# ESTONIAN URBANISTS' REVIEW

18
ON ARCHIVES
JANUARY 2016
ISSN 2461-4289


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urban.ee

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COVER: *Jevgeni Zolotko, photo of the installation* One Day of the State Archivist Life *(EKKM 2011).*

*URBANIST'S REVIEW IS GIVEN OUT BY ESTONIAN URBAN LAB (LINNALABOR).*
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*U18 is published with the support of Cultural Endowment of Estonia and Estonian Ministry of Culture.*

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# On the Love of Things

Michael Serres has said: ''The object … stabilises our relationships, it slows down the time of our revolutions. For an unstable band of baboons, social change is flaring up every minute… The object, for us, makes our history slow.'[1] In addition to having their function, name and location determined by people, objects also have their silent characteristics, which originate from their material nature and their internal historical processes. For instance, it would be difficult to imagine society and culture without the existence of objects, without them accumulating and enduring. The basis for putting together U18 was the collection of time-transcending material – the archive – that the authors of this issue view from various angles, at times drifting far away from this starting point, translated into words or images, art or space.

In an era of short cultural memory like the contemporary one, archives – collections of objects, documents, books and other material – are increasingly gaining attention. Obviously, the archive can no longer be considered a memory prosthesis that represents the past in an all-encompassing way and strives for the truth. For example, according to Derrida, the archive always carries a paradox: in the ceaseless work to maintain one memory at the expense of another, the archive not only maintains and curates the memory, but buries it as well[2]. However, as a collection of purely historical material in the modern digitalized world and obviously in its selective narration of the past, the archive functions as an important source and support that identity can refer to and gain strength from. In an interview with U, the literary scholar Marin Laak outlines the background of the currently happening cultural change – the so-called digital turn – and talks about how memory institutions are handling the state programme, which requires that the more valuable part of Estonian cultural heritage should be digitized by the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia (and the concomitant practical and philosophical problems that follow from this). We talked to Carl-Dag Lige and Hannes Praks, the engines behind the exhibition 'Expedition Wunderlich', about a specific archive as a time machine that the students of the Interior Architecture Department of the Estonian Academy of Arts travelled around in last year, and the possibilities of displaying and digitizing an archive and about the material itself.

Objects not only create permanence; they also keep past times connected to the present. The material does not choose which memories to carry or which narratives to tell. Therefore, objects enable the emergence of different stories, even forgotten ones, bearing witness to the diversity of the past. The city is exactly the kind of complex set of remains from various eras, and thanks to the functionality of the material (for example, houses are usually not demolished just because they have an unacceptable symbolic meaning) it preserves signs of various past realities around us. This relationship between symbolic and functional, when it comes to valuing materials, is discussed in this issue by Kristina Jõekalda, who focuses on how heritage conservation agencies and the public dealt with 'foreign' heritage during the first period of independence and now, after re-independence. The editors' column 'Where is the Estonian Academy of Arts?' deals with the non-material underlying factors of the demolition and recreation of the city-archive, giving the reader an introduction to the still-continuing transition period of the Academy of Arts, which began with the demolition of the academy's old building six years ago and continues spatially to this day.

The front page and the contents of the issue feature photographs of sculptor Jevgeni Zolotko's dust-grey installation One Day of The State Archivist Life which deals with the same time-transcending material, still retaining its shape but now mute, and its relationship with the present. Zolotko's other exhibition cycle, *Things*, takes us deeper into the realm of objects and material (decoded for the reader by the art critic Indrek Grigor). Here, the artist tampered with the microcosm of the objects in an attic, symbolically cleansing them of their communicative and representative roles to get back to the beginning – to the material nature of the world, and the unity of object and man in the physical sphere.

The cognitive acceleration of the flow of time accompanying cultural change makes one restless, but the material world with its slowness and engagement with the past offers a kind of existential sense of security; we look back, dig into the digital collections of museums, open archives and stroke objects. Every second art exhibition has at least one stand with items from archives; objects and collections of objects are clearly in vogue today. In the humanities and social sciences, this new wave (which is a clear reaction to the anti-material views of culture and society that dominated the 20th century as well as the influence of the digital turn) is seen as a return to the material. For nearly a decade, this wave has fed creativity and is changing notions of the foundations, history and progress of human society. Yes, in a mad world, it is good to let your senses relax in the protective lap of the material. So – do take a chair and some time and enjoy the read.

*1. Serres, Michel 1995. Genesis. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p 87.*

*2. Sampson, Walker 2011. From My Archives: Derrida's Archive Fever. [Accessible at: wsampson.wordpress.com (last accessed 12.12.2015)].*

1. Statue of Peter the Great after removal, relocated in Kadriorg, Tallinn. 1922. Estonian History Museum.

# MEMORIES AND MEMORIALS: THE PREDICAMENT OF A NATION STATE

KRISTINA JÕEKALDA, *art historian*

Every social or political-ideological change is accompanied by a re-evaluation of the physical remains of the preceding era, including the built environment. The concept of heritage, by its nature and history, is closely linked to the concept of nation – both evolved to take on their current meaning in the 19th century. And this process of 'rethinking' is destined to last forever. On the one hand, heritage construction demands shaping the image of the selected objects as ours and no one else's, but on the other hand, it also requires disregarding whatever does not fit 'our' identity or national narrative.[1]

*1. Rampley, Matthew 2012. Contested Histories: Heritage and/as the Construction of the Past: An Introduction. – Heritage, Ideology, and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe: Contested Pasts, Contested Presents. Ed Matthew Rampley. (Heritage Matters 6.) Woodbridge, Rochester: Boydell Press, pp 8–9.*

Even though we have a habit of depicting our past being dictated by an unusually large number of foreign powers, ethnic multitude and sudden political U-turns are in fact characteristic of the history of all Eastern and Central Europe. It is a region that has for centuries been at the mercy of the expansion of German culture and the idea of its alleged supremacy; at the disposal of the power games of the Czarist Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and others. In this context it is – on the contrary – extraordinary how distinctly the ethnic positions and differences can be outlined in Estonia. Due to our geographic location and isolation by the sea, the territorial aspects of Estonian history have been considerably less liable to change than those of several Central European countries.

As a result of the prevailing 'culture of disruption'[2] (which has evolved into a travelling concept in its own right, often far from what the Estonian scholar Hasso Krull originally meant with the term) and due to the numerous changes of the 20th century in this part of Europe, it has often happened that one is faced with heritage and environment that is not desired or valued. Or vice-versa: states and nations have been deprived of something that they consider theirs by right, even as the cornerstone of their identity. In the most extreme cases, and unfortunately also in the recent past, these identity crises have led to war – i.e. to an attempt to take the territory in question (with its population and material heritage) back by force. When it comes to the relative nature of heritage and interpretation, one recalls telling shots from the Estonian-Georgian film Tangerines (2013), where neighbours from different ethnicities reproach each other for their lack of education and gaps in their school system.

*2. Krull, Hasso 1996. Katkestuse kultuur. [Tallinn:] Vagabund.*

In some ways, the need to construct heritage arises from the very multiculturalism of societies – a need for a connecting link, for clarity amidst the abundance and profusion of the wider world. The above-mentioned 'disruptions' are never complete – in one way or another, people cope with the remains of the previous eras even in changed circumstances, they continue living among these physical reminders, and perhaps even feel satisfied.

Somewhat to my surprise I have noticed that issues of heritage and rethinking are amazingly 'common' despite their theoretical and conceptual complexity – even people not familiar with the discipline of art history or architecture

can relate to them with relative ease, and transfer issues across long periods of time, placing the same problems in their contemporary world. Only recently, my presentation on 19th-century renovating practices at a conference in Tartu was followed by a question from a bright city resident, who, with elegant obviousness, brought the discussion to today's world and directed it to the issue of restoring the late-18th-century stone bridge in the city centre. I later came to understand that Tallinn lacks this kind of a single icon that the entire discussion could culminate in.

To my mind, the scholarly appeal of the topic lies precisely in this 'popular' dimension – the contacts between an academic discipline and real life. These inherent contradictions bring into mind the relation of history and contemporary life – to quote the apt title of the famous book by cultural geographer David Lowenthal: 'the past is a foreign country'.[3] When dealing with the issues of the past, every historian should indeed remind himself or herself why it is necessary to explore these issues at the moment, what is their relevancy and why are they topical. This also means that we acknowledge which issues and emphases we highlight from the past – and more importantly, which ones do we reflect back on the past as researchers.

Destruction and protection have always gone hand in hand in the history of heritage conservation. In fact, it was destruction – especially the devastation that accompanied the Napoleonic Wars and the First and Second World War – that gave rise to the need for heritage conservation as a phenomenon and institution. It is not difficult to find proof of it today, when warfare and deliberate attacks on architectural heritage as the common treasure of humanity are almost a daily staple in the news.

However, the task of heritage conservation is not just protecting objects from evil intentions. Objects in either private or municipal/state ownership are often abused due to insufficient knowledge. Therefore, pedagogic and popularising activities – the fight against ignorance – cannot be divorced from the heritage conservation of laws and punitive measures. In what follows, I intend to look at this popular practice with regard to destruction and its prevention in the context of two instances of establishing an independent state and the following transitional era, with particular emphasis on the idea of Estonian national culture (skipping the reinterpretation in a totally different key that the intervening period also includes: those of Nazi Germany and Communist Russia).

## Case No 1: Interwar Independence

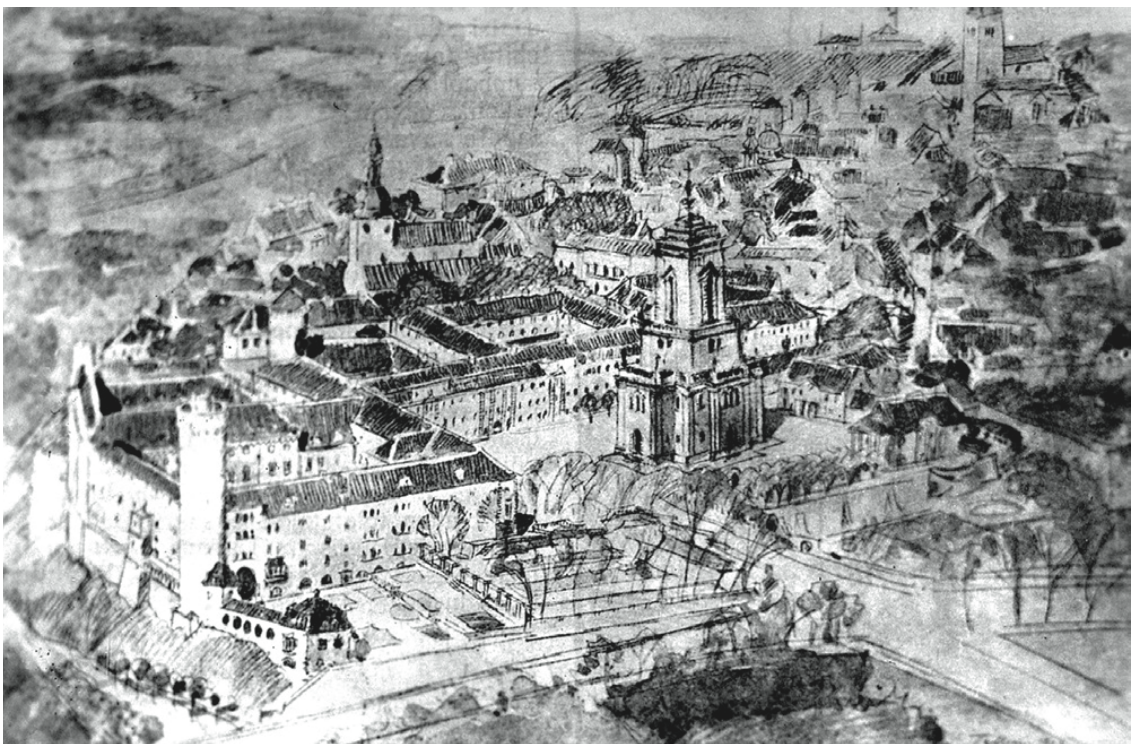
In the suddenly changed circumstances after the establishment of independent Estonia in 1918, the question about what to do with heritage of foreign origin arose.[4] Despite rather aggressive public opinion and negative attitude, no notable vandalism or systematic eradication of this 'alien' (or 'other') heritage followed. The burning of manor houses that accompanied the revolution of 1905 has remained a singular malevolent popular punitive action that found its expression in a deliberate plundering of material culture. This was not the case everywhere. In Poland, for example, the same interwar era is characterised by a massive destruction of monuments, allegedly not feeling obligated to act like one of the cultured nations (*Kulturnation*) that would refrain from restoring so-called historical justice.[5]

In Estonia, the most blatant symbols of foreign power were indeed removed, but not without hesitation. The statue of Peter the Great (erected in 1910) at what is now Freedom Square in Tallinn was relocated only in 1922, and even then it

*3. Lowenthal, David 2006 [1985]. The Past is a Foreign Country. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.*

*4. This article is a concentrate of the following longer studies: Jõekalda, Kristina 2014. „Võõra" pärandiga leppimine ja lepitamine. Suhtest ajaloolisesse arhitektuuri 1920.-1930. aastatel [Coping and reconciling with 'alien' heritage: Debates over the value and protection of historical architecture during the 1920s-1930s]. – Maastik ja mälu. Eesti pärandiloome arengujooni. Toim Helen Soovali-Sepping, Linda Kaljundi. (Acta Universitatis Tallinnensis. Socialia.) Tallinn: Tallinna Ülikooli Kirjastus, pp 182-245;*
*Jõekalda, Kristina 2011. Eesti aja muinsuskaitse rahvuslikkus/rahvalikkus. Muinsuspedagoogika ja „võõras" arhitektuur aastatel 1918-1940 [Nationalism and populism in the heritage protection of inter-war Republic of Estonia: Heritage pedagogy and 'alien' architecture in the period 1918-1940]. – Mälu. Toim Anneli Randla. (Eesti Kunstiakadeemia toimetised 20, Muinsuskaitse ja restaureerimise osakonna väljaanded 5.) Tallinn, pp 73-136;*
*Jõekalda, Kristina 2012. Architectural Monuments as a Resource: Reworking Heritage and Ideologies in Nazi-Occupied Estonia. – Art and Artistic Life during the Two World Wars. Eds Giedre Jankevičiūtė, Laima Laučkaitė. (Dailės istorijos studijos / Art History Studies 5.) Vilnius: Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, pp 273-299.*

*5. Dyroff, Stefan 2006. Das Schicksal preußisch-deutscher Denkmäler in den polnischen Westgebieten in der Zwischenkriegszeit: Zwischen Akkulturation, „Entdeutschung" und Pragmatismus. – Visuelle Erinnerungskulturen und Geschichtskonstruktionen in Deutschland und Polen. I, 1800 bis 1939. Hgg. Robert Born, Adam S. Labuda, Beate Störtkuhl. (Das gemeinsame Kulturerbe / Wspólne Dziedzictwo 3.) Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki PAN, pp 271-288.*



2. Postcard with Karl Burman's design for replacing Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Toompea, Tallinn, with a Pantheon of Independence. Undated. Museum of Estonian Architecture.

remained intact (fig 1). A newspaper described the event as follows: 'when the taking down of Peter was publicly announced, masses began to gather at Freedom Square [---] A crowd of several thousand people filled it from dusk till dawn. Everyone wanted to witness Peter's departure. The curiosity did not even decrease after the night's fall, albeit the weather was cool. Most of the crowd spent time mocking Peter. But some reviled the men at work instead – these were the dreamers of a Greater Russia.'[6]

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s another significant public debate took place over the possible destruction of Alexander Nevsky Cathedral on Toompea hill (Domberg) in Tallinn. The architect Karl Burman, for example, presented numerous ambitious designs to reorganise the site into a Pantheon of Independence (fig 2).[7] The Russian Orthodox Church, constructed in 1900, is still standing. How did Estonia, as a young and fragile peripheral state, manage to have such an open mind and show such tolerance? Moreover, how conscious was this practice?

All across Europe, nationalism and active identity construction bred a confrontation between the universal and regional, European and local. Art historians tended to side with those who thought that without the Germans, Estonians would not have been able to even build their own culture. Having one's gaze turned towards the past and possessing a certain conservative streak, which art history seemed to embody for many on the 'axis of nationalism', collided with the progressive spirit of the young state. Hanno Kompus, one of the most active theatre and architecture critics of the first independence period, even went as far as to say that the fact 'that we have inherited so much from bygone eras and powers' was a hindrance, which prevented Estonia's 'own' new architecture and the long searched-for 'Estonian style' from gaining ground. He claims: 'unfortunately – and I use this word on purpose – this inheritance of the past is often still in a relatively good, usable condition, so it satisfies our material needs, while abandoning, if not wounding our ideological demands.'[8]

*6. Peetri lahkumine Vabadusplatsilt. – Vaba Maa 2.05.1922 (nr 99).*

*7. See the sketches and photomontages in Burman, Karl 1924. Iseseisvuse pantheon. – Agu, nr 21 (24.05.), pp 687–690. See also Fülberth, Andreas 2005. Tallinn-Riga-Kaunas. Ihr Ausbau zu modernen Hauptstädten 1920–1940. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, pp 110ff; Bruns, Dmitri 1998. Tallinn. Linnaehitus Eesti Vabariigi aastail 1918–1940. Tallinn: Valgus, pp 110–114; Lääne, Margus 2009. Aleksander Nevski katedraali lugu. – Tuna, nr 2, pp 148–156; Ulm, Kalmar. Toompea säravad kuldkuplid. – Postimees. Arvamus 13.06.2009.*

*8. Kompus, Hanno. Ehitusarhitektuurist [mistake, originally: Esindusarhitektuurist]. – Päevaleht 19.03.1935.*

These practical considerations were important indeed in a situation where the state had enough on its table: ceremonial buildings were there, and they could not have been left unused solely because representatives of an 'alien' culture had erected them. However, it cannot be said that in the excitement of building a new state and creating original Estonian culture there was no time for posing fundamental questions. Whereas in the context of the 1920s, the open mind in dealing with 'alien' heritage was surprising due to the novelty of the situation, by the 1930s, this tolerance could only be maintained fighting active campaigns of nationalisation. State power taking over the government buildings in Toompea or their first national museum buildings (the Estonian National Museum in Raadi, Tartu; the art museum in Kadriorg, Tallinn, that grew out of the Provincial Museum) was therefore a symbolic act. A great number of nationalised buildings brought on urgent work like basic renovations, quickly creating a certain inertia and a number of precedents that were more unequivocally used as justifications for preserving the 'alien' structures over the years. Architects also spoke up on issues related to heritage, such as Edgar Johan Kuusik: 'Should the Old Town [of Tallinn] remain untouched, material commodities will perish, but should new buildings replace old ones, people will be poorer in intellectual values', and more forcefully: 'a few more decades of construction in its current form and our Old Town will no longer merit any attention!'[9]

*9. Kuusik, Edgar 1926. Ümberehitusi Tallinna vanalinnas. – Eesti Kunsti Aastaraamat I, 1924/1925. Tallinn: Eesti Kultuurkapitali kujutavate kunstide sihtkapital, pp 28–29.*

In the eyes of Kompus the rather robust medieval architecture took a backseat when compared to the grandeur of Classicism. With his ironic comments on the lack of monumentality of former overlords, however, he seems to put the blame of the poor aesthetic qualities of the Middle Ages on Germans, who introduced this kind of architecture to the Baltic region. He does the same in the case of Historicism and Gothic Revival, calling the following of new trends in late-19th-century manor architecture a vulgarisation of noble Classicism with bourgeois Biedermeier and Romantic styles.[10] Naturally, blaming the Baltic Germans for these old-fashioned styles that had indeed become out-dated by the 1930s was convenient and ideologically suitable for him – probably even a conscious demagogic move. It is clear that a historian could not afford such an attitude, but Kompus took the position of a critic. Even today the critic tends to consider historical objects from the point of view of their current context,

*10. Kompus, Hanno. Meie ehituslik pärandus. – Päevaleht 5.01.1935.*

3. Harju Street in Tallinn, severely damaged in the March bombing of 1944, in the process of becoming a green area; ruins of St Nicholas Church on the right. 1948.
Estonian History Museum.

presentation and reception, while the historian looks at the initial, historical context of the work.

Taking a superior position in relation to the 'alien' culture was basically a means of dealing with historic injustice. Aready ten years earlier the painter Ants Laikmaa wrote – by way of a remark, because his aim was to call on people to protect 'alien' heritage, to value both old and new simultaneously – that the contemporary architecture of the Baltic Germans is nevertheless old-fashioned and thus ridiculous, cheap and degenerate. According to him, one could follow the lead of Germans, seeing no ideological contradiction there, but Baltic German examples did not simply pass the muster.[11]

*11. Laipman, Ants. „Saxa loquuntur...“ - Päevaleht 8.09.1925.*

So which kind of motivation was introduced in order to preserve 'alien' heritage – in addition to building one's 'own' culture? In this regard, striving for the ideal of becoming a *Kulturnation* certainly became one of the key issues in Estonian public debate, and in this, the readers had to be persuaded that all past periods were indispensable to the present. When it came to architecture, a general conclusion was made that the German heritage is less bad than that of the most recent foreign power. This is well summarised by another quote from Kompus: 'Our built heritage? From the Germans: mostly soberness, solidity, even dignity, but often dry and dull, bourgeois, even petty and dusty. From the Swedes: little, little, although the little we have is substantial and in good proportions. From the Russians: momentum, grand strokes, effects, but undignified, cheap (and vain about it), not much good – only from the beginning of the last century'. Placing Estonia in the cultural history of Europe – especially being located on the edge of Europe and next to Russia – had been important already for the Baltic Germans. And this is one of the few fundamental questions on which Estonian authors agreed with them.

## Case No 2: Post-Soviet Re-independence

This is a good moment to ask about the universality of these discussions, as these issues can be more or less transferred to another 'alien' culture, temporally and spatially, this time in connection with the restoration of independence in 1991. I have in mind the art and architecture of the Soviet period, which to this day elicits a fair degree of nationalist hostility. In recent years, we have hit a wave of celebrating the 25th anniversary of various initiatives and institutions (meetings in the Hirvepark, the Baltic Way, the Singing Revolution, Rock Summer music festival etc). Particularly symbolic among these was Lasting Liberty Day (*Priiuse põlistamise päev*, when Estonia's current period of independence as measured from August 20, 1991 exceeded the length of the first, pre-war era of freedom), which provides the point and basis of this comparison. Twenty-five years of independence should mean that the state has left its 'teenage years' behind and joined other fully-fledged 'adult' countries. As is characteristic of teens, there is plenty of ambition and wishful thinking, but also unwanted veering into both sides of the 'upheaval'.

During the 1980s and 1990s many European countries witnessed people rooting out and feeling ashamed about the 'robust' brutalist architecture from a few decades before. Buildings were systematically demolished – as is often the case when times change. In Estonia, however, the 'alien' stigma was added on top of becoming out-dated, which makes it easier to deny and distance oneself. In terms of coping with the Soviet past, an important icebreaker was the opening of the Kumu Art Museum in 2006 with its Socialist Realist section of the

permanent exhibition (soon to be updated and reorganised). In the field of architecture, the latest notable attempt in this field was the 2013 Tallinn Architecture Biennial, which carried the theme Recycling Socialism.[12] This debate was first prominently brought to public attention with the 2007 'rebuilding' (i.e. demolishing) of the Sakala Centre, which had been constructed in 1985 as a new wing of the House of Political Education. However, it is clear from the media that there is still bickering over the Soviet public buildings, such as the Tallinn Post Office, the former tourist shop, the courthouse, the Ministry of Finance etc.

It is well known that the final and swift reconciliation with Baltic German heritage was brought on by the Communist regime: it has been proposed that with a single year of Soviet occupation (1940–1941), public opinion became convinced – on the principle of contrast – that the attempts to come to terms with the 'alien heritage in previous decades was not an issue to split hairs over. It is difficult to say whether the reconciliation with the Soviet heritage will similarly be channelled into the relationship with new kinds of 'alien' culture, e.g. the current wave of refugees. In any case, it is clear that the act of comparison reminds us of the actual diversity of the world. Lively public discussions on the subject are the best cure – although admittedly not always the quickest one.

Yet the practice of covering up a problematic past, together with its physical reminders – like the boom of new buildings on the former location of the Berlin Wall – often results in a belated discovery that this layer of history needs to be commemorated after all. This is followed by the digging up of filled ruins, establishing memorial parks or at the very least, adding memorial plaques. The reconditioning of the bombed Tallinn Harju Street is a case in point: the badly damaged former housing area in the middle of the Old Town was redesigned as a green area in late 1940s, this was carried out by means of Tallinners' compulsory voluntarism (fig 3); after the fall of the Soviet Union the re-opening of the ruins as a kind of a memorial was among the first symbolic steps taken, but overcoming the historic burden resulted in self-victimisation instead; after long debates, the area was again made into a park in 2007, reconstructing only one tiny street, Nõelasilm. The symbolic destruction of an 'alien' monument in order to demonstrate one's superiority can also turn into a farce, and conversely show both blatant non-superiority and the incapacity to deal with the past and its heritage.[13] The case of the Bronze Soldier (Alyosha) monument in Tallinn, the relocation of which resulted in street riots of the local Russian-speaking community in 2007, is a telling example of that.[14] It must be remembered that although attaching specific meanings to objects of material heritage is simplifying, it does not necessarily mean that nuances are lost in the process. Popular sights can be used to keep the multitude of aspects and different collective memories relevant, perhaps even more efficiently.[15]

## Conclusion

When it comes to architectural heritage, the material aspect is undoubtedly important because these are real physical remains of the past (even if they have been renovated in the meantime), which remind us who we are and where we come from. This was understood already in the 1920s, when the importance of physical heritage and its central position in terms of identity or image was stressed – this is what the 'speaking stones' refer to in the title of Ants Laikmaa's above-mentioned article.[16] In the present environment, the previous eras are visible above all through architecture – in the historical city space the shared past is always represented.

*12. See the catalogue: Klementi, Kadri; Õis, Kaidi; Tõugu, Karin; Ader, Aet (eds) 2013. Tallinna Arhitektuuribiennaal 2013. Taaskasutades nõukogude ruumipärandit / Tallinn Architecture Biennale 2013: Recycling Socialism. [Tallinn:] Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus. www.files.voog.com/0000/0033/7417/files/TAB_2013_kataloog-catalogue.pdf (viewed 21. XI 2015). Cf. Kliems, Alfrun; Dmitrieva, Marina (eds) (2010). The Post-Socialist City: Continuity and Change in Urban Space and Imagery. Berlin: Jovis; Stanilov, Kiril (ed) 2007. The Post-Socialist City: Urban Form and Space Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe after Socialism. (The GeoJournal Library 92.) Dordrecht: Springer.*

*13. See also Rampley, Contested Histories, pp 14–16.*

*14. See also Norman, Kristina 2009. After-War: Estonia at the 53rd International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. Catalogue. Ed Andreas Trossek. [Tallinn:] Center of Contemporary Arts, Estonia; Tamm, Marek 2012. Conflicting Communities of Memory: War Monuments and Monument Wars in Contemporary Estonia. – Nation-Building in the Context of Post-Communist Transformation and Globalization: The Case of Estonia. Ed Raivo Vetik. Frankfurt am Main etc.: Peter Lang, pp 43–72.*

*15. See Atkinson, David 2005. Heritage. – Cultural Geography: A Critical Dictionary of Key Concepts. Eds David Atkinson, Peter Jackson, David Sibley, Neil Washbourne. (International Library of Human Geography 3.) London, New York: I. B. Tauris, pp 146–148.*

*16. Laipman, „Saxa loquuntur...“*

Buildings are impossible to ignore, especially in a dense cityscape, but also in a landscape. Moreover, the built heritage acts differently from the written, oral or visual art heritage because the buildings continue to serve a practical purpose in a later era. Even when abandoned, empty and falling apart, they form an integral part of the built environment. As ruins they might still acquire functionality as tourist sites. This means that although archives, libraries and museums[17] certainly have an important role to play in writing history and art history, the documents and artefacts held in them can be forgotten much more easily when times and values change than the architectural heritage.

The city space has been credited with a particularly potent ability to embody the competing memories of different walks of life, nations, genders and, above all, eras. In that sense, the city environment is very democratic. For example, the architectural theoretician Aldo Rossi considers the city itself the collective memory of its residents.[18] Obviously, more of value has converged in the cities than in the countryside over time, but at times it seems that the continuous attention paid to the (Tallinn) city space by conservationists and restorers is a sort of escapist gesture. It looks like an attempt to flee from dealing with the problem of 'alienness', because in such a multi-layered and multicultural environment everyone values something – that is to say, there are also fewer opponents. In terms of heritage construction, a city attempting to present a unified image has an advantage over a single building or site, because it is inevitably multi-faceted, controversial.[19]

Thinking about the relations between one's own and foreign/alien, local and European, old and new, we must note that sometimes issues of the past can offer clearer answers to the problems of the present. On the one hand, this comes from the simplifying and selective nature of history writing, and on the other hand, from the fact that we always (unconsciously) look at the past through the perspective of specific issues raised in the present.

Our 'alien' heritage was easier to deal with in the 1920s, because the majority of Baltic Germans had already left or the ones who remained withdrew from public life. It was even easier to come to terms with the Medieval, Baroque or Classicist heritage during the Soviet period, because now all of them were gone and the real threats were totally different. However, this is obviously not a question of temporal distance alone. When you constantly take the position of a victim, it is easy to come to think that everything good comes from within and everything bad comes from the outside. Clearly it is easier to accept destruction that comes from the outside – there is always a culprit; the grief is there but the process is a lot smoother. However, it is much more difficult to deal with unrest brewing within a society – the cases of the heritage of Nazism and Communism in Germany and Russia respectively offer two very different examples of dealing with it. Thus it can be said that Estonia is lucky not to have been in the role of a coloniser in the past: it allows us to look at things in a more relaxed manner now.

Admittedly, ambivalence, abundance and the simultaneous validity of truths are characteristic of any historic reality. However, when it comes to the past we tend to forget this – all the more so the more distant the period. We generally operate with great historic simplifications. We are stuck in historical notions that often paint too unambiguous a picture of the multi-layered reality of past eras, centred around certain topical issues (that are important to the present). In order to avoid being permanently blinded by this, history needs to be rewritten over and over again.

*17. Porciani, Ilaria 2010. Master Narratives in Museums. – Atlas of European Historiography: The Making of a Profession, 1800–2005. Eds Ilaria Porciani, Lutz Raphael. (Writing the Nation I.) Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, European Science Foundation, p 7.*

*18. Rossi, Aldo 1994 [1982]. The Architecture of the City. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: The MIT Press, pp 130–131, 142.*

*19. Boyer, M. Christine 1994. The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: The MIT Press, pp 2–3.*

# POEMS

by KAAREL KÜNNAP
*architect-poet*

***

the heat of a boring saturday
stepping into a garden for a second

what are you trying to say?

– nothing

what do you mean?

– that crumbling
piece of rubber
torn at one edge
at the end of the clothes-line
flapping vaguely
in the wind

– swaying damson branches,

– the sun flickering
on the mossy grass
littered with pine needles and rotten berries,

– the no-man's-land
of a partly cloudy sky
stretching between seasons,

– the frozen randomness
of colourful objects
scattered in neighbouring gardens,

– in incandescent warm light
guests and flowers break
into a vertical swell
behind big, beautiful sloppily grooved
soviet window strips

Jevgeni Zolotko
One Day of the State Archivist Life (EKKM, 2011)
Installation from substance produced in the course of decomposition of different printed text materials
5 × 9 × 3.5 m

## ANAEMIC FREEDOM

you could have everything,
but instead you have this
anaemic freedom
pale and cold
the light of fluorescent lamps,
the vertical stoicism of poplars,
the silhouettes of chestnuts and elms
with their indifferent yet suggestive
personalised presence

the leaves rustling on trees

through your dulled olfaction
faintly sensing
strong smells:
chestnut,
Aegopodium in bloom

corneas
flooded by an unearthly breath
of a cool nightly breeze
stroking
the exhausted edges of your eyelids,

between
the food shop and the bed,
the day job and television,
marriage and self-perception,
beer, coffee and
cigarettes smoked
on the go every day
there was a strange crack
an inviting passageway
and now you are h e r e

and it is no
unreal escapist fantasy –
the place actually exists
you are here now
and later you will know
that you have been here

you have always been able
to make anything happen,
but now you can walk
through backyards and parking lots at night
houses and streets crushed into gravel
or surfaces with artificial grass,
under which the spirits of lost apple orchards lie

you have this anaemic freedom

→ Former building of Estonian Academy of Arts on Tartu road 1 (2009). Photo: Jarmo Kauge.

↘ Demolition of the Tartu road building (2010). Photo: Epp Kubu.


↓ Winning entry for EKA's new building on Tartu road: *Art Plaza* by SEA+EFEKT (2008). Image: SEA+EFFEKT.

Winning entry for EKA's new new building on Kotzebue Street 1/Põhja Boulevard 7: *Linea* by KUU Architects (2014). Image: KUU.


The bus stop remembers: from 1919–2010, the only public university providing higher education in arts in Estonia stood here. Photo: Andra Aaloe.

# WHERE IS THE ESTONIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS?

ANDRA AALOE, KEITI KLJAVIN, *editors of U*

A decade of real estate deals by the Estonian Academy of Arts have led the school to a situation where its departments are scattered across the city, the historical plot where the academy was situated from 1917 to 2010 has been sold, and the state has yet to decide definitively whether it will support the construction of a new building.

For about ten years now, the Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA) – the only public university offering higher education in architecture, design, art and art culture – has been searching for an answer to their perpetual problem – a lack of space. In 2006, the suggested potential locations (including the Patarei sea fortress and the Suva hosiery factory) were discarded and a decision was made to build a completely new building on the academy's historic plot at Tartu Road 1. An international architecture competition was announced and the winning entry, Art Plaza, with its open plan and spiral atrium, was supposed to provide the school with the latest designs in learning environments and to 'ethereally tower above the old building'.[1] EKA was so ready for its new future that it moved its departments out of the building in 2010 and dispersed them across the city, demolishing the old building. However, construction on the new building did not begin; obstacles that at first seemed small led to a situation where brakes were being put on the process on a state – and political – level, which, in turn, led to a loss of major funding schemes. In 2012, the new 'plaza' in the city centre was covered with gravel and the Europark banners were erected. Another parking lot in the middle of the city had been born.

In terms of space, everything is the same today – the departments of the academy are located at six different addresses across the city[2] and the plot at Tartu Road 1 is full of parked cars. However, the legal processes are actually underway: in the autumn of 2015, the Estonian Academy of Arts sold its historical plot in the city centre and the buildings at Nunne Street, and bought the premises of the Suva hosiery factory in Kalamaja, at Kotzebue Street 1/ Põhja Boulevard 7. An architectural design for the former industrial building has been found via a competition and the planning process is in its final stage. According to current plans, the new Rauaniidi (Iron Thread) building of the Estonian Academy of Arts is supposed to be completed by 2017.

Last August, a report was published by a working group led by Gunnar Okk, a prominent business figure, executive and board member of the Research and Development Council of the Government Office. According to this report, the local higher education and research activities need a thorough reform, including merging universities. This led to a postponement of a call for applications that was crucial for the Academy because it hoped to receive aid for financing the construction of its new building. Yet, last December, Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas reiterated[3] the government's political will to complete the new building of the Academy of Arts at Kotzebue Street: 'Actually, we have already agreed in the government that this is an important site for us. I don't know if there are some specialists who are supposed to assess its eligibility and I hope I am not influencing them in some illegal way by voicing my support. But I hope I am not doing that when I say that I think the building of the Academy of Arts definitely deserves to be built.'

Great! But. Actually, we are again brandishing, and hopefully for the last time, our EKA-0 'newspaper'*, which marks the beginning of the transitional period of the school that is still underway and reminds us of the circumstances that were strange, yet utterly characteristic of our (still) transitional society, which led to the disappearance of the historical EKA building and why no imposing art plaza was erected in the city centre. (For instance, one can also recall in the paper how former Prime Minister Ansip wholeheartedly supported the completion of Art Plaza, but eventually it was not included in the strategy of the Ministry of Education).

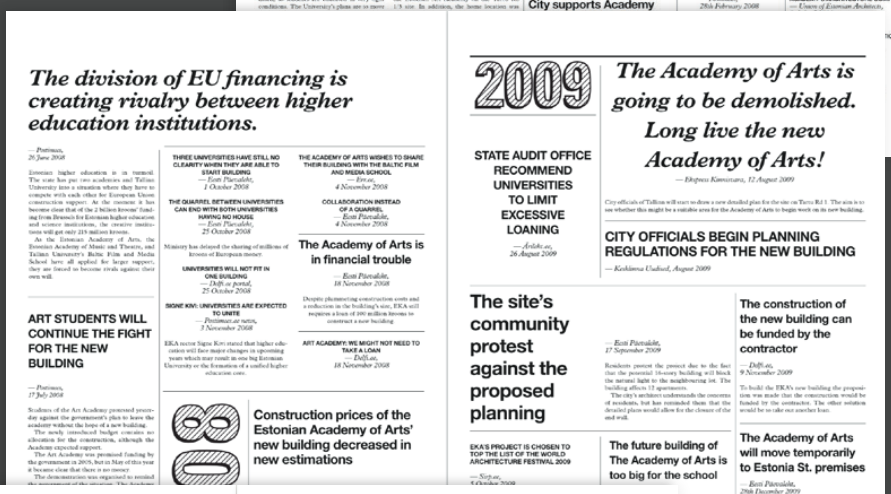
The Academy of Arts is in the air – towering 'ethereally' somewhere between the old and the new building. Having been legally unbound from the Tartu Road plot in the city centre, it is now bound to the pink hosiery factory building in Kalamaja district. In reality, the Academy of Arts is renting a building on Estonia Boulevard, and agreements allow it to stay in the buildings at Nunne Street until 2017. After 6 years the Faculty of Fine Arts was made to move from the Estonian Knighthood House in Toompea Hill for the beginning of this year and is now operating on Lembitu street in Kesklinn. Apparently, EKA finding its true place in the world again is above all up to luck. Good luck, Academy!

*1. Ants Juske. Kunstiakadeemia uus õppehoone kõrgub õhuliselt vana maja kohale. Eesti Päevaleht, 9.04.2008.*

*2. The current locations of EKA faculties: www.artun.ee/en/contacts/facilities-and-locations*

*3. An excerpt from the Riigikogu sitting of 15 December 2015, where Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas outlined the state of research and development activities and the government's policy in the field.*

* *EKA-0 or EKA-Zero was a project where we outlined from the media frenzy the entire journey of EKA's new building, how it moved from a grand vision of the future to zero, an empty demolished field. The outlet of EKA-0 was a 'newspaper' that consisted of newspaper headlines and article excerpts from the press about EKA's new building in the six years before 2012. Selected from media archives and chronologically aligned, it becomes quite clear why the school went from a building of its own to an empty lot back then. At first we distributed the newspaper during the coffee break of the Tallinn conference of the international urban activists and researchers network INURA in 2012, when we hijacked the parking lot. However, it seems the issue is still relevant today, so it is time to give this curated media archive a digital dimension by posting it on the U website.*


SEE EKA-0
IN WHOLE ON
www.urban.ee/xtra/zero.pdf

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Installation from substance produced in the course of decomposition of different printed text materials
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# ESTONIAN MEMORY INSTITUTIONS IN THE DIGITAL TURN

*A correspondence interview with* MARIN LAAK*, the senior fellow of the cultural history and literary research working group at the Estonian Cultural History Archives.*

**In 2013, Estonian Government passed the development plan Culture 2020 that foresees massive digitizing in memory institutions: namely, according to this plan, the most valuable part of all Estonian cultural heritage should be digitized by 2018. What is the national aim of this programme? What are the strategies for approaching such a changeable and complex subject?**

The idea of digitizing the entire cultural heritage reminds me of Lenin's plan to electrify all of Russia in the early days of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The idea is zealous but the scale is unfathomable. Setting development plans, as was the case at the Ministry of Culture with the development of Estonian culture until 2020, means painting in pretty bold strokes. In theory, the development plan should come with a comprehensive document called 'operational programme'; I think this has not been discussed yet, or at least not on such a wide scale as was the case with all the ideas that hopefully made it into the development plan.

Digitizing our cultural heritage is not a novel issue in the circles of memory institutions; it has been on the agenda for the past ten years or even longer. Estonian memory institutions have been and are co-operating quite well and are more or less up to date about each other's activities. Yet I am surprised that there is no mention of digital or other developments of the online field in the Human Development Report,[1] and also for the Estonian media, issues of digital cultural heritage are often not considered newsworthy, even though there has been continuous and wide-ranging 'digital action' in memory institutions. The portal Digiveeb (www.digiveeb.kul.ee) has presented this work to the public for years under the aegis of the website of the Ministry of Culture, although the updates are probably not the quickest – a lot more is actually being done!

This is the background to your question, to demonstrate that the 'digitizing all of cultural heritage' did not just appear out of nowhere.

The operational programme of the development plan Culture 2020 was organized by the Digital Heritage Conservation Council, an institution affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, and since a change of its membership in 2014, it has become extremely active. In December 2014, the document 'The Operational Programme of Digitizing Cultural Heritage 2015–2020' was composed; a document of more than 90 pages that details the plans for the coming years for all types of heritage (documents, publications, photographs, films, objects, and art). The 'Digital Cultural Heritage' development plans have actually been compiled since 2007, and the current one is the third. Once it's completed, the plan is to release a third of Estonian cultural heritage for digital use, which

*1. The chapter on the development of Estonian cultural space in the 2015 Estonian Human Development Report (www.kogu.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/EIA-2015.pdf) features a sub-chapter titled 'Digital culture as part of Estonian cultural space in 2004-2014: current state and forecasts', written by Marin Laak and Piret Viires.* Note of the editors.

The Estonian National Library is one of the largest memory institutions in Estonia. The pompous limestone library building was constructed between 1985 and 1993, designed by Raine Karp. Memory institution is an organisation maintaining a repository of public knowledge, a generic term used about institutions such as libraries, archives, museums, sites and monuments records (SMR), clearinghouses, providers of digital libraries and data aggregation services which serve as memories for given societies or mankind. (Wikipedia). Photo: Andra Aaloe.

means information on 1.3 million records in databases. A term 'open data' has been taken into active use, which means electronic availability on many levels, from metadata to full texts.

**Digitizing (or digitalizing) – what is actually meant by the word? What are the founding principles of digitizing?**

Digitizing has truly become a common concept! However, from the point of view of the digitizers, it denotes a whole complex of activities, from coming up with a concept of what to digitize to bringing each specific record out of the repository, scanning it and, of course, returning it to the repository. One of the criteria of selection is certainly the rarity and usability of the record, which endangers its physical survival and often necessitates its restoration before scanning. Once a rare 'object' has been repaired and scanned, it is followed by the writing of its metadata and its insertion into databases. This is the most labour consuming stage and can take as much time as all of the preceding steps put together, but it is also the most important section because it determines the further life of the record. If we don't know something exists, we can't use it; we cannot access information, even though the file may exist on a 'disc' or 'stick' somewhere.

It has to be taken into account that digitizing of any kind is a very expensive and time-consuming activity. The expense also depends on whether it is a film, audio, printed document, item or handwritten record. In the scanning process, a large master file and smaller user copies are created, However, the large files require an extremely powerful server and/or file repository, where digitized holdings are constantly being re-saved for security reasons. Talking about the technical specifications would be another story altogether!

**How do digital archives broaden the possibilities of users today?**

Speed is the main thing but again, the concept is important here. What does 'a digital archive' mean? There are even two or three options here. You must ask whether it is an electronic database, where you merely see that the film, song, correspondence, book etc. exists in a museum, archive or library. You will see the entry, and you can use it to order the original, but you have to go there in person. Another option is ordering a digital copy of what you require. For example, libraries offer the paid service E-Book on Demand (EOD). You can request a digital copy of public domain books – the limit here is 70 years after the author's death. The third option is to hope you get lucky and the item you are interested in has already been digitized and made available, or you can adjust your interests so that you can use previously digitized materials.

In the last case, we cannot really talk about broadening – quite the opposite. However, digital availability certainly makes any kind of use quicker and easier. The spatial dimension of usability and the chance to alter, recreate etc. are also added. A more correct answer would require mentioning the chance to process extremely large volumes of data extremely quickly. A telling but realistic example: a whole hall of the sheet catalogue of the 19$^{th}$ century library of the Imperial Tartu University fits on a single memory stick! But again – in order to extract information from these virtual filing cabinets and make a search, every single scanned sheet must be described with metadata in the electronic database.

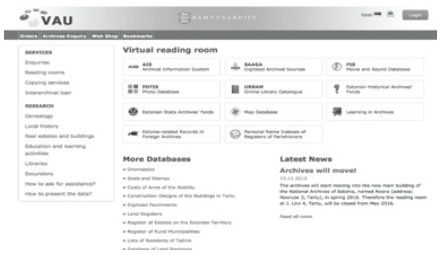
I am certain that the future of the digital cultural heritage also depends on how fast we can turn the data hubs, compiled on the level of single units, into networks of semantically linked information – this is also the direction the world is currently heading towards.

**When we copy a record – or to be precise, the part of the record that can be made into an entry that is readable in the digital world (image, sound, text, metadata etc) – into a new (digital) format, will this digital copy take on a life of its own? Will it be converted into a new format when the technology evolves or do you go back to the source? In other words, is digitizing the creation of a new object or will it always be dependent of its original, the physical record in a physical archive?**

The answer is that it does take on a new life and at the same time it doesn't. A master copy that matches the original is made in the course of digitizing, and it is kept safely in a digital repository and will be converted if necessary, when new formats appear. As of now, we still don't know how, because it is a worldwide problem. There is intense and active work going on across the world to come up with options and solutions. On the other hand, we all remember the strange large discs, and now also the small discs, that cannot be used anymore and require special devices for accessing files. Until recently, a requirement applied to digitizing cultural heritage that all files had to be copied in three different places, one of which was a CD or a DVD. By now, these requirements have been replaced by cloud storage, for example. However, the digital availability of a past document, above all, provides a convenient option to quickly find the object you're interested in and to get to know its contents. Whatever follows that is up to the individual.

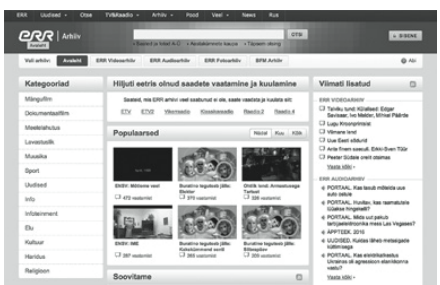
**Is the layer of more recent heritage that has no analogue form still legible in the future, considering the rapid development of the world of technology? For example, is it possible that the works of a certain period that can be experienced only with certain technology will become almost entirely illegible in the future? Take, for example, the family albums: I can see photos that were taken a hundred years ago, but I cannot access my CD albums from ten years ago. Is there a chance of an archive of software and hardware, an archive of user interfaces that could be used to access old formats? In other words, how is the long-time preservation and availability of digital entries ensured in the context of rapidly changing digital platforms? Do we have to print out the family photo and stick it in an album?**

Here, a distinction should be made between a large memory institution and the personal sphere. The former should have these things thoroughly figured out and under control, so to say. New software and updates are also mostly built to be able to instantly read and convert older formats. I have not heard of a software archive, but hardware archives have existed for some time now and are functioning, and not just as an exhibit at the Estonian National Museum; it mostly concerns the audio-visual world, sound and film. Yet – retro comes back into fashion in waves and old vinyl records are in use again for some years now. The rule of all new media is to originate from what came before and improve on it.  For an example, soon you can probably communicate with the new vinyl record players via computers. However, it is more a question of a change in the consumer habits of a culture: are the family albums browsed together or is it nicer to look at them on your mobile by yourself and even on the street? But one can still print photos; you still get power cuts and batteries still run out!




For example, the databases of the Estonian National Archive (RA) units are assembled in the Vau virtual reading room. (www.ra.ee/vau). The establishment of web-based archival services in 2004–2005 led to an explosive growth of clients using the archive. It is estimated that over one hundred times more visits to the archive are carried out today than ten years ago; 99,3% of the visits begin and end with the web.

A A web camera is live-streaming the building process of the new main building Noora for the Estonian National Archives in Tartu (find the link in www.ra.ee). Noora will host in the future also regional archives from Haapsalu and Kuressaare, and also the Tõnismäe street archive in Tallinn. With the popularity of virtual gateways for archive services, there is no reason to keep the regional centres running. Image: Screenshot 9.01.2016 at 16:44.




Estonian television and radio heritage is preserved by Estonian Public Broadcasting (ERR) archives. See www.arhiiv.err.ee.

**The conversion of physical cultural heritage into binary code has its problems; where does the dust, the dirt of centuries, texture, the ageing of the material, decay, tactility, smell go? In other words: what happens to the temporal and spatial quality that often determines the value of the object – its growing age, the lifecycle of the object/material itself? Is the record of a digital archive like a photo in an album, a stopped moment in time, where the object will always remain in one moment, age? Or perhaps the real material, the physical record can continue living its life – crumble, disintegrate, get dusty, decay?**

This question already answers everything! The original remains the original and it must be taken good care of. However, whether we should value smell, crumbling paper or scratching in itself depends on the receiver and how he or she intends to use it. Does poetry tell us more if we smell the lines on the paper that carries them? Do people need some other kind of information to understand the text? In addition to the words, can the visual text be converted, and translated into another language or media? These questions are already in the realm of philosophy, from reception theory to phenomenology.

**Lets go back to the plan in Culture 2020: 'The more valuable parts of cultural heritage will be digitalized…' Doesn't this task in itself contain a philosophical contradiction? How will it be decided what constitutes 'the more valuable parts'? Will the decision about what is valuable made today still be valid tomorrow? What happens to what today is considered the less valuable part of cultural heritage if no access is granted to it? Today is a particularly right time for asking this because it seems the world and the foundations of world change with each day.**

This is the most difficult question for me also and I suppose there is a fair share of a catchword about it. Cultural 'value' can be proved somewhat by being a classic: we value canonical works and knowing them is part of being educated. Moreover, they are works that are the pillars of the historical continuation of our cultural memory, where our national identity has settled over generations.

But why make judgments at all? In order to implement the operational programme of digitizing our cultural heritage, a decision was made to organise the selection of materials according to clearly defined content, which I consider to be the right course of action. For example, the criteria for making a selection from the millions of different records of documental heritage, i.e. manuscripts, correspondence etc., is time. A decision was made to begin massive digitizing with the materials from the era of the Republic of Estonia and to digitize collections as completely as possible. Another criterion is the needs of the field of education, which is also a long road. Converting heavy schoolbooks into PDF format is not enough to allow talking about an 'e-schoolbag'; it is more of a metaphor.

I think it is important to constantly acknowledge that the current digital turn is not merely so-called practical, but cultural. Our cultural practices, everyday habits, learning methods, and communication have changed. It is important to take these changes into account in any educational and pedagogic activity. There are multiple problems here and things work a lot more slowly here, as the processes are long. It is important to come up with learning tools that match today's technical possibilities, which unfortunately evolve extremely quickly, but do so in a way that the young retain skills for reading-using-watching older culture. So they won't drop the pencil!

**Distinguishing what deserves to be preserved from everything else that will be cast on the 'scrapheap of history', i.e. the subjective area of responsibility of historians, archaeologists – and perhaps politicians – and writing it through history and its related problems (particularly from the aspect of memory and the plurality of simultaneous historical narratives, the democracy of memory) has been discussed for decades in disciplines dealing with history and memory. We can read in the Estonian Human Development Report that 'when selecting objects from the huge collections of the Estonian memory institutions, the priority is given to those related to Estonia: by 2020, there are plans to make available as open data the materials concerning the formation of the Estonian state, from the national awakening in the 19th century to the annexation of the Republic of Estonia by the Soviet Union in 1940'.[2] Setting this kind of a task sounds like a clever plan to perpetuate again – this time digitally, as befits an e-state – Estonia as something that has always existed (especially when the new digital history, freely available to us as open data, begins with the National Awakening). So what we really want to ask is this: does this process consciously take into account the developments in historical discourse towards the democratisation of history and the move towards a plurality of narratives?**

*2. Laak, M.; Viires, P. 2015. Digital culture as part of Estonian cultural space in 2004-2014: current state and forecasts. Estonian Human Development Report 2014-2015. Tallinn: SA Eesti Koostöö Kogu, p 231.*

It is difficult to answer this question but it is very good to raise this issue. The plurality of documents and the availability of source materials also enables a plurality of narratives, it is a question of interpretation.

One of the unsolved problems of the digital world, however, is the issue of copyright and delicate personal data; perhaps the greatest contradiction lies here and would deserve a separate article on its own. The 'sharing' so characteristic of the new media culture conflicts with laws hailing from the 19th century, changing them varies according to states, but it is cumbersome everywhere.

From the standpoint of history, the plurality of narratives is currently based on the theory of the new cultural history, which is based on the personal and experienced stories of the individual. One could name the life stories of Estonians that are now collected in many places. However, how many of them should be made available to the public? Every written story, even when it's written as a 'story about history' or 'story of history', is still an interpretation. It is important to publish the sources they are based on.

**Lets go back to the museum, the archive and physical space and the spatial expressions of the digital collections. We have museums and archive halls – the rooms of memory institutions, and traditional user interfaces. If the content of a memory institution reaches our computers wherever we sit and the new heritage manifests itself spatially as server parks, then what happens to the museum, the archive hall? The library? What will be their function? Holding exhibitions to highlight connections in the vast layers of information? Organising information? Or focusing on the material that is physically tangible, fragrant, changes and becomes worn out? Who is the curator, who is the user?**

I would like to introduce the concept of new media in addition to the digital: we have a new media culture, new media art, and we have cyber literature. In the environment of the new media, we can show semantic connections between different units and knots, but they may not be all in the same computer, instead they are spread across the world; for example, we can link the materials from the archives of various memory institutions *[story contd. p 24]*

Jevgeni Zolotko
One Day of the State Archivist Life (EKKM, 2011)
Installation from substance produced in the course of
decomposition of different printed text materials
5 × 9 × 3.5 m

to create new meanings. The semiotician Ziva Ben-Porat has called these clusters of 'texts' linked to meaning new cultural units that zigzag all around us as a network. The computer culture is increasingly evolving to mimic the processes of thought and connections in the human brain.

Libraries and museums can take that into account when they are putting together their exhibitions and of course you can use all kinds of machineries to present a vast amount of information, including audio-visual material and facts. However, even in that case, the work on making connections remains the most vital. The museum and the library of the 21st century will remain a centre of creating new knowledge, but by creating and developing these centres, we can keep up with the latest thinking in science and the opportunities offered by technology in visualising this knowledge. All of this is much more than the 'old' opportunity to switch a film on or off at an exhibition.

**As a result of digitizing, access to the materials of the past will increase. Will the new extensive flood of old information that will arrive into use via digitizing now on a massive scale obliterate the present completely? In creative work, for example. Is anything essentially new being made at all or is it all just quotations and copying in new technological formats?**

Everyone will probably answer this question totally differently. No one can force anything on anyone; life is happening around us one way or another. Let us worry about the future instead! Whereas these previous times are collected, maintained and preserved thanks to analogue media, these digital cultural channels, SMSs, e-mails, voicemails, connections, links, posts, comments, forums, Facebook, tweets etc will disappear, remaining only in the moment when 'Send' was pressed. From the viewpoint of cultural history, culture seems to break and end… I would like to call on everyone to collect, log, save, and print the present, which is happening anyway!

When it comes to quoting, post-modernism was left behind years ago, around the time when memory institutions began systematically digitizing cultural heritage. As a counterbalance, a new wave of radical new conservatism, thick novels and sentimental poetry appeared in literature, for example. I see a distinct connection here and it is quite the opposite! After all, creative culture is always springing back rather than allowing itself to be moulded.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# EMOTIONS ON A MAP

MIKK MEELAK, *architect*

What happens in one spot in space both physically as well as digitally is a fascinating research subject for me. Looking at these relations and making what is happening perceptible is another interesting subject. Working with the vast data flows of the digital layers accumulating with each second is particularly charming because when analysed even with rather simple methods, new patterns form and pose various questions. If the tweets in the cities are considerably more angry, does that mean that life in the country is better? Why are people more positive when waiting in line for the ferry at the Rohuküla harbour than they are returning from Hiiumaa? Are there some particularly social kite surfers around Kuramaa or just some bored seamen taking shelter from the storm?

THE MAP visualizes around 1.5 million tweets from 2014–2015. The tweets have been analysed with the algorithm of the emotion detector of the Institute of the Estonian Language, which is available on the website eki.ee. The emotion detector looks for words with a positive and negative tone and accordingly, provides them with a value. For example, the word 'to understand' is positive, while 'to exaggerate' is negative. Also, so-called extreme words are found – according to the algorithm used they are, for example, 'idiot', 'gob' and 'snot'. The frequency of the words is used to determine the dominant emotion of the tweet and its strength.


*On the map, blue spots mark positive and pink spots mark negative emotions. White denotes so-called neutral tweets that lack emotions according to the algorithm and the areas where emotions mix are also white.*

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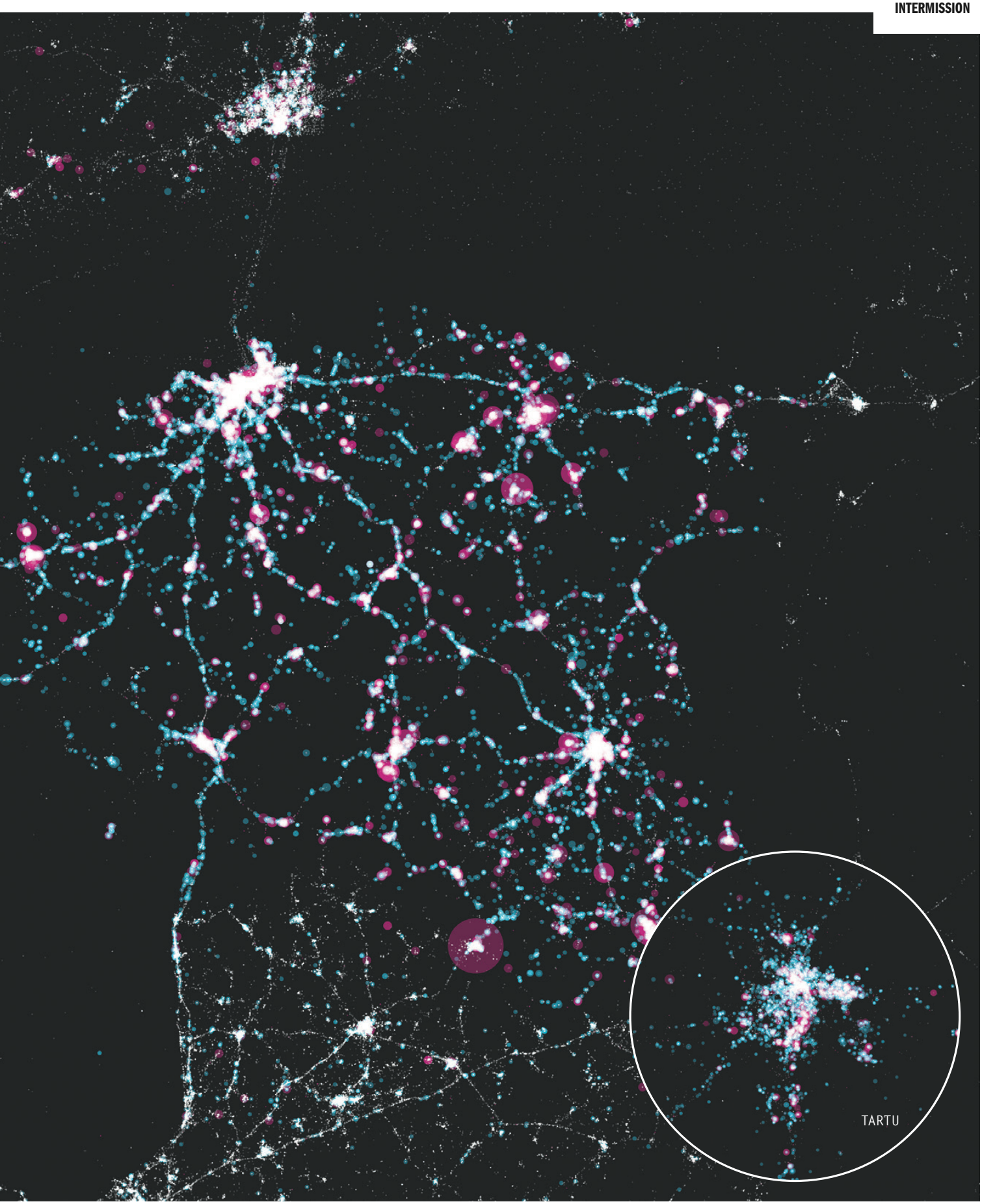

TARTU

# *THINGS* BY JEVGENI ZOLOTKO. And on the methods of new art criticism*

INDREK GRIGOR, *art critic*
Photos by JEVGENI ZOLOTKO

** An abridged version of the article was published in Müürileht 24: pööripäev 2012. The current longer version was published on the Artishok website on 25 January 2013.*

## On new art criticism

For more than ten years, the term 'new art history' has been employed in the field, dealing with how the transformed discipline of history affects how art history is or should be written. In very broad terms, the shift from a mostly form-based history of style towards the social history of art has taken place in the writing of art history. Unlike art history, art criticism has never had an academic cover, so it has been in an existential crisis almost since its birth, because there is no consistency in dealing with the theoretical problems of criticism that would allow for formulating a problem, let alone a positive programme that art criticism could rely on for its development.

However, there is certainly a need to talk about new art criticism in addition to new art history. The precise essence of this criticism is completely open, which, as I have already indicated, has to do with the fact that criticism lacks the cover of the academic canon. Therefore, the first proposition of the new criticism is the notion that in order to formulate its semantic role and ensure its sustainable development in the future, it must become a separate academic discipline. Achieving this is, above all, an issue of academic bureaucracy and holds no particular interest in terms of the semantic issues of active criticism. What does hold interest is the methodology of the new criticism and even before that, the function of art criticism overall.

The author has claimed with somewhat stubborn militancy that the function of art criticism is not to judge the artwork, which was its task when it was initially born in the 19th century, nor of mediating art to the audiences – a role that art criticism has unsuccessfully attempted to assume since the birth of the avant-garde. Art criticism has an independent role in our art field. But what is it? Boris Bernstein, a grand old man of Estonian art history and one of the few local authors to systematically delve into the role and function of art criticism, wrote in his article 'Art Criticism in Contemporary Art Life': 'A perfectly explainable aberration makes us, critics, place art in the centre of our professional world… However, when questioning the point and aim of everything we do, the 'art centeredness' turns out to be wrong…'. Applying deliberate violence to Bernstein's views, the question of what exactly is the task of criticism remains unanswered, but the central view that art criticism should be autonomous – even in relation to art – still stands.

One of the methods of independent art criticism that has become more prevalently used thanks to the now completed exhibition project Artishok Biennale (www.artishokbiennale.org) is the self-contained monologue, which stressed the role of the critic. The self-contained monologue is a method or genre of art criticism where, in addition to the object, the analysis largely focuses on the analysis itself, relegating the initial object or the artwork to a secondary position.

This method, provocative by its name alone, has an important content and function, which the author will attempt to prove below, but this certainly cannot be the only method on which to build new art criticism. The second possible approach, a methodological one which I introduce here, was vaguely formulated in a public talk between the artists Madis Katz and Toomas Thetloff and critic Indrek Grigor, held on 15 October 2012 within the Artishok Biennale. This can provisionally be called a coordinated description. The idea is that the critic works as closely with the artist as possible already during the conception of the idea for the artwork and in the end will attempt to convey the intentions of the artist as genuinely as possible. In other words – instead of ignoring the artist and the artwork on principle and withdrawing into the analysis of his or her autonomous monologue, which is unjustly referred to as unbiased distance, the critic will attempt to convey the conceptual background of the artist as precisely as possible, therefore rendering the question of the critic's independence null and void. In this situation, the critic is not, cannot and must not be independent; instead he or she must always bow to the words of the artist.

However, this description must not remain the only layer; it must be followed by a study in the form of a self-contained analysis, and the reader can then compare its competence in relation to the description. Below, an attempt is made to apply these methods of the new art criticism to the work Things by Jevgeni Zolotko.

## *Things* by Jevgeni Zolotko

The six-part work *Things* by Jevgeni Zolotko was displayed in the attic of the Tartu Art House for six months, from 19 March to 6 October 2012. The idea was born after the Art House suggested to Zolotko that he create work for the attic. The proposal was based on the playful but sincere realisation that the attic room, covered with an even layer of grey dust, resembled the monochrome abandoned environment of Zolotko's installations. It would have been appropriate to put a sign upon the door saying 'Zolotko's Office', and the work would thus have been completed. Zolotko, of course, did not agree to this kind of banal, dubious deal, but the idea of undertaking the attic had been conceived, and a year later the first part of *Things* was opened.

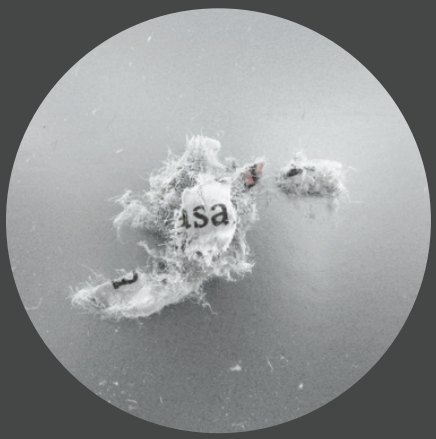
Zolotko is an artist who is extremely critical of the vocabulary of prestige language often used while talking about his work. According to the artist, *Things* is not an installation, the work does not examine anything (least of all the room) and despite the temptation, drawing parallels with archaeology is a false interpretation. However, although the artist's world-view is explicitly religious, *Things* does not constitute religious art in the classic sense; instead, it is a reflection of Zolotko's personal worldview.

The combination of Zolotko's art, which is based on a worldview that is contemporary in form, yet at times extremely archaic in its subject matter, and an artist, who has repeatedly refused to discuss his works in public, but is nevertheless very conscious of the meaning of words, is a wonderful case study for introducing the coordinated description mentioned above. Moreover, as the gallery manager of the Tartu Art House, the author of this article has been involved with the work from its conception through all the stages of installation and has talked for hours with the artist about the various aspects – related to the technical, the form as well as the subject – of the work.

***Coordinated description***
*The artist had a chance to review the descriptions below and all of his suggestions were taken into account in finalising the text.*

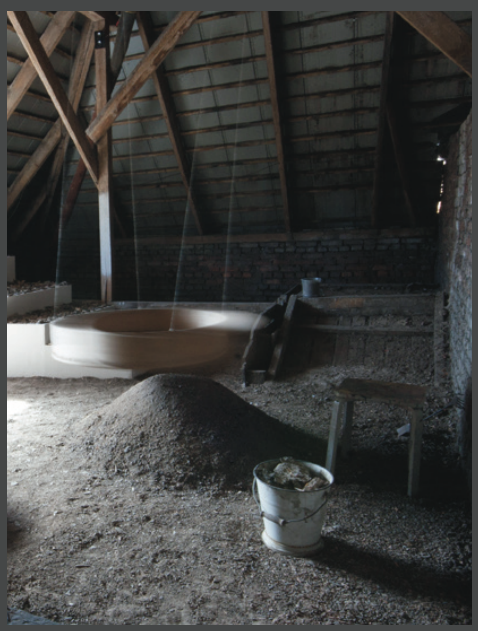
**Chapter I: Speech**

Naming is one of the most archetypal images in the myths of creation. Thus Zolotko's work in the attic also began with naming things. The thoroughly prosaic attic was realised as an artistic space by the artist who named the things he had found there. The loudspeakers issued a list of things in a monotonous booming voice. The list was long enough to symbolically cover the whole reality, at the same time adding a fascinating layer when, at the end of reading the list, the voice became tired and coarse.




**Chapter II: The Loss**

Shortly after the world was created, we were deprived of it, which is the central intrigue of the work: man's relations with things. An attic is a strange zone where things have not been thrown away, but equally they do not quite exist, so we can call it a junk room of memory. The artist removed all the things from the attic and filled it with books made of pulped paper known from his earlier works. The essential element of the chapter was a video where a young man sitting at the attic window reads extracts from the Book of Genesis about the genealogy of the human race since Adam (Genesis 5). According to Zolotko, this is one of the most peculiar parts of the Bible, because today it is practically impossible to understand the meaning of the family tree leading back to the first human being. This is a text that connects us to the beginning of everything, but the words have lost their role, symbolically marked by the books made up of an incoherent unreadable mass of text, amassed in the attic.



**Chapter III: Things**

The title chapter *Things* was visually perhaps one of the most impressive, being a sieve that had sifted out the smallest items from the debris on the attic floor. These items were then placed on two graduated altars for our viewing. These things could not be named and thus constituted the beyond, the underworld of the attic.

The images of Judgment Day in the form of the altars and the sieve are, according to the author, partly intentional but not completely meaningful. Sieving things is indeed a reference to the beyond, although at the same time it is a purely practical or ethical question: on what basis should the displayed things be separated from the debris and how should they be exhibited? A lullaby for an orphan was playing in the background, stressing the sentimental value of the act. The attic is like a junk room, but its debris holds things that have been forgotten even by the attic itself.

### Chapter IV: Dove

Chapter IV begins with the notional resolution of the raised intrigue – the relation between people and things. Whereas the previous chapter contains a reference to archaeology and an attempt to make the unnamed meaningful, the reconstruction attempts have by now been completed. The objects from the first part and the attempts to recreate them were displayed at the attic, its walls now painted white. The central object is the Dove, the only living being, who is shown through a photograph of the found skeleton, the skeleton itself, its 3D reconstruction, and finally the dove in a sculptural form.

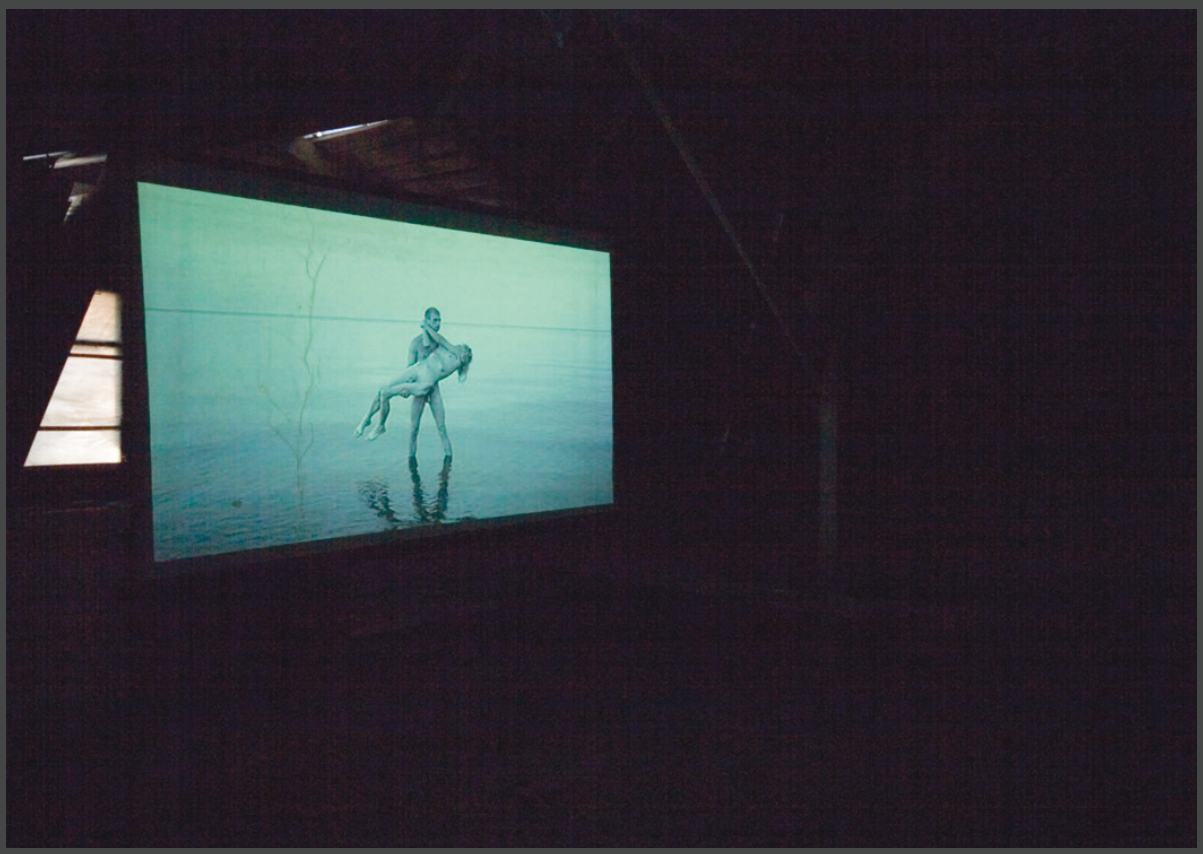
**Chapter V: Ecce Homo**

The static Ecce Homo is both a semantic pause and the resolution of the intrigue. In the second part, a large-format projection depicts the young man reading the incomprehensible genealogy while emerging from still water, carrying his father, who he had brought back from the land of the dead. Man is defined by remembering his roots. It is no coincidence that the title indicates man in the singular, but the photograph shows father and son; a human being is a human being only in relation to others.

The key text of the chapter is an excerpt from Nikolai Gogol's *Dead Souls* about the layers of things in the Plyushkin manor house, which all too figuratively describes the normal state of things in the attic. At the same time, it presents a moral judgment: the way we relate to things reflects back in our human relationships.

'On the floor lay a heap of coarser articles unworthy of a place on the table. It was difficult to make out precisely what was in the heap, for the dust lay on it so thick that the hands of any one who touched it at once looked like gloves; the most conspicuous objects in the heap were a piece of a broken wooden spade and the old sole of a boot. It would have been impossible to say that a living being was inhabiting this room, if a shabby old skull-cap lying on the table had not testified to his existence.'

– *Dead Souls* by Nikolai Gogol



**Chapter VI**

Every single thing, to the last detail, has been put back in place. The soundtrack is Helena Tulve's *Stella matutina*, where the lyrics are the Litany of Loreto, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Chapter VI does not have a title, but leads us from the relations between human beings and things to the universe. Zolotko does not agree with the opposition between the spiritual and the material world. The Virgin Mary was the purest part of the material world through whom God became material. However, against the backdrop of the litany dedicated to her, the attic is still the same as it was: nothing has changed. Nothing is disgusting, and everything is equally noble. This brings us to the work's epigraph:

'Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.'

– Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, from the conversation with the old wise man Zossima.

***Self-contained monologue***
*Whereas the above was a coordinated description, an attempt is made below to briefly sketch an analysis of the same artwork in the form of a possible self-contained monologue.*

Leaving aside the religious undercurrents of Zolotko's work, it stands out that the artist is interested – not just with *Things* but more generally – in the relationship of the material world to the linguistic world, which also probably explains his heightened sensitivity to the concepts used when discussing his works.

The linguistic world carries a potential of meaning, but it has lost its communicative capacity. This was demonstrated in The Loss, the second part of *Things*, in the form of a Biblical text that has lost its semantic contact with the reader and has therefore lost its significance.

According to the author's words, and it seems justified to trust them, the material world entails both the objects of the environment as well the potential man. The latter is potential because the absence of man is one of the most notable characteristics of Zolotko's work, and despite the intentions of the author, it tends to dominate the field of meaning of the artwork, allowing one to introduce dystopia and abandonment, while the artist's starting point is the isomorphism between things and people. In Zolotko's work, things do not signify man symbolically, but instead in an inseparable relation to man. This relationship can be called the key to the poetry of Zolotko's work.

Using as a case study the Köler Prize-winning installation *One Day Of The State Archivist Life*, it must be said that although the central event of the artwork is the disappearance of the archivist, the essential message of the work is the archivist's renouncement and escape from the booth lined with a mass of text into a pre-linguistic world. However, again, this is not a renouncement of the world, but of its textual image that has become non-communicative: the metamorphosis of the archivist into a sparrow.

This is what a brief attempt to apply the method of the self-contained monologue to Zolotko could look like. Whether and to what extent these two methods of new art criticism – the coordinated description and self-contained monologue – complement each other, is for the reader to decide. However, it must be said in the way of excuse that this is a first attempt in the genre and its potential and boundaries are yet to be discovered by the author.

*1. Photo series of* One Day Of The State Archivist Life *can also be seen on the pages through the current U number.*

‘Ah! I – to you, Petrovich, this –’
It must be known that Akaky Akakiyevich expressed himself chiefly by prepositions, adverbs, and scraps of phrases which had no meaning whatever. If the matter was a very difficult one, he had a habit of never completing his sentences, so that frequently, having begun a phrase with the words, ‘This, in fact, is quite –’ he forgot to go on, thinking he had already finished it.
‘What is it?’ asked Petrovich...

*The Overcoat* by Nikolay Gogol

Jevgeni Zolotko
One Day of the State Archivist Life (EKKM, 2011)
Installation from substance produced in the course of decomposition of different printed text materials
5 × 9 × 3.5 m

Exhibition view. Vello Asi on the foreground.
Photo: Henno Luts

# TAKING AN ARCHIVE TO AN EXHIBITION, WITHOUT WUNDERLICH

**In late November of 2015, the exhibition *Expedition Wunderlich: 11 interior architects* opened at the Museum of Estonian Architecture. The exhibition used an experimental form to introduce interior architects who began their careers in last century, showing their working principles and works from their student days. Since the story of the exhibition is closely linked to the reopening and rediscovery of the archives of the Estonian Academy of Arts' (EAA) Department of Interior Architecture, the editors of *U* talked about what has been found and experienced and about the exhibition itself with the leaders of the process. This interview is with Carl-Dag Lige of the Museum of Estonian Architecture, the exhibition curator, and professor Hannes Praks, the head of EAA's Department of Interior Architecture.**

**Andra Aaloe:** Lets start from the very beginning: how was the idea conceived to make an exhibition like that?
**Carl-Dag Lige:** The idea for the entire exhibition began a bit further back. When Hannes [Praks] was running for the position of the head of department, I helped him formulate his programme. Once Hannes had been working in his new position for some time, I asked him whether the department would like to present this new energetic beginning to the wider public in the format of an exhibition. The basement hall of the Museum of Estonian Architecture was a challenge because it is a difficult space: arches, intense character, etc. And so we gradually started thinking from there. We mostly followed our intuition and emotions. I didn't want it to happen where I would come and make an exhibition about the department; instead, I wanted to make it with the department. The working process was stalled at one point because Hannes hoped I would tell him what the specific concept was but I refused that role… The same archive space – a tiny ten square metre room in the Interior Architecture department that was used also to store vacuum cleaners and junk – was crammed with works. It was obvious that at different times, a different amount of attention was paid to the archive (though not much in the last twenty years – more recent stuff had just been thrown in a heap). This is where the base of the exhibition came from – archival material to further work with.

**Andra:** In its form, the exhibition is like a walk in the woods; each time you hear, see, and notice different things, and different elements are manifested. In general, I got a feeling of certain unfinishedness; that I will never know everything these people have to say because I cannot hear them very well, and I am running out of time as it is open only for one hour in a day. But this feeling is certainly not negative; instead, for me, it expresses the fact that the exhibition – the story of teaching interior architecture at EAA and/or the role and work of the people presented – is something considerably broader than you can initially grasp. Was this format intentional or did it just happen?
**Hannes Praks:** We arrived at this exhibition and way of exhibiting in a half-subconscious way, selecting and contemplating various options and themes as a team. Initially, we were thinking of making this exhibition about the current Department of Interior Architecture, but then it seemed that the most recent layer (that I have been part of for over a year) is too thin, so we decided to let it settle for a bit. But since the students did dive into the archive at first and immediately began bringing out treasures, it seemed that this mineral deposit was enough for exhibiting. I have said on several occasions that this is just the beginning – this is an introductory event, and we want to add also an online environment or perhaps make a few more exhibitions on the subject.
**Keiti Kljavin:** How did the decision to focus on people come about?
**Hannes:** For me, it all began when Carl-Dag made an exhibition for their provisional examination with students, who had as one course a traineeship in the archive. The students put works from the archive up on the walls and we analysed the interiors of villas from the 1960s, etc., and they seemed to have a special human touch. They were minimalistic, but not frosty – they were warmly minimalistic. The approach to material and form was very much centred on the human, and it was very fresh – these themes are extremely relevant today, too. This review kicked off the idea of focusing on the human. From there, we started visiting our research subjects, who told their personal memories, for example how they communicated with people when they were studying. These were very inspiring and exhausting outings.
**Carl-Dag:** Yes, it lasted for two intense weeks.
**Hannes:** Every conversation took place in someone's home and took about 2–3 hours. And driving back in the EAA van and discussing what we had heard and experienced was just as exciting – like a seminar in an EAA van. The students who happened to be in that expedition's working group got a very good schooling almost by chance.

**Andra:** What was the role of the students in the planning and designing of the exhibition?
**Carl-Dag:** The students helped us work through the archives in the course of their archive traineeship. And in the final examination of this subject, works selected by students emerged and they also wrote papers on specific people. Certain themes stayed in our minds from that examination and the students were always our partners in discussions. I, however, made the final selection of works.
**Hannes:** The design was also co-operative. Even when a student thought that a cindered plank did not fit in the exhibition – that it was not dignified enough for presenting the greats – it conversely inspired us to use it anyway. I guess we had votes, though everything was not totally democratic. There were different impulses at the design meetings and it was my job to integrate them.

**Keiti:** Speaking of people: could the students' relationship to their chosen archival subject – they were wearing smocks with name tags, as if to embody the person

whose works they were showing to the visitors – have been more playful, i.e. more personal?
**Hannes:** I haven't even considered that one student should go around and present the works of one interior architect. (**Carl-Dag:** It's more common that they have switched.) But today I also went to 'work' there for the first time and began choosing a smock: Bruno Tomberg, Leila Pärtelpoeg – no, no, I can't, no. For example, I could never have chosen Vello Asi – I have too much respect for him. It was easier with Pille Lausmäe because I know her personally. I had inkling that if you present someone, you delve into their work in a new way, and indeed, Pille's works reached me on a deeper level after I exhibited and reviewed them. Strangely enough, standing at the exhibition I was nervous and I even had stage fright, even though usually I have no problems speaking to about 100 people. Perhaps it was because here I was representing someone else and on top of that, my entire craft.
**Carl-Dag:** I got the impression that you are an exception – the students are more chilled out about it. But I guess they are thinking something in the back of their heads.
**Hannes:** Yes. When an acquaintance or a student of the given interior architect comes along, you can indeed hear some thoughts around the stand. Basically, the students are still taking part in the history lesson of interior architecture there.

**Keiti:** The catalogue prominently features photographs of desks. Where did this idea come from?
**Hannes:** The desks in the catalogue form a set with the portraits at the exhibition. Both the portraits as well as the desks are moments from today.

**Carl-Dag:** To be quite honest, these desk photos were a backup option. During our visits, we asked photographer Renee Altrov to take pictures of both people as well as their desks, so we had them. We also have other details of the interiors we could have exhibited. We also considered showing one important item from the home of every person, but it is good that we didn't, because the space is sufficiently concentrated as it is now. The catalogue was also the result of a quick creative process: namely, in the final stage of the process we decided to do away with all the captions within the exhibition. Instead, we made a little catalogue, which offered a good opportunity to show the photos of desks. The catalogue is something every visitor can take with them, yet it doesn't duplicate what is at the exhibition – instead, it is more like a part of the whole experience and complements the exposition at the hall.
**Keiti:** And the portraits play a very important role on the exhibition…
**Hannes:** Yes, we realised at one point that we must have these photos. In fact, we should state here that at this exhibition we are showing something that cannot be seen. In other words, we are showing the first works of these specialists and their portraits today – all this information that has been recorded on their faces over the years. Basically we are interested in what has been done between today and the beginning, and this is what we are presenting, but it is not shown at the exhibition. It has to be read between the lines.

**Andra:** But for example in the case of Vello Asi, you will see first his Stalinist works and then an old man sitting

Leila Pärtelpoeg's desk. Photo: Renee Altrov.

Photo: Henno Luts.

on the windowsill, looking into the distance, reminiscing and waiting. What he actually did – he was a trailblazer for a new kind of interior architecture in Estonia – is not told through these two moments. Perhaps some layers will be lost on the visitors who are not that well versed in the history of Estonian interior architecture…
**Hannes:** I guess it does depend on how much you have delved into this field before.
**Carl-Dag:** For me, professional practice and completed works are not important in this exhibition. They do not have to be prominent.
**Hannes:** The important thing we were after was the fact that behind every work, there is a person. How they communicate, what they feel, what their world is made of. We asked about this in our interviews and we also tried to express it in the exposition.
**Carl-Dag:** I would rather hope that the exhibition does not fetishise history, but instead uses and interprets it creatively. A powerful contemporary filter has always been especially important to me. The people active today relate to history through the now. It is not about raising history on a pedestal ... The initial task of the museum was to create an impressive environment and a comprehensive atmosphere.

**Keiti:** Was the choice of people influenced by the logic of the department's archive – or lack thereof?
**Carl-Dag:** Yeah, there wasn't much logic there. In some ways, it is a subjective selection of the archive; many important figures are missing, although some of them should be included. But these selected people had cool works in the archive and this is how our selection took form. For example, there are no works by Maile Grünberg or Toivo Raidmets there, with a few poor exceptions. We decided to not exhibit the works of department heads but they are all present at the exhibition, whether in interviews, as supervisors of students' works or in the case of Hannes, the exhibition design.
**Hannes:** Yes, Raidmets was my teacher and inspiration. In the early 1990s, he made an installation, which was a stack of planks with neon pipes between them. This object inspired me enormously back then in terms of form and ideas and I see its formal influence in the exhibition design – burnt planks. Raidmets is also often talked about in interviews.
**Carl-Dag:** Edgar Johan Kuusik, Edgar Velbri, Väino Tamm also prominently emerge in the interviews. One of the reasons for not exhibiting department heads was the fact that we did not want to focus too much on the institution itself.
**Hannes:** One of the most important results of this process is that I now value the archive more. I would like to continue archiving and getting deeper into it, as a concept could emerge from it on how to preserve things in today's digital world. There have also been many discussions at the Academy on what will happen to the so-called methodical funds in the future because there are no rooms designated for them in the new building. The fund of our department was also almost lost with the change of guard… I have

come to think that the fund should not go to a museum; instead it should stay with the department. This way, it serves a purpose. My mission is to organise the archive and keep it with the department, so when the next change of guard takes place, I will pass it on with my position.
**Carl-Dag:** Yes, I heard that rector Mart Kalm plans to delve deeper into the EAA archives in the near future to get a better understanding of what is actually there.

**Keiti:** I think this exhibition is the second time since EAA's 100th anniversary that the Academy's archive was shown to the public. Could this become an obligation of every department – to preserve and exhibit the works that have been created?
**Hannes:** Departments were already obligated to do that at one EAA meeting.
**Carl-Dag:** The state of these archives varies according to the department; where there have been people who actually maintain them, the archives are in a better state and there is a better overview of them. However, in some places, works are just lying about. It totally depends on the unit within the Academy. In the interior architecture department, the archive was neglected until now but still many valuable works are preserved there.
**Hannes:** We plan on digitising the entire archive (the materials of this exhibition and a bit more have been uploaded to a server by now) – this way, it would be the easiest to use it in studies and distribute it in professional circles. But I liked Carl-Dag's idea to exhibit the originals in the exhibition after all. The folds of the paper reveal more information. I think that in today's world, where everything is online, it is very important to go to that offline world and focus on the materials. I should actually send my students there on a regular basis.
**Andra:** Will digitising and the online portals of museums that bring all the old materials to the homes of researchers via memory institutions' web-portals change the curating and future of archive exhibitions in any way? Will this suggestive highlighting of experiential-spatial moments and connections have a more prominent place in the museum?
**Carl-Dag:** I don't believe the exhibition is that special. It is perhaps different in format and more event-oriented. However, when it comes to archives, museums are always places where specialists work and make a selection from the vast collections of the museum to show to people. Obviously, the methods and grounds for selection change over time. Regarding the digital revolution in the world of museums – on the one hand it is very nice that you can browse through the entire museum on your screen and that the average user can access materials more easily. However, if you're not a specialist, you often don't know what you're looking for because there is so much of everything, and that is why you need someone to make a concentrated choice for you.
**Keiti:** How is the Museum of Estonian Architecture handling the great national digitising programme?
**Carl-Dag:** Our main curator and researchers are handling that; it is not part of my direct responsibilities. I think that in any case it is positive that they attempt to digitise the more valuable part of our cultural heritage. It is a major one-time effort and once this layer is online, it will remain there for some time. However, for me personally, technology is just a tool in all this digital stuff and what matters is what is done with the content: who does it, how they do it, why they do it.
**Hannes:** Yes, I have also come to the conclusion that digitising is no miracle weapon – there is enough digital spam pouring in as it is. I rather feel that the physical archive must not disappear, as it has a different energy, atmosphere, and smell, which is lost in the digital. For example, you may touch a planchette that you haven't laid your hands on for decades – this act contains a very powerful exchange of information. If we digitise the entire archive, take it away to Lasnamäe and only browse it on the screen, then we drift away. We cut off the material from us with the screen… Perhaps this is an important aspect in the way our exhibition has been composed – with current students, we have not put a screen between today and history. It is as if we are moving in a time machine and are physically so close to different eras.
**Carl-Dag:** When you look at a two-dimensional drawing, you don't immediately realise that it is actually three-dimensional; a rapidograph applies pressure to the paper, there is gloss, etc. – and it is an entire world you're looking at. You cannot sense it when looking at a screen.
**Hannes:** Today I found myself thinking that we do fetishise the manual work – things made by hand – a little at the exhibition…
**Carl-Dag:** I have stressed that it is still the same genesis of meanings based on a bodily experience. Whether you are a visitor, an author, a creator – your mind and body always work together, both in the creative process as well as in experiencing an exhibition. It could be called a fetishising of the sensory side, but it is something that has been somewhat forgotten during the 20th century and especially now.
**Hannes:** In our department, this manual activity has been highly esteemed for decades: we have joiners' work, a woodworking workshop, architectural drawing. The latter, for example, is especially important as an exercise in concentration. Concentration and becoming absorbed is something I always try to address at the department.

**Keiti:** Expedition Wunderlich is a very well chosen title. However, Richard Wunderlich himself is not part of the exhibition…
**Hannes:** He was left out because of design considerations. I immediately liked the intrigue that there is a Wunderlich exhibition where Wunderlich is not exhibited.

It is like a homage, because we are showing his successors, the school Wunderlich founded. Of course, he is very much present at the exhibition through the people.
**Carl-Dag:** The EAA archives revealed a dossier with more than a hundred original drawings by Wunderlich. It was a potential part of the exhibition but we decided to leave it out. Wunderlich deserves a great hall exhibition of his own and some serious study. And his professional work and student work did not form an organic set. Hopefully we will deal with Wunderlich in a future stage of the expedition.

**Keiti:** What has been the most surprising feedback from the exhibition?
**Carl-Dag:** One nice thing is that if a person holds a drawing, small children also stop to look at it. This way, even a random architectural drawing catches the attention of a child. This whole thing, the concentrated opening hours and being in the border zone between a performance and an exhibition helps to keep the intensity alive – you only have an hour there. We consciously discarded the academic and historic approach and let us to be guided by intuition and emotion.
However, during the preparation of the exhibition and even now I have an important question on my mind and I hope that we managed to at least partly answer it with the exhibition. Namely, how to engage history not too academically, instead keeping in mind the experience of the exhibition and today's visitor, i.e. through a strong modern filter, in a fresh way, so that the visitor would feel there is more at the exhibition than just history that has been dragged out of the archive.

Photo: Henno Luts.

Jevgeni Zolotko
One Day of the State Archivist Life (EKKM, 2011)
Installation from substance produced in the course of decomposition of different printed text materials
5 × 9 × 3.5 m

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