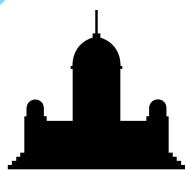
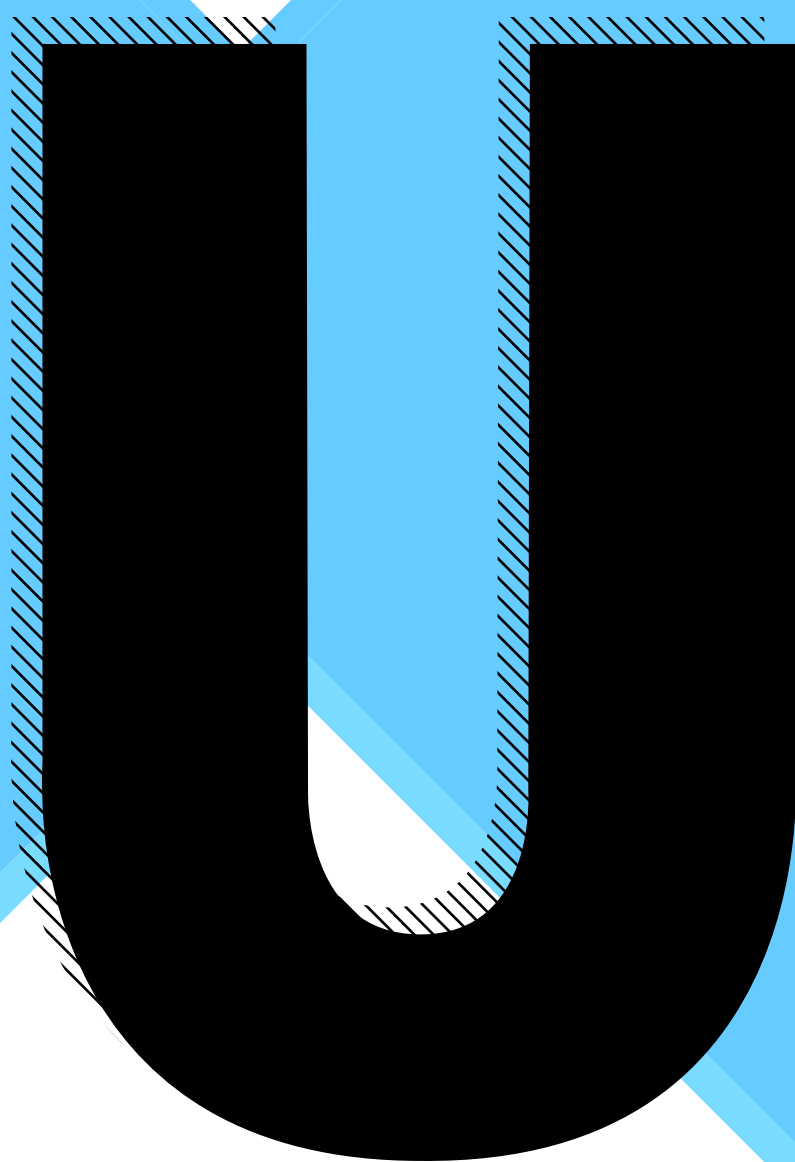


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URBANISTS' NEWSLETTER U12
HELSINKI ISSUE
AUTUMN 2012

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NEW U & HELSINKI

U12 is new in many ways. For a long time we have been thinking that the newsletter, which has been in existence for over 2 years, needs a change - a more reader-friendly appearance and content with a wider grasp. U12 is the first attempt at this new dream; it is available online, but also tangible if you decide to print it out. The **DIY mentality** of U, born from of self-organised initiative, has taught us that solutions grow from cooperation. Behind the new design and web layout is **Ptarmigan**, a trans-disciplinary arts and culture space situated on Toompea, who stand out in the cultural landscape of Estonia with an international group of people and a unique approach. One of their volunteer organisers, John W. Fail, writes in U about what the term 'urbanist' means to him and how it relates to their regular activities.

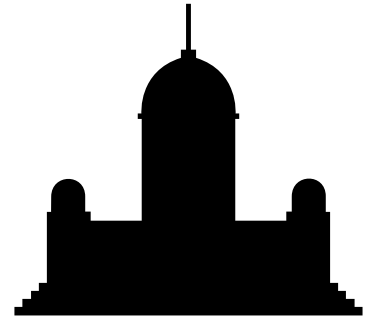
U has always wished to be a mediator for the local urbanist, and to find opportunities for international cooperation. Last time we talked about a city more thoroughly a year ago, when The New York issue was published. This time we focus on **Helsinki and the World Design Capital 2012**. Most of us cross borders virtually, but sometimes changes in real life urban space can start with an inspiring example from an idealistic book. Reading the book 'Helsinki Beyond Dreams' is therapeutic for a person interested in cities and this is warmly recommended by Teele Pehk. The statistic parameters of Finland and Helsinki have always made Estonians jealous - this **murky 'city of the sun'** is only a boat-ride away. Having role models is necessary, but making comparisons is a self-destructive activity. We should rather try to build bridges, cooperate and learn from each other. The reader of U12 will find proof that Helsinki is an innovative, happy and a liveable city, but also more critical voices will have their say. In several texts, locals and strangers mention the high-caliber order that characterises Helsinki and makes one walk on the tips of their toes in the city, **dreaming of a little chaos**. This topic of chaos and order is explored by an urban manager, Kadri Koppel.

Personal stories about Helsinki are told by expats, who may have a better eye for comparison - a twin-citizen of Helsinki Kristi Grišakov, Scottish artist Andrew Gryf Paterson and the programme leader of the Finnish Institute Jenni Kallionsivu. In addition, we introduce one of the exceptional solutions (Paviljonki), discuss the festival culture on the line Helsinki-Berlin, write about parking and think again about what it means to get to know a city and what our choices for doing that are.

What remains the same amongst the 'new' is that we keep an eye on the **everyday experience of the urbanist** - with continual reflections on events present and past. This time you will also find many valuable hints for further reading, from the new developments in Helsinki to the collection issued about the Vision Conference of Tallinn. This newsletter is also made colourful by an urban comic produced in a summer school in Vilnius.

Enjoy!

Yours truly,
Keiti and Kaija-Luisa
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U

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Restaurant Day. Restaurant Kuchnya Pojska. Photo: Veikko Kähkönen

IS HELSINKI THE NEW BERLIN?

TEELE PEHK, *urban enthusiast from Tallinn*

What is happening in Helsinki is nothing special in the context of citizen uprising, or - if you prefer – the end of individualism that increasingly characterizes the Western world. What is special is that these actions, aiming to improve the atmosphere and physical space of Helsinki as a living place, are documented in the form of a book called “Helsinki Beyond Dreams”. As editor and author Hella Hernberg (architect, designer and urban practitioner) notes, the book itself is “something of a collective grassroots activity”, being compiled and edited by various urban activists, artists and thinkers.

According to Yle News¹ Helsinki activists have brought the rights of the everyman out into the streets. The capital of Finland is facing massive transformations – Jätkäsaari, Kalasatama, Pasila and the oil harbour are being introduced as new residential, business and cultural areas in central Helsinki.

Does this vast transforming space in close proximity to the city centre give more ground to urban experiments and provide a playground for cultural manifests? It definitely seems so! The book describes actions of different scale and impact, including the Punajuuri Block Party, We Love Helsinki’s communal interventions (such as a water gun fight on a beach), massive tango dances in Vallila parks, and the open-air Solar Kitchen Restaurant. The book

1. www.yle.fi/uutiset/helsinki_on_uusi_berliini/6212783

REVIEW

also contains stories of foreigners living and owning a small business in Helsinki, traces of suburban activism in Mellunkylä, small entrepreneurship conquering gentrified neighbourhoods like Kallio, Finnish-initiated international movements like the Restaurant Day, excursions to usually closed places by the Open House movement as well as future visions of the Helsinki-Tallinn twin city and Helsinki as the capital of the Nordic welfare society to foster non-economic values.

With regard to temporary uses of large-scale development areas and as a valuable example for Tallinn's transforming seaside, a **remarkable city government initiative** is the temporary cultural field of **Kalasadama**, which has a central role in the book. The former cargo port of 175 hectares is slowly being turned into homes for 25 000 people and work places for 8000 people. Since the construction may take up to 30 years, the city of Helsinki has hired coordinators to turn Kalasadama into a bureaucracy-free zone for public art, cultural activities and different open-air initiatives. Since 2010, when Kalasadama was opened to the public, the place has witnessed the creation of open-for-all graffiti fence, urban gardening, open-air pizza baking, a pop-up sauna, and life around the container-cafe Ihana. And all this in the middle of a construction site! These initiatives have been accompanied by night-time bicycle rides, bicycle brunches, open-air ride-in movie nights, Kalasadama festivals and other non-commercial events. All this is made accessible through a cycling route through Kalasadama construction site and along the shoreline. Adding to the charm of simplicity, this route is merely green lines painted on the existing concrete. We should do the same at Tallinn seaside!

Helsinki city government funds Kalasadama Temporary by collecting 10 euro per square metre from every developer in Kalasadama area. This 1%-for-public-art rule has earlier been used for example in one of Helsinki's new districts - Arabianranta.

Call it temporary uses, creative citizen deeds or agitative activism, but the message behind these actions are the same: reclaiming the right to the city,



◀ *Punajuuri Blockparty.*
Photo: Carl Lindberg

◀ *We Love Helsinki Bicycle Day.*
Photo: Johannes Romppanen

▼ *Vallilan Tango.*
Photo: Heli Sorjonen





Kalasatama opening. Photo: Hella Hernberg

shaping one's living environment, and bringing more sense to planning space and life. **The book "Helsinki Beyond Dreams" is full of examples of invigorating public space through "what if"-thinking and doing things together.** This way the foundations for "a society based on active citizenship, the common good and caring of other people"² are being created. Does it sound too idealistic? Even if so, these people behind the stories and actions **dare to dream.** And dare to act on streets, in parks, in their courtyards, on seaside... By doing so they manifest their dreams in the public space of Helsinki and breed systemic, long-term changes.

As Hernberg states, it's the "new we-spirit and enthusiasm of its people"³ that has turned Helsinki a surprising and inspiring place to live. Helsinki definitely has some secret charm - or is it the culture of trust that Hernberg refers to? - since the city has attracted many expats to work there, among other institutions, in Sitra, at Aalto University, in the city government and beyond. No wonder that in 2011 Monocle chose Helsinki as the world's most liveable city.

Apart from that, the book serves as a good city guide! While you might not witness lively Kalasatama or take part in the Punajuuri Block Party, you can sense the spirit of citizen-made Helsinki.

MORE INFORMATION: www.pps.org/book-review-helsinki-beyond-dreams/
www.uuttahelsinki.fi/kalasataman-ymparistotaide
www.he12.fi/ksv/julkaisut/kizriat/myotatuulessa_en.pdf
 AMETLIK KODULEHT - HELSINKI NEW HORIZONS: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/

PUBLICATIONS: www.he12.fi/ksv/julkaisut/kirjat/myotatuulessa_en.pdf:
www.uuttahelsinki.fi/sites/default/files/helsinki_esite_web.pdf

2. Santala, Timo
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 2012, page 17.



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“TEMPORARY COULD BE PART OF THE FUTURE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY IT IS VERY MUCH PART OF THE PRESENT”

An interview with Hella Hernberg

Ephemeral, temporary, and tactical urbanism are some of the keywords of contemporary architecture and planning. Temporary initiatives for cultural purposes are increasingly used for creating meaningful places, drawing attention to shortcomings and livening up the streetscape. Helsinki is a city that, while sometimes being called over-regulated, has managed to also be on the forefront of urban activism and experimental creative projects. Perhaps one does not exclude the other. A good example of that is the Paviljonki project planned, built and programmed within the World Design Capital 2012.

The Pavilion was an open-to-all space, located between the Museum of Finnish Architecture and the Design Museum, which offered a cultural programme curated by Demos Helsinki. The Pavilion showcased Finnish architecture and also served contemporary Finnish cuisine. Designed at Aalto University's Wood Programme by Pyry-Pekka Kantonen, it exhibited the latest in Finnish design. Now that the programme is over we hope to look into what happened and what remains, exploring what kind of effect on a city can a temporary project like that have. Insight is given by the editor of the book "Helsinki Beyond Dreams", and artist and a designer Hella Hernberg.

Just to mention in the beginning - I'm not a representative of the World Design Capital organisation or Paviljonki, so can't really answer on their behalf, I am just writing my opinions of the Paviljonki as its user. It's important not to confuse those, just to make sure. I have been realising a WDC project as an independent entrepreneur/designer/individual and could possibly have realised the project even without WDC.

What makes an idea on paper come to life in a real city?

The ideas presented in my own project, Helsinki Beyond Dreams, are typically not those that are born on paper, but rather in people's discussions and through the collaboration between creative individuals. However, creating any ideas is easy and realising is often not that easy. I think one needs to have a clear vision, be persistent and believe in their goal, then find the means to travel towards that goal and walk through any obstacles they find on the way.

Paviljonki really filled a kind of gap in many ways. It discovered a potential location, which had been just a parking lot but nevertheless very well situated. It also filled a "program gap" in providing an arena for many activities that would maybe not have happened without the place. I think the program was very cleverly engineered, in the way that it combined a large variety of activities (from yoga, craft meetings to concerts



INTERVIEW

and seminars of all kinds) for different kinds of audiences, and therefore it succeeded in being a proper urban place where people meet and find interesting things. It was a combination of pre-defined program and events that anyone could propose. Also the Paviljonki building was really nice and well made, and **something worth visiting** as itself, which I think contributed in the success of the place.

Could temporary be the future?

Temporary could be part of the future, but I think more importantly it is very much part of the present. Temporary uses are a way to **react fast** to current conditions, and therein lies often their charm. However, they can be included in longer-term planning processes, too, and they can bring an important level of **flexibility**, and also be a tool to test and develop new ideas for the future in a not-too-serious way, which can bring forth unprecedented opportunities.

What happens after the programme is over?

Well, there are a lot of activities going on in many parts of the city and Paviljonki was not the only venue in Helsinki. Perhaps the WDC year with its rich program has contributed to that people are realising the **potentials in the city** in a new way and realising that they can be active themselves, in producing the city where they wish to live. I think Paviljonki has been important arena for this, but the process of **active citizenship** has roots that go much deeper than World Design Capital.

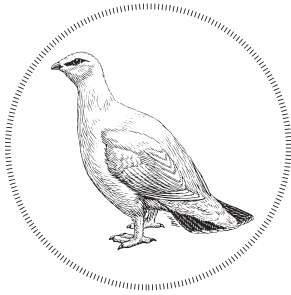


All photos by Keiti Kljavin

MORE ABOUT PAVILIONKI: <http://issuu.com/wdchelsinki2012/docs/paviljonki1>



WHO IS AN URBANIST?



WHO IS AN URBANIST? AM I AN URBANIST?

JOHN W. FAIL, *Ptarmigan*

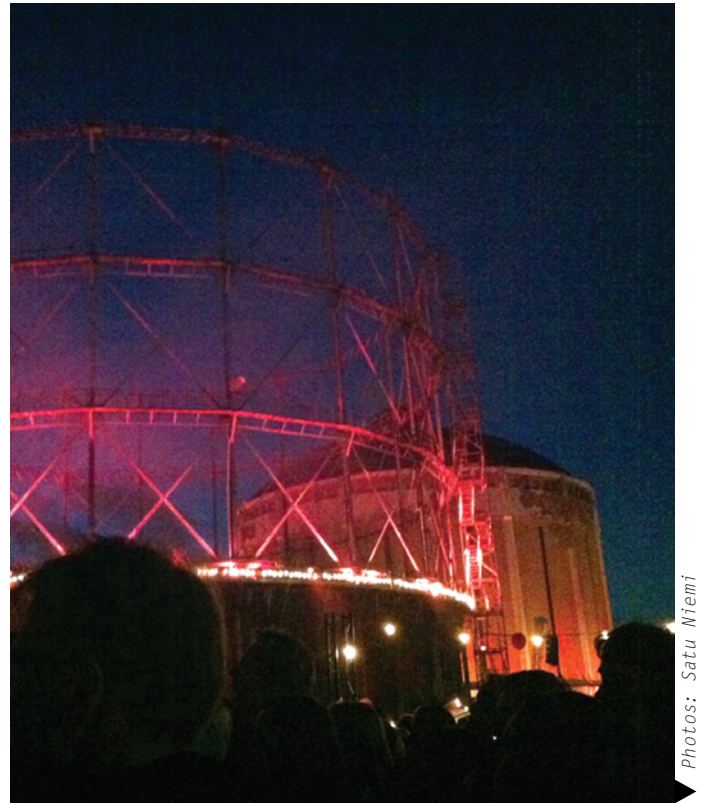
Sure, I can be an urbanist. I live and work in an urban space, and that **urbanity is central** to what we do at **Ptarmigan** - is that enough? To me, “urban” doesn’t mean concrete jungles, public transportation or fast-paced office workers shuffling through crowded public space. It’s instead the **connections between these elements**, woven together like a blanket, that I consider to be “urban”. Perhaps a better term is diversity - a plurality of perspectives, united by some shared negotiated space.

Urbanism is politics, on an every-person level. It’s inherently shape-shifting, dynamic, and resistant to model-making or formulas. All of these aspects add up to something wonderful, a life always **invigorating**, which one can never be completely on top of.

My interpretation of urbanism — which comes without even the slightest bit of theory, so knives out, carve away — is not bound specifically to city-forms. I have no doubt that rural or village environments spin the same webs, probably with a density even more complex and difficult to unravel. The city or village is **just a layer**, Cartesian coordinates we can plot points on, but in multiple dimensions beyond time and space.

For Ptarmigan, itself a shape-shifting project that is sometimes art, sometimes educational, sometimes activist — being situated in a **network of intersecting lines and viewpoints** is essential. We’re not interested in reinforcing existing subcultural structures, but in widening the space between them. If this leads to confusion, so be it. What’s central to everything we do is **living** - living is the central conundrum in urbanism, art, labour and all forms of culture. Urbanism is a **language**, with an infinite number of dialects. It is not a solution, but it provides the questions through which we can re-imagine our world.

OBSERVATION



Photos: Satu Niemi

THE FESTIVAL CITY

Berlin Festival and Helsinki's Flow Festival

NELE MOOR, *urban studies student in EKA*

SATU NIEMI, *architecture student in Aalto University*

INTRO

From small street festivals to gigantic music festivals, the city is a platform for all types of events. Backyards, parks, industrial complexes and airports are reused and we can sense that festival culture has become a lifestyle for many, especially amongst a younger generation. We, an architect Satu from Helsinki and an urbanist Nele from Tallinn, will discuss the importance and influence of this culture using the examples of Flow Festival Helsinki and Berlin Festival. We will observe their ability to relate to the surrounding urban context. Both cities are known for their vital cultural life and often used as examples, but what can we learn from them?

THE CHAT

Nele Moor (later **NM**): The percentage of single households in our society is rising and contributing to the **individualistic world-view**. In that light we can boldly suggest that the emergence of festival culture could be a result or a cure for this problem in bigger cities where people are hungry for warmer communication and something that goes beyond mundane everyday life. Music unites and offers experience not only for one but also a **feeling of collective enjoyment**.

OBSERVATION

Satu Niemi (later SN): This feeling of collective enjoyment seems to be one of the most notable factors about urban music festivals. Flow Festival attendees have described the event as a “**city within a city**” and “**a village that doesn’t exist**”. The festival creates a fleeting sense of a village gathering, where people are connected through similar interests: taste in music, style and fashion, and above all of course the choice of festival itself.

NM: To a degree it is even comparable to the religious tradition of Sunday morning church service. Besides satisfying emotional needs and gathering to listen to “the holy word” the experience is also about checking out other people and establishing new contacts - it’s a **social game**. You hear people not talking about only whether the music is better in one or another event, but also about the general atmosphere of the festival - a type of **synergy**, mostly defined by people, location and music. This is not directly and immediately perceptible but can determine the success of the event.

SN: This is very true, if the festival manages to create a sense of communality in the festival-goers. Rather than a series of big gigs or a big party, the festival becomes a temporary community where people relate to each other. This feeling of coming together can spread to the city on a wider scale as well. A well-received and a popular festival can create a **feeling of pride** amongst the residents of the surrounding areas and connect neighbourhoods.

NM: On one hand, there is a tendency that **festivals move out of the city** to more natural surroundings like forests and fields with the purpose of narrowing the amount of participants and also creating more specific and intimate atmosphere. On the other hand, the number of festivals in cities is growing and the content is becoming increasingly diverse. Therefore festivals have to become **platforms for contemporary urban activities**. Berlin Festival, for example, aspires to offer venues for **urban subcultures**. To mention a few more examples, there was an Art Village introducing street art, and a brand market introducing Berlin based smaller entrepreneurs.

While these festivals can be venues for contemporary urban movements there is also a tendency towards becoming **commercial and profit oriented**. Festivals can be used for city branding and lose their initial credibility for the subcultures. This could be prevented by allowing **participatory** projects and a space for the festival visitor to take action and influence the course of the event.

How should we look at integrating design and art into Flow Festival?

SN: Flow festival offers film screenings and art installations, and it is branded as a “creative” festival. This connects to the current venue of Flow: **Suvilahti**, a former gas plant next to one of Helsinki’s hippest neighbourhoods. The area has been developed by the city to become a **versatile event venue**, housing creative production companies, galleries, a circus and different kinds of non-profit organizations, just to name a few. Even though the development of the once derelict industrial area to an important cultural hub had started a few years before Flow Festival first organized their event on the site, the festival has played an important role in improving the profile of the area. The festival is also a breeding ground for **new collaborations**, for example in 2012 Flow Festival collaborated with the European Architecture Student Assembly held in Helsinki in Suvilahti just a few weeks prior to the festival. A design competition was organised which resulted in a new kind of stage typology that was then built for the festival.

OBSERVATION

NM: So what to think of the much-discussed notion of **festivalization**?

Contemporary cities are competing, and big events can be used as one tool to attract cash flow and investments. This is often done without considering the context. It is commendable to **see Berlin and Flow Festival using the urban fabric wisely**. They have managed to celebrate the re-ignition of former industrial and infrastructural landscapes. In addition to that (and also in connection), **Tempelhof**, the location of Berlin Festival, as a former airport is actively used now as the biggest open-air park in Europe. The historical layers of the sites are incorporated into the festival. When you enter the festival in Berlin you have to pass through a quite a formal looking check-in with pilots and stewardesses. The decoration and design of the event makes constant references to the subject of airports and flying.

The organizers don't see themselves only in the role of introducing Tempelhof; rather, they aim to compete with festivals worldwide and introduce the whole city. The scale and dimension of the festival shows that it is a **grandiose spectacle** aimed more towards the outside visitor instead of trying to entice the experienced local clubber.

There are many actors behind creating a profile of a festival, but most important are the organizers and the experience. Festivals tend to embrace more local context when they are growing organically step by step in collaboration with the music scene and people. That has been the case with Flow Festival - initial character of the event remains, even though the prices on the site grow significantly every year. In Berlin there is so much going on simultaneously all over city that a big scale festival feels more like a **packaged version of the cities endless possibilities**. A central question today for Berlin's subcultures is what next. The physical space is becoming neater, sterile and gentrified and the underground scene has to either transform or disappear. Former club areas become quiet residential districts or touristic shopping havens and the international hipster takes over the night life.

OUTRO

Looking for possible futures, urban festivals could grow bigger and bigger and become increasingly commercial. If we consider the fact that most big scale European music festivals have the same line-ups every year, it would be interesting to see them develop in an opposing and more local direction. A good example is Tallinn Music Week, which uses many locations. In general it could be about understanding possibilities beyond big intentional performers, becoming a venue for local movements and newcomers, and involving non-professionals and the visitor.



ALTERNATIVE IS OUT

Tactics for getting to know a city

KEITI KLJAVIN, *urbanist*

Can you remember the board game „A Journey Round the World“⁴¹ from your childhood? This game had little to do with the world or travelling, as it really taught basic skills that are needed for life, such as **elementary maths** and how to experience the beautiful state of **random fortune**. The game was enthralling probably for completely other reasons.

The possibility to travel around the world is here today more than ever. Visiting foreign towns is sometimes just as an easy as throwing dice. In a foreign city people often find their way to someone or something third, who and what guides them around. Usually these people are called **guides**, the things **maps** and the actions **urban excursions**. The ‘don’t miss’ sights are elementary; **calculating the number of inhabitants** and a **random guide** and a choice by a good fortune – definitely informative, but where is the playfulness, that something that engages?

As a reader of U, you already understand the joys of cities and how, even in our home towns, there are places that you must make an effort to awaken to and notice. An excursion is built on **passive communication**: listening to and looking at the guide. The guide knows. There is also an array of other ways of getting to know a city. Firstly of course are the friends of friends, their personal stories, networked volunteers, ‘like a local guide’, and other excursions stressing the alternative. But the way we sense the representation of a city (through excursions or other mediated actions) has much to do with the **choices** that our local sense considers important **in the process of evaluating sights**.

Each of us has a certain image of their hometown that is not always consciously, but often carefully **constructed for the outside world**. This perceptive, which can be alternative or local, refers to agreed upon authenticity, but it leaves out **nuances, shadow sides**, the **boring** and the **mundane**. These progressions of projections can be cultivated endlessly in an urban space – architectural wonders as exhibits of the open air-urban museum, as fragmented decorations next to each other, and all those contemporary and future fetishised **objects that you have to see**. Isn’t it so, that for some reason people love to photograph architecture and urban space without people, as a separate artefact, despite the fact that the space is used, houses are lived in and the real life of even most photogenic object is ruled by the mundane. I have many of those photos.

1. Also known as Ludo.

OPINION

Leaving the “professional cretinism” and analysis of desires aside, and looking for something beyond a sequence of uniform spaces and **texts memorized by guides, prepossessions** and **‘the tourist gaze’**, it is possible to find many options in the practice of learning about the contemporary city. Namely, one can seek practices that redefine that sort of ‘consumption’. We are back to that ‘something’ that is simultaneously engaging and informative.

For example in Berlin, it is possible to discover secrets of places on **photo-tours**² to abandoned factories, closed fairgrounds and former hospitals, where permission to enter is a gray area. In Sydney, Barcelona and several other cities, **architecture is introduced by the architects** themselves³. Well-known is the **Open House**⁴ conception, which introduces exceptional built environments and urban space in many cities across the world completely free of charge. Looking at the titles of tours, it is refreshing to see that in addition to ‘wow-architecture’, people have started to turn their attention to **details**. For example under the aegis of Open House and during the World Design Capital, a “Font tour”⁵ and a “Brick Tour”⁶ took place in Helsinki (yes, really, fonts and bricks!).

In Estonia these approaches are more likely to be exceptions. In the tourism sector, you can find experience-tourism, official town excursions and opposing entertainment tours. This kind of **place marketing** is attracting external capital. A concrete place with its distinguished social, cultural and physical parameters becomes an important criterion in the globalization of production and increased mobility of capital. The **entrepreneurial cities** around the world are using local urban cultural landscapes strategically (mega-events, festivals, conferences in special locations creating **extra value** in choosing a place to live). Identity-based entertainment zones such as an old and graceful merchant town’s queer space mark internationality, open-minded attitudes, tolerance and diversity for visitors. Identity is the main tool for re-creation as places of culture and consumption that **meet the desires of the executive and the white-collar worker-consumer**. Smaller towns and urban regions tend to be less armed in the **war of the creative capital**⁷. This means that it is hard to compare Helsinki and Tallinn in that respect.

But **Tallinn’s representation**, opted by several public opinions, speaks of a space of contrasts – a wooden house next to a shiny high-rise. Here as well, many exiting short-term actions take place to introduce the city. For example one event critically redefined the format of an excursion and carried out social theatre.⁸ Or elsewhere in Estonia, for example in Tartu, where while visiting the unknown city with authors, a book presentation was played out⁹. Exciting urban wanderings are offered by the side-programmes of conferences (E.g Tallinn Architecture Biennale and Urban and Landscape Days) and local organisations (Estonian Urban Lab Linnalabor¹⁰ and Estonian Centre of Architecture¹¹).

“Alternative” has not been an exciting buzzword for some time. People interested in cities are attracted to **temporary, interdisciplinary** and maybe even **chance-lead events**. Fixed authenticity and memorised urban narrative is not producing new knowledge, but enforces the incapability of representations to create additional value. An area’s local history and culture is made available and transformed into a resource for local economic and social development within a globally evolving economy and society¹². Those kinds of tactics are actively used by all sorts of initiatives introducing the city. Today it is really possible to travel around the world, without throwing the dice, affected by that ‘something’, **playfully**. In order that **smart choices has been made**.

2. PHOTO-TOURS “GO2KNOW”.
MORE INFO: www.go2know.de

3. SYDNEY ARCHITECTURE WALKS:
www.sydneymararchitecture.org
BARCELONA ARCHITECTURE WALKS:
www.mielarquitectos.com/baw

4. SEE MORE:
www.openhouseworldwide.org

5. SEE MORE:
[www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/
program/2011-10-11/font-walk](http://www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/program/2011-10-11/font-walk)

6. OPEN HOUSE HELSINKI PROGRAMME:
www.openhousehelsinki.fi/2011/index_eng.htm

7. RICHARD FLORIDA’S THEORY ON CREATIVE CLASS:
Florida, R. Cities and the Creative Class, Florida, R. (2003), pg.143-149 - City Reader (1996), Richard T., LeGates and Frederic Stout (ed.), 5th ed., NY:Routledge.

8. PLAY by Theatre N099,
“Tallinn - our city”
[www.no99.ee/lavastused.
php?nid=55](http://www.no99.ee/lavastused.php?nid=55)

9. URBAN WALKS DURING PRIMA VISTA (*annual literature festival in Tartu*):
[www.kirjandusfestival.tartu.
ee/mitte-tartu-linnaretked](http://www.kirjandusfestival.tartu.ee/mitte-tartu-linnaretked)

10. [http://www.linnalabor.ee/
tegevus/70](http://www.linnalabor.ee/tegevus/70)

11. [http://www.arhitektuuriokeskus.ee/ekskursioonid/
arhitektuurituurid/](http://www.arhitektuuriokeskus.ee/ekskursioonid/arhitektuurituurid/)

12. Urry, J. (1995). *Reinterpreting Local Culture - Consuming Places*, pg.152 London:Routledge.



Photo: Grete Stimut

CHAOS, ORDER AND HELMET

KADRI KOPPEL, MA Urban Governance, Tallinn University

This spring I was travelling in South-East Asia – in **Cambodia** and **Laos** to be precise. There wasn't a reason to use a car once, you got everywhere with a tuk-tuk, roller and jumbo¹. In June, work obligations took me to **Helsinki** for several days and I decided to bring along my **two-wheeled friend**. You might guess that my **experiences in traffic** between crazy, unregulated South-East Asian towns and the safe, Nordic Helsinki streets were totally different. However these profoundly opposing urban orders are joined by a similar flow and joy of movement.

Traffic signs are rare in the towns of Cambodia and Laos. Even when they are hanging on some street corners, they don't have a decisive role. On the streets of the cities in South-East Asia the will of the strongest functions as a rule: **if you have a SUV, then you can take the primary road**. Yet, vain, big cars are rare compared to other modes of traffic in these countries (though – when you have a car, it tends to be huge). Pedestrians, cyclists, people with rollers and tuk-tuks drift smoothly and **organically**, interweaving between each other.

If you wish to take a left, it is not expected that you stop at the crosswalk and wait to check if there is someone coming from either side – that moment would never arrive! You have to slowly move to the left side of the street (reverse road) and turn left on the crossing street (also reverse road), where you can get on the 'right' road on a lucky moment.

1. Equivalent to tuk-tuk in Laos

URBAN WANDERINGS

In Helsinki, a city that has become a complete bicycle paradise in the last couple of years, everything is of course organised, **thought through and regulated**. When a bicycle lane stops and continues across the street then there is of course a clear sign and an arrow pointing to the right direction. It seems almost as that on every regulated crossing meeting a bicycle lane is a special traffic light for the cyclists and the area where the cyclist has to stop is clearly marked to give road to the pedestrians who are crossing. In addition to gorgeous seaside promenades and common bicycle lanes next to the street, Helsinki has recently opened a **bicycle 'highway'**, that takes you from the old railway tunnel at the Western Terminal to Kiasma.

While the traffic in South-East Asia flows its own course, in Northern-Europe every mode of traffic gets equal, comfortable and safe options/solutions.

Political order, living standard, social hierarchies, ways of life and culture are completely different in those two societies – yet navigating the streets in South-East Asia and Helsinki I felt safer than I do in Tallinn. Aspiring towards **the wild South-East Asian organic movement** is most likely not a solution that an educated adult with reasonable amount of common sense would suggest in Estonia. However, sometimes I get the feeling that the more rules and laws we have, the less a person has to decide for themselves. Common sense, noticing and caring for others decreases. It seems that here in Estonia we are stuck in some kind of a **transition-limbo**: we have outgrown an approach that takes its leads from a natural state and created rules for traffic, and for society in general, that should characterize every civilized society. Some kind of humane aspect has been lost in that process and we haven't been able to rediscover it yet. The general attitudes in society are reflected in using the urban space as well as in traffic.

Three summers ago, after a friend who had gone running was killed in traffic, I bought myself a **bicycle helmet** and it is unlikely that I will make a trip without it since. Considering that I live in Nõmme and take a bicycle lane on Pärnu road which is often occupied by a bus, where big trucks hunk their horn and sometimes a car is parked, it is a reasonable decision if I **wish to survive**. However, in the future, I would like to feel a stronger trust towards my hometown and fellow road users and re-experience the freeing feeling of my hair flying in the wind when I am, for example, cycling to work in the morning.

I wasn't wearing a helmet in Asia, nor did I in Helsinki. I just didn't feel the need.

Changes in attitude towards more **tolerant** and open societies take time and, as mentioned before, what we see in traffic is only one expression of valid beliefs. The need and initiative for a change towards more open, communicative and respectful environment is definitely there in Tallinn.

One nice solution that rethinks movement and represents positive attitude is an interactive map of ideal Tallinn on the web page of Tallinn Bicycle week WWW.TALLINNBICYCLEWEEK.EE.



▲ Granite walls of the "bike highway" are planned to be used as an art gallery.

▲ Beside bike lanes and pedestrian roads the breakthrough is also packed with leisure grounds for big and small.
Photos: Kadri Koppel

HOW LIVEABLE IS HELSINKI, REALLY?

U asked Helsinki residents for their opinions on the liveability of the city. The expat's perspective is often more contextualised and unique for evaluating processes from an outsider viewpoint.

KRISTI GRIŠAKOV, Helsinki-Tallinn twin-citizen since 2006

No city is ever perfect or “ready” in the mind of its citizens, no matter how liveable it might seem by quantitative standards. There is always a problem with crazy bureaucracy, being under- or over regulated, expensive, without affordable living spaces etc. For me a liveable city is a place where I can concentrate my **energy on actual living** (work and hobbies), where the surrounding urban environment and connected services are supporting, not hindering it. Based on this definition, Helsinki is liveable. It can be compared to a grown-up who is successful, polite and conscientious, supports her family, honours certain traditions, has strong (sometimes rigid) principles, enjoys culture and appreciates simple and local design. However, all of that doesn't mean one shouldn't go to the sauna naked and get drunk once in a while. All in all, as a citizen you feel safe and secure relying on that sort of a person. These qualities reveal themselves in every aspect of Helsinki's life, although they appear sometimes so seamless that there is a danger they can go unnoticed. **Good city planning is like special effects in the movies** – it is almost unnoticeable, if well done. In this case Helsinki is a good stuntman and a computer wizard – public transportation is running like clockwork, people are helpful and don't cut queues, the public spaces are cozy and offer a variety of activities for all age groups. The city itself, regardless of its urban sprawl, is forming an interconnected network of roads, trails and passes for all movement preferences. Although some aspects of urban planning are heavily regulated, the usage of public space for a variety of activities is still encouraged (to play games, have a picnic or just sleep on the grass). Overall, Helsinki is comfortable for its citizens not the other way around.



Vallila, one of Helsinki's remained wooden districts



Otaniemi campus pop-up sculpture
Photos by the author

ANDREW GRYF PATERSON, artist-organiser, independent researcher

As an **immigrant** from North-west Europe, growing up in **Scotland**, I have about 10 years experience living in post-industrial towns and cities in the UK. I based myself in Helsinki at the beginning of 2003, as a particular kind of **expat**: I came to study and stayed, as an artist, researcher, cultural worker and networker. Comparing Helsinki to urban places I knew, Helsinki is a city where things are growing, more organised and efficient, that is very active as a culture-supporting capital city for its size, as well as feeling safe and 'stable'. For many years Helsinki has happily been my professional 'base' in the Eastern Baltic Sea Region, and I have gained lived experience of the city in two ways.



Happiavuono. Photos by author.

LIVEABILITY INDEX

In my early years, as a single guy in a single room apartment on the edge of downtown 'trendy' **Punavuori**, I knew I was in a good location, but sometimes wished that the city was not so stable and efficient, more random and playful. At that time I travelled a lot and rarely had a chance to settle. Around 2005 I came across the extraordinary cultural greenhouse '**Happihuone**' on Töölönlahti, first built during European Capital City of Culture 2000, which gave me an insight into grassroots ecological and subcultural scenes. However, my urban experience was frequently supplemented with travels, for example to Riga, Berlin, London, Glasgow.

Later in a transitional year, I had longer residencies in Barcelona, Istanbul, Chicago, and New York, which gave new ideas and comparative examples of cultural gentrification and counter-activism, urban gardening and autonomous cultural centres. Reflecting, I went searching to find the types of things which I was hoping to find in Helsinki. Then I returned, let's say, to my 'second Helsinki life', in 2007, when I moved into a family situation in the Northern suburbs of **Kannelmäki**. At the same time 'Happihuone' was dismantled by direction of the city planners. However, the next summer, NGO Dodo initiated and promoted urban gardening at other spots in the city, and I watched with interest to see how things would develop onwards.

So I am still in the northern suburbs 5 years later, but a little further outwards in **Malminkartano**. I have an appreciation of different things in the city: I have gained neighbours that I know, backyard facilities with social relations, an allotment plot nearby, and a young child. However, I am still wishing that the suburbs were a bit less stable, had some visible energy with people on the streets: A self-organised social, cultural or community centre space to meet others. A cafe would be nice. Many street-front units in my neighbourhood are either hairdressers/beauty salons or small engineer-entrepreneur offices. Dare I say, I wish for something more lively. Where would I be without the Internet?

Now a more established member of the cultural and grassroots scenes of Helsinki, I have followed the creative energising of the city taking place, for example in Kallio, Vallila, and temporary Kalasatama in the last couple of years. But these are still a bit far from where we live, eat dinner, and sleep. I wonder how long before **alternative** and world design (or cultural) capital **vibrations shake Helsinki's outer suburbs** like mine.

Inhabitants include older-generation working and middle class residents, mixed with younger couples and families moving here for extra space and maybe some quiet. Finns live among immigrants such as Western Europeans like myself, as well as repatriated Karelians, nearby Estonians, Russians, far-travelled Somalis, Afghans and others. This multi-cultural and multi-ethnic image is created from people whom I can see and hear in my apartment block and neighbourhood, walking to and from the local commuter railway station. How and where can this suburban population get to know each other? How will older and newer neighbourhood activist energies meet? Will it be Restaurant Day or Cleaning Day, or some other creatively invented occasion? I look forward to a common space for us all to drink coffee or tea, bake, make, listen and learn from each other, fix and experiment in the unstable future predicted ahead. In the last year I've been making little steps in this direction, dreaming of a very local, grassroots artist-residency for myself where I live.



Punavuori



Happihuone



Kannelmäki



Malminkartano



Malminkartano



Malminkartano

JENNI KALLIONSIVU, programme leader of the Finnish Institute

I'm a Finn whose relationship to Helsinki is **strongly based on Tallinn**. I have started to visit the capital of the country of my birth only after moving to work in Estonia. Helsinki is actually like a northern part of my current home town Tallinn. **Very expensive**, but still. I don't have the statistics, but I think that an average Tallinner goes to Helsinki more often than an average Finn from the North. When I moved to Tallinn from Tampere (which is not really an example of Northern Finland), my friends from Helsinki were delighted, that they can visit me cheaply. The boat ticket is much cheaper than the train ticket to Tampere, a few hundred kilometres up north.

I could continue about how the Southern parts of Finland and Northern parts of Estonia are integrating to become one cultural- and economic space. And this has been talked about before. **But in what language should we use to deal with our shared culture and economic business?** English? Probably this is a great solution to many. After all, English is the contemporary lingua franca which you are expected to know in every position. But when there is more and more communication with the neighbours a feeling might emerge that it is a little bit bizarre to communicate in a language that is not native to either. There is a considerable amount of communication already. In the old town of Tallinn during certain seasons you are more likely to hear Finnish than Estonian, and there are shops in the centre of Helsinki where the main language is Estonian. The reality of large cities is always multi-lingual and the connection between Helsinki and Tallinn can also be heard.

In this situation, knowing several languages becomes more and more important. I don't imagine a situation where every Finn expects Estonians to know Finnish. You can hear from the older generation that these situations have occurred and a reason has been given for these expectations. There is no point for looking a situation that would be the other way around. Not everyone has to know the language of their neighbours, if there is no need or interest. But I hope that we will continue to have a chance to learn each other's languages in need or will. In addition to everything good multi-lingual life helps to prevent dementia.



Photo: Mikko Kallionsivu

SMARTER PARKING IN EUROPE

KAUR SARV, *linnalaborant (linnalabor.ee)*

Could such a thing as parking be innovative and smart? The common perception is that we don't need more than an empty lot or a sidewalk to organise parking. Add some signs, start collecting money from car owners, and you're there. By now it seems that Estonia has achieved the highest level of technologically advanced parking with its **mobile phone payment systems**. Yet there is the everlasting question of sufficient parking places for all cars in the city. But should there really be a secured parking place for every car?

Let's take a look at some solutions used to manage parking in European cities, discussed in an event¹ organised by the **European Parking Association** in Helsinki on 20th September this year. First, it was interesting to find out that there are so many parking experts from a wide range of organisations. Both public and private public parking managers were present, together with researchers from universities who described their ideas on parking efficiency. The most interesting examples actually came from the academy and parking practitioners - starting from GIS-maps and aerial photos used helping to fill unused parking spaces in the city², to designing the best soft enforcement methods for on-street parking violations³.

Several parking organisers in local governments have understood that parking is not only about **collecting money from car owners**, but it is a **tool for managing mobility** and creating a shared space for cars and people. A good example comes from **Gent** in Belgium, where the local government wanted to preserve their street cafés and lively atmosphere. They merged its transport, traffic and parking management organisations to create a common approach to mobility management in the city. Besides the obvious management of cars, public transport and cycling, the people of Gent focused on communication of mobility plans and advice on land use. By creating a common mobility company for all transport related activities, the city of Gent has now gained around €1.6 million yearly revenue towards the city budget⁴.

For Estonians, the examples of the parking policy in **Helsinki** were probably most interesting, as they have experienced similar parking problems in the past. **Juha Hietanen** from the Helsinki City Planning Department explained that their aim is to create "enough parking spaces for inhabitants, but not too many". There is a maximum limit for workplace parking, so people are encouraged to use public transport for getting to the city centre. Helsinkians have understood that good public transport service decreases the need for building new parking spaces and this keeps the price of apartments cheaper as well. In addition, the city government of Helsinki is planning to develop an innovative system, which informs inhabitants about free parking spaces in town. How and when this will be implemented remains to be seen.

A representative of **Tallinn City Government**, **Liivar Luts**, introduced the current parking situation. He proposed two solutions to resolve the overcrowding of our city centre. First, he offered a better regulation of parking places (currently many spaces are on the plots of demolished houses and do not meet environmental safety requirements). Second, he expressed the hope that the free public transport in Tallinn (starting from January 2013) will encourage people to leave their

1. PRESENTATIONS OF THE SEMINAR CAN BE FOUND HERE: www.polisnetwork.eu/public-events/115/61/Second-Joint-EPA-Polis-Parking-Workshop

2. SEE MORE: *Itzhak Benenson, Tel Aviv, Israel:* www.geosimlab.tau.ac.il

3. SEE MORE: *Joao Caetano Dias, Lisbon, Portugal:* www.polisnetwork.eu/uploads/ModuleXtender/PublicEvents/115/EPA_Polis_Helsinki2012_Dias_EMPARK.pdf

4. SEE MORE: www.polisnetwork.eu/uploads/ModuleXtender/PublicEvents/115/EPA_Polis_Helsinki2012_Gheldof_Gent.pdf

FIELD NOTES

cars home which consequently decreases congestion in the city centre. Parking can be a significant income for cities and parking organisations, hence questions from the audience about decreasing parking spaces in cities were treated carefully by the representatives of European Parking Association. This revealed maybe the most important factor in current urban parking policies – **sufficient alternative income should replace parking income** and then we can have lesser cars in the city centre.

AUTHOR'S TRAVEL WAS SUPPORTED BY THE CULTURAL ENDOWMENT OF ESTONIA.

Still looking for the point: THE VISION CONFERENCE OF TALLINN

REGINA VILJASAAR, *linnalaborant (linnalabor.ee)*

About the Conference: The simultaneous lack of vision and megalomania of one of the first vision conferences, Synergic Tallinn, inspired a critical article entitled "Where is the point?"¹. This year, the 10th conference in a row, was dedicated to Mustamäe and began with Toomas Vitsut's dashing statement that the interest of the local government is a radical change. What happened after that was – without irony – almost just as good.

About Mustamäe: The population of Mustamäe is the oldest in Tallinn and it is expected to decrease more than 10%², which is more than in any other part of the city. The amount of elderly residents and the age of the 103 block houses, the oldest in Estonia, points to the fear Mustamäe will become a ghetto³. At the same time, 45% of the inhabitants are patriots of the neighbourhood and do not wish for major changes to take place⁴. Unfortunately, most of them won't be living in Mustamäe in 50 years time.

About the Vision: Broadly, the following solutions were considered – to renew the neighbourhood as a complex or through housing; demolish it completely and rebuild in a new manner; or renovate the existing properties. The strongest argument was that the cheapest solution is renovating the whole district, for which the financial and juridical help of from the state is needed. But what happens if the object in need has more that 7000⁵ owners, out of whom half do not wish the disturbance? How will people want to live in 50 years? Or to be more accurate, how do they have to live when the future European regulations expect that a house has to produce its own energy as well as food? And where will they work? What kind of opportunities are hidden in the proximity of the Technical University? The last point was touched upon by Hardo Aasmäe in his introductory speech, where he mentioned that it could be possible to extend the campus to the residential part of the district. However, this could be one of the main forces in livening the neighbourhood.

The conference made a noteworthy effort in mapping different solutions, but when it comes to Mustamäe and other similar districts, it is only a 'good start'. Considering the fact that more that half (meaning up to 400 000) of dwellings in Estonia originate from the period from 1960 to 1990⁶, we can be sure that radical changes are ahead. What part we will have in this, remains unclear.

1. *Uibopuu, Laura; Viljasaar, Regina; Lilia del Rio, Miks nii vähe uba? Tallinna Visioonikonverentsist, Eesti Ekspress 21.12.2006.*

2. *Geomedia, Population Prognosis of Tallinn 2011-2030 (2011). Notes: pdf in U web*

3. *Jõesaar, Tuuli, Magalarajoone ootab ees must tulevik, Eesti Päevaleht 28.11.2011*

4. *Heidmets, Mati, Valmisolek muutusteks. Mustamäe korteriomanike uuring 2012, page 39 in the conference materials.*

5. *There are more than 7300 apartments in Mustamäe, most of them belong to private owners. The fact that many apartments have several owners have not been considered here.*

6. *Toompark, Tõnu, Elamis-pindade kvaliteet käib alla, Delfi 25.06.2012*

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

21st - 30th September 2012

► **Exhibition "Cities for all"**

The exhibition demonstrated Design for All solutions from projects all over Europe, that demonstrated how participatory design principle and strategic thinking enable people, companies and government organisations create new values.

Maria Pukk's review in Estonian can be found in Sirp 5.10.12

www.disainioo.ee/et/sisu/citiesforal5.html

12th October

► **Marc Auge's public lecture "Architecture and Non-Places"**

in Tallinn University.

16th October

► **The Vision Conference of Tallinn "Life on the 'hills' – 50 years later"**

Read Regina Viljasaar's summary in current U.

18th October - 3rd November

► **"LASN" The Curatorial Exhibition Of the Union of Estonian Architects**

This year the exhibition dealt with the problem that architects seem to consider their own – how to redeem Lasnamäe. Nine teams of architects had created nine models that deal with the lacking aspects in the public space of Lasnamägi.

1st November

► **New building policy inured to Tallinn**

www.tallinn.ee/est/ehitus/Tallinna-uus-ehitusmaarus

2nd November

► **Urban walk "The souls of the city"**

on the Siselinna cemetery in Tallinn. The series of urban walks organised by the Estonian Urban Lab started with dealing with a dark subject fit for the gloomy times outside. Siselinna cemetery is one of the biggest green areas in Tallinn, and at the same time an interesting museum and memorial. The walk was guided by architect Reedik Poopuu and human geographer Taavi Pae. For up-coming walks keep your eye on social media and follow Urban Walks online: www.linnalabor.ee/tegevus/70

8th November

► **Seminar "Meeting on a collision"**

in Tartu Loomemajanduskeskus. How to arrive to contact instead of conflict in the situation of anonymous safety? Sociologists, city managers, youth workers and several other experts working with young people invited together by City government of Tartu and the young people themselves discussed over this and several other equally important questions. We hope that ideas and possibilities were born, that help the initiatives of the youth in the public space. The programme and list of speakers can be found here:

www.tartu.ee/kohtumine_kokkupuorke1

9th - 23rd November

► **Exhibition "Contemporary traditional dwellings. Rebirth of archaic space"**

in The Museum of Estonian Architecture. An exhibition organised in cooperation

EVENT CALENDAR

with the Estonian Open Air Museum, Estonian Architects Union and The Museum of Estonian Architecture raised an important question – how can changed traditions, living standards and -styles be adjusted to the traditional type of house?

14th November

► **Public lecture “Clean surfaces and narcissism”**

Architect Reedik Pooptu seems to be very busy lately. In the big hall of Lindakivi culture centre XXXII “Lightning lecture” took place. This time the subject was the conflict between aesthetic and ethic values in architecture.

www.arhitektuurikeskus.ee/category/valkloengud/

14th - 15th November

► **Planning in Two Unions. The Society of Estonian Planners 10. Jubilee conference in Viljandi.** www.planeerijad.ee

19th - 20th November

► **Estland: Die neue Welt - Kultureller Aktivismus und Stadtentwicklung in Tallinn. Linnalabor in Berlin**

German Greens' Heinrich Böll Foundation invited Linnalabor to Berlin to give a speech on Tallinn cultural activism and issues of urban development. Beside Linnalabor Mikko Fritze shed light on the year 2011 when Tallinn was the Capital of Culture. In addition to that the movie “New World” was shown and the producer Jaak Kilmi and director Jaan Tootsen shared insights about their 5-year portrait of an active neighbourhood in Tallinn. Linnalabor people met Raumlabor, Think Berlin, Stadt Neudenken and other urban thinkers and activists.

20th November

► **Discussion “New ideas in urban policies in Europe”**

in University of Tallinn. Anne Querrien, Toomas Tammis and Marek Tamm.

29th November

► **OPEN LECTURE: Bolle Tham ja Martin Videgård - Tham & Videgård Arkitekter**

The open lectures series in the Estonian Academy of Arts (in LHV bank lounge Tartu mnt 2, Tallinn). www.tvark.se

18th December

► **OPEN LECTURE: Orkan Telhan - MIT / UPenn**

The open lectures series in the Estonian Academy of Arts (in EKA architecture department Pikk tn 20, Tallinn, 3. floor). www.orkantelhan.info

20th December

► **Seminar and party Apocalypse**

in Energia Avastuskeskus (Põhja pst 29, Tallinn). Union of Estonian Architects, Union of Interior Architects, Union of Landscape Architects, Union of Planners and Estonian Urban Lab (Linnalabor) joint seminar and party. Seminar starts at 6 pm and party at 8 pm.

TICKETS: pre-sale: students/seniors 5 EUR, others 10 EUR. On door 15 EUR

Starting on January 17th, 2013

► **(Il)legal Aesthetics core workshop @ Ptarmigan**

A series of activities from January - March 2013 around the concept of (Il)legal Aesthetics, focusing on content and tools which are not common for a usual artist. We will investigate responsibilities and possibilities; we will attempt to discover (il)legal forms of action and aesthetics. More info: www.ptarmigan.ee

URBAN PHOTO

HELSINKI OUTSIDE H&M AND FLOW

KADRI VAHER, urban planner



URBAN GRANITE CLIFFS AND SHRUBS OCCUPIED BY HARES, THE STYLISHLY NORDIC POWER PLANTS, FINNS AFFECTION TO THEIR DOGS AND NATURE, FULLY PLANNED AND REALIZED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS, COLD WINTERS, ENDLESS CYCLE PATHS, URBAN SPACE MIXED WITH GREENERY – THERE IS SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT THE CITY OF HELSINKI. AS AN URBANIST AND EASTERN-EUROPEAN I HAVE A NEED TO GET THERE AGAIN AND AGAIN.

▼ HELSINKI – THE CITY THAT OPENS TOWARDS THE SEA



▼ IS YOUR DOG SMALL OR BIG?

URBAN PHOTO



CLASSY POWER PLANT



COVER USED STREET

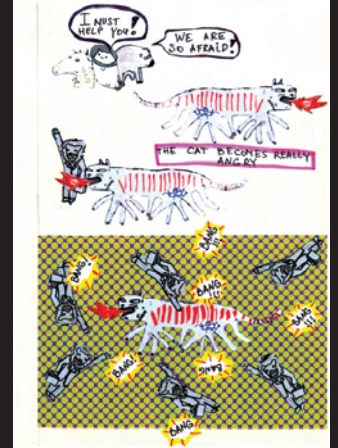
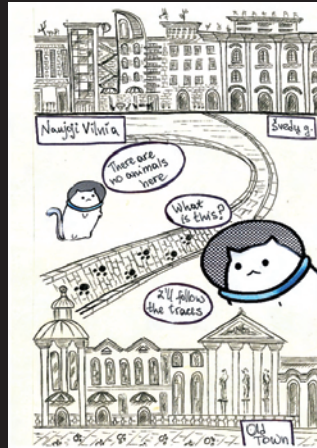
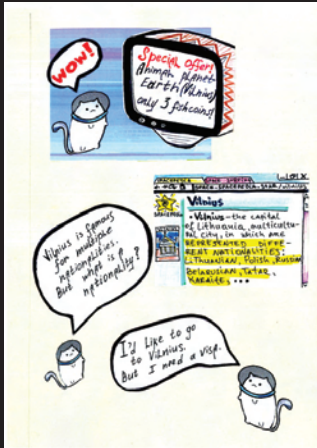
URBAN PHOTO



GRANITE ROCKS INTERLACING WITH HOUSES



ONE WAY OF LIVING IN HELSINKI



URBAN TEXTS + STREET ANIMALS = THE COMICS OF VILNIUS

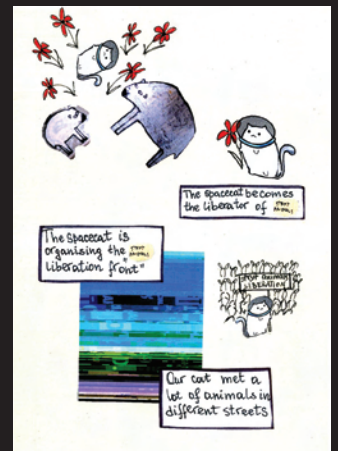
VERONIKA URBONAITĖ-BARKAUSKIENĖ, PhD student of Sociology (Vilnius University)

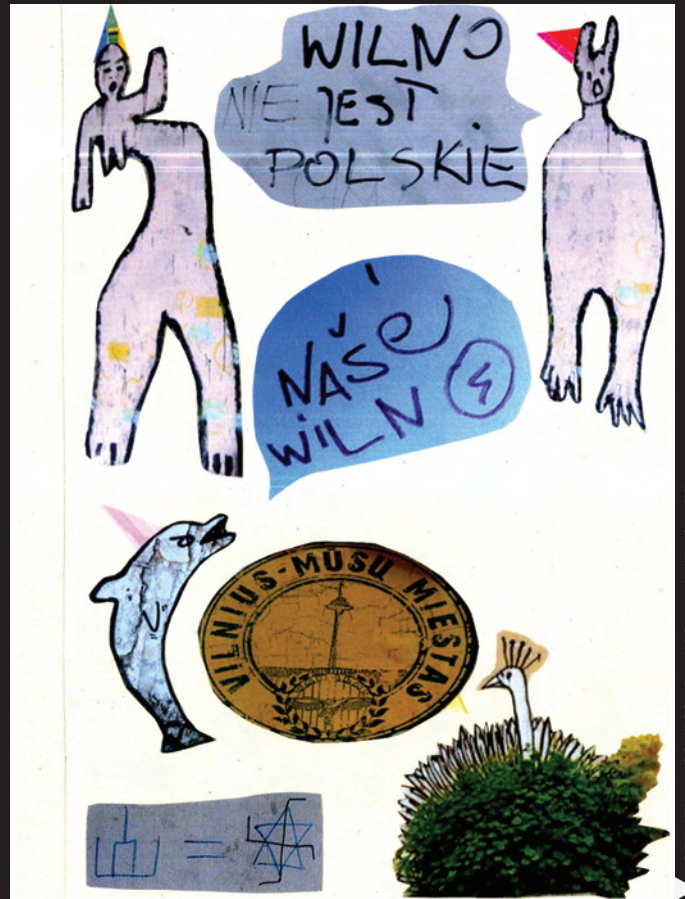
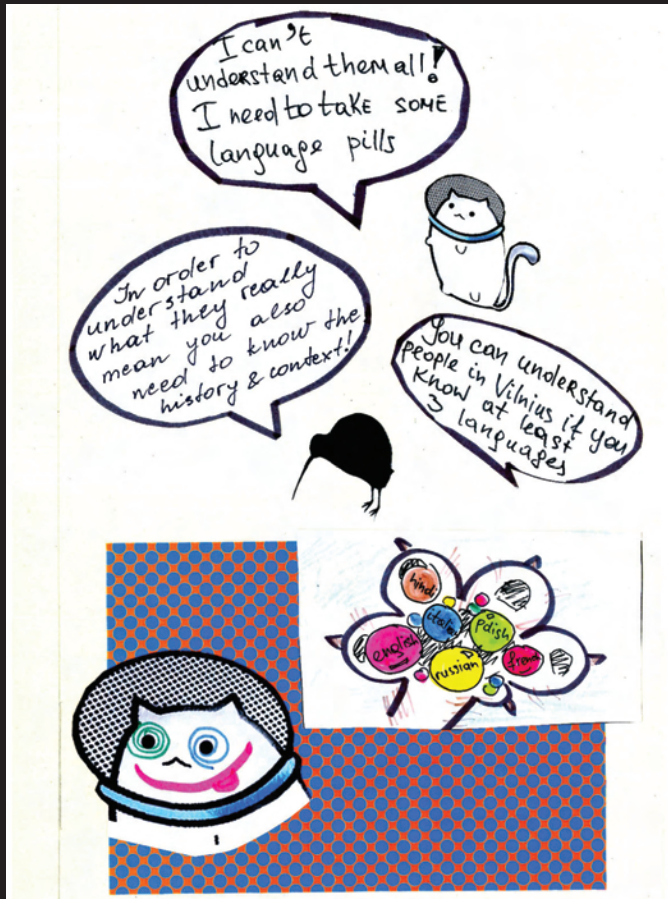
The idea of creating an urban comic compiled of texts and pieces of street art in Vilnius was developed this August during the summer school „City. Language. Identity“ organized in the European Humanities University (EHU – Belarusian University in exile, located in Vilnius since 2005). Our international working group „Urban texts“ consisted of eight sociologists, art historians and designers: Alla Marchenko from Ukraine, Kristóf Nagy from Hungary, Ieva Vaičiaitė from Lithuania, Vera Kavaleuskaya, Vera Zalutskaya, Darya Vasiura, Kate Varfolomeeva from Belarus and me, Veronika Urbonaitė-Barkauskienė from Vilnius.

We were inspired by the genius loci, street poetry ... and those fantastic animals we met on the walls of Vilnius. We spent several days walking in different districts of the city taking pictures of street art and trying to understand what characters, colours, moods and topics dominate the urban landscape of Vilnius. After these field trips we shared our insights and had long discussions. We discussed many questions, such as why are there so many graffiti in the center and oldtown of Vilnius, or why does the street art in working class district Naujininkai differ so much from the brand new suburb with private houses where graffiti is simply absent. The most important question was, what narrative can we extract from illegal pictures and inscriptions on the streets of Vilnius. After long hours of talking, arguing, drawing, cutting and gluing we developed the characters, the story (or to be precise – a fairy tale) and the whole crazy comic – about the multiethnic spirit of Vilnius and adventures of the street animals, such as the Space Cat, its best friend kiwi Vytautas, huge worm Ivan and others who fight Lion the Cleaner of Walls and celebrate the diversity of Vilnius.

After this interdisciplinary experience in urban anthropology + visual ethnography + collective story writing + designing the comics (which was, to tell the truth, as intriguing as exhausting) I still think that every city with a rich history and walls full of texts and characters deserves its own urban comic. And I wonder which city is going to be our next?

SEE FULL COMICS IN U12 IN WWW.URBAN.EE





READING ABOUT AND BEYOND HELSINKI

Dynamic Helsinki - New Urban Development Projects

www.hel2.fi/taske/julkaisut/2009/Helsinki_esite_expo_low.pdf

Tailwind – Helsinki's Horizon 2030

Helsinki's City Planning Department, 2010

Exhibition "Tailwind" presented changes planned for the former harbour areas in Länsisatama, Kalasatama and Kruunuvuorenranta. The change could be observed by examining a large scale image of contemporary Helsinki side by side with short films and short scale models representing the future.

EXHIBITION: www.laituri.hel.fi/en/node/43/image_gallery

PUBLICATION: www.hel2.fi/ksv/julkaisut/kirjat/myotatuulessa_en.pdf

Helsinki Beyond Dreams

Helsinki Beyond Dreams is a book about new urban culture and how it can make a difference. Check out Teele Pehk's overview in current issue. www.helsinki-beyonddreams.com

Helsinki under construction

Overview on expanding Helsinki on City of Helsinki official homepage. <http://en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview>

High-quality housing in Helsinki (Helsinki, 2008)

www.hel2.fi/taske/julkaisut/2008/High_quality_housing.pdf

City of Helsinki - Economic and Planning Centre

The Economic and Planning Centre of the City of Helsinki as an expert unit in management and deployment serves the top management of the City and the city departments. The Centre operates as the City Board's overall executive organ for planning, preparing and monitoring. The Centre is in charge of preparing and matching the objectives and strategy alternatives related to developing the city. The Centre is also responsible for taking initiative either in the form of projects or individual measures. Read further about the City of Helsinki Strategic Themes and Strategies 2009-2012: www.hel.fi/hki/Taske/en

Finlandiapuisto

The Finlandia Park entity will be part of the city's active core. Besides different theme parks and squares, Finlandia Park will encompass the new Music Centre, Finlandia Hall congress and concert centre, the National Opera, the City Museum and Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art. Finlandia Park is skirted by the Main Post Office and Library 10, the National Gallery, Parliament House, the Main Railway Station, the National Theatre, the City Theatre, the Winter Garden, Kaisaniemi Park, Kamppi Commercial Centre with bus station and Sanomatalo media house. www.finlandiapuisto.fi/pages/en/front-page.php

URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

www.uuttahelsinki.fi/sites/default/files/helsingin_aluerakentamiskohteet_-_englanti_-_2011-09-22.jpg

Laituri

Laituri is the Helsinki City Planning Department's information and exhibition space in the old bus station building at Narinkka. www.laituri.hel.fi/en

Jätkäsaari – Urban life by the open sea

www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview/areas/6/jatkasaari

www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/areas/6/jatkasaari

BROCHURE: www.hel2.fi/ksv/julkaisut/esitteet/esite_2009-13_EN.pdf

MAP: www.uuttahelsinki.fi/sites/default/files/jatkasaari_a4opaste_v9_en_0.jpg

L02NO APPROACH – constructing an ecological urban life-will be developed and defined in practice in Jätkäsaari: www.sitra.fi/en/low2no

JÄTKÄSAARI INFORMATION CENTRE HUUTOKONTTORI:

www.uuttahelsinki.fi/jatkasaari/info

Kalasatama – Residential and business district on the waterfront

OVERVIEW: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview/areas/1/kalasatama

BROCHURE: www.uuttahelsinki.fi/sites/default/files/kalasatama_esite_eng_lowres.pdf

BROCHURE 2: www.hel2.fi/ksv/julkaisut/esitteet/kalasatama_esite_en.pdf

KALASATAMA TEMPORARY BLOG: www.kalasatama.blogspot.com

URBAN DREAM MANAGEMENT: www.urbandreammanagement.com

Pasila – Helsinki's business and media hub

OVERVIEW: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview/areas/3/pasila

BROCHURE (KESKI-PASILA): www.hel2.fi/ksv/julkaisut/esitteet/pasila_keski-pasila_en.pdf

OVERVIEW 2: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/areas/3/pasila

HARTWALL AREENA: www.hartwall-areena.com/en

Kruunuvuorenranta – City life and wilderness

OVERVIEW: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview/areas/139/kruunuvuorenranta

KRUUNUSILLAT BRIDGE DESIGN COMPETITION: www.kruunusillat.fi

OVERVIEW 2: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/areas/139/kruunuvuorenranta

Viikki – Ecological living right next to the campus

OVERVIEW: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview/areas/156/viikki

OVERVIEW 2: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/areas/156/viikki

ECO-VIIKKI: www.hel2.fi/taske/julkaisut/2009/eco-viikki_en_net.pdf

VIIKKI SCIENCE PARK AND LATOKARTANO GUIDE: www.hel2.fi/ksv/julkaisut/esitteet/esite_2010-8_en.pdf

READING LIST

Myllypuro – A district of sports and welfare services

OVERVIEW: www.en.uuttahelsinki.fi/sections/2/overview/areas/183/myllypuro

MYLLYPURO MEDIA LIBRARY: www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/program/2011-12-30/myllypuro-media-library

OTHER:**World Design Capital Helsinki 2012**

www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en

PROGRAMME SUMMARY: www.issuu.com/wdchelsinki2012/docs/programme_summary/1

URBAN PLANNING EVENTS, EXHIBITIONS, PROJECTS DURING WDC:

www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/tags/kaupunkisuunnittelu

URBAN CULTURE EVENTS, EXHIBITIONS, PROJECTS DURING WDC:

www.wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/tags/kaupunkikulttuuri

City of Helsinki Neighbourhood Project Plan 2012–2015

The theme of the project period is “Cool culture and education”

www.lahioprojekti.he.fi/en

Helsinki 200

The jubilee year project. www.helsinki200.fi/en/node/573/open-city-opportunities-improving-lives-city-residents

PROGRAMME: www.helsinki200.fi/en/programme

ABOUT TALSINKI AND BEYOND:**Helsinki-Tallinn Transportation and Planning Scenarios**

KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM: www.talsinki.net

Draft of the Helsinki-Tallinn decision-support system

www.dev.tamme.lv

The effect of business on the mobility between Helsinki and Tallinn

Final report, BDA Consulting OÜ, Tallinn – Helsinki 2012

www.uuringud.tallinnlv.ee/document.aspx?id=11313

The development of Tallinn’s seaside and attitudes and evaluations of the users’ in relation to the planning of the new building for the City Government of Tallinn

City Planning Department, Tallinn University of Technology, School of Economics and Business Administration (Tallinn, 2012), only in Estonian.

www.tallinn.ee/est/ehitus/g8312s61549

Damiano Cerrone.**Tallinn, opening the city to the seaside – Analytic and planning tools**

Estonian Art Academy master thesis, supervisors Panu Lehtovuori ja Daniele Giovannini, reviewer Anssi Joutsiniemi (Tallinn, 2012)

www.issuu.com/damiano.c/docs/tallinn_opening_to_the_seaside

Margit Mutso.**Courtyards for people, enliven streets, set right the house!**

an overview of the LASN exhibition in SIRP, 2.11.2012.

Andreas Wagner.**Next Time in Lasnamäe**

Sharp critique of the LASN exhibition - worth reading and thinking along! www.seriousplans.com/general/next-time-in-lasnamae

Participatory planning manual

U breaks the news on new participatory planning manual guiding how to change planning in Estonia better for all parties.

www.karlova.ee/files/kaasava_planeerimise_juhend.pdf

Verdict on Hipodroomi detail plan is out!

On the 6th of November the administrative tribunal decided to deny Telliskivi neighbourhood association and other civil society associations’ appeal on Paldiski mnt 50 (Hipodroomi) detail plan. The 45-page long verdict in Estonian can be read here:

www.telliskiviselts.info/cmtls/1/482/article/483

Maros Krivy.**From factory to culture factory - Transformation of obsolete industrial space as a social and spatial process**

Paper analyses transformation of obsolete industrial space as a contested socio-spatial process of urban restructuring and examines the way ‘culture’ becomes a planning instrument of the transformation. The thesis studies social practices that have influenced the process and examines the main actors, conflicts, and perceptions of obsolete industrial space. The main argument is the following. Artistic practices challenged negative perceptions of obsolete industrial space and represented and practised it as a space of the everyday. Artistic practices have been labelled as ‘culture’ and ‘culture’ has become a planning instrument of regenerating obsolete industrial spaces. Case studies of the Cable Factory and the Suvilahti in Helsinki and the influence of the former on the latter give empirical evidence to the argument. www.helda.helsinki.fi/handle/10138/37174The thesis

Cities of Tomorrow: Challenges, Visions, Ways Onward

www.ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_final.pdf

Tanel Veenre. The spatial heritage of the Soviet times needs to be looked at with fresh eyes.

Eesti Päevaleht. 20.11.2012

www.epl.ee/news/kultuur/noukogude-ruumiparand-vaarib-varsket-pilku.d?id=65287734

Check out the new urban studies blog

a public resource bin for all urban interests.

www.urban-studies.eu

Take your child to Architecture classes!

FURTHER INFO: www.arhitektuurikool.ee