

CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN LATVIA

2012



The economic importance of the creative and cultural industries has been widely recognized as a source of economic development and growth. In this case the Baltic and Nordic countries are no exceptions; on the contrary, the development of these sectors has been high up on the national policy agendas.

The current report presents a snapshot of the creative and cultural industries in Latvia. It is written within the project "Creative Entrepreneurship Training Network – CREAENT". The objective of the project, reflecting the fact that the creative industries in the Baltic and Nordic countries are seen as an important sector of the economy with a high growth potential, is to develop a best practice model of entrepreneurial education and networking for entrepreneurs active in the creative industries in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden.

By browsing these pages you will experience the breadth and depth of the Latvian creative and cultural businesses – from small design companies to theatres and opera, employing many artists and support staff. Although diverse, what they all have in common is a strong creative power, something that could and should be used in other industries and sectors as well.

It is our hope that this publication, in addition to providing a snapshot of the creative industries in Latvia, will serve as a source of inspiration for current and potential entrepreneurs – thereby contributing to realizing the entrepreneurial potential of the Latvian economy.

Anders Paalzow
SSE Riga Rector

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ARE DEAD. LONG LIVE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES !

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SHIFTING CONCEPT OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN LATVIA

Dace Melbārde, Head of the Arts Education and Intangible Heritage Centre

My thoughts on the outlook of creative industries in Latvia begin with some fairly recent events in Latvian culture that were widely discussed among local cultural and creative professional circles, and that allowed for a better glimpse of the future growth potential and risks for creative industries within a broader area.

Create! A short victory march

2012 began with an upswing for Latvian cultural life and the creative industries. The creative vocations week Create! (March 12 – 18), which included more than 130 widely attended events across Latvia, set the creative agenda for the years to come¹. Four ministries signed a cooperation memorandum on integrated action for cross-sector strategy and collaboration in producing Creative Latvia. Alongside the Ministry of Culture's customary dominant role, the Ministry of Education and Sciences successfully incorporated its initiatives into the week's events, fulfilling its hoped-for reforms for more in creative education options. In turn, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development organized creative ideas workshops for the regional and municipal planning specialists who successfully seek out and implement creative, integrated approaches and solutions. The unanticipated response from local municipalities set the foundation for introducing a regional map of the creative week featuring the visual branding imagery – many green Create! dots. The week's motto word "create!" also seemed success-story worthy. The word 'create' has two meanings in Latvian. 'Create' is a call to create something new, and the

word also denotes a group of people related through family. The second meaning of the word allowed for one of the week's fundamental goals to be successfully played out – the jumpstarting of new partnerships and solidification of joint-action as the fundamental principles of Creative Latvia. It seemed like a winning key for future Creative Latvia branding, beneficial to a political framework and to forming a cooperation network, had been found.

"That was a very good idea" (John Holden, member of the independent British research group Demos on the beginnings of creative industries in the UK)

Within months the optimistically initiated creativity victory march in Latvia faced a sudden fall. Not long after the creative week, several critical articles and sceptical comments from creative industry representatives on the overall concept of Creative Latvia began to appear in the press and media. The criticism held that it was too centred on creative industries and cultural commercialization while marginalizing the rest of culture.

"Creativity" is the usual political-speak weed, similar to the recently popular "innovation" – concepts that are so abstract they are only good for general political announcements and appeals ("Creative Minds – The Nation's Greatest Asset!" / "Wake Up and Create!"), as who would object to creativity as a bad thing. But hardly anyone would be able to state what exactly is meant by these appeals," was the criticism levelled at the Ministry of Culture's Creative Latvia initiative by Zane Zajānčkauskā, head of the Culture After Creative Industries project (Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art). In her opinion, the only context wherein discussions on creativity are more or less logical is education, as "along with other skills, children develop or are taught creativity". In turn, Gundega Laiviņa from the New Theatre Institute calls for caution in narrowing the creative industries concept down to activities supported by business logic and product manufacturing, and to not rely on strategy as a solution². The discussion and ensuing forum, CREA? TI? VIT? Culture After Creative Industries, brought up a string of questions on the next steps for creative industries: How has the creative industries concept changed

the local cultural field in Latvia as well as in the outlying region? What should be the new game rules? What is the link between culture and creative industries? What to do about creativity that isn't profitable? How are creative industries ideas adapted to the local situation?³

Alongside the issues surrounding creativity, April saw the arrival of a long-awaited European Union document: Policy Handbook on How To Strategically Use the EU Support Programmes, including Structural Funds, to Foster the Potential of Culture for Local, Regional and National Development and the Spill-over Effects on the Wider Economy⁴, in which, along with the term creative industries, such labels as "culture based development" and "culture based creativity" are also used. Similarly to the discussions taking place in Latvia, the handbook's conclusions and recommendations attempt to outline and reinforce the mutual bond between culture, creative industries and a wider development process, emphasizing that "culture based creativity helps foster prosperity, influences the development of life style, activates all forms of spending, and stimulates collective self-confidence and societal solidity". It must be noted that in reading the document in its entirety there is often a feeling that the various inter-connected terms inconsequently replace each other, and that the European cultural and creative sector programme Creative Europe requires a new terminology-defining dictionary. One thing is clear though – the creative industries concept instilled 7 to 15 years ago, depending on the country, is currently experiencing a significant transformation, and its supporters are invited to work on new future scenarios wherein the entire ecology of culture and creativity plays a vital role – contemporary art, education, politics and management, infrastructure, entrepreneurship and local particularities. The main binding agent in this relationship is the creative professionals and artists who generate and develop ideas, metaphors and missives, and who help guide social networking and stimulate new experiences.⁵

The Topicality of the Creative Industry and Future Scenarios in an Era of Creativity

In thinking about the future of creative industries in Latvia and in the Northern Baltic

Region, one of the boldest questions that has prompted lasting discussions among various circles of specialists is whether the term creative industries has exhausted itself. How relevant is the use of the creative industries concept in the so-called "era of creativity", when the necessity to be creative and innovative is referable to any company, manufacturing and service area? What are the possible future scenarios for creative industries?

The discourse on creative industries in Europe is marked by at least three creative industries development scenarios. The first – creative industries retain their special place in the combined European economy, still continuing to prove to be one of the fastest-growing sectors and economic stabilizers⁶, as was first noted in the 2006 Study on the Economy of Culture in Europe⁷. It seems that this scenario is best suited to a large country like Great Britain in which creative industries, both by the numbers they employ (1.5 million in 2010) and their percentage among the total number of enterprises in the business sector (5.1% of all registered companies in 2011), as well as the exportation of their services (10.6% of total UK service exports)⁸, undoubtedly allow for reference to clearly definable competitive creative industries.

The second scenario envisages the "bursting of the bubble" of creativity economy causing the creative collective to seek new employment in lesser-paid service industries, agriculture, craftsmanship and trade. One of the authors of this scenario, Klaus Kunzmann from Dortmund Technical University, warns that the potential of creative industries in Europe is limited, and creative industry products from China, India and Brazil will soon flood the European market. Only English speaking countries with powerful cultural industries (films, books, music) have the capacity to compete.⁹

The third scenario can be defined by two words – "spill-over effect", which became a keyword on the agenda of the Creative Industries Days in Estonia, when Tallinn held the honour of European Culture Capital. The "spill-over effect" concept has been further developed in the previously mentioned Policy Handbook on How To Strategically Use the EU Support

Programmes, including Structural Funds, to Foster the Potential of Culture for Local, Regional and National Development and the Spill-over Effects on the Wider Economy. The essence of this scenario is the holistic view on the creative and cultural sector's role in overall European development. The goal of the spill-over effect is to create a link between culture, the creative industries, all other social processes and the economy: from inspiring and nurturing creative and innovative entrepreneurship to designing new public service transportation or new interactions between patients and health service staff, to innovative forms of teaching, etc.¹⁰

Which of these development scenarios has the most potential for Latvia? This is a question to which we must seek answers, creating Creative Latvia policy guidelines as well as integrating creative and cultural sector questions into the Latvian national development plan. It's important that cultural and creative sector 'players' as well as economists, financial experts, and businessmen meet around the table and come to agreements in these discussions. I admit that I too have quite radically changed my opinion on the future of creative industries in Latvia over the course of this year, which significantly differs from the one I defended in 2006 when the term creative industries was first defined in Latvian in a national policy document – State Cultural Policy Guidelines 2006 – 2015, "National State"¹¹. And not because the opinion originally formulated in 2005 is wrong! The term creative industries, which initially covered a limited number of sectors whose "origins are rooted in creativity, skills and talents", has, in essence, emptied itself out over the last years, influenced by national economic development tendencies. "It must be taken into consideration that any industry wishing to be competitive will have to become a creative industry in the near future," the Latvian Minister for Economics, Daniels Pavļuts, stated his conviction recently while discussing the creative industries issue with the Minister of Culture, Žanete Jaunzeme-Grende.

Taking into account the various opinions and analysing the discourse on creative industries, I am convinced that in subsequent years the cultural industries that will remain topical will be those characteristic

to the cultural sector's product manufacturing and distribution (music, books, theatre, films, etc.). At the same time creative partnerships will play a growing role. The advantage of creative partnerships is hidden within the basic set-up that places an artist, a creator of cultural values, in the centre, and lends new meaning to his creative powers, non-traditional worldview and courage to take risks and discover and try new things.

"Creative partnerships are about linking the art world or artist or cultural institution to sectors that are traditionally hard to associate with culture – such as administration, business, industries, educational institutions, labour and management. Creative partnerships can be successful, and their success may be measurable in productivity gains and financial results, in improved social relations within an enterprise, and in better communication on an organisation's values, product development and innovation,"¹² writes Philippe Kern, founder and director of KEA, in his blog.¹³

In my opinion, the Creative Latvia platform will become future forward if it is based on the partnership idea. But first the creative professionals and the cultural sector as a whole have to be on board.

1 http://www.radiatvija.lv/eng/par_radi/atskats
2 Spēle ar radošumu. Osvalds Zebris. <http://www.diena.lv/kd/spele-ar-radosumu-13943071>
3 <http://www.pecradosuma.lv/en/idea.html>
4 <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/120505-cci-policy-handbook.pdf>
5 <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/120505-cci-policy-handbook.pdf>
6 http://www.nesta.org.uk/areas_of_work/creative_economy/past_projects/creative_economy/creative_business_catalyst/assets/features/uk_creative_industry_to_drive_significant_growth_i
7 http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc873_en.htm
8 http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/default.aspx
9 Presentation „Territorial implications of the global economic crisis for the future of European space” at the conference on cohesion policy and territorial development: Make use of the territorial potential! 10-11 December 2009 in Kiruna, Sweden http://www.se2009.eu/polopoly_fs/1.27648!menu/standard/file/091211_kunzmann_l%C3%A4tt.pdf
10 <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/120505-cci-policy-handbook.pdf>
11 **Creative industries** – activities whose origins are rooted in creativity, skills and talents and that have, through creativity and use of intellectual property, the potential to create products with high added value. They include architecture, advertising, arts and cultural industries, design (including fashion, graphic and industrial), films, computer games and interactive programming, music, new media, publishing, radio and television.
12 <http://www.keablog.com/2011/12/welcome-to-the-marvellous-world-of-creative-partnership-presentation-given-in-warsaw-on-5122011.html#more>
13 KEA is a strategic consultation organization based in Brussels that specializes in creative industries, culture, entertainment, media and sports since 1999.

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GET INSPIRED



Artis Nīmanis

ANGEL GLASS DESIGN

DISHES SCANDINAVIAN IN NATURE

Idea: multi-purpose glassware with a stainless steel overlay

Idea originators: Artis Nīmanis, Agnese Garā-Nīmane

Birth of idea: 2004

Operating from: 2008

Employees: 4 + 4 associates

An ascetic, laconic form, muted colours, metallic luminosity, the multi-faceted significance of the mirror – a brief characterization of the Angel Glass Design dishes bearing the an&angel logo. This glassware has relatively quickly – within some 4 years – become known in Latvia as well as abroad, and has garnered a stable roster of clients.

“The idea was born in 2004 when our designer Artis Nīmanis created his graduation project for the Glass Arts Department of the Art Academy. We knew that the success of that project meant it could also have sales potential!” – recalls Agnese Garā-Nīmane, one of the company’s owners and project manager. However, some time passed before it all began to move forward – the Līvānu Stikls factory that manufactured large quantities of an&angel wares went bankrupt, and there was a change in ownership.

Still, the idea of using the original design technology – dishes in different colours created using the ancient glass-blowing, not melting, method, with a stainless steel overlay that gives each plate, vase or bowl an additional dimension – on a larger-scale production remained. The second wave came after we won the 2007 Deko magazine top award – new ideas for dishes originated, there was travel to international exhibitions, and new production partners came on board along with innovative technology. “Our technology is our mark of distinction. While creating his graduation project Artis uncovered

that glass can be fused with stainless steel and used in art and design objects. Research on how to achieve the best possible fusion of glass and metal took a fairly long time, but we did it. And when you participate in several exhibitions and find that your wares are liked by others as well, things really begin to happen. With success comes the added responsibility of proving there is more to come and to continue on,” – states Agnese.

Another advantage of an&angel wares is functionality – not only are they beautiful, colourful, sparkling design objects, but they also have

practical uses and are thus ordered by hotels and restaurants throughout the world and for corporate, wedding and special occasion gifts. Agnese says that for the most part the clients have similar preferences – the same dishes loved in Latvia are loved elsewhere. It’s notable that at international exhibitions an&angel products are always unmistakably assigned to being, if not specifically Latvian, then definitely Scandinavian. Agnese:

“That isn’t a condition of ours, and if that’s the case then it is unintentional. However, it’s always good not to lose your identity.”

www.angel.lv



With success comes the added responsibility of proving there is more to come.



Photos: Māris Ločmelis

ARHIIDEA

ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FROM A TO Z

Idea: a full-service architectural office for business clients

Idea originator: Ēriks Grūbe

Birth of idea: 2003

Employees: open-ended – currently 7, management: Ēriks Grūbe, Toms Kokins, Mārtiņš Hermansons

“We’re developing an architectural studio with a business-oriented emphasis, and we do very little work on creating dream homes. The idea behind architectural services from A to Z for businesses is similar to private banking within the banking sphere, wherein the client is provided with anything relating

With this project we turned away from the Slavic delusions of grandeur to the laconism and pragmatism of Scandinavia.

to his/her finances. It’s the same with us – we provide the legal end, economic support, lobbying, and everything else associated with the architectural process,” – explains Ēriks Grūbe, head of ARHIIDEA architectural services.

ARHIIDEA business clients include large-scale public establishments, mainly hotels, and it’s especially important for these clients that during the entire design and construction process they deal with one company rather than several. The result is that clients develop greater trust, and the architects – a greater sense of responsibility. ARHIIDEA has overseen development and technical projects throughout Latvia: the hotels Kempinski Kemer Palace, Kempinski Grand Hotel Riga, Jekaba Hotel Riga, Hotel Grand Palace, Fabricius, Mariott, et al., culture

Mārtiņš Hermansons,
Toms Kokins,
Ēriks Grūbe



www.arhiidea.lv



ESCLICE
Architect Toms Kokins, designer Mārtiņš Hermansons
Photos: Ingus Bajārs

centre Jūras Vārti and the City Culture Hall in Ventspils, office buildings Rixport, Pireus Tower, the Riga Messe centre, the Catholic abbey in Ventspils, a church in Bergī, et al.

Parallel to larger projects ARHIIDEA is also involved in “small architecture” – houses, country estates, et al. One of the best examples of this is the ESCLICE prefab home design that not only won the 2010 Latvian architecture annual award – the pineapple slice – but also generated a lot of international interest at the

Fiera Milano and the 100% Design exhibition in London. Ēriks Grūbe continues: “With this project we turned away from the Slavic delusions of grandeur to the laconism and pragmatism of Scandinavia. We are further developing this idea to prove the principle that a lot is not always better and more comfortable.”

At the end of 2011 ARHIIDEA became involved in the public architecture sector. The aforementioned ESCLICE home was placed in a provocative location – beside the city’s pride and joy, the classic Latvian National Opera building – and for three months it became an Architecture Information Centre, a restaurant and events venue. “Our view is that the end user – the people – should be able to decide on the construction of any public building; moreover, they should be included

in the process from the beginning in order to ascertain exactly what kind of building is needed, what they will do in the building and how they will feel. That’s why we aimed for a different approach with this information centre. Rather than a project that has already been decided upon in some office and the public forum involves only an either “support” or “do not support” choice, it’s a chance to talk to people about architecture in layman’s terms, and about how one can get involved.”





VIRTUAL HANDBAG DESIGN STUDIO ARTBAG

DESIGN YOUR OWN BAG!

Idea: a chance to design your own unique bag
Idea originator: Zane Lase-Lasmane
Birth of idea: summer 2009
Studio opening: spring 2011
Employees: less than 10

Begin with a handbag model, choose the material, colour, handles, then the lining colour and accessories, and in two weeks you will receive the fruit of your creative labours. Carry it and know there is none other like it in the world! This is the opportunity offered by the virtual handbag studio ARTBAG, and the idea originator and company manager Zane Lase-Lasmane.

As it often happens, the idea behind the studio came about when Zane herself felt the need for a specific handbag that she had spent a lot of futile time searching for. "My idea is an online destination where you

I wanted to quash the myth that everything tailor-made is exclusive and expensive.

can create the ideal bag for you – matched with your shoes, clothing, or for an event. Also, given that the end product is a unique, hand-made creation, the price is accessible – I wanted to quash the myth that everything tailor-made is exclusive and expensive."

Within ARTBAG the creative and rational go hand in hand, and it's impossible to have one without the other – first of all, this is determined by the object itself: a handbag is just as functional as it is an aesthetic accessory. Secondly, as we see

in international trends, any company today regardless of the operating sphere must be creative; everyone seeks their own special approach and way of communicating with the world. ARTBAG speaks in the language of the client, openly and transparently; moreover, without the client's direct participation the end product cannot come to be, and anyone who wishes to have their own bag is involved in the design process.

ARTBAG knows their client well – a woman around 30, either a working professional or a stay-at-home, as a freelancer or with a child. She is confident and knows precisely what she wants, and is very happy to fulfil her creativity and aesthetic needs. She is also curious and open to new things. The range of possibilities the virtual handbag studio offers is attested to by the fact that in the last year or so since the studio opened, there has never been an order for 100% the same handbag. "This also shows the level of creativity – given the opportunity to create something unique, we will choose take that opportunity," – maintains Zane.

The company's main asset is its people – without a great team even the best idea will fall flat. Experienced and professional people in their fields contribute to all the ARTBAG operational spheres – starting from design issues to accounting and



www.artbag.lv



management, to the fundamentally important procurement of financing. Through assessing offers and opportunities from various institutions, ARTBAG has, in two years time, attracted an investment from various foundations of more than 20 000 lats.

Photos: Kaspars Goba



Photo: Renārs Koris

BRAIN GAMES

SELLING THE JOY OF GAMES

Idea: board game distribution

Idea originators: Pāvils Jurjāns, Egils Grasmanis

Birth of idea: 2004

Store opening: 2007

Employees: 6 in Latvia, 6 in Estonia



www.brain-games.com

www.ludo.lv

www.ludo.ee

"It all started when a friend got an American version of Settlers of Catan. We began playing one evening and got so carried away that we played 24 hours straight, and even missed work," – this story could come from any board games fan, but in this case it's the story of the start of the most serious board game distribution business in Latvia. Brain Games' owner Egils Grasmanis continues: "The game was a positive addiction, and we thought that if it worked for us, it will work for others. The

The game showed that the joy of gaming is alive and well in the Baltics.

game opened up a whole movement and showed us that passion and the joy of gaming is alive and well in the Baltics."

Brain Games, formerly Prāta Spēles, began by wholesaling a single game in book stores and supermarkets in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Now that distribution has expanded, the name has been changed for international appeal, and there are companies and games stores in Riga, Tallinn and Tartu (small, creative oases where one can not only buy games, but also try them out on the spot, rent them, and join in gaming nights), and the scope of available games is in the hundreds. The Settlers of Catan championship in Latvia organized by Brain Games had more than 100 players last year; moreover, the 2007 Latvian

champion became the world champion. "The game was invented in 1995 and was a trail-blazer for the unpredicted popularity of board games around the world. The best thing is that it not only invokes passion, but also the joy of being together; it makes you think, and creates a feeling of time well spent," stresses Egils.

From all the games Brain Games distributes in Latvia, the most popular is still Settlers of Catan, followed by Carcassonne and Saboteur, which is surprising not only to the distributors, but also to the creators in Germany – the small game about dwarves that allows one to take on various roles, to find within oneself the trickster and con artist, turned out to be perfect for the Latvian public; the next instalment that makes the game "even crazier" just came out.

In Egils' opinion, their obsession and enthusiasm as well as that of other players is what has allowed them to keep working even through hard times: "The difficult start, the crisis, other conditions, could have easily sunk our enterprise. However, each new achievement and accomplishment was a push forward. If everything turns out as hoped, this will be a big year for us – we hope to debut our original products, as what we've long been waiting for is finally happening – authors with ideas for games are coming to us." Pirmā Bezdelīga (The First Swallow) – a



game about the most popular Latvian hockey team, the Riga Dinamo – was selling in unprecedented volumes within the first four months. We expect 5-6 more Latvian-authored games to come out this year, which will then also be adapted for other countries. This year's other trend is classic board games (Riču-račs, Circus, checkers, et al.), with great emphasis on quality and packaging design.



Photos: Kaspars Gobas

DD STUDIO

DIGITAL MEDIA IN AN ANALOGUE CONTEXT



www.dd.lv

Idea: digital stories for the contemporary person

Idea originator: Jānis Mitrēvics

Origin of idea: around 2000

Employees: approx. 10, up to 50 for special projects

21st century stories for digital technology users – is how Dd Studio describes their services, stressing that their original museum exhibition and website design niche has now expanded to a full range of design services. The studio is still strongly labelled by their museum connection, which pleases them (see, for example, <http://muzejs.ventspils.lv>, <http://www.lmsmuzejs.lv>, <http://www.rigamuz.lv/km>, et al.).

“It all began more than ten years ago through a cocktail of coincidence and natural progres-

It's more important for us how we make something than what. We make sure that everything has a purpose in being where it is.

sion,” recalls Dd Studio creative director Jānis Mitrēvics. “A great team evolved while creating a concept for the Jānis Rozentāls Riga Art High School's new media model, so we established a company and people stayed on – we worked so well together.

The Dd Studio idea was simple – put to use the new technologies springing up at the time in creating a diverse range of design, and to incorporate them into the multi-faceted elements of the design language. The studio's first project was to create expositions (including digital ones), for the Ventspils Museum. Jānis: “I think we won the competition due to

our offer to use new technology in the expositions. That was a hot, new thing at the time, and moreover, the ambitions of the Ventspils' representatives of “we need the best in the world”, coincided with ours.

Dd Studio ambitions are realized by executing visually and technologically descriptive expositions, presentations, biographic and other multi-media CD projects, by recruiting the best specialists from specific fields, and by creating their own “personal method”. When asked to list work that Dd Studio is proud of, the creative director describes the studio's work principle: to try not to fuse a great artist and great programmer into one person, but rather to separate the two, allowing each to excel in their field; to not just “make a digital presentation”, but to form a missive

that creates a complete overview of the object, exhibition, or person by using text, imagery, sound, video, historical information and digital technology. Jānis continues: “It's more important for us how we make something than what. This also refers to smaller projects.

Digital media - for example, a computer containing a presentation in an exhibition booth cannot exist without an analogue context – the computer has to be placed somewhere, it has certain dimensions and a goal is to be achieved with the presentation, et al. countless nuances. We make sure that any action and object has a purpose in being where it is.”



The studio's methodology and work is highly regarded in Latvia as well as abroad – awards include the Artists' Union of Latvia annual award for the Ventspils Museum of History exposition's visual image creation (2001), special award at the FIAMP festival for the Jūrmala City Museum digital exposition (2007), Grand Prix at the FIAMP festival in the multi-media CD/DVD category for the Latvian Popular Front multi-media programme (2011), et al.

Photos: Kaspars Gobas, Valdis Ceļmiņš, Reinis Dzudzilo





DRAUGIEM.LV

CONNECTING FRIENDSHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

Idea: a virtual meeting place

Idea originators: Lauris Liberts, Agris Tamanis

Origin of idea: 2004

Employees: approx. 100

Users: 1.2 million registered users, 500 000 daily visits to the site

The success story of draugiem.lv is one of the most popular in Latvia: the actions of two people and one programmer made friends of all of Latvia and Latvians living throughout the world, their friends, relatives and acquaintances in record time – within seven years the draugiem.lv group has grown and, more importantly, with more than a million registered users it has become the most-visited Latvian website.

Draugiem.lv is a virtual meeting place – a friend registers, invites other friends, they invite other friends, etc. As explained by draugiem.lv spokesperson Jānis Palkavnieks, the portal's idea owners had knocked about other ideas and the idea of a virtual platform

After 10 000+ new registered users daily and constant server capacity increases, the draugiem.lv success story spread.

for connecting people turned out to have the most resonance and viability. What's noteworthy – draugiem.lv was created literally at the same time as the American giant Facebook, and the competition between the two for users has been in place since day one. "After 10 000+ new registered users daily and constant server capacity increases, the draugiem.lv success story spread and several copycat attempts were made, but they didn't last. That once again proves that stealing a

bare bones idea doesn't work if you're not capable of carry through," asserts Jānis.

The portal embodies contemporary technological possibilities – we, who in reality shy away from addressing strangers or people we haven't seen for a long time, do so quickly through the internet and without problem. Jānis continues: "To log onto draugi means to come home – to put on those comfy old pants and slippers and affix a photo of granny on the wall."

The portal's success stories include thousands of couples who met through draugiem.lv and are now raising kids, people who have found relatives on the other side of the world, people who have found former teachers, found help, work, a solution to a problem, the like-minded, formed interest groups and organized events. And the portal is no longer solo – the draugiem.lv group now contains 17 various enterprises and projects, including the modern TV platform draugiem.tv, Gudrās mājas [Smart Home] technology company istabai.lv, the advertising service zip.lv, the car park management solutions mapon.lv, social media monitoring and management tool prodesk.lv, et al. New ideas are continually forming in the group's laboratory, and one of their motivators is the motto – "Mistakes are allowed!" If an idea seems good there is an attempt to jump start it, and if it doesn't work out it's mercilessly

shut down and then it's on to the next one. No business can succeed these days without creativity, and that is an obligatory prerequisite for each employee at draugiem.lv, from the administrator to the programmer – everyone has to think of the best way to do their job. Jānis: "We have a kind of staff unit as our nanny – she sees to it that we're all doing well, that we don't worry about what to eat and drink today, but only about our work. She too has to be creative – how else can she please us spoiled ones?"



www.draugiem.lv/company



Photos: Alvis Rozenbergs



Reynsi (Reinis Sējāns)
Šipsi (Jānis Šipkēvics jr.)

INSTRUMENTI

PLAYING WITH INSTRUMENTS AND VOICES

Idea: searching for beautiful sounds

Idea originators: Jānis Šipkēvics jr., Reinis Sējāns

Origin of idea: around 2007

Employees: a fluctuating number

Legend has it: Instrumenti is a multi-national collective, created by good friends who met several years ago in Reykjavik while studying physics in the ERASMUS student exchange programme.

Instrumenti is not a set ensemble – it changes with every performance or musical project. The group's core is made up of two academically educated Latvians – Šipsi (Jānis Šipkēvics Jr.) and Reynsi (Reinis Sējāns). Though Instrumenti have a fairly short biography, the group is currently the freshest phenomenon on the Latvian pop-music scene due to their self-ironic visual missive and vocally-generated “beautiful sounds”.

The Instrumenti sound is a fusion of indie pop and experimental electronic music, and the vocal amplitude falls within the boundaries from beat-box to contra-tenor. Šipsi (vocals / keyboard) is one of the most-impressive falsettos in contemporary Latvian music, while Reynsi (percussion / keyboard / vocals) has a talent for creating rich, warm sounds. Instrumenti are one of the most-in-demand performers from the Baltics – the group opened for James Blunt on The Whale Watching Tour, and have participated in festivals in the Baltics and Europe: Europavox, Bergenfest, Positivus Festival, Be2Gether, Sound of the Forest et.al, and have fans in Europe, Russia, China, Japan and the USA.

Their creativity, natural wit and professional demeanour in any given public forum – outdoor festivals, on the opera stage accompanied by a chamber orchestra, in an intimate club concert setting, at social events, and in their choice of a website interface, et. al. – is characteristic of the group. In combination with the fine balancing between visual and musical styles and genres, it is all part and parcel of the original stage presence of Instrumenti. It's possible to recognize Instrumenti by the fact that they are unrecognizable – in white panda masks, with over-sized, face-covering wigs, and dandy suits.

2011 was a heady year for Instrumenti: their debut album TRU was recorded in Reykjavik at Valgeir Sigurðsson's Greenhouse Studio, which is where Sigur Rós, Björk and Jónsi have also recorded. At the end of the year the group set out on a cross-Latvia tour with an impressive concert programme enhanced by cohesive staging and compelling video-projections. Their programme attracted listeners in numbers similar to international music stars in terms of audience sizes.

Instrumenti plan to create their own sound recording studio – Tru Music Studio, which they hope will be a centre for creative expression for ambitious professionals and colleagues from various creative spheres.



It's possible to recognize Instrumenti by the fact that they are unrecognizable.



Photos: Sandis Vāgners

NEW RIGA THEATRE

NEW THEATRE LANGUAGE

Idea: theatre for a thinking audience

Idea originators: Juris Rijnieks, Alvis Hermanis

Birth of idea: 1992

Employees: 97 (22 actors, 3 directors, administrative and technical staff)

Viewers per season: averaging 107 000

From its founding in 1992, beginning with Alvis Hermanis' directed *Kā lēna un mierīga upe ir atgriešanās*, the New Riga Theatre (JRT) has positioned itself on a new path - in terms of theatrical language and content, and in attitude towards the audience. The uniqueness of the JRT is the contemporary interpretation of classics, and a special interest in the people of Latvia. The theatre's artistic direction was initially shaped by Juris Rijnieks, but Alvis Hermanis took over in 1997 and continues on today.

Under the leadership of Alvis Hermanis performances are created as the result of collective collaboration, with the most talented actors of their generations studying

It is theatre for a thinking audience.

fellow humans: the documentary mode is interlaced with the actor's personality and artistic standards, lending a new quality to the performance. In a quantity, stress and information era, JRT performances attest to humanity, vitality and emotions, seeking a way back to harmony and simplicity. It is theatre for a thinking audience, neither providing answers nor the lull of mindlessness, but rather asking the audience to live and think along with the performance. JRT viewers do not fear painful themes or long running times - some performances are four hours long.

The JRT experiments with material as well as space, playing anywhere - in the large 470-seat theatre, the small 80-seat *Minūte* theatre, in the theatre's museum or elsewhere. Animals or birds are present onstage if the play's content requires it, and ice, sand, music and lighting all become part of the performance.

A serious approach and marked interest in the people of Latvia has attracted not only local viewers, but also the interest of the theatre world at large. On the average JRT gives some 500 performances per year, 90 of those in various international theatre festivals, gaining world class recognition and awards. In the last few years the JRT has performed in the many significant international festivals: Edinburgh Festival (UK, 2006), Festival d' Avignon (France, 2008), Kunstfestivaldesarts (Brussels, Belgium, 2004, 2007), Wiener Festwochen (Vienna, Austria, 2005, 2007), Kontakt (Torun, Poland, 1994, 1997, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010), Golden Mask (Moscow, Russia, 2007, 2010), and many others.

The theatre's financing includes state funding and the support of various cultural foundations and sponsors. Diverse forms of collaboration are created in order to attract viewers, to the benefit of all three sides involved - the audiences, the theatre, and the benefactors.



Photos: Girts Mālderis



VLADIMIR LESCHIOV, ANIMATION STUDIO LUNOHOD

LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS IN ANIMATION

Idea: to discover new potential in animation

Idea originator: Vladimirs Leščovs

Birth of idea: first film 1995 -1996

Idea for a studio: 1998 - 1999

Employees: 2, more hired for separate projects

"In 1970, for the first time in the history of mankind, the Soviet lunar rover Lunohod-1 executed a remarkable journey across the surface of the moon. That same year I took my first steps, discovering planet Earth. Since then I have shared my impressions of this experience, creating animation films, paintings and illustrations." – so begins the introduction on the website of one of the most internationally-known Latvian animators, Vladimir Leschiov, and his animation studio LUNOHOD.

Vladimir's animation films, which can hardly be called simply cartoons, are characteristically ascetic in form and multi-layered in content, and require more than one viewing to take in the film's many undercurrents. These animated stories – Grandad's Honey, Insomnia, Lost in Snow, Wings and Oars, et al. – have been to film festivals all over the world and received numerous awards, the most notable being: award for best debut at the Animafest Zagreb in Croatia, three special awards at the International Animation Festival Hiroshima, Japan, awards for best animation film at the Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival in France, and the Short Film Festival Leipzig in Germany.

Vladimir Leschiov has an artist's education and decided to turn to animation after becoming interested in the possibility of bringing "drawings" to life. "Miracles take

place around us every day, only we don't pay any attention. I see and want to share with others – the way I sense and see the world," says Vladimir, emphasizing that the maximum goes into each frame – visual, literary, associative, the sub-conscious, et al., that is why the time needed for an animation master to create a film is so varied: Bill Plympton makes a feature in a year, but Yuri Norstein has been making The Overcoat for over 20 years. Leschiov's filmmaking process is somewhere in the middle – for example, Wings and Oars was made in 2 years, moreover, while working solo, functioning as director, artist and producer.

"My animation work is like a laboratory experiment – I'm constantly learning. Someone said that the possibilities in animation are untapped, there is still much that remains hidden. It's interesting for me to seek them out. My problem is that perhaps I'm not as interested in great stories (they've already been written by Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky), and no so much in genre (genres have also been devised), but rather in a new level of story-telling – new heights that reveal something novel with each viewing of the film, and you find yourself so far immersed in the characters that you have the feeling that you can influence the action," continues Vladimir, thinking about his next film – a story about a person for whom all that is most strange and significant is connected to rainy days...



My animation work is like a laboratory experiment – I'm constantly learning.



Photos: Kaspars Gobas

PUBLISHING HOUSE LIELS UN MAZS (BIG AND SMALL)

HOW BIG IS THE LITTLE ONE?

Idea: big attention to literature for the small

Idea originators: Inese Zandere, Alīse Nīgale un Ūna Laukmane

Origin of idea: Ineses Zandere's collection of poems innies and outies

Founding of the publishing house: 2004

Employees: the owners and one other worker

The publishing house Big and Small was founded eight years ago and is still unique within the Latvian publishing field for several reasons: for publishing only children's literature, upholding equally strict artistic and content criteria, and exuding a respectful attitude towards small readers, with the view that children are drawn to more than an overabundance of colours and shimmering sparkles with scant specks of text.

As told by publishing house director Alise Nigale, "The beginning of operations was Inese Zandere's collection of poems innies and outies, featuring Ūna Laukmane's

Readers cannot learn to want something that has never been offered to them.

specially created textile-illustrations. The book sold out quickly, the publishers at the time were no longer in business, and the many questions from readers asking if the book would ever be available again prompted the authors to establish their own publishing house, and to seriously turn to distributing children's literature."

One of the principles that Big and Small follows is that readers cannot learn to want something that has never been offered to them, that's why Big and Small

offers an assortment and has no fear of tackling projects that might otherwise be deemed "not commercially viable".

The publishing house Big and Small has set these principles:

To develop Latvian children's literature and book art, and publish good translations.

Not to cultivate one specific trend, but aim to broaden the territory of literary and visual taste.

To learn to want something new; to create ripples in the surrounding milieu of children's literature and book art, as well as in theatre, animation and music.

To provide opportunity, alternatives, choice, and movement.

To expand the scope of literary perception – with audio books, animation, music, multi-media

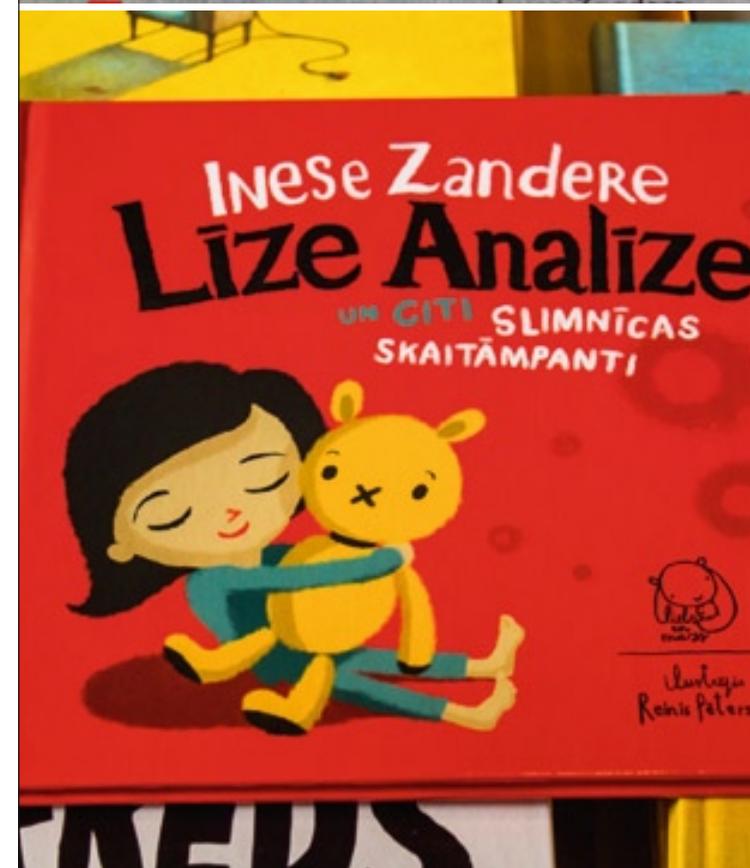
projects, theatre performances, games and book festivals.

To involve benefactors in the process of children's book publishing, guaranteeing prices that make quality books accessible to readers.

Big and Small has been recognized in Latvia and abroad – since its founding, many of the book authors and artists have been nominated and received various prestigious awards in literature, book art, and animation.



Photos: Dāvis Drazdovskis



LATVIAN NATIONAL OPERA

OPEN TO THE WORLD, OPEN TO THE NEW

Idea: opera and ballet development in Latvia; nurturing existing and new talent
Attendees per season: 154 209 (2011)
Employees: 574

The Latvian National Opera (LNO) is the only opera and ballet institution in Latvia that executes a state opera function and fosters the development of the opera and ballet genre in Latvia. The Latvian National Ballet is the only professional troupe of its kind in Latvia.

The origin of the LNO was at the end of the 19th century, but the theatre itself was founded not long after the proclamation of independence on November 18th, 1918.

The LNO began afresh in the 1990s after Andrejs Žagars became the director. He is a new type of leader who, together with his colleagues, has achieved high artistic standards and the inclusion of the LNO into European and global opera circles. Furthermore, the LNO has been the first stepping stone in the careers of the now internationally-known, exceptional opera soloists: Elīna Garanča, Kristīne Opolais, Maija Kovaļevska, Marina Rebeka, Inga Kalna, Inese Galante, Aleksandrs Antoņenko, Egils Siliņš, conductor Andris Nelsons, as well as international ballet stars Mikhail Baryshnikov, Māris Liepa and Alexander Godunov.

The LNO has a wide repertoire – some 200 opera and ballet performances are performed each season, including on average 6 new productions, as well as symphonic and chamber music concerts. Contemporary forms of expression explored in the staging of classic and romantic operas and ballets is characteristic of the LNO – the significance of these attempts is

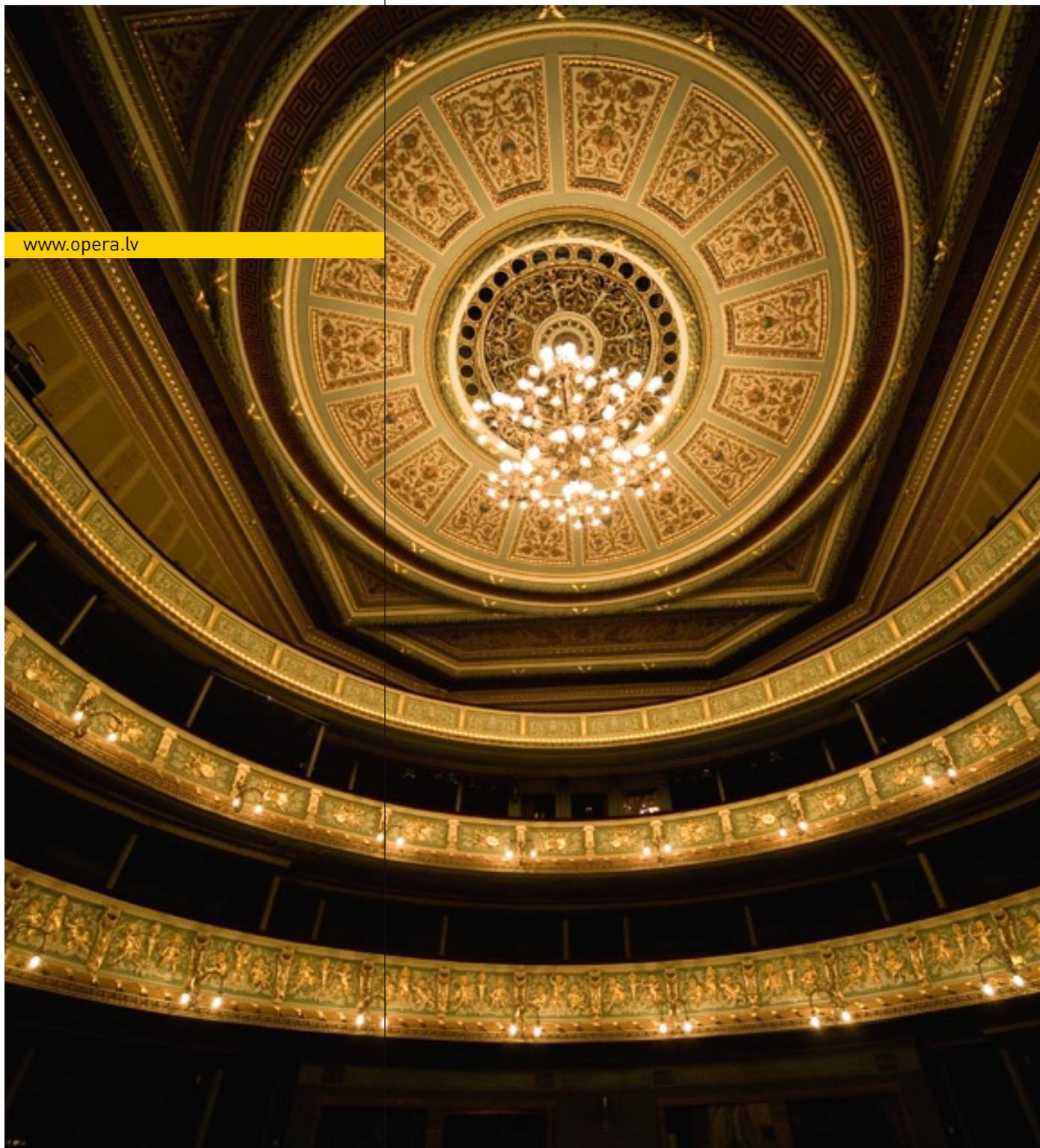
attested to by the regular discussions amongst cultural circles and the public, where the mainly traditional versus fresh interpretation preferences clash.

The theatre's global links are indicated by the many guest performances and participation in international festivals, wide-ranging and regular collaboration with internationally recognized guest artists, conductors, choreographers and directors, as well as the annual Riga Opera Festival (established in 1998), which brings together opera fans and interested parties from all over the world, delighting them with the best of the season in both opera and ballet.

Great significance is placed on the search for new talent, and also the nurturing of existing talent vis-à-vis new productions and repertoire.

The LNO has created a special educational programme for viewers offering both the young and old a chance to learn about the opera performance production process, and to produce their own operatic story. The programme also features excursions through the unseen labyrinths of the "White House", revealing the unknown. Another exceptional aspect of the LNO is its home – the beautiful, neo-classical style building erected in 1863 for the Riga German Theatre that has, over the course of time, been subjected to reconstruction and rebuilding. It now outwardly showcases the connection between cultural heritage and contemporary needs.

www.opera.lv



NABAKLAB

A GENRE-FREE CLUB

Idea: a not-so-commercial music club
Idea originators: Radio Naba + Bufete Gauja
Birth of idea: 2009
Club opening: 2010
Employees: approx. 13
Number of patrons per year: approx. 50 000

Once upon a time in the last century, proprietor and benefactor Kristaps Morbergs built a beautiful building on the boulevard as a residence for himself and esteemed members of the arts, politics and other spheres. The building also housed a bakery, winery, medal atelier; et al. Mr. Morbergs fostered a selfless goal – to help others gain higher education, which is why he left his fortune to the University of Latvia. At the beginning of this century, this very building became

NABAKLAB operations are multi-faceted: concerts, exhibitions, performances, lectures, readings, music recordings, live broadcasts, sound recordings, fashion and

The creative possibilities bring to mind those as-yet-uncovered modes of expression.

other useful object workshops – all to attract a multi-faceted public, aged 18 – 40+. The student-style atmosphere and creative possibilities bring to mind those as-yet-uncovered modes of expression. The club's repertoire leans towards the alternative (the distinct and non-standard); nevertheless, "we don't have affiliation to any one genre, and never refuse quality offers," states NABAKLAB programme manager Edgars Āboliņš. "We're not a concert hall, and we want people to return again and again, that's why we want to buy a person's interest by offering normal prices rather than the stripping-you-bare kind."

The club regularly hosts exhibitions and concerts as well as more unconventional activities. As Edgars attests, "we want to be one of those places where things happen, that's why we regularly submit applications to festivals like the Staro Riga Festival of Light, Museum Night, and White Nights." As a gesture of respect to the building's

constructor and benefactor, the club's large hall is named Morbergs, while the smaller hall is named after his wife, Auguste. The main bar is named after the Freedom Monument's Milda – sitting at the bar one can look upon Milda 24/7. A nugget of the Soviet era – the Bufete Gauja – dwells

deep in the club's interior. The club is also open to the great outdoors – the courtyard, ensconced by beautiful old, high walls, is available for use during the better months of the year.

Besides the events, the club is also involved in organizing various excursions and festivals, further varying its chances for expression and profit. Look for the NABAKLAB tent or bar at the festivals LabaDaba and SummerSound – NABAKLAB is one of the organizers!



Photos: Dāvis Drazdovskis

the new home of NABAKLAB – a mid-sized good sound quality music club, with roots in the University of Latvia radio – Radio Naba, which attempts to bring non-commercial music and non-standard contemporary global views to the people.

ART MUSEUM RIGA BOURSE

A HARMONIC CULTURAL LOCALE

Idea: a museum as a cultural meeting place

Idea originator: Daiga Upeniece and the creative team

Birth of idea: 2002

Employees: 37 (including 20 specialists)

Number of patrons in 4 months: 68 000

The Art Museum Riga Bourse, formally the Museum of Foreign Art, began its second incarnation in a new space with renewed vigour on August 20, 2011. This was justifiably viewed as one of the most important cultural events in Latvia not just last year, but in recent times. As recalls Museum Director Daiga Upeniece: The idea for a new space for the museum originated some 10 years ago. In order for the museum to yield a profit and be included into the cultural tourism circuit, small modifications to expositions wasn't enough – the museum had to undergo cardinal changes. As the museum had outgrown the space in the Riga Castle we looked at other possibilities, simultaneously thinking about how we envisioned the new museum. We recognized that the Riga Bourse building – a grand, 18th century Venetian-style palazzo – a cultural icon in itself, could provide a full-service venue for patrons: besides art exhibitions there are conference halls, reading rooms, graphics offices, a school for children, a restaurant, café, souvenir shop, et al. We wanted to avoid a situation wherein someone comes to the museum, grows tired, and then heads out to look for somewhere to rest. This is a setting where everything desirable is under one roof – for one to feel good in an absolutely harmonic environment.

We positioned the museum as a cultural meeting place, meaning not only – here we meet, shake hands and depart – but as per the wish of the Art Museum Riga Bourse and partners to foster interest in cultural events and propel patrons towards creativity through joint projects.

It was nice to sense these thoughts evolving in interesting directions. For example, professions unrelated to culture but in themselves creative and forward-thinking (lawyers, pharmacists, doctors), came in wishing to hold seminars and conferences, and to utilize the full-service experience – this is a fine place to meet and focus on professional growth, it's an aesthetic setting equipped with modern technology, offering coffee breaks and lunch, and also a place where one can experience custom-designed cultural programmes, or to browse the exhibits. Concerts are also hosted.

The museum's development – the restoration and reconstruction of the building and the renewal and expansion of the museum's collection – required a sizable monetary investment; therefore it had to become competitive within the European market, fostering an interest to head to Latvia and a curiosity to see what we have to offer along with others. Close collaboration with other cultural institutions is required to achieve this. The process has begun – the museum is becoming a miniature creative industry model wherein we work alongside our professional partners, mainly international ones – the LNMA (Latvian National Museum of Art) Brand Fund that runs the souvenir shop, a restaurant that can easily cater to various culinary needs, technological services that have a chance to become more innovative in partnership with the museum, etc. It's especially heartening and creatively stimulating that this process is exciting for all sides involved.



www.rigasbirza.lv



Photos: Valters Lācis, Kaspars Filips Dobrovoljskis, Dace Krūgere





Mare Mastiņa



Rolands Pēterkops

MAREUNROL'S

CLOTHING WITH A MESSAGE

Idea: high-quality clothing for individualists

Idea originators: Mare Mastiņa un Rolands Pēterkops

Origin of idea: 2002

MAREUNROL'S was established in 2002 by fashion designers Mārīte Mastiņa and Rolands Pēterkops. The brand's motto: "not just clothing", states less than can be imaginable. MAREUNROL'S clothing collection and particular elements are always played out in some context, with people, accessories, installations, photographs, staging, music and a dose of the mystical. And again it is the "not just", as the seemingly surreal clothes are ready for reality: made of simple but high-quality materials for both men and women.

For MAREUNROL'S it is essential that each detail has meaning, and their goal is to create clothes that tell their own story and live their own lives. Working with photographers and other artists on MAREUNROL'S conceptual art (photographs, short films, installations), helps express the encompassing vision of the clothing.

For both designers their own personal message is of essence in creating MAREUNROL'S collections, and that also determines the end-user: MAREUNROL'S ideas and clothing appeal to people for whom individuality and self-expression is important, and for whom clothing is a testament of their personality and attitude.

MAREUNROL'S is one of the most internationally recognized Latvian fashion brands, and as they themselves state: "up

until now the various acknowledgements and awards have been more for our own personal excitement and interest in seeing how far we can take our ideas without investing excessive amounts in the process. Any recognition coming from leading fashion and art representatives attests to us that we are interesting and able to compete on an international level. That inspires us to work harder and become even better."

MAREUNROL'S does not lack recognition by the mighty of the fashion world: in 2009, at the prestigious Festival International de Mode et de Photographie in Hyeres (France), the brand won the main Grand Prix L'Oreal as well as 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes – the first time in the festival's history that kind of win has occurred. There have been accomplishments in other fashion and arts events as well: at the Prague Quadrennial (Czech Republic, 2011), the Mode Biennale Arnhem (The Netherlands, 2009), Barcelona 080 (Spain, 2009), and the ITS International Talent Support young fashion designers' competition (Italy, 2007). In Latvia, for two years in a row (2006, 2007) MAREUNROL'S received the Latvian Style and Fashion award for best Latvian fashion designers. In 2006 they also won the Latvian theatre Spēlmeņu Nakts award for the best costume design. Mārīte and Rolands have also created costumes for the Latvian National Opera for which they received the L'Officiel Latvia special award in 2010.



www.mareunrols.com



Photos: Ansis Stankis, Nils Vilnis



DIZAINA STUDIJA RIJADA

CREATIVITY : ASSESSMENT = 50 : 50

Idea: an industrial design workshop and showroom

Idea originators: Rihards Funts, Ilze Jankovska

Birth of idea: 2008

Workshop opening: 2008

Employees: Rihards Funts un Zane Homka

Design is not solely meant for fanciful elitist objects – design is what we find in our homes and what we use. Designers, who are also socially active, work to create new, functional things that serve people – this was the thinking a few years ago when several like-minded designers created a design workshop. The workshop – a space in which to work together, exchange views, and create and develop design ideas that are not associated with any one material or direction, but rather in as broad a work range as possible. The project Design Drive and Design Store (public events and a design object market in an urban setting) that drew the attention of other

If an object based on a great idea cannot be sold or used, then it has no point.

designers as well as the public, took place at almost the same time. RIJADA's current space in Andrejsala is a workshop, studio and showroom where one can commission a design or host various types of exhibitions amongst the award-winning and internationally regarded RIJADA design pieces.

RIJADA works with a wide range of specialists – manufacturers, craftspeople, material suppliers, technologists, et al., and the work is done in all possible dimensions. "It all flows together into a single synthesis, creating play and interplay; in emphasizing

design aesthetics there also emphasis on functionality, usefulness of materials, production possibilities, and technology. From all that comes a useful product for the end user. There is a wide scope of themes that must be grasped in producing industrial design, beginning with the characteristics of the materials, all the way to psychology and social issues. That's why it's interesting, and that's why we do what we do," states Rihards Funts, one of the owners of RIJADA.

The most visible RIJADA product line is toys, which also garners the strongest interest in international exhibitions. The cardboard wolf that is a stable seat, a container and a portable guard, the wooden-legged duck woven from wattle is a place to seat a best friend or hide something precious, the round-headed wooden block family, et al. – the search for the ideal form, size and material for these toys, appropriate to the perception and desires of children, took a long time. As Rihards has discovered, "the rational side in this field is not any less important than the creative – for example, can this object be sent by post, does it fit into standard mailing sizes. The skill to continually think about if and how an object can be sold while developing an idea comes with time and experience. Also – thinking about creating a positive feeling in the end user. If an object based on a great idea cannot be sold or used, then it has no point."

www.rijada.lv



Photos: Valdis Jansons



RITUMS IVANOVS

A FACE AS A TRADEMARK

Idea: self-invented painting technique

Idea originator: Ritums Ivanovs

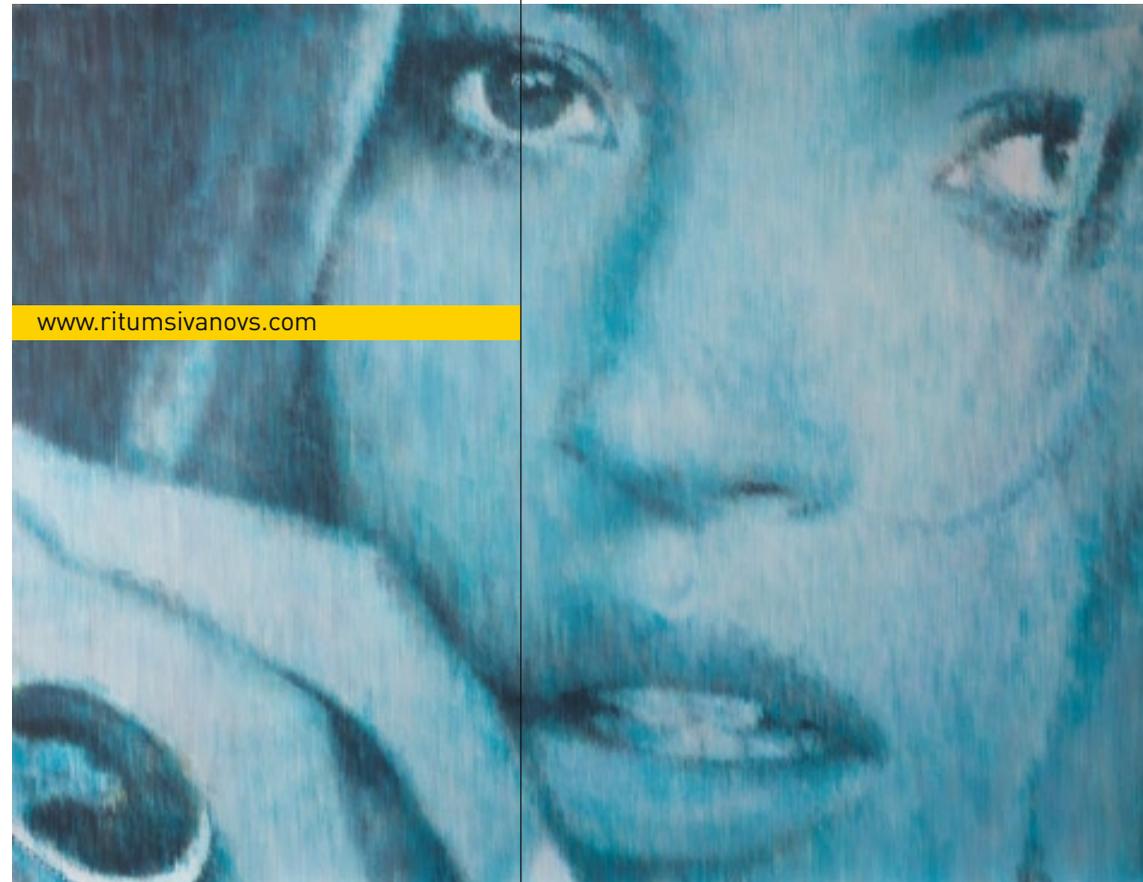
Birth of idea: in the 1990s

A human face is like a two-way mirror – it is a calling card, a mark of distinction, and it also reflects the attitude and judgement of surrounding people. Ritums Ivanovs, one of the best of his generation of painters, explores this phenomenon in his work. His original signature – a self-invented line technique – is applied in large-format works centred on popular, mass-culture faces, or other evocative visages or expressive human bodies. This and the Nordic colour gamma is what has attracted interest in Latvia, Europe, and globally. Ritums Ivanovs' successes speak for themselves: a painting named Frame 05 was sold at a Sotheby's auction in 2009, a portrait of Kate Moss was chosen for the cover of a 2010 German-made DVD film about the model.

Our face is our trademark; if you have a face like Angelina Jolie you can pretty much sell anything.

It seems that self-invented painting technique is an important and significant step, but in reality it is the result of a process. While I was studying we were isolated from Western Europe, and art history was more concentrated on classical art – contemporary art processes were not featured – that's why the education was on the whole quite classical. I needed to further my studies in America and take a practical approach in getting acquainted

KATE
2010, 153 x 200



www.ritumsivanovs.com

with contemporary art in person: through exhibitions and biennales.

Schools teach what is already there – methods, techniques, but there's nothing original, no new creativity. When you come into contact with real life, then you compare and try to extract from yourself something that is yours alone, and you begin to understand where you fit in and what you are like. In positioning yourself against everything else, you recognize where what is yours does or doesn't fit in.

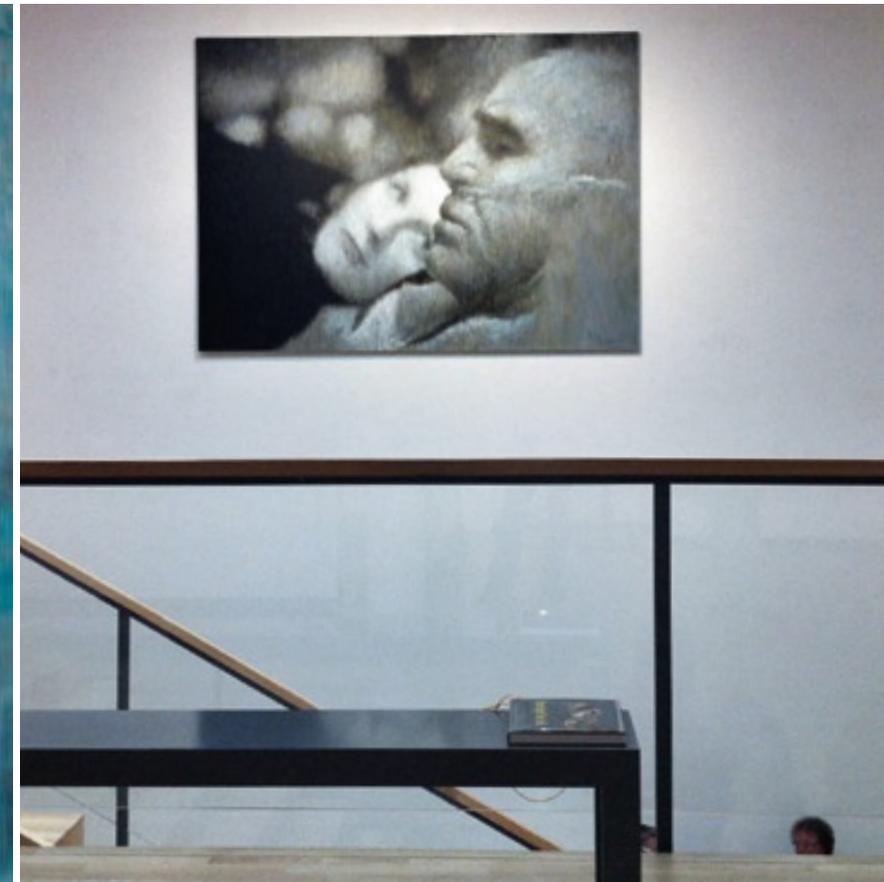
I painted, made attempts, experimented, also purely technically – by changing the paint from oil to acrylic. I wanted to work more expressively with colour and came to the conclusion that, similarly to the Impressionists, I could use strokes. I became interested in op-art, portraiture, faces, figurative art, colour distribution, throwing paint around, how colour impacts sight...the process of the fusion of these various things resulted in the self-invented technique.

I found similar stylistic traits in several artists who have their own school and followers; in getting to know them I had to cast aside their methods. One must take one's own path.

I'm interested in the face as a human's means of expression, and less so in how

popular or mass-culturally recognized it is. I think more about creating a conceptual series that addresses not so much the person as a theme; for example – beauty as a trademark. Our face is our trademark; if you have a face like Angelina Jolie you can pretty much sell anything. A face or persona can be fetishized, and can also be viewed within a specific context, conveying our own reflections on it. That's the way conceptual selection is created.

Thematically I haven't concentrated on the personal; I'm interested in the socially objective view. Scanning what is happening around, what it looks like, images that speak to me. Mass culture is my field of interest. And the human at the centre of it.



EXHIBITION
Kunsthalle Würth, 2012

LOVE DANCE
2011, 120x150



SPLENDID PALACE

THE DREAM OF A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

Idea: the art of presenting cinema

Idea originators: Vasilijš Jemeljanovs un Leonīds Falšteins

Birth of idea: early 20th century

Theatre opening: 1923

Employees: 20 or so

A cinema with a biography, a sense of pride, and a secret as well. Posh, resplendent, ambitious. Almost too elegant and refined for film screening – the most democratic of art forms, as this theatre was more suited to evening gowns and tuxedos. A Neo-Baroque facade, the Neo-Rococo style interior, the sculptural elements and ceiling art, are the building's characteristic architectural and design elements.

The Cinema Splendid Palace is one the small number remaining in Europe still operational since its opening in 1923, which has unbelievably survived the historic upheavals of the last 100 years. The story of the Splendid Palace began back when two men travelled around Europe and saw the

They built their dream of a beautiful life, creating one of the grandest cinemas in Europe.

type of space that was used for screening films, and wanted to bring the same experience – refined and elegant, to Riga. "They borrowed money to construct the building with the conviction that screening films could also be a business. And they succeeded. They built their dream of a beautiful life, creating one of the grandest cinemas in Europe." explains Ilze Saulīte-Jansone, director of the LLC Rīgas Nami Event Centres department. One of the stories surrounding

the building is that due to the building's status as a "bourgeois remnant" during the Soviet era, its name was changed to the neutral Cinema Rīga, and the film theatre Spartaks, now one of Splendid Palace's theatre spaces, was built in front of it to render its fancy façade less conspicuous. "We can't change our history and that's why we decided against erasing the unpleasant episodes from the building's past, but rather emphasized them to pique the interest of visitors to the city", continues Ilze Saulīte-Jansone.

The Splendid Palace repertoire features European art-house and festival films, as well as Latvian-made films. It is the only cinema in the city with three theatres. The film repertoire is supplemented by author nights, hosted by film historians, while cross-cultural ties are strengthened by collaboration with foreign embassies and cultural institutions in the presenting of films from specific countries. The Splendid Palace is also a familiar spot for film festival events – including the Lielais Kristaps National Film Awards as well as the international film festivals Arsenāls and the Baltic Pearl. Since LLC Rīgas Nami took over control of the building its operations have expanded to include various forms of entertainment: besides film, there are also live-translations from European opera houses, theatre performances, concerts, corporate events, seminars and conferences.



www.splendidpalace.lv



The Splendid Palace speaks to visitors to Riga, showcasing the splendid folks of the city. Ilze Saulīte-Jansone continues: "Riga has always been a multi-cultural and multitalented city, rich with the talent of its inhabitants. We decided to make this fact known to others by creating a photo gallery of portraits of the Riga Born, World Famous. The other thing that we want to showcase is our history – we hold 6 screenings per day of the 30-min. documentary film, Riga Story, as a teaser to encourage getting to know Riga better."



Photos: Kaspars Gobas

UPE TUVIEM UN TĀLIEM

THE PAST AND PRESENT

Idea: Latvian music recordings for adults and children

Idea originator: Iveta Mielava

Origin of idea: 2004

Employees: permanent – 3, musician Ilga Reizniece participates in recordings

The music recordings publisher Upe tuviem un tāliem stands apart with its considerate and consequently publishable selection of material – classic and traditional Latvian music, as well as children’s music. The concept “tuviem un tāliem” (for those closer and further away) is not only in reference to the audience, but also a reflection on “those closer” (meaning today), and “those further away” (from the valuable past) - Latvian musicians whose contributions is the foundation of modern-day Latvian music. Launched during

The challenge in creating this sort of material will always be greater.

a time when the nation was experiencing relative prosperity and music recordings were in demand, the publishing house now occupies a stable spot within the Latvian music field. From the more than 70 CDs and DVDs in the publishing house’s catalogue, half have been reissued multiple times.

“In choosing this niche I was well aware that retail levels for these recordings would be a lot less than for pop music, however, there also wouldn’t be any issues of one-time-only hits. The challenge in creating this sort of material will always be greater and I needed to avoid the routine, therefore – it was bound to be interesting and that was important to me,” says Iveta Mielava, head of the publishing house.

Iveta studied at the Riga Applied Arts High School as well as the Latvian Academy of Art, so she also looks after the visual image of the recordings. She designs the disc and cover art thus effecting her creative ability, while also creating a conceptually unified product as a point of additional information for the consumer.

Iveta: “The foundation of publishing is a creative view on all the elements. For example, we imagine a listener of classical music to be someone for whom CD content is important, but who is indifferent to the visual design. When I was designing for the Latvian National Symphony and the Liepaja Symphony

Orchestra, I strove to break that stereotype and designed the recordings as photo albums of the respective eras, with some 40 photos and descriptions in each. Jānis Ivanovs’ album was in a 1950s style, while the Romualds Kalsons’ recording was a greeting from the 1970s. The same with recordings for children – for example, the sleeve for the Vecīša cimdiņš CD (Old Man’s Mitten) was a knitted mitten, and for the Muzikantu pasakas CD it was a harmonica.”

Audio books are an additional direction at Upe tuviem un tāliem, and another way the publishing house continues on the path of preserving Latvian culture: a double album of poems of one of the most exceptional 20th century Latvian poets, Aleksandrs Čāks, has

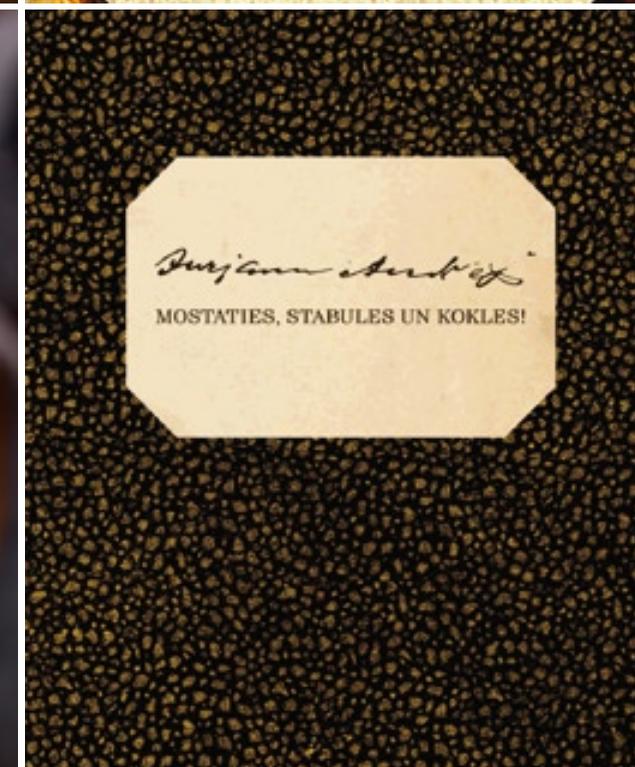
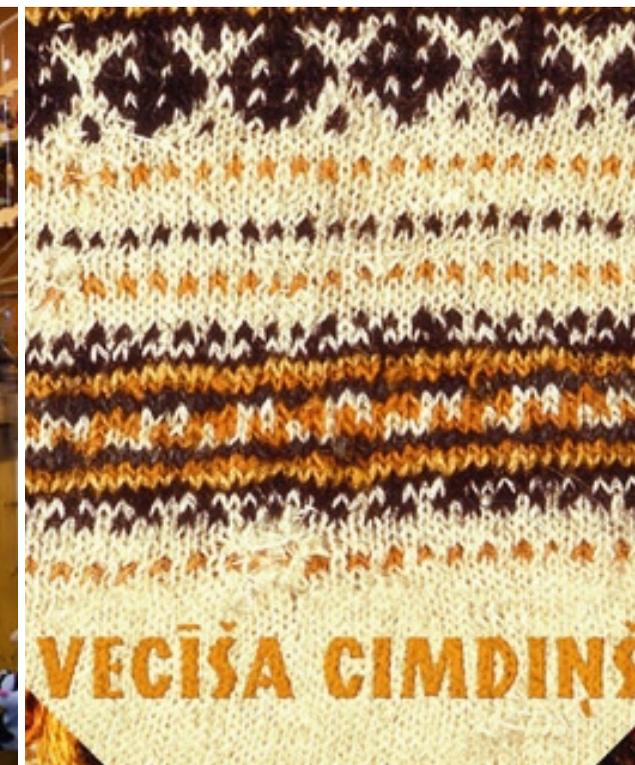


been released, and later this year discs dedicated to the creative accomplishments of poets Ojārs Vācietis, Imants Ziedonis, and actress Vera Singajevska will be released.

Iveta Mielava has been running the folk music store Upe in the Old Town for 12 years – it’s a place where one can purchase music recordings along with traditional musical instruments and sound games from various nations.



Photos: Kaspars Goba



ZAIGAS GAILES BIROJS

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE HISTORIC AND THE CONTEMPORARY

Idea: an architecture office for restoration and renovation

Idea originator: Zaiga Gaile

Birth of idea: 1992

Employees: 8

“Our office profile is about everything that starts with “re”: reconstruction, restoration, rehabilitation, re-humanization. We work with architectural heritage, and I it’s so very interesting – to prime a historical object to the smallest nuance and identify what I like and can use and how an old building can be inhabited by modern people,” explains architect Zaiga Gaile. Her work in the architectural and design milieu in Riga stands out with its tasteful restraint and elegance, as well as its thought-out functionality.

Zaiga Gaile’s name is closely linked to several building ensembles. “Bergs Bazaar (an arcade block in the centre of Riga originally built during the first independence, now restored) is one of my biggest clients – we have lived and breathed together for 20 years, almost like a family,”

It’s so very interesting – to prime a historical object to the smallest nuance and identify what I like and can use.

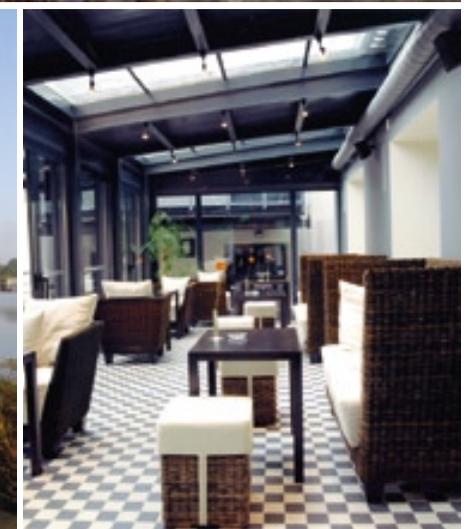
continues Zaiga Gaile. Bergs Bazaar has been restored respecting the original layout and concept, and is now an oasis of calm in the hectic city centre. The Bazaar also includes Hotel Bergs with its perpetual circle of clients, and the hotel’s countryside residence, the Rumene Manor, wherein the utilization of exceptional natural materials and finishes and the high quality work signals a long duration of service.

The other building ensemble is on an island in the middle of the River Daugava – Ķīpsala – that was historically inhabited by fishermen and port workers. The restoration of large and small wooden houses and the remodeling of a former industrial corpus and barracks into contemporary apartments, has propelled Ķīpsala from a run-down place destined to obscurity into a tidy, modern environment with a singular geography – rural idyll, a view of the river and the port, and 10 minutes from the capital.

Zaiga Gaile’s public activities are just as well known – she is one of the patrons of the unique wooden architecture of Riga. The map of Riga on her office wall is dotted with red flags marking known wooden buildings. Europa Nostra (EN) representatives enthusiastically received the century-old buildings that miraculously withstood the Soviet era when they first saw them more than ten years ago, and they offered to hold the organization’s conference in Riga. Through that event, EN member organization Latvia Nostra, founded by Zaiga Gaile, attracted not only the attention of international experts, but also of the local public, starting a whole movement to protect this unique part of Latvian heritage. Now the outwardly fragile, romantically enveloped wooden structures with diverse biographies around Riga are regaining their original beauty, the most noticeable being a 24 building ensemble on Kalnciema Street, the Ķīpsala buildings, and



www.zgb.lv



Photos: Ainārs Meiers, Ilgvars Gradovskis

LATVIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM BRAND FUND

ARTWORK WITH A STORY

Idea: to raise awareness of the wealth of artwork in the National Museum of Art through souvenirs

Idea originators: Inese Pētersone, Daina Vītoliņa, Laila Baumane and Vanda Dauksta

Birth of idea: 2009

Store opening: 2010

Employees: 4 + 7 sales people

If one has an idea, and once they begin to fulfil it they learn that someone else is also pursuing the same idea, would they view that as competition? No – rather as a potential business partner! This is the way the story began of four enthusiasts who came up with the idea of an artwork-based souvenir shop more or less at the same time: Inese Pētersone and Daina Vītoliņa

If one has an idea, and once they begin to fulfil it they learn that someone else is also pursuing the same idea, would they view that as competition? No – rather as a potential business partner!

from the Design Information Centre, cultural project manager Laila Baumane, and Vanda Dauksta, who moved to Latvia from Chicago where she managed an art gallery, and wished to continue working in her field.

The idea that the museum should offer its patrons a chance to purchase something that will serve as a reminder of an exhibition, a specific piece of art, an artist or era, has floated around the Latvian National Museum of Art (LNMA) for a long while. Finally, the doers were found to make the idea happen. In creating the LNMA Brand Fund, it was clear that the souvenirs

had to conform to high-standards in terms of tastefulness, content and availability. A story created by a specialist is attached to each souvenir, and that is the souvenir's added value. This fulfils another of the Brand Fund's goals – to inform and educate.

The LNMA structure is comprised of five separate museums: the large main art museum, the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design, the Exhibition Hall Arsenāls, the Museum of Romans Suta and Alexandra Belcova, and The Art Museum Riga Bourse, together containing numerically tens of thousands of the nation's artistic wealth. In order for this wealth to be uncovered and shown to the world while also heralding Latvia,

its history and arts processes, the Brand Fund's initiative group brainstormed on ideas and recruited Latvian craftspeople, designers, artists and manufacturers to produce souvenirs, and also looked for financing. Another benefit of art reproductions – they are much easier to transport and deliver, and as such serve to bring the art to those further away from the capital.

The Brand Fund involves experts from various fields in executing their ideas, and the result is attractive art objects that, together with other events connected to specific exhibitions at the museum, form

www.artmuseumshop.lv



a wide context around a theme, object or artist. For example, for the Riga Bourse opening event the Brand Fund gifted the museum with a new collection of postage stamps to be presented with envelopes and the special seal. For the exhibition of the 20th century "Riga dandy" Kārlis Padeģs, a collaboration with young designers resulted in shirts that generated resonance on Internet fashion blogs. With these qualitative cultural souvenirs as the intermediary, an image of Latvia as a tradition-rich cultural nation is being shaped, and awareness of the artistic wealth of the LNMA and Latvia in general is increasing. As well, local museum patrons and tourists are given the chance to purchase a "gift with a story".



Photos: Gints Mālderis



Elīna Dobele

ZoFa Footwear Design

SHOES AND BOOTS FOR FOOTWEAR FETISHISTS

Idea: designer shoes hand made in Latvia
Idea originator: Elīna Dobele
Birth of idea: spring 2009
Beginning of operations: spring 2010
Employees: 7

In the spring of 2009 architect Elīna Dobele was faced with a decision – the economic crisis in Latvia had affected the field of architecture, and she had to find something else to do on the side. Elīna looked at smaller design forms, and while analysing the Latvian market came to the conclusion that there are many furniture makers, but hardly any shoemakers. As footwear is an important enough accessory for a creative woman, everything fell into place, and an empty niche was occupied. At the end of the summer the first prototypes were ready – bright, colourful summer boots; in the spring of 2010 the ZoFa enterprise was established.

As the enterprise had a very small starting capital – 2 000 lats – Elīna took a creative ap-

The world belongs to the mad. If you come from a different sphere you're less afraid of failure.

proach to development: she began to look for a business partner who produced orthopaedic shoes, therefore – with a lot of experience in making made-to-order footwear. In turn, collaboration with Latvian fashion designers carried ZoFa footwear out into the world, which Elīna could not have otherwise afforded. Through financial support from various business enterprise financing programmes, the company could now stand on its own and gain stability. "The world belongs to the mad.

If you come from a different sphere you're less afraid of failure. The main thing is – be obsessed with your idea, and it will all happen!" – Elīna is convinced.

The first impression of ZoFa footwear is a sense of elegance, ease and impeccable style, while at the same time it's hard to imagine this footwear on the street in a Latvian winter. That is deceptive, however, as it is actually fine for tramping into snow banks. The footwear is made of leather utilized in different ways – the sole is one layer, for winter footwear it is two layers, and on top of that is a protective compound that is thicker or thinner depending on the model. The footwear is 100% hand made, very soft, comfortable and flexible. Elīna's approach to footwear design is professional:

"I look at footwear like buildings – the main thing is the function not the decorative details. Our footwear has a laconic, ascetic design, and the details, if any, are suitable. For example, there is a colourful elastic fastener on men's shoes – a practical (as men usually don't like to lace up or zip up), as well as a decorative detail."

Who are ZoFa footwear clients? Elīna: "30-55 years old – a thinker, footwear fetishist, always looking for something new, with his/her own vision of life, confident, and, if making a purchase, wants something with a story and an origin. It's also important to them to buy something made in Latvia."



www.zofa.lv



Photos: Iveta Vairode, Kaspars Gobas, Māris Lapiņš

MAGAZINE IR

WRITING THAT AFFECTS DAILY LIFE

Idea: a weekly magazine for those with a sense of responsibility and interest in life
Idea originators: Nellija Ločmele, Pauls Raudseps, Sanita Jemberga, Dace Smildziņa, Anita Brauna, Māris Diņģelis, Armands Leitis, Voldemārs Dūdums, Miķelis Baštiks
Origin of idea: 2009 – 2010
First issue: April 8, 2010
Employees: 18

Latvian magazines “about life in general” don’t have much luck – they are either oriented towards leisure, culture, or private lives, or, if they are socially-gearred they go bankrupt. There is now, however, an example of success – the magazine IR. Recalls Editor-in-chief Nellija Ločmele:

The motto for the magazine IR is “the important in an interesting way”. We’re creating a magazine about life for a reader for whom it’s important to understand what is happening in Latvia and the world, and also to have the opportunity to relish meeting inspirational people. IR did not appear in a vacuum – our team is made up of exceptional journalists who formerly worked at the daily Diena, but after a suspicious and secretive change of ownership in 2009, we decided to leave the editorial staff and create a new, independent media – by sourcing financing and coming up with the weekly magazine concept and the online portal.

Readers are the magazine’s foundation

– we work for them, they are our employers, the main source of revenue is sales and subscriptions. In creating a new magazine concept we decided not to focus on the demographic parameters of the audience, but rather on lifestyle – we address active people who take ownership and are interested in savouring life.

Regular contact with readers became our principle even before publication, as 5 000 people expressed the desire to

The greatest satisfaction comes from uncovering the hidden or landing a truly exclusive interview.

receive the first issue without knowing exactly what we had created. We have a solid community of readers: as of the beginning of 2012 there are more than 46 000 registered users. From time to time we invite our readers to participate in various interactive projects – together we inflated the red IR anniversary

balloon to blow out the first candle on the cake (<http://vimeo.com/38683248>), we organized a presidential race before the presidential elections, and a “daftness simulator” before the emergency Parliamentary elections (<http://vimeo.com/38683249>).

We work so that each article is the best. The greatest satisfaction comes from uncovering the hidden or landing a truly exclusive interview, as with the new First Lady, Dace Seisuma, who gave IR, in her words, “her first and last interview”. Our base-product, however, are articles in which we simply clarify an issue that affects daily life (for example, many readers have said that they began to drink tap water after reading our material about the water quality in Riga), or to help better understand surrounding persons or events. We’ve received many compliments on the business success stories – they compel one to believe in one’s own strength.

www.ir.lv



ir
Interesanti par svarīgo



WHERE TO STUDY

ART ACADEMY OF LATVIA

www.lma.lv

The Art Academy of Latvia (LMA) was founded in 1919 by one of the first professional Latvian artists, the well-known landscape painter Vilhelms Purvītis.

After the reestablishment of Latvian independence in 1990, the LMA renewed the traditional master-workshop style of teaching, creating a balance between the traditional academic arts education and the new art mediums as dictated by

contemporary culture.

The LMA is a university-type institution that offers post-secondary arts education through 5 departments: visual arts, visual sculptural arts, design, audiovisual media arts and arts history and theory, in 14 various sub-departments. The departments and chairs are led by elected academy professors – active artists and art historians. The studies are all subsidized by the State.

The LMA's art history institute performs fundamental research on visual art and architecture in Latvia and the surrounding regions, and also refines art theory and methodology. The institute's goal is to recognize, interpret and popularize historical and contemporary Latvian art trends. One of the most important tasks of the institute is the compilation of Latvian art history in Latvian and English on the internet.

LATVIAN ACADEMY OF CULTURE

www.lka.edu.lv

Founded in 1990, the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) is where academically-educated, professional specialists in Latvian culture, research and education are trained. Four academic departments – Theatre and Audiovisual Arts, Cultural Sociology and Management, International Communications and Languages, and Cultural Theory and History – offer 27 study programmes.

LAC graduates perform scientific research, literary translation, work

in cultural institutions and in the media, fulfil cultural infrastructure administration duties and professional and creative positions in theatres, television and film studios. They also work in diplomatic institutions in Latvia and abroad, creating joint cultural projects between Latvia and European nations, resolving interrelation issues in local and international companies, and carry out cultural projects, etc. There are currently some 620 students

in the LAC's bachelor, masters and doctoral study programmes, with more than 73 professors including international teachers giving lectures and holding practical workshops. The LAC has various structural units: the Riga Film Museum, the Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum, the Contemporary Dance Cultural Centre, the Robert Schuman Cultural Centre, and the Polish Culture and Language Centre.

RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

www.rtu.lv

The Riga Technical University (RTU) is the oldest technical post-secondary institution in the Baltics – the school will celebrate 150 years this autumn. The Riga Polytechnical Institute was the first post-secondary institution in the territory of Latvia at the time.

Over the course of time the school's name has changed as have the educational specialties, but one remaining constant is the technical orientation and the sense of mission towards economically conducive operations. The RTU's goal is to ensure high quality scientific research and to

prepare specialists in demand by the international market, with the further goal of advancing the RTU as a European study, scientific research and innovation centre. The RTU is the only multi-field technical university in Latvia with eight faculties – Architecture and Urban Planning, Computer Science and Information Technology, Civil Engineering, Electronics and Telecommunications, Engineering Economics and Management, Power and Electrical Engineering, Materials Science and Applied Chemistry, and Transport and Mechanical Engineering – and the

possibility of 130 study programmes on college, bachelor, masters and doctorate levels. Currently there are 15 000 students at the RTU, including more than 500 doctoral, 3 000 masters and 11 200 bachelor programme students. The Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning is the only post-secondary education institution in Latvia training specialists in urban development and architectural and cultural monument restoration, while also offering interior and landscape architecture specializations.

RISEBA

www.riseba.lv

The Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration (RISEBA) was founded in 1992 and has a branch in Daugavpils and an affiliation in Cēsis. The school's vision is to be a business, arts and technology university associated with such values as an outstanding education, an internationally recognized diploma, high quality studies, a foundation of exceptional scientific

research and highly qualified personnel. RISEBA offers an education in business, architecture and the creative fields through level 1 post-secondary, bachelor, masters and doctorate degree programmes. The creative programmes teach skills and knowledge in public relations and advertising management, e-commerce and audiovisual media arts. RISEBA is the only institution of

higher education in Latvia that offers a professional bachelors programme in the audiovisual field, and also the only institution wherein it is possible to acquire TV and film producer qualifications. Students can utilize international study options offered by RISEBA through ERASMUS and other partnership programmes.

BA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

www.ba.lv

The BA School of Business and Finance (BA) was founded in 1992 by the Bank of Latvia, with the mission to provide an exceptional financial and business education for goal-oriented personality types. The most significant BA values are personality, cooperation and membership, and the main goal is to fulfil the mission – to prepare academically and professionally educated specialists for the Latvian economy.

The BA School of Business and Finance offers international business and financial education through 13 accredited professional higher education study programmes of all levels. The high-competency of the programmes is ensured by links to an actual business environment and by cooperating with experts and field specialists from various Latvian and international organizations and businesses whose representatives

participate in the creation, realization and evaluation of the study programmes. The BA School is the only educational institution in the Baltics that offers an MBA in Creative Industries Management. The BA School of Business and Finance is a member of the EFMD (the European Foundation for Management Development and has signed partnership agreements with more than 80 educational institutions in 29 countries.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ECONOMICS AND CULTURE

www.eka.edu.lv

Studies at the University College of Economics and Culture (EKA), established in 1998, are geared towards those who have chosen an active, interesting and creative lifestyle – due to the school's innovative methods and multi-cultural approach, it is possible to gain a higher education shaped upon a scientific and practical experience foundation that also adheres to international standards.

Studies at the EKA are organized into three departments: Economics, Culture and Foreign Languages, with ten programmes to choose from: creative marketing and sales management, entertainment industry management, international trade and logistics, management sciences, business economics and administration, accounting and audit, translation, interior

design, cultural management and business administration. The study programmes at the EKA are organized in cooperation with international institutions within the same fields, fostering international scientific projects, conferences, seminars, student exchanges etc.

JANIS ROZENTALS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

www.jrrmv.lv

The history of the Janis Rozentals School of the Arts (JRRMV) began in 1896 when the doors to the Riga Latvian Painters Aid and Advancement Association's drawing and painting evening school opened. The name of the school changed over the course of time until 1946 when it was re-named after the forefather of professional Latvian painting – Janis Rozentals. The school's orientation changed from craftsmanship to professional art, which also

expanded the arts specialties available at the school. Today the JRRMV is one of the best arts high schools in Latvia offering a high level foundation in academic drawing and painting, sculpting, photography, computer graphics, animation, video arts, website design and other contemporary arts subjects. The JRRMV also offers a good education in general subjects, thereby giving students the chance to acquire a

creative view of all aspects of life. Among JRRMV graduates are many of the elite personalities that have shaped Latvia's 20th and 21st century arts and culture. The JRRMV also encompasses a Children's Arts School through which children are professionally prepared on a grades 5 – 9 level in drawing, painting, composition, structuring and in the language of art, as well as in graphics and computer graphics.

LATVIA CULTURE COLLEGE

www.kulturaskoledza.lv

The Latvia Culture College (LCC) has inherited the educational goals and course content of its predecessor – the Riga Cultural and Educational Workers' School, founded in 1946, namely: to offer a general and professional education in various mass culture organization specialties.

The LCC study programme is divided into four directions: art institution management (in 9 cultural spheres: advertising and public relations, music management, photography, interior design, media production, lighting design, events planning, festival direction and theatre arts), modern dance

(dance troupe leadership specializing in contemporary and modern dance), tourism and recreation organization (cultural tourism), and library and information (library information specialist).

RIGA ARTS AND DESIGN SECONDARY SCHOOL

www.rdmv.lv

The Riga Arts and Design Secondary School (RDMV) is the successor to the Riga State School of the Crafts, founded in 1933, which was located in the same historic building which houses part of the RDMV today – the Katrina School building, erected in 1820. This building was recognized as a wooden architecture monument and incorporated into the Europa Nostra restoration programme in 2001.

The RDMV offers crafts foundations through two educational programmes and sub-programmes: for interior, textile, glass, metal, leather and wooden objects, clothing and knitwear design, as well as in ceramics and a decorative arts programme – for arts and crafts and decorative painting. The school has successfully and fruitfully worked together with arts and design

colleges and other educational institutions in Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Estonia and the Czech Republic, enabling student and teacher exchange programmes and creating joint exhibitions. Arts in Latvia are well represented in the exhibitions of the RDMV – the school can be rightly proud of its graduates who are recognized artists and cultural representatives not only in Latvia but also abroad.

SUPPORT STRUCTURES

ARCHITECTURE

LATVIAN ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS

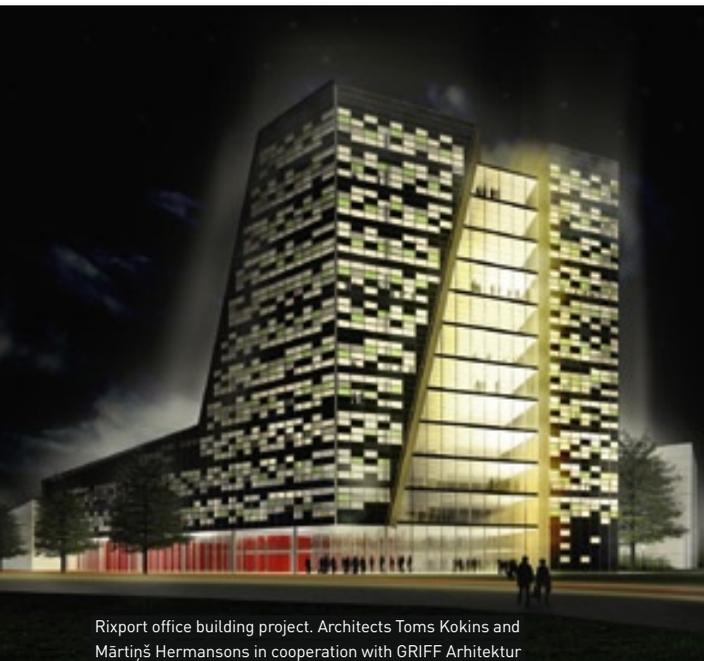
www.latarh.lv

The Latvian Association of Architects (LAA) is a non-governmental professional organization of architects with the goal of unifying and coordinating the efforts of Latvian architects and those residing outside of Latvia in preserving, fostering and developing the architectural and architectural heritage sector in Latvia.

The LAA was established in 1924 and currently includes some 500 architects practicing in Latvia, as well as architects of Latvian origin practicing abroad.

The Latvian Association of Architects has initiative rights that are utilized in lobbying the actions of Latvian state institutions in questions relating to architecture. The LAA Certification Centre carries out architect certification, maintains the registry of certified architects, develops guidelines for further education and the expertise advancement of specialists, et al.

Since 1996 the LAA has hosted an annual best of showcase – the key event in the professional sector of architects and builders; since 2005 the work has been evaluated by an international jury. In 2009, the LAA subdivision, the Young Architects Association, undertook the project Learner. Explorer. City Dweller. geared towards the next generation of urban environment users, developers and legislators. The project's immediate aim is an informal educational programme that fosters knowledge of urban development and an understanding of architecture and the urban environment.



Rixport office building project. Architects Toms Kokins and Mārtiņš Hermansons in cooperation with GRIFF Arhitektur

IT AND GAME DEVELOPMENT

LATVIAN COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION

www.itnet.lv

The Latvian Computer Technology Association (LDTA) was originally an initiative group formed in 1997 to bring about an exemption from the VAT tax for the computer industry. Now the organization's goal is to move towards an information association unifying computer technology specialists in Latvia, to bring order to the Latvian IT market, and to foster high quality IT production, sales and services.

The LTDA views its mission to be the creation of an equal opportunity environment for computer enterprises, the forging of a link between companies and state structures, and fostering the business development and competitiveness of its members within the computer sphere. This is achieved by participation in the drafting of new policies, and submitting proposals to state administration and



DD Studio at work

legislative representatives. The LTDA is also a consultative association which, as an expert in the field, gives advice and recommendations to Latvian as well as international organizations.

The association also represents its members internationally, cooperating with NGOs to create an opportunity for an exchange of mutual and general information and opinions.

DESIGN

DESIGN INFORMATION CENTRE

www.dic.lv

The Design Information Centre (DIC) was established in the spring of 2004 to support and organize Latvian design sector activities. The DIC is a centre of active design information exchange, providing informative support to professionals, students, and design-oriented members of the public.

The DIC has several operational directions. Firstly – information distribution, including the creation of an interactive data base on design projects, designers, design education, and collaboration between designers and manufacturers, as well as a design library and an online information circulation system. Secondly – education, incorporating Latvian design education institutions into the Baltic and EU educational system, and organizing conferences, seminars and creative workshops for professionals as well as students.

The third DIC operational direction is aimed at popularization in cooperation with Latvian and international design institutions, educational institutions, centres, manufacturers and creative labs, and by hosting regular events – the Riga International Young Designers' Biennale and the festival Design. Future – a series of events that has become a national cultural happening, as it serves as a platform for demonstrating the achievements of Latvian designers within an international context, and also stimulates the development of the design sphere in Latvia.

LATVIAN FASHION HOUSE

www.latvianfashion.lv

The Latvian Fashion House (LMP) was founded in 2010, expanding the operations of the Latvian Fashion Fund. Its goal is to foster the fashion industry and fashion education in Latvia so that it becomes a sphere producing products with high added value that deliver investment into Latvian export and the economy.

Due to the questions surrounding the applicability of fashion in Latvia, the readiness of the fashion industry to become business-oriented, as well as in terms of the utilization of creative potential in creating commercial products, the LMP hosts various cross-sector events, bringing together fashion designers and future partners – investors, buyers and manufacturers.

One of these events is Riga Fashion Mood, which will from now on be a bi-annual event that will ensure a permanent link between fashion designers and clientele. To facilitate the recognition of Latvian fashion eastward, this type of event also took place in Moscow in 2011 in cooperation with the Latvian Embassy in Russia.

Taste Latvia, a chain of stores featuring Latvian fashion, was also created due to a LMP initiative. The stores, opened in several shopping centres, are an outlet for local designers – highlighting the designers as well as their work.



Mareunrol's / Private Detective

Another LMP activity is in cooperation with UV Stokmann – once a year a Latvian Design month is held at the department store, wherein local designers offer products geared towards a wider consumer audience.

LATVIAN DESIGNERS SOCIETY

www.design.lv

The Latvian Designers Society (LDS) is an organization of creative professionals working on fostering design development and enhancing its added value factor in Latvian culture and economics, as well as the preservation of design heritage. The LDS also facilitates collaboration between designers and determines and defends their interests and rights.

The LDS unites 177 members working in various design spheres: interior, environmental, advertising, unique objects, industrial, graphic, packaging, virtual and web graphics, fashion, textile, jewellery, and photography design, as well as in an educational capacity in design, design theory and publicity.

The LDS hosts an annual design awards competition – the most significant reference point within the design sphere – determining the best in Latvian design, creating awareness and endorsing the highest quality projects. There is also an informal design object competition, Divdabis, showcasing ingenious, aesthetic and dual-purpose design objects, demonstrating their dual nature, atypicality, uniqueness, or use of unexpected materials. Both competitions are judged by an international jury.

PUBLISHING

LATVIAN PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

www.gramatizdeveji.lv

In 1993, 30 professional publishers came together to establish the Latvian Publishers Association (LPA), in order to foster the development of the publishing business, to protect the interests of publishers in regards to state policy, to create a positive public opinion towards books, to organize various events, exhibitions and competitions, and to lend support to its members on the international circuit.

One of the most significant LPA goals is to bring about changes to tax policy in regards to the book industry – the organization has achieved a VAT tax exemption on first edition original literary works, scientific and educational materials, as well as children's and youth literature and their printing and production. The second important LPA aim regards the balancing of interests between the digitalization of books and the publishing industry.

The LPA is responsible for organizing book competitions, exhibitions and fairs: the sector's biggest annual event – the publishing arts competition Annual Publishing Awards, the annual, socially significant Riga Book Fair with its wide-ranging cultural programme, and The Book exhibition at the Ķīpsala exhibition hall. The association also represents Latvia at various book fairs around the world.



Riga Book Fair



LATVIAN PRESS PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

www.lpia.lv

After regaining post-Soviet publishing independence in 1991, 15 Latvian press publication representatives agreed to create the Latvian Press Publishers and Editors Association, in order to resolve common problems that arose in connection to the six-month long occupation of the Press House (Preses Nams), and to be incorporated into the international press publishers' circuit.

The "A Week Without the Press" event, held in February 1992, was a significant happening in the organization's history. This action, which resonated internationally, achieved the abolishment of the VAT tax on press publications and resolved the paper issue.

The organization has known as the Latvian Press Publishers Associations (LPIA) since 1993, and currently unites 33 publishers and 114 publications. Its goal is to uphold the freedom of the press principle, prevent monopolies, and address political questions within the development of the printed media sphere. The LPIA represents the interests of its members in regards to authorities, public and private institutions.

PERFORMING ARTS

NEW THEATRE INSTITUTE OF LATVIA

www.theatre.lv

The New Theatre Institute of Latvia (LJTI) – an NGO and non-profit organization – was established in 1998 by 33 theatre and theatre management representatives to foster contemporary theatre, dance and other stage performance projects locally and internationally. The goal is to broaden theatre boundaries in terms of creativity, circulation and perception, and to foster the development of multi-faceted, innovative, responsible and independent professional performance art in Latvia.

The New Theatre Festival Homo Novus, nurtured by the LJTI and supported by the State Culture Capital Foundation and the Riga City Council, which will take place for the tenth time in 2013, is the leading contemporary performance art festival in Latvia, and one of the largest in the Baltics. The festival hosts performances that express interest in and opinions on the modern world and society, also leaving room for experimentation, educational events, and other activities.

The other recurring LJTI festival is the Experimental Theatre Festival Homo Alibi, which draws attention to a theme significant and topical to Latvian and European theatre.

LATVIAN THEATRE WORKERS ASSOCIATION

www.ltds.lv

The Latvian Theatre Workers Association (LTDS) carries the mantle of the traditions and mandates of the Latvian Theatre Association founded in 1922. It has more than 700 members, and operates with the goal of preserving, fostering and developing the Latvian theatre culture, and elevating the prestige of the theatre profession. The LTDS represents the interests of its members in regards to state, municipal and other organizations, participates in the shaping of state cultural policies, supports creative exploration in theatre arts, as well as educational opportunities.

The LTDS also grants awards, scholarships and bursaries. The most public of these is the most significant annual theatre awards ceremony Spēlmaņu Nakts, which has been taking place every November 23rd since 1993, on the birthday of Latvia's most renowned theatre director, Eduards Smiļģis.

The LTDS is also one of the organizers of the contemporary drama festival Skats; the festival's main focus is the preservation and development of the original dramaturgy of the Baltic States, as well as an exchange of experience for theatre professionals. The weeklong festival is the place to see the best theatre productions of recent seasons from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.



„Melnais piens” (Black Milk) New Riga Theatre performance

FILM

LATVIAN FILMMAKERS UNION

www.latfilma/lks

The Latvian Filmmakers Union (LKS) unifies some 300 various profession filmmakers with the goal of fostering the development of Latvian film and prestige, representing and protecting the professional, economic and social interests of its members, establishing links to keep the public informed and educated, and overseeing the popularization and availability of Latvian films.

The LKS represents Latvian cinema abroad in order to gain experience within the international circuit, while also utilizing contacts and the experience of other nations in participating in the initiation and development of the sector's standard practices, and in creating collaborative projects.

The LKS is the founder and organizer of the main Latvian film awards festival Lielais Kristaps. Since 1977 the best Latvian feature, documentary and animation filmmakers have been awarded a statue of Kristaps, the custodian, ferryman and protector of old Riga. There are also awards for student films, the best debuts, and lifetime achievement awards for the most noteworthy Latvian film professionals.

NATIONAL FILM CENTRE

www.nfc.lv

The National Film Centre (NFC) was founded in 1991 with the goal of administering State funding for the film industry and to promote Latvian film.

The NFC is now additionally responsible for the long-term development and competitiveness of the Latvian film industry, as well as for ensuring access to and promotion of audiovisual heritage in Latvia and internationally.

State-funded Latvian films regularly participate and also receive awards in various national and international film festivals, including A-class festivals such as Cannes, the Berlinale, Venice, Annecy et al, which is a testament to the professionalism of Latvian directors and other film industry members and a guarantee for a strong and long-lasting industry.

One of the NFC's main achievements is the fact that despite various funding cuts and threats to close the Centre down, the NFC has managed to preserve the small yet fully functioning film industry wherein film professionals can fulfil their artistic intentions and work in their chosen field.

RIGA FILM FUND

www.filmriga.lv

The Riga Film Fund is a co-financing programme created by the Riga City Council and the National Film Centre with the goal of fostering foreign film production in Riga. An invitation to apply to the programme is announced up to four times per year for Latvian and foreign film co-production projects that plan to shoot in Riga. The

winners of the co-financing tenders gain the chance to regain a portion of the production money spent in Riga after shooting the film.

The first tender was held in 2010, and there have been four co-financing tenders to date that have supported 14 various projects, 6 of which were filmed in Latvia – projects from Japan, Russia, the UK, Germany, Korea and Denmark. Applications to the programme are increasing each year, which is a testament to the interest of foreign producers in Riga as well as in co-producing with Latvian filmmakers.

The Riga Film Fund's co-financing programme promotes attracting foreign investment to Riga, creating new jobs in many business areas as well as the development of the film industry and the popularization of Riga internationally.

CULTURAL EDUCATION

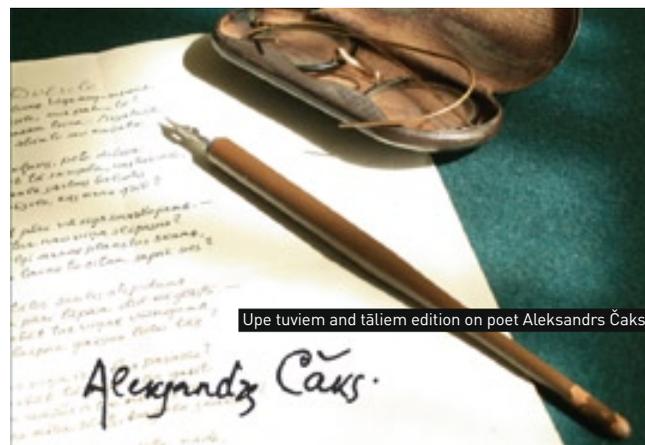
ARTS EDUCATION AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE CENTRE

www.knmc.gov.lv

The Arts Education and Intangible Heritage Centre (AEICH) carries out the mandate of the Ministry of Culture to oversee the recognition of national cultural identity, its preservation and documentation, in order to guarantee its survival and recognisability within Latvia and internationally. The centre also ensures the continuity of the Latvian Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration process and implements state policies in culture and creative industries' education. The Centre was founded upon Latvia signing the international UNESCO convention on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

The main operational directions of the AEICH are intangible cultural heritage, the Latvian Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration, amateur arts, and continuing and cultural education. The AEICH has created a Cultural Map website (www.kulturaskarte.lv), containing information and statistics on Latvian cultural institutions.

One of the AEICH's biggest events is the "Meet your Master!" event that takes place over the course of three days each spring, wherein one can travel around Latvia meeting cultural masters. In approx. 100 spots in Latvia the masters of ancient traditions open the doors to their creative workshops for demonstrations, music, dancing and discussions.



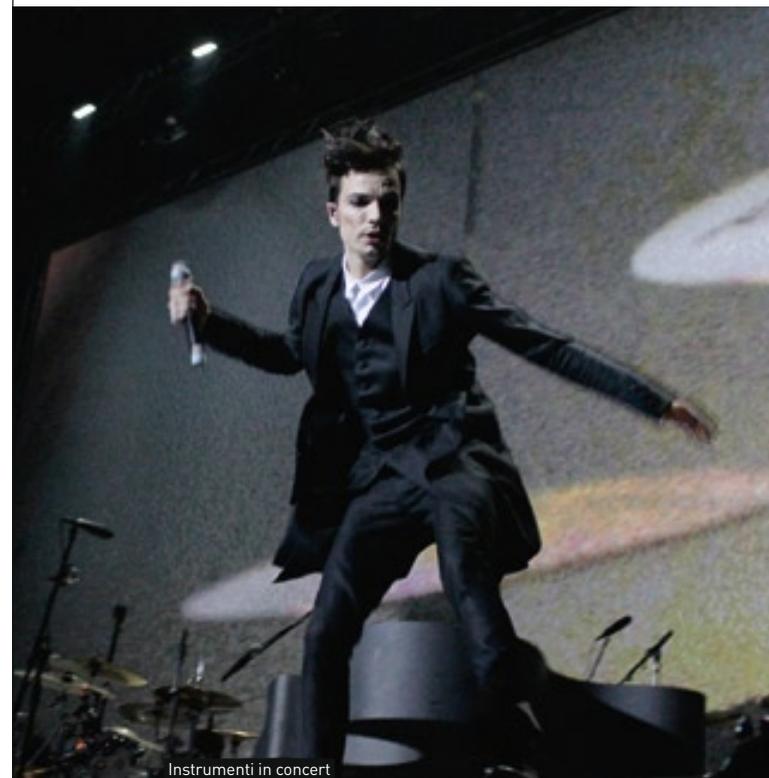
Upe tuviem and tāliem edition on poet Aleksandrs Čaks

MUSIC

LATVIAN MUSIC INFORMATION CENTRE

www.lmic.lv

The Latvian Music Information Centre (LMIC), founded in 2002, is an association linked to various music establishments. It handles the popularization of Latvian music, gathering and giving out infor-



Instrumenti in concert

mation in Latvia and internationally, music sector venue coordination, the inclusion of Latvian music and musicians in international processes, and fostering the recording and publishing of Latvian music. The LMIC is financed by the Ministry of Culture and functions on behalf of the state within the music information sector.

The centre is building a data base of Latvian classic and contemporary music, the authors, interpreters, concert organizers and sponsors, concerts, festivals, competitions and music organizations. In order to facilitate the existence of Latvian music on the international music scene, the LMIC forges contacts between Latvian musicians and interested international parties, and oversees Latvia's presence at music fairs and exhibitions.

Another of the centre's functions is publishing – regularly putting out informative and analytical materials and CDs featuring works from a wide range of Latvian music genre representatives to present to the world.

ADVERTISING

LATVIAN ART DIRECTORS CLUB

www.ladc.lv

The Latvian Art Directors Club (LADC), founded in 2005, is a public organization uniting Latvian design, advertising and other creative professionals with the goal of fostering education for the new creative generation in advertising and design. The LADC founders are well-known Latvian advertising creatives, artists, musicians, photographers, graphic and industrial designers, as well as other creative profession representatives. The LADC oversees the growth of creative industry artistry and professional standards, with a mission to educate, inspire and encourage the new creative generation, and to ensure an exchange of experience between industry representatives and the public. "Humanity is based on creative types. On those who believe in their hearts rather than in the status quo. On those who are willing to leave behind the comfort zone and head to where no one has been. Each of us carries an unfulfilled revolution within," is stated in the LADC manifesto.

The LADC regularly organizes lectures and seminars featuring leading international advertising gurus. There are also the annual LADC Awards – a festival showcasing advertising, graphic and product design, and video, audio, TV, multimedia, photo design, illustration and animation works – the most exceptional of these receive gold and silver medals.

VISUAL ARTS

ARTISTS' UNION OF LATVIA

www.msav.lv

The Artists' Union of Latvia (AUL) is a professional visual arts organization and the largest professional creative organization in Latvia, uniting more than 1200 professional artists and art historians. The AUL is a member of the Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia, the European Arts Council and the IAA/AIAP (UNESCO). The goals of the AUL are to foster art development, to preserve Latvian art heritage, to defend artistic freedom and the professional, economic, social and ethical rights of visual artists, to participate in the shaping of cultural policies, and to collaborate with other nations. The AUL gallery is a non-commercial structure of the AUL – a place where professional Latvian artists can gather and generate ideas and where the interests of Union members can be realized.

The AUL gallery produces artistically significant exhibitions for Latvia and abroad, and enhances Latvia's cultural environment. The gallery also supports new talent, honours master-artists, and hosts educational events. The AUL museum also operates under the auspices of the AUL, with a collection including unique mid to late 20th century artwork that has not been available for public viewing to date – more than 16 000 pieces of art created during the Soviet era. The plan is to create the museum as a virtual, stationary database that can be visited in the AUL museum space.

TELEVISION, RADIO AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA

THE NATIONAL ELECTRONIC MASS MEDIA COUNCIL

www.nrtp.lv

The National Electronic Mass Media Council (NEMMC) was founded in 2010 in order to monitor adherence to the electronic mass media law that dictates the operations and regulations of the electronic mass media. The NEMMC is an independent institution that represents the interests of the public in the field of electronic mass media and supervises the operations of the field so that the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the EMM law, and other regulatory enactments are observed.

NEMMC operating principles are transparency (the Council's decisions are open to any member of the public), balanced development (all forms of EMM are equal), the prevention of monopolies within the EMM, and the promotion of EMM policies appropriate to national interests.

The Council's mandates include the drafting of a national strategy for the development of the electronic mass media sector; determining principal formulations and preparing a State budgetary project, making decisions on the breakdown and signing agreements to enable the execution of national requirements; managing the State's capital shares in Latvian Radio and Latvian Television by approving the statutes, appointing general directors, creating auditing commissions and approving board members; as well as the granting of broadcasting and retransmission permits and maintaining a register, etc.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES INSTITUTIONS

CREATIVE ANDREJSALA

www.creativeandrejsala.lv

Business incubator Creative Andrejsala (CA) was established in March of 2010 with the goal of fostering the formation and development of new and competitive creative industry enterprises in Latvia. CA was created with the support of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia.

The incubator supports only those companies representing the creative industries that have not been commercially registered for longer than two years and are a LTD. type of business and do not owe any taxes. To date CA has supported more than 50 new businesses - some of the companies have already become economically independent. An enterprise's chance of survival is evaluated over the course of two years. The incubator ensures a business infrastructure for its chosen ones - office and conference space including maintenance, accounting and legal services, business leadership, sales and a range of other consultations, employee selection, virtual incubation et. al. New businesses receive an 85% discount on these services in their first year, 55% in the second year, and up to 35% in the third year. Alongside financial



Liene Kuplā (Creative Andrejsala) with An&Angel

assistance the incubator fosters an exchange of ideas and experiences between various types of creative industries.

Thanks to the location in one of Riga's most vibrant creative locales - Andrejsala, and also to CA's main goal - to assist inexperienced people in creating their businesses and providing a solid launching base - the Latvian market is being introduced to new ideas, and unique products and services.

TABACCO FACTORY

www.tabfab.lv

The former tobacco factory building is located on Miera iela in Riga - a setting that has already outgrown its creative borders and has become a place on the map of Riga representing various artistic manifestations. The Latvian Ministry of Culture's goal in announcing a competition for a creative-living concept for the 11 000 sq.m. tobacco factory, was to develop this city block into a multi-functional and innovative home-base for cultural and creative industry representatives - a space for creative enterprises and cultural and artistic education, and also a place open and accessible to the public, fulfilling a social and life-quality enhancing function.

The main idea of the winning concept, Stacija (station), is to develop a vibrant and creative milieu in which to fulfil ideas with potential, where people can try to realize what they've created in their heads, and where competitiveness can be fostered for the local market as well as for Europe. From the Tobacco Factory website: "It will become a centre open to the public and saturated with exhibitions, concerts, festivals, screenings, performing arts shows, conferences, seminars and workshops."

CROSS-SECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

www.km.gov.lv

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia is the state governing institution that organizes and coordinates state cultural policy and cultural-educational policy. The Ministry of Culture operates pursuant to the regulations of the Ministry of Culture, the declaration of the Cabinet and the basic principals of the State culture policy.



The central apparatus of the Ministry of Culture consists of three departments: the Cultural Policy Department, the Public Integration Department, and the European Union Funding Department.

The Ministry of Culture oversees the following branches: libraries, museums, music, visual art, traditional art, theatre, literature, cinema, cultural education, copyrights, the archives, public integration, and the preservation of architectural monuments. The Ministry recently drafted a National Identity, Civil Society and Integration policy for 2012 - 2018.

The Ministry of Culture is one of the organizers and supporters of Riga 2014 European Capital of Culture.

STATE CULTURE CAPITAL FOUNDATION

www.kkf.lv

The State Culture Capital Foundation (SCCF) is a public establishment created with the goal of fostering a balance of new creative works in the culture and arts sphere, and preserving cultural heritage. The SCCF's main tasks are to attract, accumulate, manage and allot funds for the implementation of cultural projects and the granting of lifetime stipends to exceptional culture and arts workers for their lifelong investment into culture and arts development. The SCCF also advertises and organizes project funding competitions.

The SCCF's tenders financially support projects submitted by any persons or legal entities that foster cultural revival and new creative works and promote their diversity. They also support cultural research projects; education and professional development; the development of international relations and the popularization of

Latvian culture and arts internationally; the preservation of and distribution and access to cultural heritage for the population, and the development of traditional culture.

In fostering balanced development in all areas of culture, the SCCF organizes cultural project competitions in literature, music and dance, theatre arts, cinema, visual art, cultural heritage, traditional culture and design and architecture, as well as for inter-disciplinary projects. There is also support for travel related to creative pursuits.

LATVIAN INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

www.liaa.gov.lv

The Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA), founded in 1993, is a State institution subordinated to the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia. The Agency considers its main responsibility to be fostering the competitiveness of Latvian entrepreneurs, and to this end it offers a wide range of assistance - from information on starting businesses, to information about the availability of various State subsidies and financing opportunities, and support for entrepreneurs who wish to begin exporting and are looking for foreign partners. The LIAA offers businesses an integrated solution with not only a package of services on the realization of investment projects and promoting foreign trade, but also by implementing and administrating the EU Structural Funds that support enterprises. To date the LIAA has attracted 10 of millions of Lats of direct foreign investment to Latvia, has created external trade transactions worth tens of millions of Lats, has created hundreds of new jobs, and agency support has fostered the growth of industrial parks, the creation of a new research facility and cooperation in technology transfer.

In 2008 the LIAA was granted the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) award for promoting investment-friendly state policy, while in 2009 the LIAA was ranked as one of the top 10 performing national (Investment Promotion Intermediaries - IPI's) in the world.

COUNCIL OF THE CREATIVE UNIONS OF LATVIA

www.makslinieki.lv

The Council of the Creative Unions of Latvia (CCUL) was founded in 1988, uniting the 11 Latvian creative unions and more than 3000 individual members. Since 1995 the CCUL is also a member-organization of the European Arts Council. The CCUL operates in several directions: participation in the shaping of cultural policies in Latvia, representing and defending the professional, social and economic rights of creative professionals, cooperating with the Ministry of Culture, Parliamentary committees and national and local institutions, delegation of representatives for consultative committees and expertise councils, and coordinating the flow of information and cooperation within the cultural sphere, et. al.

The Council has created an Artists' Registrar containing accessible information on all of the current CCUL members who have gained recognition in their professional fields - more than 3000 individuals.



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During the CREAENT project an analysis of the situation in creative entrepreneurship education was carried out, and a training programme for young creative entrepreneurs was created and piloted. In addition, several networking forums for creative entrepreneurs from Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Sweden were organised. To learn more about the project please visit www.creaent.fi.

Several companies that participated in CREAENT project events are included in this publication: Angel Glass Design, Arhiidea, ArtBag, DD Studio, Nabaklab, Mareunrol's and the LNAM Brand fund.

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CENTRAL BALTIC
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PROGRAMME
2007–2013



CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN LATVIA

2012