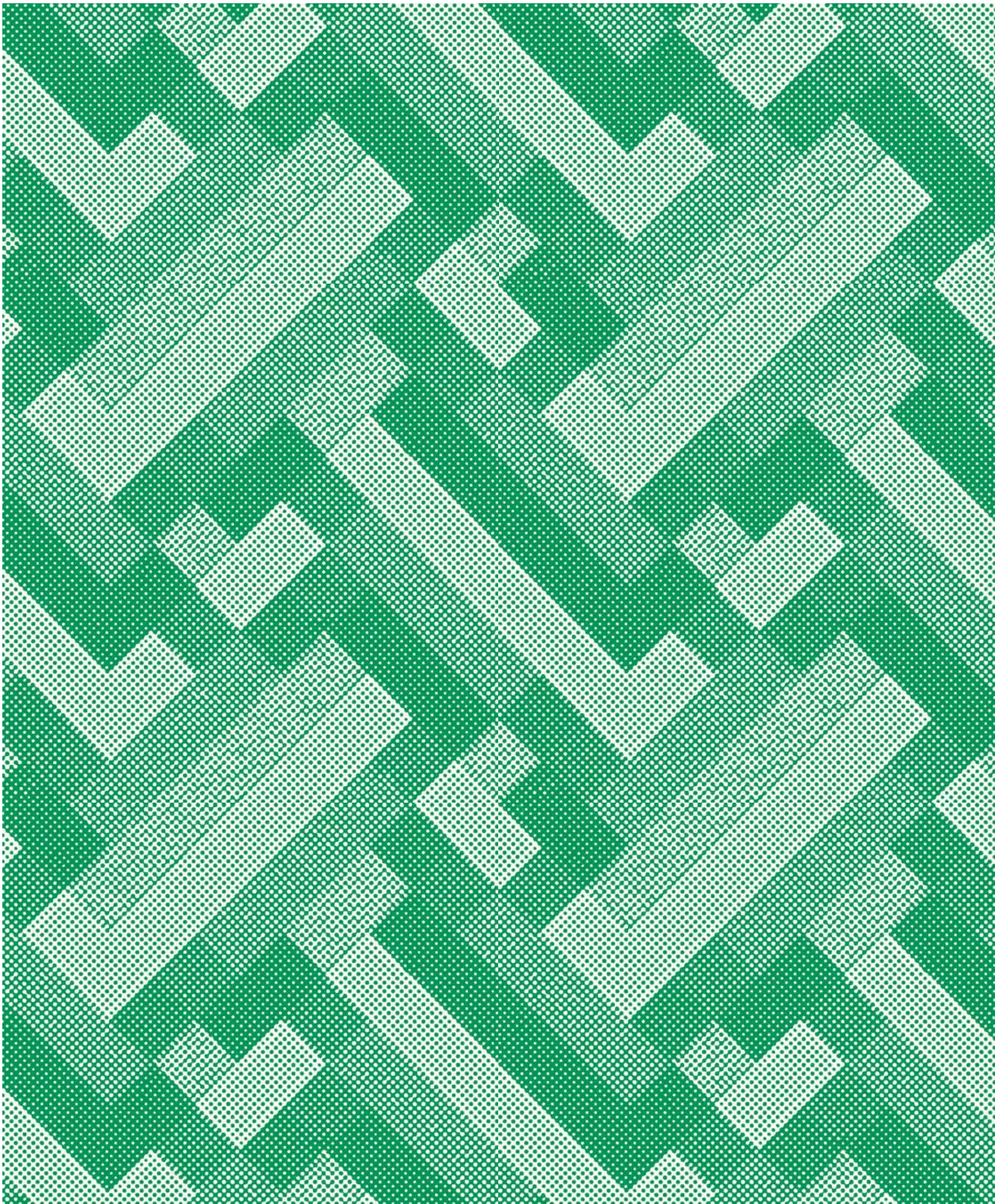




www.nidacolony.lt
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Reconstituting Rurality



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The discourses around public art have become thickly intertwined with those of cities and urban development. Little of this discourse, however, has addressed the specificities and disruptions presented by the notion of rural publics and rural public spaces. As an artist-run organization, located in rural Sweden, dedicated to long-term, place-based research, Rejmyre Art Lab, in collaboration with Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Arts (NAC), welcomes you to the seminar Reconstituting Rurality. Our aim with this gathering is to think the space between the drive towards rural existence in artistic practice and its relationships to other attempts to constitute rural space as a place of retreat, a site for clandestine study and a refuge for resistance movements throughout history.

Sunday 7 May

- **18.00–19.00**
Dinner
- **19.00–20.00**
Introduction and opening exercise

Monday 8 May

- **9.00–10.00**
Respondent exchange

You will be paired with another person in the group who will take on the role of respondent/moderator for your presentation and vice versa. Take this time to explain what and how you are planning to present. Your respondent may have some feedback on the spot or they may just listen and have some additional time to process. When the time comes for your presentation, your respondent will act as a moderator for your session.

- **10.00–12.00**
Public work(s) as contribution to rurality

dr. Vytautas Michelkevicius, artistic director of Nida Art Colony, Lithuania
What could be the most relevant way to reconstitute rurality? Instead of sitting and discussing (speaking into the air) in the auditorium, I invite all the participants to do some fieldwork which in the rural context means to help voluntarily and without being paid to local farmers or communities. Since in Curonian Spit the main "agriculture" is forestry (forests cover 70% of the territory and they are public property), everybody is invited to perform (applied art) work, after which some tangible result will stay.

Together with guidance of the rangers from National Park of Curonian Spit, we will walk or drive to the site where not qualified workforce is needed and through collective public works (in Lithuanian "talka") we will relate to the rural territory, park-forest and each other. After two hours of physical work, we will have a collective meal and discuss our experiences. It is said that a map is worth a thousand words, so how many words could be worth "giving a hand" in a scarcely populated and remote rural territory?

- **12.00–13.00**
Lunch
- **13.15–13.45**
Rural art spaces working with local resources

Presentation by Katrina Weissenborn, researcher and curator, Germany
Emphasizing the aesthetics of contemporary rural art that engages with existing social and spatial conditions of the countryside the lecture gives examples of art projects with contextual and participatory aspects. It shows how public, common, communal space is created with and for a distinctive public outside of art institutions and how this art practice can be a stance against economically driven regeneration policies which ignore existing rural value and trade system.

- **14.00–15.00**
Performing Labour, embedded Installations and Irrational Affairs

Presentation by Daniel Peltz and Sissi Westerberg, Rejmyre Art Lab, Sweden
Rejmyre Art Lab shares the experience of Performing Labour; an artistic research project in the rural glass factory Reijmyre Glasbruk as well as the project “Bureau of Irrational Affairs” that aims to situate itself inside the local government of the small town of Finspång.

How to embed artists and artworks in the local/social/economy/context?

- **15.00–17.00**
Lost

Presentation and workshop by Carl Oscar Sjögren and Eric Sjögren, Sweden
The non existent Center/ Ställbergs mine, Sweden
The non existent Center/Ställbergs mine will give a presentation about their ongoing society research with a focus on the last production, 2070- a participatory trilogy about the rural municipality Ljusnarsberg. The workshop ”Lost” was a method we used during the process of 2070. The artist-run group bought 2015 the abandoned mine industry in Ställberg and, in it, established a site for work, art and thought. The group use different formats such as performance, seminars, international residencies, festivals and exhibitions to raise ethical dilemmas often around money, migration and the power of narratives.
- **17.00–19.00**
Communal Cook Out: 3 goups, 3 courses, 3 themes
- **19.00**
Dinner

Tuesday 9 May

- **9.30–10.00**
Residencies Reflected

Presentation by Irmeli Kokko, lecturer, KUVA University of the Arts, Helsinki
Residencies Reflected – is a book of commissioned articles and interviews on artist residencies. One of the focuses of the book deals with the rural and urban artist-movements and the existing and potential role of residencies as facilitators of that movement. The book asks: What is the present ethical and social role of artist residencies in contemporary society? What is the relationship between the classical art world system and the residencies of today? What is the role of residencies for artists in the present?
- **10.00–12.00**
Presentations by five artist-run-initiatives in the Baltics

Marija Griniuk, BiteVilnius Artist-in-residency, Lithuania
BiteVilnius Artist-in-residency is an artist-in-residence program in a unique 19th century former farm complex, which now is rearranged into guest houses, meeting room and a shared studio, besides, facilities own 1,5 ha garden. Site-specific large-scale projects, process-work and interdisciplinary events are encouraged.

Māris Grosbahs, ROJA ART LAB, Latvia
ROJA ART LAB, is a non-profit artist-run, short term residency in a small seaside town Roja, providing an opportunity to meet, exchange ideas, possibly collaborate, and to create experimental and /or site-specific artwork.

Lina Berzina, Rucka Artist Residency, Latvia
Rucka Artist Residency in Cesis, Latvia is created by artists for artists, serving as a meeting point for artists coming from various disciplines to create projects dealing with social and environmental issues. The activities of Rucka Artist Residency are also firmly based on ideas of green living, community involvement and downshifting as a way of life.

Kaspars Lielgalvis, Totaldobže Art Centre, Latvia
The Totaldobže Art Centre learns to create Black Holes in various places and situations and draws into them artists from various disciplines, generations and places. The constant change of locations helps to improve flexibility, but can also compromise continuity.

Mari Volens, Rundum artist-run space, Estonia
Rundum is an artist-run space based in Tallinn,

a creative and independent platform run by five artists. Rundum assumes a nomadic position in order to turn up in a variety of settings, spreading around and interfering with public space, different social environments and experimenting with new ways of showing art.

- **12.00–12.30**
Open Discussion
- **12.30–13.30**
Lunch

- **13.30–14.15**
Clear Cut - Nordic/Baltic Studio for Continued Engagement

Daniel Peltz, USA, Uku Sepsivart , Estonia and Greta Vileikytė, Lithuania
The Nordic/Baltic Studio for Continued Engagement is an annual post-MFA-workshop for recent graduates from the Nordic and Baltic art academies focusing on site-responsive practice and exchange between fine arts and craft practitioners in the rural context of Rejmyre. Each year, we consider a new theme, related to our site, that we explore with the group. Our 2016 workshop focused on the forestry practice of clearcutting, attempting to harvest the metaphoric potentials of this industrial model of thinking the landscape as resource. Previous workshops have investigated themes such as: Everything you want was already here [exploring notions of abundance and lack as constituted in our various practices] and Infinite Gestures [exploring the aesthetic structures of the Occupy Movement and their possible extensions into artistic practice].

- **14.15–15.00**
He will travel with water over water

PerfoLectur by Henrik Hedinge, Sweden
With a suitcase full of lakes and rivers he will cross the Baltic sea and arrive to Nida. Once in Nida he will gather water from the Baltic Sea and the Lagoon and invite you all to a series of re-performances of invented and suggested rituals and traditions in the rural landscape among rivers, lakes and seashores.

- **15.15–16.30**
Liveart Nomad Style

Presentation and workshop by Meri Linna, Finland
The main interest behind this project by the duo Harrie Liveart is to relocate contemporary art from cities to rural areas, from galleries and museums to fields, forests or even someone’s backyard. A journey is conducted by bicycles, nights are to be spent mainly outside in hammocks. The aim of the project is to create unexpected art experiences for people in places that are familiar to them.

- **18.00**
Dinner

Tuesday 9 May

- **9.30–11.30**
Closings are openings, final session facilitated by Rejmyre Art Lab
- **12.00**
Snack and departure

* "Talka" in rural context means a voluntary collective work to help to complete the biggest and most arduous seasonal work in the agriculture. Through practicing "talka" communities were being and still are being built.