

INGA MELDERE SUNPOLES LUĪZE NEŽBERTE

Inga Meldere (b. 1979, Kuldīga, Latvia) lives and works in Helsinki. She studied at the University of Latvia, the Art Academy of Latvia and The University of the Arts in Helsinki, as well as attending the Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht. Her recent exhibitions include the personal exhibition *Breathwork*, Pech, Vienna (2024); *Bluetooth (Sister N)* Temnikova & Kasela Gallery, Tallinn (2022); the group exhibition *Don't Cry! Feminist Perspectives in Latvian Art*, LNMA (2023); and *Archaeologists of Memory: Vitols Contemporary Art Collection* at the KUMU museum of contemporary art in Tallinn (2022) and the international Helsinki Biennial: *The Same Sea* in Vallisaari (2021). She is involved in running different workshops related to the methods of natural colour pigment extraction.

Luīze Nežberte (b. 1998, Riga, Latvia) lives and works in Vienna, Austria. Currently she is studying fine arts at the University of Fine Arts Vienna. Most recent exhibition: the personal exhibition *Clump Spirit* at 427 Gallery (Riga, 2023); duo and group exhibitions: *Come As You Are*, Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna, 2024); *A simultaneity of stories-so-far*, Neuer Kunstverein Wien, (Vienna, 2024); *Fibbing, Fabulation, Feigning*, House of Spouse (Vienna, 2023); *Vienna Seduction*, SPOILER (Berlin, 2023); art in public space: *How Much Can a Boat Carry* (Salzkammergut, 2024). Since 2023, she has been co-curating the exhibition program at Pech in Vienna, Austria.

With the participation of artists: Ieva Putniņa, Elīna Vītola
Text of the accompanying zine: Raimonds Ķirķis
Project management: Evita Goze
Project assistant: Katrīna Jauģiete
Communication: Žanete Liekīte
Technical team: Andris Maračkovskis, Aldis Bušs
Graphic design: Stefans Pavlovskis
Proofreading LV: Ilze Jansone
Translation ENG: Valts Miķelsons, Lauris Veips
Proofreading ENG: Will Mawhood
Exhibition mediators: Marta Andersone, Beatrise Šulte, Marija Viņķele

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Kim? Contemporary Art Centre's autumn season exhibition programme opens with a special collaboration: a spatial installation by Inga Meldere and Luīze Nežberte, encompassing newly created works by both artists, as well as works never previously exhibited in Latvia. The exhibition space includes several series of works: sculptures, installations, drawings and paintings which study and reflect regional, social and culture-historical details. These series of works establish a dialogue between the practices of two artists from different generations, which reflect the rebirth of narrative in visual art, an ethically grounded approach to matter and respect towards the heritage of the past.

When beginning to prepare the exhibition, Meldere and Nežberte researched the architectural heritage, which follows from the work of Latvian architect and ethnographer, founder of the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia, Pauls Kundziņš (1888–1983). Kundziņš's unique contribution consisted of studying and preserving for future generations important architectural elements, such as the so-called "sun-shaped" ("sauļotās") columns in Latvian wooden architecture from the 18th century, which are noteworthy as historically significant formal exercises, and which furthermore open the way towards a search for parallels, comparisons and context with "idea fields" on a register similar to those seen, for example, in modernist artist Constantin Brancusi's (1876–1957) *Endless Column*.

In her individual practice, Meldere is preoccupied with abstracted and poetic painterly investigations – "hand exercises" – based on what she has observed as part of her daily routine, read, or noticed on her smartphone. References to what has been experienced are interpreted visually: paraphrased and approximated in fragmentary oil-on-paper sketches of seemingly recognisable objects or creatures. Printed on canvas and articulated in spatial installations, these references conjure up a variety of surreal situations. Employing interdisciplinary, innovative and speculative approaches borrowed from her education in painting conservation and contemporary art, Meldere delves into tracing transience, and into questions touching on social history, authenticity and microhistories.

Meanwhile, Nežberte, in her series of works included in the exhibition, takes up the conceptual thread related to forms of vernacular architecture by making sculptures. These are column-like vertical structures assembled

from modular elements, their forms borrowed from the sketches Kundziņš developed for the bandstand of the 1926 Song Festival, as well as from stylised replicas of the columns from the first state-protected cultural monument in Latvia – the Community House of the Congregation of Moravian Brethren in Gaide. By organically integrating object, image-making and text, a series of metal sculptures made specially for this exhibition uncover Nežberte's fascination with the techniques of collecting, quoting and collage. These formal experiments with *objet trouvé* and the dissipation of authorship through creative appropriation are further transposed in the zine accompanying the exhibition, which brings together inspirational and research references in visual and textual form, as well as a specially created literary passage by poet Raimonds Ķirķis.

Further developing collaborative practices, the questioning of authorship and the authority of the solitary artist figure, part of the exhibition is a collective collaboration – a spatial sand installation, or "pigment room", the making of which involved the artists Ieva Putniņa and Elīna Vītola. The artists use methods to extract Lake pigments from local plants such as meadowsweet, yarrow, cow wheat, blueberry, sea-buckthorn and birch, and to place them on a white sand "canvas," thus broadening the imaginative potential of painting and showing the resources of Latvian and Baltic flora.

As an artistically sensitive and tonally rich presentation, Meldere and Nežberte's *Sunpoles* also touches on aspects of ecological, economic and social sustainability. Reflecting on the potential announced by Symbiocene, or reflections on humanity from outside the anthropocentric consciousness, the exhibition highlights the necessity to resolve the issues raised by chaos and constant change with the aim of replanting (in ourselves) understanding towards the interrelationship between humanity and nature.

Curator: Zane Onckule



RĪGA



Valmiermūža



Kim? Contemporary Art Centre
Sporta iela 2 k-1, Rīga, Latvija
@kim_cac, www.kim.lv

Kim?

21.09.2024 – 17.11.2024

1
Inga Meldere, Luīze Nežberte
Piedarbs, 2024
Installation: birch trunk, acrylic glaze
Craftsman: Kaspars Zvirbulis

2
Inga Meldere
Youth, 2024
UV print, oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm

3
Inga Meldere
Blooming, 2023
UV print, acrylics and oil on canvas
106 x 80 cm

references: an unknown domestic scene by a Dutch Renaissance author (photo from personal archive), public transport stop on the outskirts of Helsinki

4
Luīze Nežberte
The sky above our heads is nothing else but a roof supported by wooden pillars, 2024
MDF, oak, steel
Execution: Luīze Nežberte, Aldis Bušs
Dimensions variable

interpretation of a fragment from the Nationwide Song festival stage designed in 1926 by Pauls Kundziņš

5
Luīze Nežberte
Zine with collection of texts and visual material, 2024
Intro text: Raimonds Ķirķis
Design: Stefans Pavlovskis

6
Inga Meldere
Letter/Message, 2024
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm

reference: birch trunk, found in 1967 during excavations at the island of lake Āraiši

7
Inga Meldere
Female Piper, 2024
UV, acrylic and oil on canvas
110 x 80 cm

references: 13th century oven clay plaster at Tērvete hillfort, water pitcher in an Athens' museum (photo from the author's research trip in 2022)

8
Inga Meldere
Swallow's Brood, 2024
Oil on canvas
50,5 x 50 cm

9
Inga Meldere
from left, all sized:
41,5 x 29,6 cm
Waterlilies, 2024
Paper, oil

Bad hearing, 2024
Color pencil, oil

Flax, 2024
Oil on paper

Sphinxes (Country Cats), 2024
Oil on paper

Waterways, 2024
Acrylic, oil on paper

10
Luīze Nežberte
We could listen much longer, but it is late by now, and the moonlight glistens like quicksilver upon the waves of the lake before us, 2024
MDF
Execution: Andris Maračkauskis
313 x 60 cm

interpretation of a fragment from Gaide meeting house built in 1765

11
Inga Meldere
The Architect, 2024
UV print, acrylic, oil on canvas
110 x 80 cm

12
Luīze Nežberte
Consistencies Arise Only to Implode Later, 2024
Aluminium, rivets, magnets,
photographic prints
Dimensions variable

13
Inga Meldere
Archive, 2024
Paper, oil, acrylic, pencil, museum glass
59 x 40 cm

14
Inga Meldere
Reflection, 2024
UV print, oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm

15
Inga Meldere
Touch ID, 2022
Canvas, oil, acrylic
60 x 45 cm
Zuzāns Collection

16
Inga Meldere, Ieva Putniņa,
Luīze Nežberte, Elīna Vītola
Symbiocene, 2024

colour pigments extracted from yarrow, borage, fly agaric, cowslip, pumpkin, red onion, red cabbage, madara root, cactus root, velvet, rooster, lilac, sea buckthorn, chokeberry, charcoal, walnut, onion peel, birch leaves, tulips, bee-rose, roses, red beetroot, carrots, pomegranate peel, velvety mint, sour cherries, paper napkins, white sand from the sand caves of the river Riežupe

17
Inga Meldere
Saulstāves, 2024
UV print, acrylic, oil on canvas
126 x 07 cm

18
Inga Meldere
Embroideries, 2024
UV print, acrylic, oil on canvas
110 x 75 cm

19
Luīze Nežberte
Losing the light and becoming rash, 2024
The sweetness of a song contains the sharpness of a bite, 2024
All those who suffer are waiting to play, 2024
Series of photocollages
Museum glass
50 x 30,5 cm

20
Inga Meldere
Woolen Shall's Cross Stiches, 2024
UV print, oil on canvas
41 x 32 cm

21
Table with color pigments
prepared by: Terēza Juškus

