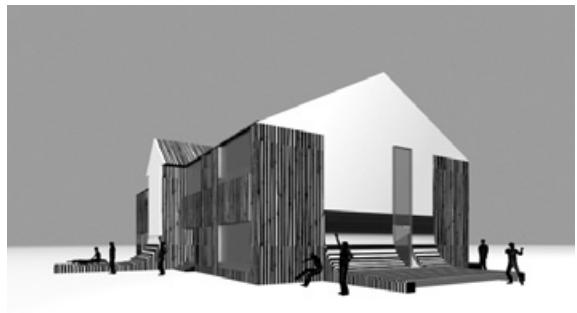
SAUGA OPEN YOUTH CENTRE

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Kadri Klementi
Client: Sauga Municipality
Project: 2007
Completion: 2010

The design is in line with Zizi&Yoyo's
former educational facilities projects.

Location: Sauga parish
Pärnu county, Estonia
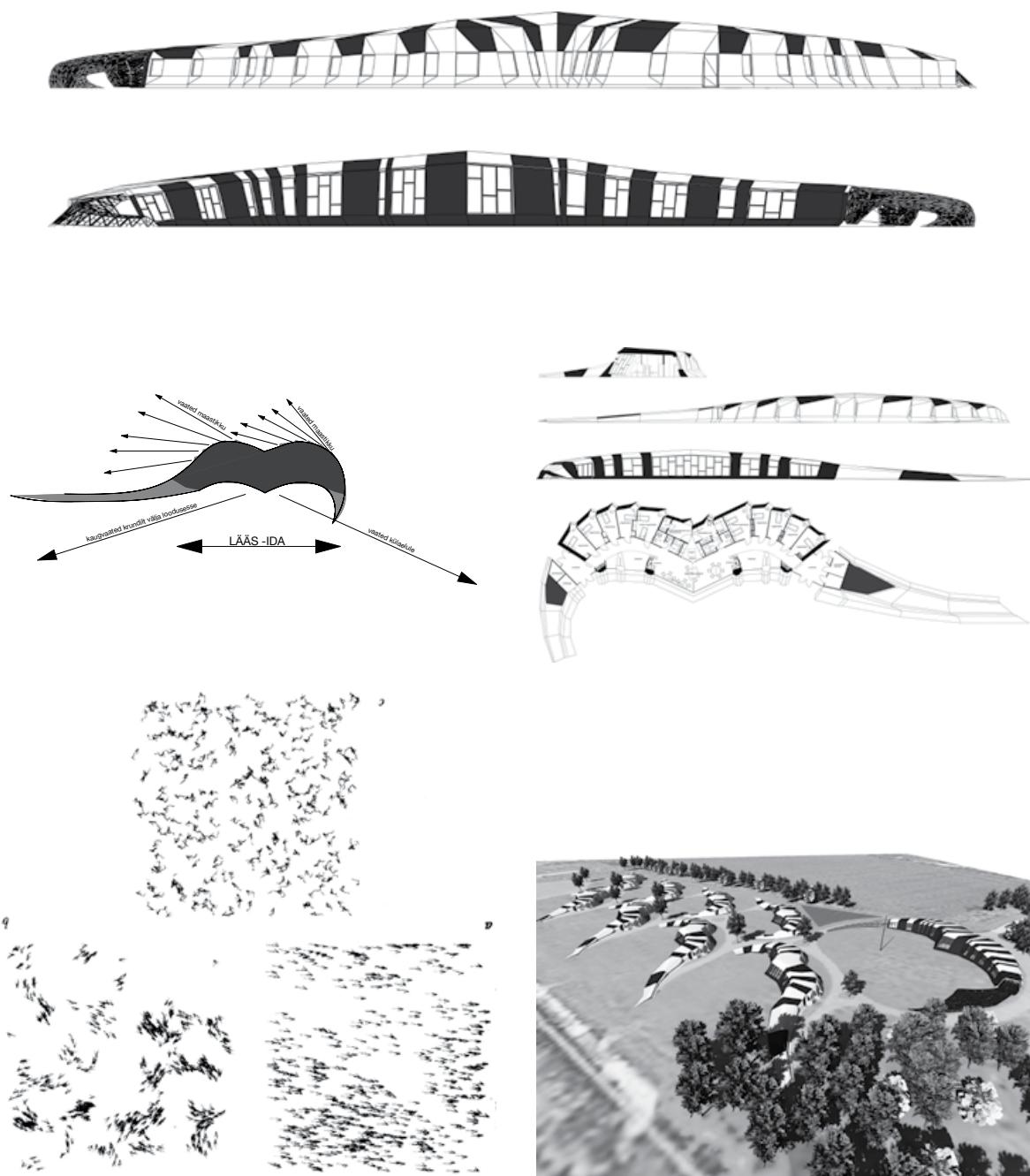
EMBERS

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-authors: Siim Tuksam, Johan Tali
Project: 2009

This village for the disabled, designed according to the 'universal design' principles, is an energy-efficient planning model of eight dwellings and an activity centre, which can be located both within an existing rural development as well as apart from other settlements, operating almost autonomously.

Both the circular and linear village typologies utilise passive house standards in construction techniques to reduce maintenance costs, while both provide opportunities for the inhabitants not only to receive guests and spend time with loved ones, but to participate actively in society, starting up micro-enterprises and selling their products and services.

Continuous outdoor landscaping blends the buildings into topography, creating the freedom of endless navigation and a variety of routes, views and experiences.

The wing-shaped configuration of the houses for ten people and a caretaker establishes a subtle differentiation between the private courtyards and the public open space of the village.

The project is in line with earlier kindergarten designs from 2002 to 2007. The design is likely to be suitable also for the retirement concepts of the future.
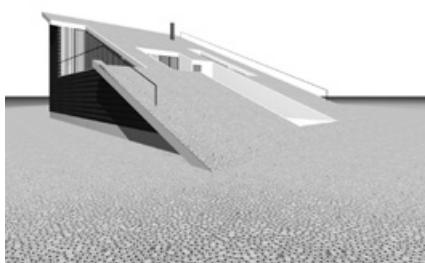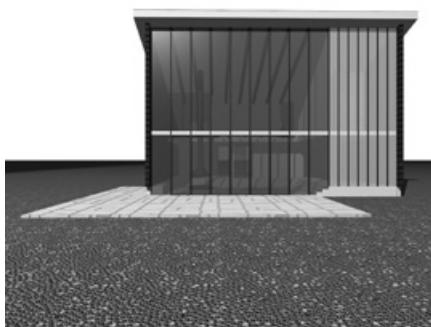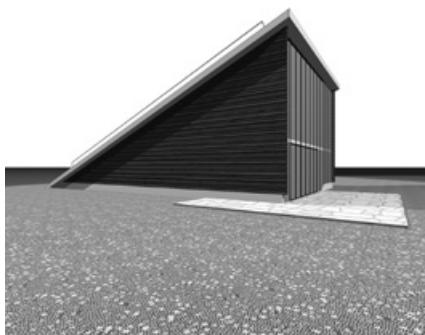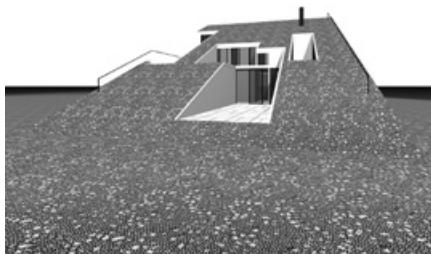
'GROSS' SUMMER HOUSE

In collaboration with Villem Tomiste. 2000.

SYDA ATTIC

Architects: Veronika Valk and Villem Tomiste
Completion: 2000

Despite its quaint medieval heart, which is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Tallinn has actually been a hotbed of technological and design innovations. After all, this hyper-wired town, where citizens easily vote and pay parking tickets online, is the birthplace of the free internet phone service, Skype. And yet, the old informs the new. The new developments and conversions flirt with contemporary styles while trying to maintain the city's nineteenth-century mercantile character. After centuries of foreign rule, Tallinn was finding itself at a fre-

netic pace. Edgy galleries, fashionable boutiques, Asian-inspired restaurants and space-age designed lounges lie not far from defensive towers and Gothic churches. Moreover, Tallinn was the 2011 European Cultural Capital. The question was: How can innovation be brought to the Old Town without sacrificing the town's preservation? Innovative solutions are normally forbidden in districts with historic protection, yet these areas should be vibrant, aiming for people to actually live there and enjoy the proximity of services.

Since there are plenty of uninhabited attics, Zizi&Yoyo interior designs emphasise bright luminescent colours and white surfaces together with light-pipes to intensify sunlight: an important way to lift spirits during the autumn and winter months, which are cold and dark at this latitude.

Location: attic in the Tallinn city-centre
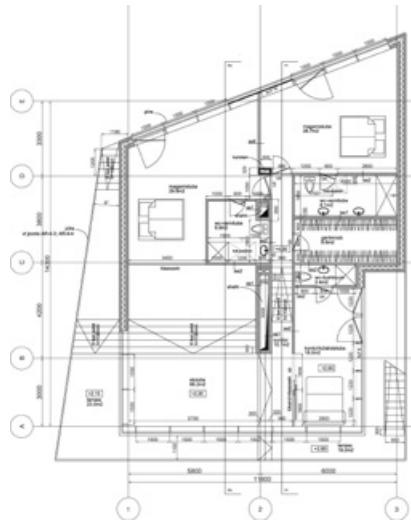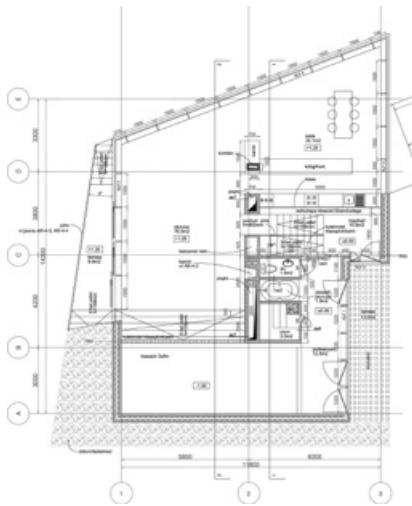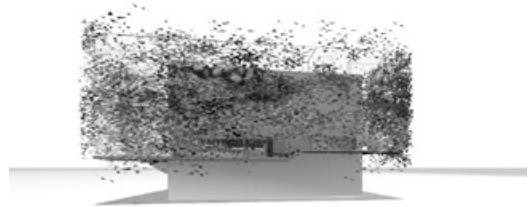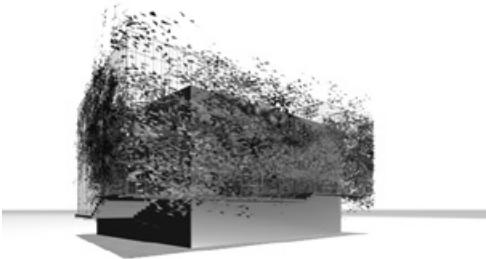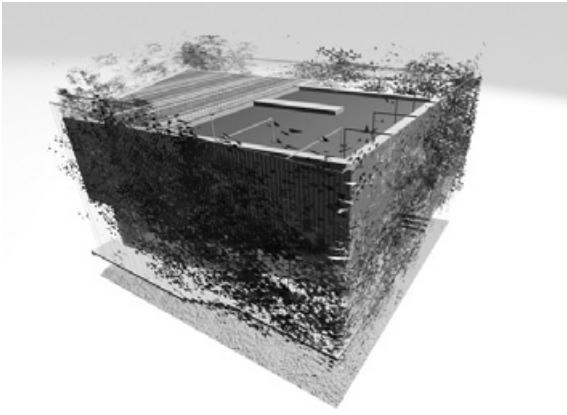
MERIRAHU 85 DWELLING

Architect: Veronika Valk
Client: David Heir
Project: 2004
Completion: 2007

The district has exceptionally clear formalistic planning and construction guidelines. For example, flat roofs and roofs with a slope to one side are preferred.

The outer walls of buildings must be surfaced with one primary material – either concrete, mortar or painted silicate. The permitted shades range from grey to white. No wooden logs, natural rocks, sheet metal or plastic are per-mitted for the façades. Exterior façade materials of sett, boarding, veneer and ceramic tile (except for shades of white) are not permitted, while roof coverings need to be monotone: rolled materials and smooth sheet metal (dark grey) are preferable.

Bright colours and painted or three-dimensional decorative elements are not permitted.

The room program of the dwelling spirals upward, from shared bath, sauna, pool area and living room through to an office and guest-room in the mid-level, to private bedrooms on the top floor. The cantilevered spiralling terrace around the building takes the inhabit-ant from a ground-level garden to a rooftop terrace.

Location: Merirahu 85, Tallinn, Estonia
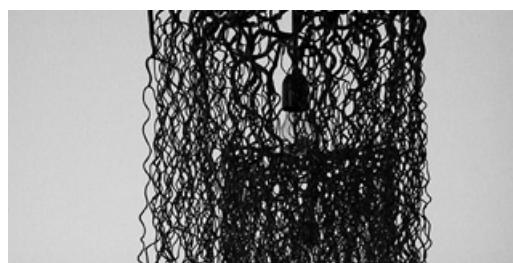
MERIRAHU 69 DWELLING

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Kadri Klementi
Client: Aivar Villemson
Project: 2007
Completion: 2009

Located in a residential waterfront area in Tallinn, the site is a short trip to the city centre. The dwelling leaves the perimeter of the building as open as possible, allowing for views to the sea and to the trees. The core program is located in the centre of the house, rendering the house permeable, spacious and full of life and light.

Upon entering the building, one finds to the east a sauna with a jacuzzi and showers and to the west a living area with a kitchen, an office (which can also be used as a guest bedroom) and a fireplace. Both eastern and western façades have sliding doors opening onto the terraces and into the garden. The sauna block to the east continues as an outdoor pool in the landscape, which is designed in the same visual vocabulary as the main building, ex-

cept that it uses natural black stone to contrast with the bright white façades of the buildings. Inside, a wooden staircase with a vivacious metal mesh barrier takes one to the second floor. The interior's colours complement the light scheme with fresh yellow, light blue, pink and black. The building has a rooftop terrace.

Location: Merirahu 69, Tallinn, Estonia
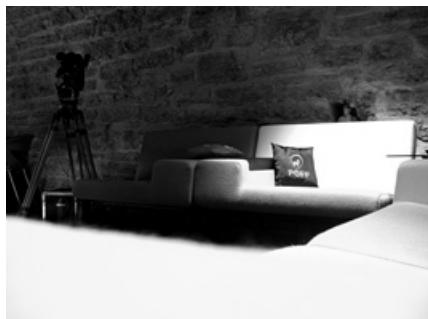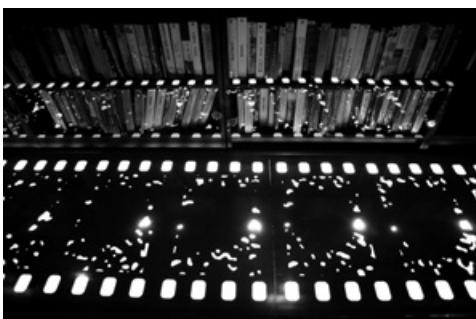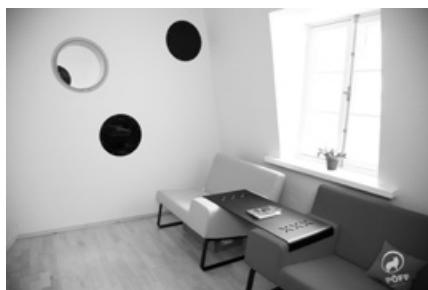
EFS

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Kadri Klementi
Graphic design: Helene Vetik
Lighting artists: Rait Siska, Risto Tali
Client: Estonian Film Foundation
Project: 2007
Completion: 2009

The Estonian Film Foundation (EFS) aims to promote Estonian film at home and abroad as well as to support the training of Estonian filmmakers and audiovisual professionals. Zizi&Yoyo was commissioned not only to come up with the EFS premises' interior design in Tallinn, but also to invent EFS's new graphic identity.

The interior design respects the heritage protection regulations as much as possible. Inserted floor-lights in the dark-blue and black video library use frames from Estonian animator Rait Siska's production Raud/Fe. All of the floor space is designed as fluidly as possible, merging formerly-separated private offices.

Location: Uus 3 Tallinn 10111, Estonia

TARVASTU KINDERGARTEN

Architect: Veronika Valk
Co-author: Kadri Klementi
Graphic design: Helene Vetik
Client: Mustla Municipality
**Project:** 2007
Completion: 2009

The landscaping and interior architecture of the Tarvastu Kindergarten in rural Viljandimaa aims to enhance children's creative skills, inviting them to experience the space both indoors and outdoors with all their senses.

A renovated pirate boat, a 'sky' performance hall, textured surfaces for drawing, playing and inventing: all this and much more are designed to trigger children's imaginations and to raise their curiosity about their surroundings, as well as to provide means for immediate creative expression. One finds bedroom walls as story-boards, game tracks leading to bathrooms, panorama mirrors, curving driveways with traffic signs, and an evergreen maze around an existing fir-tree, which is decorated by the children themselves at Christmas-time.

The architectural design was developed hand-in-hand with the kindergarten's graphic identity. 'Naeruvõru', a newly-invented nickname, means 'smiley' in the Estonian language.

Location: Kooli 8a 69701 Mustla Tarvastu parish Viljandi county Estonia
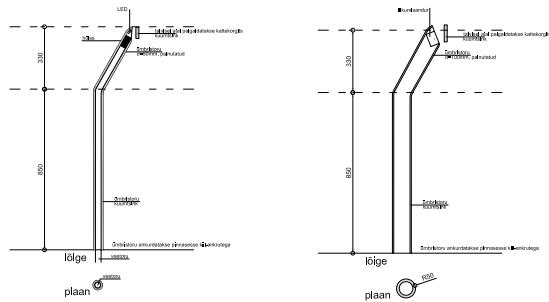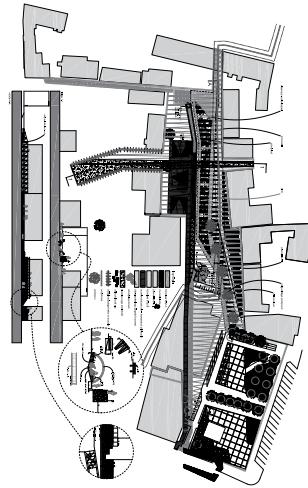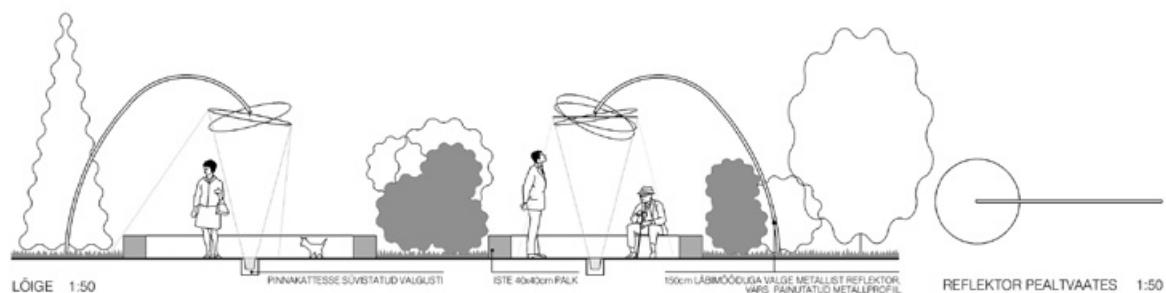
ARKAADIA GARDEN

Architect: Veronika Valk
Vegetation and technical assistance:
LLC Artes Terrae & Linnar Tillman

The main feature of the (partially completed) pedestrian promenade in the small town of Viljandi in southern Estonia is the movement-sensored interactive sprinkler-fountain installation, which marks the former moat around the ancient castle of the Teutonic Order, construction of which started in 1224 on the site of a former hill-fort and which would become one of the strongest castles in Livonia.

Today, the area serves as a car-free recreation area boosting development for adjacent city blocks. Phase 1 reconstruction included pathways, street furniture, lighting, vegetation and playgrounds, while Phase 2 involved the demarcation of the castle's corner tower to serve as a viewing platform, additional seating along the former castle wall and moat, and a canopy structure to offer rest and shelter.

The 160-metre promenade is a play-area with cafés and a summer stage, where the joyful sprinkler fountains are interspersed with benches, lights, ferns and flowerbeds as well as carousels for children. The pre-war Arkaadia Garden used to be a summer garden on Väike-Turu Street, where people went for dancing and entertainment.

Location: Viljandi City, Estonia

LÕIGE 1:50   PINNAKATTESSE SÜVISTATUD VALGUSTI   ISTE 40x40cm PALK   150cm LÄBIMÕÕDUGA VALGE METALLIST REFLEKTOR. VARS: PAINUTATUD METALLPROFIIL   REFLEKTOR PEALTVAATES 1:50

STEINER GARDEN

Architects: Veronika Valk, Villem Tomiste
Client: Pärnu City
Project: 2001
Completion: 2001

The Steiner Garden in Pärnu, the 'summer capital' of Estonia, is located in the picturesque Old Town and is surrounded by historical buildings. The adjacent music school and the young families from five-storey dwellings nearby take advantage of the site, thus the garden is filled with children for much of the daytime.

The construction process was an experiment in itself: the completion of the project took place in 16 days, from the submission of design drawings to the opening of the garden.

The design emphasises detailed elements, such as playfully zig-zagging trunk-benches that are tinted ash-brown and that separate the grass from a central field of bright gravel, along with uplights inserted into the ground in seating niches, and hanging swinging reflectors on arching steel stems that scatter sunbeams. Moved by the wind, these white reflector plates fling circles of light around the garden, which in winter is calmed by snowdrifts.

The centre of the garden is home to a dozen sculptures, both figurative and abstract, to stimulate children's imaginations. The garden was vandalised.

Location: Pärnu City, Estonia

open ends …

… and an open end

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