

THE STATE OF PERIPHERY

Planning U14 began with a wish to delve into the small towns of Estonia, asking about the possibilities for local urban studies, and ended deep in a discussion of world cities and the question – Where actually is the periphery – is it a geo-political inevitability or a state of mind? Thereafter, "The State of Periphery" was born.

But we won't be focussing only on the hinterland and the diagnosis of growth complexities intrinsic to small towns, instead we will claim that big ideas might just as well be born in Tallinn, Tartu and maybe even in an unheard of place called Mõisaküla, as much as they are in New York or Toronto. In a new column "Urban Theory Republished" we are (re)publishing and more importantly translating, relevant texts of urban studies. This time we have included Steven Flusty's elaboration on the topic of world cities. The local practice of theory will be opened by a transcription of a discussion group about the ambitions of the urban studies program in the Estonian Academy of Arts, the thesis dealing with urban issues from 2013, Mari Luukas's text on small towns having dreams suitable for bigger cities and the reality of shrinking populations. We dare to agree with Panu Lehtovuori, who finds that thinking about cities is one of the most important directions of contemporary theory and thereat a visit to Tallinn can inspire urbanists who are thinking in terms of world cities while more influential locations can make them howl in anger. In between the event overviews (The Urban and Landscape Days and the twin city festival *Pixelache*) and topical discussions we will ask again about art in the public space – investigate the backgrounds behind local street culture festivals (who would have thought that the street art landscape of Estonia is so eventful, diverse and ambitious) and invite everyone to the wasteland of the Estonian Academy of Arts, gather round the table, clear our thoughts and ask if art in an urban space can actually have more fishy aims. An example here can be small town Võru's wish to cover its houses with copies of paintings by well known Estonian artist Navitrolla.

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