



Dressed in bright yellow light, SHE glided by
Past the old green and red house with Greek columns
Where two women laughed on the sun-kissed porch
Their joy - ecstatic, and imagination - wild.

In a fleeting glance, women's eyes softly met
A gentle smile exchanged, a moment to forget
As sunshine spilt gold
Creating a tapestry of feelings that purred.

Imagine, if you will, Paul Kondas at this door
Breathing in the blossoms, year after year, evermore
Basking in warmth that time cannot sever
Living the magic of this place a long time ago.

Would he, too, catch looks from strangers who roam
Just like those two women, exploring this house
In this fragrant garden, a link through the years
Not to be forgotten. Reimagined.

Drunk on emotions and fragrant air
Two friends wandered the streets of Viljandi
Until they found themselves
At a café where chilling evening whispers and laughter interlace.

Only to find the same lady in yellow who passed by with a smile
She radiated calm in the soft evening light
Waiting for her dinner, as she glanced
With her eyes just to say 'Paul, hi'.

- *Vija Skangale, curator of the exhibition*

This text was inspired by a research trip to Viljandi and a visit to Paul Kondas's house in August 2025.

Thea Gvetadze, Paul Kondas

Unfolding Nuptials

05.02.2026 – 11.04. 2026

Temnikova and Kasela gallery proudly presents a duo show of Tbilisi-based artist Thea Gvetadze (b. 1971, Riga, Latvia) and Estonian artist Paul Kondas (1900-1985) in an exhibition titled “*Unfolding Nuptials*” curated by Vija Skangale.

The exhibition features two artists who lived in different geographies, times, and environments and never met. However, the ability to see the world through a lens of truth and unmasked perception is what distinguishes and brings together Paul and Thea. While Thea’s artistic practice reveals honest realities and hidden layers that often escape the gaze of the average observer, Paul’s paintings disclose the complexities of life—signs of resistance, whispers of dissent, and the quiet passions that drive human connection. Often unnoticed, they also expose the truth about political systems and relationships.

The two rooms constructed for this exhibition marry the artistic values and experiences of Paul and Thea, placing them on parallel paths, despite their different contexts. At the heart of this project is the embodiment of connections, which unites the two artists and weaves together invisible networks that transcend the constraints of time, distance, and political systems. These connections have the power to create an environment free from the divisions present in today’s world. This exhibition showcases the coexistence of two artistic practices, filled with hope, truth, and possibility, creating a tapestry of revelations and connections.

Thea’s homage to Paul Kondas’s legacy results in the creation of project-based works, including textiles, mosaics, paintings, and installations for this exhibition, following a research trip to Estonia in August 2025.

This exhibition is supported by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia

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Thea Gvetadze (born 1971, Riga) is a Georgian contemporary artist living and working in Tbilisi. She studied at the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts, the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, and the Düsseldorf Art Academy. Working across painting, ceramics, textiles, installation, and mixed media, Gvetadze creates emotionally charged, symbolic works that merge personal narrative, mythology, and material experimentation. Her practice is known for its tactile intensity and poetic ambiguity. Gvetadze has exhibited widely across Europe and Georgia and has participated in the Venice Biennale, alongside numerous international museum and gallery exhibitions in cities such as Antwerp, Berlin, Warsaw, and Tbilisi. Her recent solo exhibitions include Room for many (with Diana Tamane), Art House Tartu, Tartu (2024); Iris Iberica, LC Queisser (2022); Subtropical Ushguli, LC Queisser, Tbilisi (2019); Thea Gvetadze – Becoming Thea Merlani, Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (2018); Zeda Tsinsvla, Gallery Nectar, Tbilisi (2017).

Paul Kondas (1900–1985) was an Estonian self-taught painter, celebrated as a significant figure in naïve art for his unique visual language blending myth, daily life, and philosophical reflection. Trained in law and commerce, he worked as a schoolteacher and was a polymath with interests in poetry, music, and photography. Despite his contributions being overlooked during his lifetime, his paintings, often created in isolation during his retirement, served as visual parables rich with symbolism and irony, addressing themes like human desire and historical trauma. Recognition came later, notably through a 1979 documentary and an entry in the World Encyclopedia of Naïve Art in 1984. His works are now primarily housed in Viljandi, symbolizing his legacy as a quietly radical artist who thrived outside conventional artistic frameworks.

Vija Skangale is a writer, curator, and researcher from Georgia currently based between Tbilisi and London. She is a PhD candidate and a visiting lecturer at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. Her practice lies between research and curated exhibitions & performances (including performance re-enactments). Her research focuses on the exhibition histories within the context of post-socialist transitions. She examines under-documented performance practices and exhibition histories in Georgia, aiming to broaden our understanding of performance-making during significant cultural and political transformation. In 2025, she founded the Institute for Contemporary Art Research in Georgia.

List of works

Fist room clockwise

Thea Gvetadze, Gentle Gravity, silk organza, 158 × 107 cm, 2026

Thea Gvetadze, Formula, oil on canvas, 70 × 50 cm, 2025

Thea Gvetadze, Formula, oil on canvas, 70 × 50 cm, 2025

Thea Gvetadze, A Moment We Did Not Name, copper, 65 × 40 × 8 cm, 2025

Thea Gvetadze, Silent poppy, silk organza dress, 120 × 57 cm, 2026

Thea Gvetadze, Celestial Berries or Taste of Planets, iron pieces, 2025

Thea Gvetadze, Self Portrait, oil on canvas, 40 × 35 cm, 2025

Thea Gvetadze, Microchimerism – Clouds Above, Stories Below, glass mosaic on plywood with brass trim, 2025

Second room clockwise

Paul Kondas, The Spooky Castle, oil on canvas, 66x55 cm, 1958

Paul Kondas, The Bathing Women, oil on canvas, 79 × 111 cm, 1957

Paul Kondas, Drezden, oil on canvas, 111 x 72 cm, undated (1960?), two-sided painting

Paul Kondas, Vampires, oil on canvas, 78x110 cm, 1970, two-sided painting

Paul Kondas, Blossom of Love, oil on canvas, 115,5 × 84 cm, 1962