

Maria Kapajeva's new solo exhibition explores identity politics, womanhood and queer embodiment

Estonian artist Maria Kapajeva's solo exhibition [*By Losing Them, I Become a Whole*](#) is on view from 3 October to 22 November 2025 at Kogo Gallery in Tartu, Estonia. In her exhibition, the artist draws on her recent physical transformation and ongoing healing process to explore identity politics, womanhood and queer embodiment; it also marks the first chapter of a new body of work by the artist. The exhibition is curated by Šelda Puķīte.

Working across photography, video, textiles, ceramics and found objects, the exhibition is at once a case study, a therapeutic process, a tribute to Kapajeva's grandmother, a farewell to her breasts and ovaries, and an ode to the body she now inhabits. By weaving together physical, visceral and psychological experiences, the artist has created a roadmap for navigating a transitional state of being – learning to mourn, care for and celebrate the body's evolving form. What begins as a profoundly intimate story opens into a collective experience – one that looks toward a future filled with diverse voices and bodies, sharing stories, raising awareness, and celebrating new ways of being and becoming.

Maria Kapajeva engages women with BRCA1/2 mutations or breast cancer and hosts a queer community gathering to expand her two new works. More info can be found on the gallery's website.

The exhibition *By Losing Them, I Become a Whole* is open from 3 October to 22 November 2025. The gallery is located on Kastani 42 in Tartu, Estonia and is open for visits from Wednesday to Friday at 12–18, on Saturday at 12–16.

The exhibition is part of Tallinn Photomonth 2025's satellite programme and serves as Kogo Gallery's final show of the year, presented under the programme *Thrifters and Transformers*.

The exhibition is funded by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia and the City of Tartu.

Maria Kapajeva (she/her, b. 1976) is an artist whose practice explores questions of identity and gender, often focusing on people in states of transition. She works with found and vernacular photographic images, video installations, textile and embroidery, and participatory practices. Working between the UK and Estonia, she exhibits her work internationally. Kapajeva has received numerous awards, including the Estonian Cultural Endowment's

Annual Award (2025), the Eduard Wiiralt Scholarship (2023) and the Kraszna-Krausz Photo Book Award (2021).

Kapajeva's works are held in several collections, including the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art and the Tartu Art Museum. She is currently pursuing a practice-based PhD at the Estonian Academy of Arts and works as a project manager for Fast Forward: Women in Photography at UCA, UK.

Šelda Puķīte (b. 1986) is a Latvian curator, writer and researcher based in Estonia. Her formal education includes a Master's and a Bachelor's degree from the Department of Art History and Theory at the Art Academy of Latvia. She has worked on several international exhibitions, curated stands for art fairs including Liste Art Fair Basel, viennacontemporary and Art Brussels, published art albums, created catalogues for contemporary art festivals Survival Kit and Riga Photography Biennial, as well as written several essays for Baltic culture publications. Her most recent curated exhibitions include Paweł Matyszewski's solo exhibition Momentary Organisms (2025) at Kogo Gallery, Tartu, Silver Girls. Retouched History of Baltic Photography (2025) together with Agnė Narušytė and Indrek Grigor at National Gallery of Art, Vilnius, and White Dwarfs and All Those Beautiful Nebulas (2024) at Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga. Since 2020, she works at Kogo Gallery as an international project manager and exhibition programme curator.

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Kogo Gallery

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[By Losing Them, I Become a Whole](#)

Maria Kapajeva

Curated by Šelda Puķīte

Kogo Gallery, Tartu, Estonia

3.10.-22.11.2025