

is based on a documentary approach, translated in films, drawings and books, it deals mainly with issues of integration and immigration, work, and women’s issues. Her focus is the Russian community in Estonia. In 2005–2006, she directed “Atom Cities”, an ensemble of films and books devoted to nuclear research, in the ex-soviet towns of Sil-lamäe and Paldiski. Since 2007, Eléonore de Montesquiou has been filming in Narva, a Russian border town. Her ongoing work comprises already a book and films made in the closing textile manufacturer in Kreenholm and films with women living on both sides of the border. A regular issue newspaper and a new film are under way.

## RUNNING BACK THE RAILS – 10 YEARS AFTER “FRIENDSHIP”

*Anu Pennanen*

What is an archive? What is worth archiving?  
What is worth remembering?

When Margaret Tali asked me to write an article for a publication about the role of archives, memories from almost ten years ago, when I worked in Tallinn, started coming back to me. Between 2004 and 2007 I realized, with nine Estonian- and Russian-speaking young people, the “Tallinn Project”, a cinematic art project which examined how young people in Tallinn used public spaces in the fast-changing capital of Estonia.

Process-oriented and time-based, this project took many forms. It started with informal and ongoing discussions about what Tallinn’s public spaces meant to the project’s young participants. A video titled “You don’t realize it used to be different” combines their thoughts with footage from two improvisation video workshops. A series of photographs titled “Portraits of the teenagers participating in the Tallinn Project” documents each participant in one of the locations of the film. The project eventually crystallized into a short fiction film and 3-screen film installation

entitled “Sõprus – Дружба” (Friendship). Finally, the first museum exhibitions and screenings in Tallinn, Helsinki and Pori were accompanied by a published group discussion on the issues which surfaced during the “monument crisis” of April 2007, and public talks about the project in its entirety.

It was right after finishing my studies at the Fine Arts Academy of Helsinki in 2003 that I decided to make my next film in Tallinn. Perhaps the idea started to take form when I was at a friend’s place leafing through an enchanting collection of books that showcased Tallinn’s Soviet-Era architecture. The colourful images of Maarjamäe Memorial, Linnahall cultural centre, the Õismäe housing complex circling a round pond, and other views of Tallinn’s developing infrastructure seemed like a science-fiction film set to me. When I first encountered the unstoppable force and wit of Esto TV -squad<sup>1</sup>, I was convinced that the energy I was lacking in my hometown of Helsinki could be found just around the corner in Tallinn. I wanted to continue working with the topic of public space, already present in my previous film “A Monument for the Invisible”. But I wanted to do so in a city that would provide more historical layers than Helsinki, which was mostly built in the 19th century.

<sup>1</sup> Esto TV is an Estonian media performance group whose members are Andres Maimik, Juhan Ulfsak, Rain Tolk and Ken Saan.



The participants of Tallinn film project: Mari, Häli, Madis, Ronald, Ilja, Erich, Steven, Sille and Olena by the Viru Keskus Shopping Centre.

In Tallinn, I began working with nine Estonian and Russian speaking teenagers, who, over the span of several months, became the participants and actors of my project. They were between 14-18 years old at the time, and had little or no memory of the Soviet times. I first interviewed them about how they used public spaces in Tallinn, and we later visited those places together. The participants also wrote short stories, which took place in various spots in Tallinn. Based on all of this “material”, I wrote a draft of

a film manuscript, which we further defined in two video improvisation workshops, shot entirely on location just outside Tallinn, in 2005 and 2006.<sup>2</sup> The project culminated in the half hour film and 3-screen film installation “Sõprus – Дружба”, filmed at the beginning of Summer 2006 in the locations where the scenes had been developed. The film starts at Maarjamäe memorial, continues to Õismäe, Linnahall, the Old Town and Kopli, and ends in a scene where two gangs, one Estonian and one Russian-speaking, are united against a new common enemy: the Viru shopping centre. The guards at their favourite hangout have kicked them out for quarrelling in an escalator. Armed with paint ball guns and brightly coloured bullets, they attack an antique-style statue of a voluptuous naked woman in front of the mall.

After completing the film project in 2007, I lectured and wrote about it on numerous occasions, describing its different aspects: the collaboration with the teenagers, Soviet and capitalist architecture, the political situation in Tallinn, as seen from both the Estonian and Russian-speaking sides.<sup>3</sup> The last aspect suddenly took on

<sup>2</sup> The participating teenagers improvised scenes on real locations in Tallinn that was used as an inspiration for the film-script. These workshops were conducted with an actor to provide the participants an acting training. The improvisations also enabled them to understand and influence the whole project and feel it in ‘skin-level’.

<sup>3</sup> List of publications and talks about the project: “Case study of the statue of the Unknown Soldier, also known as Aljoša and The Bronze Soldier”. Leaflet with colour images in 3 languages. Publisher KUMU Estonian Art Museum, 2007. (Available at: [http://www.anupennanen.com/wp-content/uploads/case\\_study1.pdf](http://www.anupennanen.com/wp-content/uploads/case_study1.pdf)) “How do



Still from the video: ‘You don’t realize it used to be different’ (featuring Silje Paas and Olena Romanjuk). Duration 12 minutes. Anu Pennanen 2006.

you say Friendship?” – a lecture in conference on the occasion of the exhibition Don’t Worry – Be Curious! 4th Ars Baltica Triennial of Photographic Art at Pori Art Museum in October 25-26, 2007. Publisher Pori Art Museum 2008. Talks about the project include: “Negociier les utopies” (Negotiating utopias) CAUE du Nord Achitecture Centre, Lille, France, 2010; Helsinki Fine Arts Academy, Helsinki, Finland 2010; “Ce qu’il reste à voir” (What is left to see) lecture and film projections in Cent Quatre, Paris, France, 2009; “How do you say Friendship?” A case study on the meaning of the word, Tallinn project, Ars Baltica seminar, Pori Art Museum, Pori, Finland, and NGBK, Berlin, Germany 2008; “Presentation of Tallinn film project” Tallinn Art Academy, Architecture and Urban studies department, Tallinn, Estonia, 2007; “Discussion about Tallinn Project with the participants”, KUMU Estonian Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia, 2007; “Discussion about Tallinn-project with the participants”, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Artist talk, Brisbane University, Brisbane, Australia, 2006.



Still from the video: ‘You don’t realize it used to be different’ (featuring Steven Vihalemm). Duration 12 minutes. Anu Pennanen 2006.

an air of urgency in April 2007, with two nights of riots surrounding the “Monument Crisis” (27–28.4). According to the international media I was following at the time, up to 1000 rioters protested the government’s speedy decision to move a Soviet-era statue – “Unknown Soldier” – (and the 12 bodies beneath it), from its place by Tõnismägi in the heart of the city, to a soldiers’ cemetery two kilometres away. The riots were over as quickly as they started. I felt profoundly shocked but immediately understood that what had just happened resonated strongly with the themes that came up in my interviews with Tallinn Project participants. I therefore initiated a group discussion with them, which was published in a group exhibition in Tal-

linn at the end of Summer 2007. We gave away leaflets in three languages: Russian, Estonian and English, as a take-away from our final discussion, which gave the project the right sense of closure. It was nevertheless heartbreaking to hear the final question from one Russian-speaking participant, just as we were about to go our separate ways: “When is the next meeting?” Curator Hanno Soans (who organized the very last public event of the project at Art Museum of Estonia, KUMU and supported it in so many other ways) and I were left standing in front of the museum with a question we couldn’t answer.



“Sõprus – Дружба” 3 screen film installation, duration 20 min/loop. Anu Pennanen 2006. Exhibition view from: After the final simplification of the ruins. Montehermoso Cultural Center, Vitoria, Spain, 2009.

The ending of a film project often feels somewhat bittersweet. An artificial world is created, based on a particular view of reality, which is mirrored in the film. Actors

or participants are persuaded to engage intimately in the film to bring it to life. A world collaboratively formed is truly lived, and everyone gets close to each other, professionally as well as emotionally, over a short but intense period of time. Then, when the shooting is over, you get together a few more times, you linger on the fringes. Sooner than you expect, all the resources are used, this particular world is now in the past. There are no reasons to see each other any more. It is time to leave that world behind: distancing begins.

Today, 7 years later, I have already lived in three cities other than Tallinn and Helsinki. I have filmed other films that confront various local socio-political situations. The people I have encountered in those places have had an impact on me in a personal and unique manner. The realities of my own life have been questioned and changed as a consequence. The intensity with which I embraced the topics of the Tallinn Project for more than three years has now transformed into nostalgia and a sense of tenderness towards all the people I met and my own self at that time. It is impossible to have a purely professional point of view anymore.

The Tallinn Project has become a part of my personal history. The people, busy streets, and small moments, which for some reason have left their imprint in my mind, fill my personal archives. Some examples: My first visit to Tallinn, and I am bristling with enthusiasm on an early spring day. I discover Linnahall, Maarjamäe and Viru

shopping centre, all crowded with young people, and back in the ferry to Helsinki decide to make a film around all this. The following autumn, while walking home from the film archive in Tallinn, I pass the tram rails in Kopli. Dry, yellowish leaves rustle under my feet. I drink black tea in the kitchen with my flatmate Andres Lõo. The afternoon sun lights up the dusty streets as I wait for the green bus to Nõmme; it must have been near Kaarli Puiestee. The ferry trip from Helsinki to Tallinn through the ice in the winter takes a numbing eternity. When the waters are open the same trip goes swiftly, like in an action film.

I think of the young participants of the project. I recall how Ronald Pelins' first rebellious manoeuvres became perfect politeness; he always carried my bag like he did his mother's and grandmother's, he says. Mari Tammesalu has the same birthday in April as me; I always think about her on my birthday. Häli Ann Reintam moves and walks beautifully; she has the slow gestures of an actress. Ilya Alpatov has blond hair, shaved on one side, and punk clothes. His cheeks turn red as he tells me about the benefits of communism and anarchism. Finally he agrees to appear in the film scenes that take place in the Viru shopping centre. There, walking along colourfully lit shop windows, he gives a heartfelt monologue about the problems of the class divide. I cannot say he was wrong by any means.... I remember all the young people who took part in my project, and all my friends in Tallinn, and think about where they are now: New York, Amsterdam, or still





From the series ‘Portraits of the teenagers participating in The Tallinn Project, 2006’. “Ronald outside the Linnahall Cultural Centre. Tallinn, March 2006.”

in Tallinn, but with totally surprising long hair!

Among the people I met in Tallinn is someone whose personal history resonates with the theme of archive. This person is Pearu Tramberg, who has worked at the Estonian Film Archive since 1972, the organization’s longest-term employee, and a true guardian of Estonian audiovisual memory. At the beginning of the project, I contacted the archive in search of footage on the devel-



From the series ‘Portraits of the teenagers participating in The Tallinn Project, 2006’. Häli in the Viru Keskus Shopping Centre. Tallinn, April 2006.’

opment of the city of Tallinn. Before making my own film about the city I needed to know how it was filmed in the past. Pearu Tramberg presented me with a wealth of films about Tallinn from the Second World War until today. Many of the films were of course Soviet propaganda: Weekly News Reports. The reports’ optimistic tone sought to conceal even the devastated view of the smoky ruins of Tallinn in 1944, under an energetic cleaning effort.

Most of the weekly reports follow much more mundane events, like how the inhabitants of the Mustamäe apartment blocks arrived at their new homes to find that they already needed renovations. It is often argued that it was these kinds of continuous frustrations in everyday life which destroyed the Soviet empire more effectively than the nuclear arms race with the US.

I explained Tramberg that I wanted to film the city from teenagers’ point of view: about how this first generation experiences the process of growing up in independent Estonia, and about their use historic locations as “hangout spots”? Being born into the current socio-political situation, this group had only a slight affiliation with the heavy history connected to these places. After hearing the idea behind my film, Tramberg told me how during Second World War, when Tallinn was embattled by both the Germans and the Russians, his father and his fathers’ two brothers had all ended up on different sides in the war. The oldest brother (his father) was mobilized to the German army and fought against the Red Army. The second eldest brother was mobilized to the Red Army and died fighting against Germans in Russia, while the youngest brother escaped from Estonia to Finland, and fought against the Soviets in the Finnish army. Tramberg asked me: Do you understand the gravity of your topic? I tried to understand.

I would never forget the story of the three brothers. It would always come to mind when I read the exhibi-

tion titles where “Sõprus – Дружба” was exhibited after 9/11 and just before the global financial crisis. The titles tended to go something like this: *Don’t Worry Be Curious! Don’t Misbehave! Wake Up! or Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War*. Once, during a dinner after the opening of the Ars Baltica -Triennial in Berlin, I tried to share Pearu Tramberg’s story with a German curator. I was thinking that she might be able to understand it, because she had studied in Moscow during the 1990s. The destinies of the archivist’s father and uncles only brought about a shrug: “*Na-ja*, couldn’t we already forget those stories?” she asked with a bored, irritated voice. People sharing their heavy experiences often bring about the same reaction. It is as if the listener fears that misfortune might be infectious; it’s better to quickly think about something else.

The former Eastern Block countries have strived to quickly move to the new social order. Estonia is an active member of NATO and a model student of liberalism. Global corporations sprawl from Coca-Cola-Plaza to every direction in Tallinn centre. People often have many jobs, as salaries are less than the cost of living. There are always clients in the new trendy cafés and bars. The rhythm in the centre of the city is as frantic as a big metropolis. But that which is dropped to the side or reminds us too much of the past might be not heard any longer. Art critic and curator Iara Boubnova has interpreted the emphasis on the present as “a voluntary cultural amnesia, which enables

the ex-Eastern Block countries to develop a new identity for the 21st Century, and erase the 20th Century past”.<sup>4</sup>

While living in Tallinn, I started to feel as though we were in a moment when the train had started to run backwards, and that we were travelling backwards in the stream of history. Not back to the Cold War, but to some time even further in the past. I remember this sentiment starting to form one early summer day on a sunny rooftop of the Viru shopping centre. Madis Mäeorg, who participated in my film project, said he was dreaming about an era when universities and healthcare would be free for everyone. Within a few years Madis’ dreams had a wider echo within the European context due to the rapid demolishing of the welfare state structures following the economic crisis of 2008.

The Tallinn project is now in museums and archives both in Estonia and Finland.<sup>5</sup> Portraits of the 9 young Tallinners, video footage from the workshops and interviews, as well as the final film installation are shared on both sides of the gulf, in the collections of the KUMU and the Kiasma. They are now part of conserved cultural

4 Iara Boubnova’s proposal for the exhibition “History in Present Tense” that she curated for the 2nd Moscow Biennale.

5 List of collections and archives which have different works from “Tallinn project”: The film “Sõprus – Дружба” is in the collection of Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Finnish National Gallery; the video “You don’t realize it used to be different” and the series of photographs titled ‘Portraits of the teenagers participating in The Tallinn Project’ are in KUMU, Estonian Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia. “Sõprus – Дружба” is archived in Estonian Film Archive and in Finnish Central Archives of Visual Art.



“Sõprus – Дружба” A still from the film (featuring Madis Mäeorg).  
Photo by Pelle Kalmo.

history, a piece of Tallinn’s urban development, a kind of footage I didn’t find in the archives. I never found out what Pearu Tramberger thought about my film. His personality lives in my memory both as a bearer of Estonian cultural history and for the story of his family. Of course, when asked if I could use his story in my text, Tramberger answered with typical Estonian humour: “Anything for the sake of the youth!”

Berlin, May 2014

ANU PENNANEN (1975) is an artist and filmmaker from Kirkkonummi, Finland. She graduated from Helsinki Fine Arts Academy in 2003 and is currently based in



Berlin. Over the last 10 years, Pennanen has worked with the theme of urban public space, creating narratives with people situated or living in alienating architectural structures of power. In 2010, she completed a trilogy of multi-screen film installations shot in Helsinki, Tallinn and Paris: *Monumentti näkymättömälle* (A Monument for the Invisible, 2003), *Sõprus – Друзьба* (Friendship, 2006), and *La ruine du regard* (The ruin of the gaze, 2010). The trilogy screened internationally, at Manifesta 5 San Sebastián in 2004, the Rotterdam and Hamburg film festivals in 2005, the Liverpool Biennale in 2006, the Ars Baltica Triennial 2007–2008, Frankfurter Kunstverein in 2007, CAC Vilnius in 2010, KIASMA Helsinki in 2012, and CCA Glasgow in 2013. Since 2011, Pennanen has been making fiction films with the artist Stéphane Querrec, based on a collaborative model with local participants. *Staande! Debout!* (Standing!, 2013), tells the story of a major factory strike in Belgium. The film was screened at the Glasgow Film Festival, Lens Politica Film Festival Helsinki and Cinéma de Galeries Brussels, among other venues. Pennanen & Querrec are currently working on their first feature film.

## FOREMOTHERS

*Anna-Stina Treumund*

We parted at the end of George Street. There were people near & so I didn't shake her hand. I shall explain this on Saturday & say how sorry I was I had not time to set her nearer to me. I see how it is. She begins to like me more than she is, perhaps, aware... I must mind I do not get into a scrape. Wishing I was a gent; I can make her believe anything, etc; bespeaks my influence, & a few more walks & perhaps she will understand her feelings better.

— Anne Lister's diary.

Thursday, 18 February 1819, Halifax.

I have two families: a biological one and a political – queer-feminist – one<sup>1</sup>. The origin and history of the first is covered with all sorts of protecting traditions and laws. The second, which I view as one of the most important aspects of my life, is scattered around the world and is for the most part hidden and criminalised. Yearning to find out who are my predecessors, how they lived, how they

<sup>1</sup> In the context of this article I define queer as an identity of alternative sexuality and/or gender. The latter also includes a shorter period of time as well as posing as a member of the opposite sex for economic reasons.

# ARCHIVES AND DISOBEDIENCE

## Changing Tactics of Visual Culture in Eastern Europe

*Tina Bastajian*

*Achille Mbembe*

*Margaret Tali*

*Vesna Madžoski*

*Marina Gržinić*

*Tanel Rander*

*Oliver Laas*

*Marko Raat*

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