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RĪGA | 2014

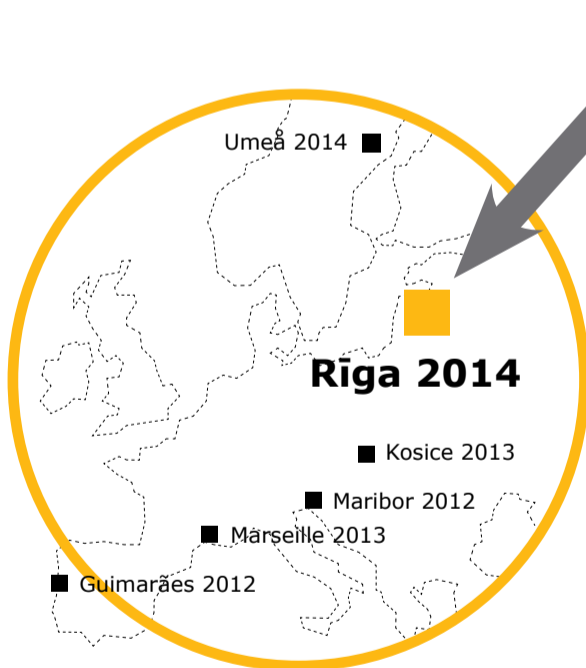


EIROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVAPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE



Juris Kalniņš / Fotocentrs. Bird's-eye view of Riga

Experience the *Force Majeure* of Culture!



Rīga takes its visitors by surprise with its external beauty as well as its rich world of interiors. If you have never been to Rīga before, now is the time to experience the pleasure of discovering the diversity of Latvia's capital city. Ancient and at the same time youthful, European and multicultural, today's Rīga is the place to recharge your cultural batteries.

After you get to know the medieval streets of the Old Town, the Art Nouveau heritage and the shabby chic of the creative quarters, let us surprise you once more – this time with the saturated content of Rīga's cultural events calendar for the whole of 2014.

It is the surprising, the unexpected and even the provocative that underpin the *Force Majeure* cultural programme of the European Capital of Culture. It is the creative power that cannot be foreseen or planned beforehand. The miracle happens and astonishes everyone, even its creators. Culture has the power to change the lives of people and cities for the better. I believe that culture can become an instrument of salvation, a survival kit, a springboard for new and bold ideas.

All in all, throughout the year it is planned to run more than 200 events meant especially for the *Force Majeure* programme in addition to Rīga's traditional cultural calendar – festivals, rich concert life and cultural events. This publication

will introduce you to the most extensive and most significant activities of the European Capital of Culture programme – and remember, whichever of them you choose to attend, be open-minded and prepared to experience the unexpected!

Diāna Čivle,

Head of the Rīga 2014 Foundation

Welcome to ESPLANĀDE 2014!

The end of June will see a new building rise in the very heart of Rīga, between the Nativity of Christ Orthodox Cathedral and the monument to the poet Rainis in the Esplanāde Park. From late June to early October, the new building, lovingly designed by young Latvian architects, will host the creative information space Esplanāde 2014.

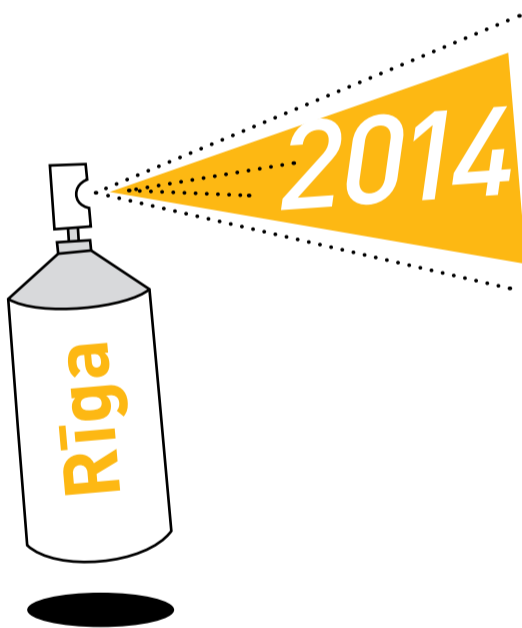
Here, visitors will be able to find out about Rīga 2014 projects, take part in creative workshops, enjoy theatrical, film and dance performances, view art exhibitions or just use the freely available wi-fi connection. Rīga 2014 Partner Sigulda will also present its cultural events, as will the other 2014 European Capital of Culture, Sweden's Umeå.

Rīga is:

- > the Latvian capital founded in 1201
- > the biggest city in the Baltic region
- > home for 700 000 people
- > situated at the mouth of the Daugava river
- > a crossroads for trade and business between east and west
- > the city of inspiration



Meet the Team building Force Majeure



From the left:

Gints Grūbe – publicist, political scientist, TV and documentary film director. Curating the Freedom Street Chapter.

Solvita Krese – art critic and curator, Director of the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art. Curating the Survival Kit Chapter.

Gundega Laiviņa – Director of the Latvian New Theatre Institute and the Homo Novus International Festival of Contemporary Theatre. Curating the Road Map Chapter.

Diāna Čivle – Director of the Rīga 2014 Foundation, Artistic Director of the Staro Rīga light festival. Curating the Rīga Carnival Chapter.

Aiva Rozenberga – head of the Rīga 2014 Programme.

Vita Timmermane-Moora – Latvian diplomat, coordinated programme for the Surprising Latvia festival in France and French Spring festival in Latvia. Curating the Amber Road Chapter.

Uģis Brikmanis – director and producer of international and national concerts and events, curating the Thirst for the Ocean Chapter.



page 5 Castle of Light – a dream and a challenge



page 6 From Wagner to Vasks – surprises lined up by the Latvian National Opera



page 10 90 nations sing together, all on one stage



page 18 Purification of the State Security Committee ghost building has begun



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RĪGAS DOME



EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE



Kaspars Gardā

Castle of Light – a dream and a challenge

The building of singular architectural form, which, like the snow-capped Himalayas, rises over the left (SW) bank of the Daugava river, is a hive of activity as interior fitting-out and utility works continue apace.

It is the new building for the National Library of Latvia (NLL), whose advent has already stretched out for more than 20 years. Even today, no one is prepared to accurately predict its completion date. It has already witnessed several changes of government and Cabinets have sometimes even discussed the possibility of stopping its construction altogether. Fortunately, thanks to the persistence of the NLL's Director and the outspoken opinions of numerous cultural leaders that did not happen.

The Rīga 2014 team hopes that it is the year in which Rīga has the honour of being the European Capital of Culture that will be the year that the

Gaismas pils (Castle of Light – as the new building is popularly known) opens its doors to the public.

The Library being opened would be a tangible symbol of the Latvian government's and community's adherence to spiritual values. The new premises will offer not only unique collections of books, periodicals, maps, music, audiovisual materials and a contemporary, welcoming environment for learning and research, but also a Museum of Book Publishing, conference rooms, exhibition space and venues for cultural events, allowing the implementation of the vision for the new library as being a centre of research, culture, education and communication, open to the whole community.

As acknowledged in an interview by Rīga 2014 cultural partner, Director-general of the EU-Japan Fest non-profit organisation, Shugi Kogi: "The economy and the business world are more influential than traditional politics – the poles of power have changed. But there must be a balance, because, nonetheless, we are human beings, and here the role of culture is even more important".

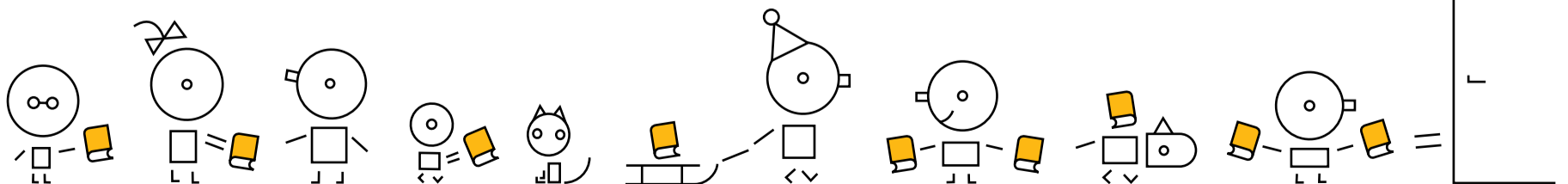
And that is exactly why we, the Rīga 2014 team, announce that the central event of the opening of the European Capital of Culture will be a significant action of public participation – a living chain of books, where everyone can feel themselves an

integral part in the transfer of books from the old library building to the new one. Let us keep our fingers crossed that all obstacles to carrying out this intention are removed and that the dream of the Castle of Light becomes reality, also for the many other *Force Majeure* cultural programme projects that need the NLL's new building to be open, fully equipped and ready to receive visitors.

Let's don our hats, scarves and gloves and participate in a unique people's action: a living chain of books! This symbolic national act, transferring books, hand to hand, from the old building of the National Library of Latvia to its new, modern building across the river, will be one of the Rīga 2014 Opening events on 18 January.

Form a chain, everyone!

Castle of Light



The road to Castle of Light continues

By Anda Baklāne, Master of Philosophy, National Library of Latvia

The *Gaismas pils* (Castle of Light) and the National Library of Latvia have, for a long time, existed in parallel worlds, as if each were on its own trajectory. The *Gaismas pils* construction project actually involves the creation of two libraries – the physical building and the new National Digital Library, but it is the news from the *Gaismas pils* construction site which is usually in the limelight.

The National Library recognised its problems with space soon after being founded in 1919, and the issue remained challenging until 1988, when émigré Latvian architect Gunārs Birkerts was approached. The world-renowned, talented and extraordinary artist agreed to design the National Library of Latvia, as a gift. At the time, no one could imagine that it would take more than 20 years to build the library.

2012 saw the release of a documentary by director Dāvis Sīmanis on the construction of *Gaismas pils: Pēdējā tempļa hronikas* (Chronicles of the last temple). It is precisely the long and difficult path to the new library which acutely resonates with the poetry of the construction of the majestic temple captured by Sīmanis's film. Of course, the Library has never been interested in being perceived as a temple of a bygone age. The library wants to be seen as a workshop, a mine, power station or laboratory (and although there is no need to mention this, everything here applies to both the physical and virtual, as is self-evident). Nevertheless, the path to the library has been excruciatingly long, for many it was a like building a pyramid.

Latvia has no other buildings whose form is so closely bonded to different metaphors and symbols in people's minds. The metaphors for the genesis

of Gunārs Birkerts's concept have frequently been listed in publications about the library project: the *Stikla kalns* (Glass Mountain) of Latvian folk tales and Rainis's play *Zelta zirgs* (The Golden Horse), the legend of the sunken castle in Burtnieki lake, the form of 12th century wooden castles and barns, the birch grove motif, etc.

The period from the initial version of Birkerts's creation to the actual construction has seen the dawn of a new era: Latvia has moved from a time of heartfelt enthusiasm and hope into a much more pragmatic era – a phase of antitheses, a critical reassessment of values and the deconstruction of myths. The Library's very form, as a very graphic and literally symbolic shape, frequently provides a good basis on which to begin to unravel the tangled issues of our national values and the future of knowledge organisations. Meanwhile, the building itself, having progressed from a concept into a real entity in the urban landscape, is beginning to construct its own – new – images and figures: from one angle it looks like a cruise ship, from another like a radar installation, now it is emerging from the mists of the Daugava river like the fins of a giant mythological fish. This building has a personality of its own, it will just not allow itself to be recorded as a simple, careworn symbol.

But so far, all we have talked about is the 'outside'. The real image of the library will only begin to form when the monolithic, abstract shape becomes a living space. The Library and the building will more and more merge into one, but will never fully overlap. The field of librarianship will

always be broader than the area of the building, as the library is a component of the world's memory. At the same time, the building will not just belong to the library itself – it will be a 'platform' – a *tabula rasa*, on which anyone can write (it could also be seen as a giant tree, at the foot of which one can meet, just for a rest from creativity).

The way we talk about the library and our expectations of it will always be in flux: we tend to organise knowledge in line with our own preconceptions about how the world is set up, and how our minds work. That is why the library, as of course Rīga itself, will never be finished.

The Second Coming of Gutenberg



The current era in book publishing is often referred to as the 'second coming of Gutenberg'. What actually is a book in this computerised age? Are readers changing in line with the changes in information and book publishing technologies? Is the significance of content changing? These are the issues to be considered by the activities taking place at the new National Library of Latvia building.

The Book 1514-2014, an exhibition in July devoted to the 500th anniversary of the printed book. 1514 was a landmark year: the first book was printed in Arabic characters, the first Jewish printing house was established, the Torah was first printed, the first book published in Polish ... The first Latvian book was published a few years later. The exhibition will display outstanding examples of books produced in 1514, from Europe's largest repositories of books, including the Florence, Bavaria, Regensburg, Strasbourg and other libraries.

21st Century Content, academic readings August 2014 to January 2015

Key themes of the readings: 500 years of book publishing heritage, libraries as cultural, educational, research and social centres, the electronic environment and digital publication. World-renowned specialists will participate in the readings.

Books Going to the Library, carnival procession, September

Joyful communication among thousands of children. A jolly mask procession will wind its way from Rīga's Old Town to the National Library of Latvia. 'Wrapped' in the covers of their favourite books, reading excerpts, playing out episodes, watching the pirate ship in the Daugava River and air balloons with greetings, everyone will be able to participate and watch screenings of literary works.

Born in Latvia

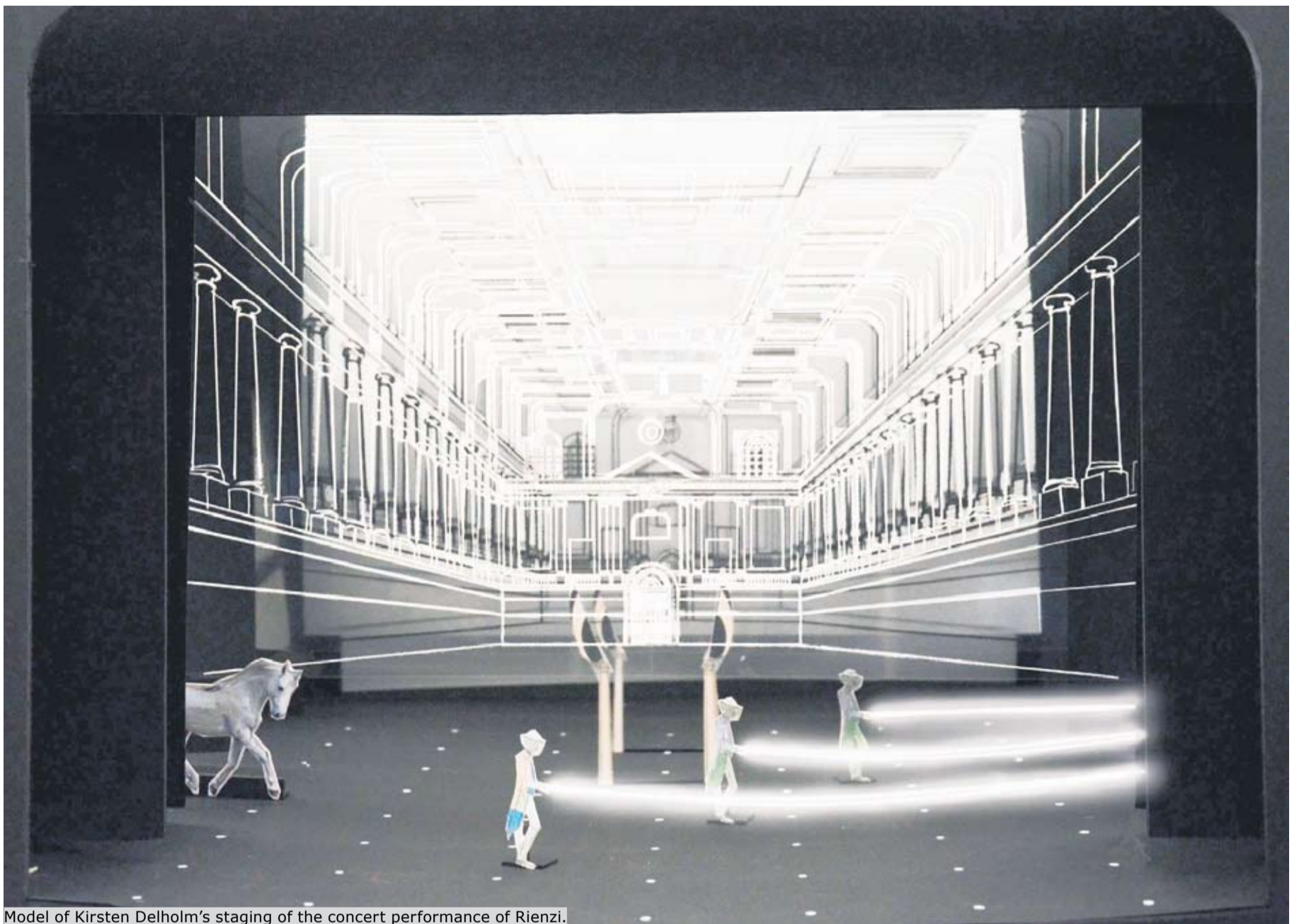


Gunārs Birkerts (1925) – a well-known US-based Latvian architect, the designer of the National library of Latvia building. His most significant works: Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Corning Museum of Glass, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, College of Justice of the University of Iowa and others. Recently nominated for the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal 2013.

Mikhail Baryshnikov (1948) – world-famous ballet dancer and choreographer. Began his ballet studies at Rīga Choreography School and then entered Leningrad (now – St.Petersburg) Choreography School. In 1974, during Leningrad Opera and Ballet Theatre guest performances, he decided to stay in Canada, later on moving to the USA.



Isaiah Berlin (1909 – 1997) – one of the most celebrated liberal philosophers of the 20th century. It was his strong and sophisticated explanation and interpretation of liberalism that won him world recognition. His essay *Two concepts of Liberty* had essential influence on the development of liberal philosophy.



Model of Kirsten Delholm's staging of the concert performance of *Rienzi*.

From Wagner to Vasks – surprises lined up by the Latvian National Opera

Information prepared by the LNO Press Office

Although Rīga has long been known as little Paris – a reflection of the sophisticated cultural tastes of its population, its creativity and scenic beauty – 2014 will see these traits receive formal recognition with the granting of European Capital of Culture status. During this year, many cultural institutions will let fantasy take flight, demonstrating to Rīga and its visitors that Latvia's capital city is a unique cradle of talent and has much to see and hear! 2014 will see a particularly wonderful cultural programme from the Latvian National Opera(LNO), which has always enjoyed the respect and admiration of the international community.

Rīga and Wagner: event of the century

Symbolically highlighting the great German composer Richard Wagner's strong links with the Latvian capital, the LNO will stage his first opera *Rienzi*, written in Rīga no less, which will premiere in January 2014 as part of the opening of the European Capital of Culture *Force Majeure* programme. It is worth recalling that one of the most noteworthy pages of Latvian opera history relates to the time that Richard Wagner spent in Rīga, from 1837 to 1839, as the musical director of the *Pilsētas* (City) theatre. Honouring the memory of the great master, performances of the Ring of the Nibelung tetralogy have been at the centre of the LNO's artistic programme since 2006, and it is this very year (2013), Wagner's bicentenary, that the LNO is holding the event of the century, staging all four Ring of the Nibelung operas during the Rīga Opera Festival. It

is especially interesting that the only time that this magnificent cycle was previously staged in Rīga was in 1902.

Rienzi is very closely associated with Wagner's time in Latvia, he composed it while living in Rīga. The multimedia production of *Rienzi* will be staged by Danish director Kirsten Dehlholm, with whom the LNO has already successfully collaborated in its productions of *Operation: Orpheus* and *The Nature of War*.

"To work with Wagner's music is to touch a rich cultural heritage, so I love that this opera is so rarely staged. It's not like *Parsifal*, say, which immediately draws comparisons with other productions. Ours will be unusual, visually expressive and conceptual" reveals the director.

Operas about legendary Latvians

While *Rienzi* will launch Rīga's European Capital of Culture Year, the overall 2014 programme at the *Baltais nams* (LNO, popularly known as the White House) will be dominated by operas and ballets by Latvian composers.

March sees the premiere of the opera *Šahs* (Chess) by young composer Kristaps Pētersons. As explained by the writer himself, it is dedicated to the Magician of Rīga, world chess champion Mikhail Tal. Known as the last 'chess romantic', the unusually gifted Mikhail Tal was one of the most original and recognisable symbols of Rīga. The opera's storyline revolves around the 1960 World Chess Championship match in Moscow between Mikhail Tal and Mikhail Botvinnik. The project's creative team will consist of a bright new generation of artists who have already

gained international recognition and won prizes at prestigious international competitions: conductor Ainārs Rubiķis, Latvian choreographer Kirill Burlov, now resident in London, director Viesturs Meikšāns and stage designer Reinis Suhanovs. The accompanying video will be directed by France's Carlos Franklin.

In turn, internationally acclaimed Latvian Arturs Maskats is basing his upcoming opera *Valentīna* on a legend of Latvian culture – film critic Valentīna Freimane. "Her personal life story is closely intertwined with the events of Latvian and European history, enabling a panorama of the era to be revealed in all its colour and contradiction. The dramatic episodes of Valentīna's life have coincided with significant 20th century historical events – times requiring enormous strength of spirit to survive physically and morally, but this is not just about politics: all the events interweave with a dramatic love story and deeply felt emotions" says the composer.

Collaborating with his librettist – the poet Liāna Lange – the composer portrays the significant, drama-filled pages of Latvia's history, culture and the different peoples living here, in the period from 1939-1944. The city of Rīga itself plays an important role alongside the complex and contradictory main protagonists: Rīga, despite the dramatic and tragic collisions of different eras, always 'rises up' (poet Aleksandrs Čāks), changes, is reborn. This is the path to development that the real Valentīna invites us to take.

Latvian music, world movement

The 2014 repertoire will also be given a special accent by three new one-act ballets, with the world premiere planned for April. The music of three outstanding Latvian composers – Pēteris Vasks, Rihards Dubra and Georgs Pelēcis – will become a source of inspiration for the world of dance, addressing today's brightest choreographers. Even though none of the scores was written specifically for dance, sound breaks down genre boundaries, sparking the interest of foreign choreographers of seemingly different mentalities, for whom the field of emotions and messages encoded in the music have become central.

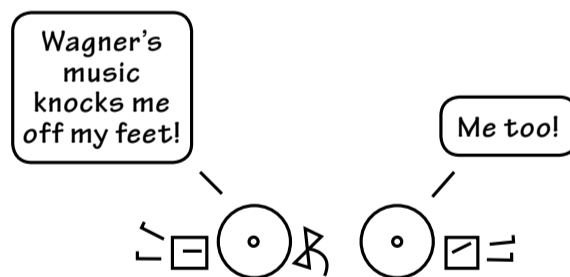
The music of Pēteris Vasks has challenged a number of contemporary choreographers as it captivates with its Nordic nature and ability to portray the human soul in existential situations. It is no coincidence that of Latvian composers, it is the music of Vasks that has become the most performed in



contemporary dance productions around the world. This time, we will see his music through the dance of choreographer Demis Volpi, who is of Argentine origin.

Meanwhile, Dubra's music suggests a special vertical spirituality, a sense of powerful religiosity and great internal freedom, always expressed in pronounced symphonic development that cannot be mistaken for the work of any other composer. Dubra's enigma will be unlocked by Mário Radačovský, Director of the Bratislava Ballet.

Meanwhile, the music of Pelēcis fascinates in the brightness of its detail, with his simple, sometimes naive (but not simplified!) view of the world, expressed in original, theatrically vivid imagery, illuminated this time by celebrated British choreographer Tim Rushton, Director of the Danish Dance Theatre.



Born in Rīga!

The Gala Concert Born in Rīga, planned for mid-July has aroused particular public interest. Latvian artists who have gained fame around the world will perform on a specially built stage in front of the Latvian National Opera. The opera house will itself act as a magnificent backdrop to the event. This architectural monument, located in the very centre of Rīga, presents its exterior in the style of restrained classicism, but its luxurious interior possesses renaissance, baroque, classicism and Empire features.

If you can't make it to Rīga in the summer, you can still catch other Born in Rīga concerts in the autumn. World-famous Latvian conductor Mariss Jansons will visit Rīga in November with one of the world's greatest orchestras – the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra – giving two concerts. Mariss Jansons will dedicate one of them to his father, the distinguished conductor Arvīds Jansons who was the long-time conductor of the Opera, frequently also conducting the National Symphony and Opera orchestras in the 1940s and 50s.

Born in Latvia



Ivetta Apkalna (1976) – Latvian organist. She has given recitals in the most famous cathedrals, churches and concert halls of Europe and North America, participated in leading music festivals and received music awards, as well as won significant organ competitions. Her repertoire comprises organ music from Bach to contemporary composers.

Andris Nelsons (1978) – Latvian conductor, one of today's internationally most sought-after young conductors who has earned fame in the operatic as well as symphonic fields. From 2003 to 2007, he was the principal conductor of the Latvian National Opera Orchestra and since 2008 has been the Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. In May 2013, he was appointed Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.



Kristīne Opolais (1979) – Latvian opera singer, soprano, began her career at the Latvian National Opera and is continuing it at opera houses in Munich, Berlin, Milan, Vienna and many other cities. She made her debut at *Bayerische Staatsoper* in Munich in the title role of Dvorak's *Rusalka*, which was followed by her debut at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden in the title role of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*.



From the series of postcards for the All-Union Spartakiada in Moscow, 1928

Gustav Klucis

Anatomy of an Experiment

The extraordinary story of an artist in an epoch of revolutionary change

By Iveta Derkusova, art curator

Gustav Klucis. Anatomy of an Experiment at the Arsenāls Exhibition Hall of the Latvian National Museum of Art will be an exhibition on a scale not previously seen in the artist's home country (more than 200 different works), including the LNMA's own unique Gustav Klucis collection. Numerous

works will also be loaned by other museums: from the George Costakis collection of Russian avant-garde art held by the Greek State Museum of Contemporary Art, and from Moscow's State Tretyakov Gallery and Vladimir Mayakovsky Museum.

The title of the exhibition refers to the manifesto written by Gustav Klucis himself, in which he espouses the idea that artists have the right to experiment. In his art, Gustav Klucis dared to follow a path he found stimulating, while believing that his creative and civic goals were in line with those of the country and society in which he lived and created. The benefits of hindsight give us knowledge about the background of historical events which transformed the Constructivists' new, experimental art into a weapon of Soviet ideology. We also now know that Gustav Klucis, inspired by his political naivety or creative passion, did not see that this turning-point held any risks for society's liberty or his own creative freedom.

The exhibition will invite viewers to set aside hindsight and decline the temptation to condemn or reject. Telling the story of one personality, the exhibition will encourage us to think about all the issues that have remained critical through the ages – freedom of choice and responsibility, relationships between artists and authority, how artists' personalities and works influence public opinion.

Constructivist pioneer

World-famous artist Gustav Klucis (1895 -1938) was born in Latvia, but his creative life in the 1920s and 1930s was spent in Moscow. Gustav Klucis's contribution to the shaping of Constructivism aesthetics, to the development of photo-montage, as well as his work in the field of poster art place him among the most important figures of 20th century art. Klucis's life is a story of an extraordinary personality and a talented artist in an epoch of crucial changes in the history of mankind. Klucis's creative work covers the entire period of Russian Avant-garde art while the course of his life tells an exemplary story, common to thousands of Latvians who stayed in Russia after the Bolshevik coup (October Revolution) of 1917 and fell victim to Stalin's purges in the late 1930s.

In 1915, only a few months before Latvians in Rīga were permitted to form their own riflemen battalions to fight against invading German forces, Gustav Klucis, a pupil of the Rīga City Art School was conscripted into the Russian imperial army and sent to Petrograd. The 1917 Revolution heavily influenced the then only 22 year-old Klucis, determining both his political opinions and further course in art. Klucis volunteered for duty in the 9th Latvian Riflemen battalion and took part in the October Revolution. His military duties continued, serving as a guard to Lenin himself, and in March of 1918 he was transferred from Petrograd to Moscow together with the new Soviet government.

From autumn 1918 till 1921, Klucis studied at VKhUTEMAS, the Higher Art and Technical Studios in Moscow. His professors were outstanding personalities – Kazimir Malevich and Natan Pevzner. Gustav Klucis intentions "to exhaust all current directions and 'isms', and thus to be released from the burden of the past, from the old school, and to find new forms for the present," naturally drew him into the circles of artists – pioneers of Constructivism. Klucis's constructions, designs

of multi-functional exhibition and agitprop stands and tribunes, made in the early 1920s, are masterpieces of functional design.

Art as propaganda

In the early years of Soviet power, Constructivist art was celebrated as a symbol of deliberate creativity. Faithful to experiment and innovation, Klucis introduced a new method in constructing artistic images – photomontage, which he applied extensively in the design of magazines, books and posters. Bringing photography and slogans into compositions of coloured planes, the artist broke down the barriers between the abstract and the real. But very soon, the construction of art images was replaced by the engineering of human souls, and the



Jēkabs Kazāks / Refugees 1917. Canvas, oil

100 years after WWI

1914 is a year that changed Europe. Superpowers that had ruled empires for centuries disappeared, but the Europe we know today – with 11 new countries, including Latvia – was created. Throughout the 20th century, Rīga has found itself in a cycle of post-war/pre-war, loser/winner relationships. In some ways, this war only ended here in 1991. Latvians' memories of the historic events are real and alive, as they are in the minds of many Europeans. Looking back and evaluating World War I, its

Born in Latvia



Alvis Hermanis (1965) – internationally acclaimed theatre director and actor. He has been the Artistic Director of the New Rīga Theatre since 1997. He received the *Young Directors Award* in 2003 at Salzburg Theatre Festival for *The Government Inspector* and the Europe Prize *New Theatrical Realities* in 2007. He has staged plays in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Russia.

totalitarian regime began to exploit art as one of its most powerful propaganda weapons. His subsequent output, printed in runs of tens of thousands, photomontage posters of the 1930s, featuring monumental images of Soviet leaders and referring to Communist Party guidelines and the goals of Five years plans, to this day remain a controversially interpreted art legacy.

Gustav Klucis's loyalty to Soviet rule did not save him from a tragic fate. Under false accusation, he was arrested on 17 January 1938 as a 'member of an armed Latvian terrorist organisation' and shot at the Butov firing range in Moscow on 26 February.

Gustav Klucis. Anatomy of an Experiment. 22 August to 26 October, Arsenāls Exhibition Hall.



impact on Latvia and Europe exactly one hundred years after its onset, is an absolute necessity.

The exhibition entitled 1914, being curated by the Latvian National Museum of Art, is envisaged as a visual documentary message. It will pull together art, culture and history, bringing to life personal stories through the eyes of both World War I and contemporary artists.

The expositions will seek correlations and developmental directions in a period when the old world collapsed and independent states were formed against a background of human suffering, terror and destruction.

1914. International Exhibition. 17 January to 20 April. Arsenāls Exhibition hall.

Mariss Jansons (1943) – one of the world's most distinguished conductors. Since 1973, he has been the conductor of numerous symphony orchestras in Europe and in the USA. Has been the music director of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and the principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic orchestra. Currently – chief conductor of Amsterdam's Royal *Concertgebouw* orchestra.



The ornate Main Hall of the Latvian National Opera

Rīga to host European Film Awards in 2014

In February 2013, the European Film Academy announced its decision to hold the 2014 European Film Awards ceremony in Rīga. The ceremony, scheduled for 13 December 2014, will be one of the European Capital of Culture Year events and will be held at the Latvian National Opera, whose magnificent architecture and stunning interiors earned special recognition from the Film Academy.

The ceremony sees the presentation of awards and recognition of personal achievements in European film. Each year, it brings together about 1400 guests, including European Film Academy and film industry representatives, nominees and previous award winners. Every other year, the European Film Awards ceremony is held in Berlin, but in other years special venues are chosen. To date, the ceremony has been held in London, Paris, Rome and Barcelona. In 2010, the awards were presented in Tallinn and in Malta in 2012. It was Rīga's status as a European Capital of Culture which raised the interest of the organisers.



Maija Kovalevska (1979) – Latvian opera singer, soprano. In 2006, she was the winner of the World Opera Competition for young opera singers *Operalia*. The very same year she made her debut in *La bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Since then she has been a regular soloist at the Metropolitan Opera, *Vienna Staatsoper*, London's Royal Opera House and at *Bayerische Staatsoper* in Munich.



Sean Hughes

A Global Choir – All on One Stage!

Can you imagine thousands of singers from all over the world, in an exotic variety of national costumes parading through the streets of Rīga? That is precisely how the largest and most important international event on the choral music scene will start in July. The World Choir Games 2014 will see around 20 000 singers from more than 70 countries gather in Rīga. Romāns Vanags, Artistic Director of World Choir Games 2014 and Associate Professor at the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, tells us more about this festival of music.

Where did this choir games idea come from?

Many different choir competitions are held around the world, but to participate, you have to get through a rigorous selection process – so the contests are restricted to really great choirs. Some time ago, concert producers *Musica Mundi* began to hold small competitions where, for a small fee, practically any choir could participate and be judged by a panel of professional experts, also form creative partnerships with other choirs. This tradition has evolved into the WCG, now run by the *Interkultur* organisation.

Do these games respect the Olympic spirit: the important thing is not to win, but to take part?

This principle is followed very much: the Games are held every two years regardless of the number of choirs, and all who wish to participate – whether it be 300, 350 or more choirs – are able to do so. Depending on the number of applications, a jury is set up with 70-80 first-class choral music experts, world-renowned conductors and composers. Currently, the World Choir Games is the world's largest choir forum, where conductors and experts meet, master classes and concerts by top artists are held. Of course, there are choir competitions, organised at different levels and categories.

What categories of choir can apply?

Choirs will compete in open and champion competitions, participation being determined at qualification stages. Choirs will compete in 29 categories at Rīga's World Choir Games, including folkloric, sacred music, pop/show choir, gospel, spiritual, as well as traditional choir competitions.

Does that mean that audiences too will have many opportunities to hear the widest variety of music?

For those interested in choral music, there is no better opportunity. There will be an opening concert, a massed choir concert on the Mežaparks open-air stage, a special concert of sacred music at Rīga's Dome Cathedral, a concert by a united Baltic boys'

choir singing the music of world-renowned American composer Morten Lauridsen. Listeners will get to know very diverse and varied choral folk music from all over the world – from South Africa to China

Will Latvia be offering something different to the usual choir events?

First of all, there will be more opportunities for choirs from Latvia and our near neighbours to participate, who otherwise, for lack of funds, would not be able to take part in the Choir Games in places like China or the USA. The jury will include many of Latvia's best-known conductors and composers of choral music. The world has heard much about the Latvian choral singing tradition and we will have the opportunity to present it to Games participants. In Rīga, we will be organising a unique massed choir concert on the Mežaparks open-air stage – the first such in the history of the Games! These World Choir Games will provide a special opportunity for Latvia to show the world what we – these singing Latvians – are really like. In the global context, it is unique that we have consolidated our identity in a humane way, through folk songs and singing traditions. The dream of Professor Imants Kokars has been fulfilled: Rīga has earned the chance to host the World Choir Games through our excellent international achievements in the sphere of choral music. I believe that the Choir Games are certain to give Latvia a permanent place on the world's choral map.

8th World Choir Games. 9 to 19 July, various locations www.singriga.lv

AN  INTERKULTUR EVENT

 World Choir Games |  RIGA LATVIA

Force Majeure programme



JAN

[january]

OPENING EVENTS 17 to 19 January

Rienzi 17 January Latvian National Opera
Multimedia concert performance of *Rienzi*, an opera that Richard Wagner began composing during the time that he lived in Rīga (1837-1839). It will be performed by the Latvian National Opera under the leadership of acclaimed Danish director Kirsten Dehlholm.

1914 17 January to 20 April Arsenāls

1914 was a year that changed the history of Europe, with the outbreak of the First World War. The exhibition 1914 will feature visual documentary materials on a number of historical events and personal life stories, both from that period and in subsequent interpretations by contemporary artists.

Chain of books

18 January
The central event of the inauguration will be a human chain extending from the old National Library building in central Rīga to the library's sparkling new quarters on the opposite bank of the Daugava River.

Fire Sculpture festival:

Force Majeure 18 January
Various

A fire sculpture championship – 15 teams of professional fire sculpture artists from all over the world will create an unforgettable fire sculpture show.

From Amber to Amber Thread 15 January

Latvian Natural History Museum
A special exhibition devoted to the amber biomaterial industry, to promote scientific research into amber and reveal the uniqueness of Baltic amber as a material, and its future potential.

Amber Through the Ages

15 January to 31 December Latvian Natural History Museum

A new exhibition about Baltic amber in Latvia's Natural History museum.

FEB

[february]

Lysistrata

14 to 17 February
Latvian Railway Museum
Musicians from Latvia, Switzerland and Germany will create a joint contemporary chamber opera, inspired by Aristophanes's play *Lysistrata*.

Rīga Winter Carnival

21 to 23 February Various
A carnival, which in the meaning of this particular word has never happened anywhere at any time – a completely new component of urban culture on a European scale.

MAR

[march]

Re:Visited 13 March to 25 August

Centre for Contemporary Art
Re:Visited will be a large-scale exhibition featuring the most significant and notable works selected from the most influential art biennales of 2012/2013.

Kristaps Pētersons: Šahs 13 March

Latvian National Opera
The new opera by Kristaps Pētersons, *Šahs* (Chess) is an innovative contribution to the opera genre with the participation of a new generation of performers. The opera is about World chess champion Mikhail Tal, known as the last 'chess romantic' and a native of Rīga.

Imagine 2020 21-22 March

Symposium 'I, the Consumer', as part of the Imagine 2020 project. It will host meetings, group work and panel discussions, etc., involving the invited artists and scientists. A platform to sow the seeds for later development of ideas and collaborative projects.

Amber Songs

15 to 16 March
The *Kamēr...* choir will commission arrangements of specially chosen, beautiful Latvian folk songs by composers from different countries and nationalities (but mainly from countries on the historic Amber Road), exploring the strength of Latvian heritage when in contact with the influence of other nations and mentalities.

Monument Wars

27 March to 30 November
Rīga city centre
The site on which monuments created by artists from four countries – Russia, Germany, Sweden and Poland – will be successively displayed.

WINDSTREAM 2014 under the aegis of Bach

31 March
The international composers' competition WINDSTREAM. Composers will compose new brass-band pieces in line with the theme Feel Bach, Continue Bach, Debate Bach.

APR

[april]

Bach. Passion. Rīga 4 April

Rīga Dome Cathedral
Part of a series of concerts, this time featuring J. S. Bach's little-known St Mark Passion, and, composed especially for this event, the world premiere of the St Luke Passion by Ē. Ešēvalds.

SKAN II 9 April to 02 May Various

This exhibition has already put Latvia on the ever more topical map of sound art, the intersection of contemporary music and art. Concluding with the *Skaņu mežs* (Sound Forest) festival uniting the organisers of Europe's experimental music festivals.

The Black Market of Useful Knowledge and Ignorance

5 April Part of the Imagine 2020 project. An installation by German curator Hanna Hurciga will enable 100 experts to be consulted, reminiscent of forms of knowledge transfer such as archives and reading rooms, in combination with communication situations similar to stock exchanges or consultancy sessions.

Amber Road: Millennial

Myths and Science
15 April to 01 November
Pauls Stradiņš Museum of the History of Medicine
Displaying the interaction between amber and people.

Vija Celmins: Works

11 April to 30 June
Art Museum Rīga Bourse
A retrospective of works by Latvian-American artist Vija Celmins, one of the world's most influential exponents of abstract realism.

J. S. Bach St Matthew Passion 11 April St. Peter's

Church
The grandeur of Johann Sebastian Bach's monumental St Matthew Passion, part of the concert series Bach. Passion. Rīga. will be unveiled to the audience by a very high quality musical performance: the Latvian Radio Choir will work with Europe's foremost interpreters of baroque music – the *Les Passions de l'Ame orchestra* (Switzerland), conductor Hans-Christoph Rademann (Germany) and notable foreign singers.

Bach 2014 18 April

Rīga churches
Music of J. S. Bach performed by Latvia's Radio Choir, *Concerto Copenhagen*, conductor Lars Ulrik Mortensen and *Akademie für Alte Musik*, conductor René Jacobs.

Habitus Baltija 2014

20 to 30 April
Rīga International Exhibition Centre
A competition between more than 100 new designers from 20 countries. Competition theme – *Force Majeure*.

Film Trophies 24 April to 30 May

Rīga Film Museum, Splendid Palace
An exhibition on film repertoire policy and the architecture of cinemas in Stalin's time and in the late 1950s. Screenings of films from the end of the 1940s.

Rīga Jazz Stage 24 April to 26 April

Splendid Palace, Kongresu Nams
Rīga Jazz Stage is an international jazz competition, encouraging Europe's new talents to prove themselves.

New ballets for Latvian composers

26 April Latvian National Opera

World premiere of three one-act ballets to music composed by outstanding Latvian composers Pēteris Vasks, Rihards Dubra and Georgs Pelēcis, arranged by world-renowned choreographers.

CULTURE REINVENTS FORMER KGB BUILDING

30 April to September

Former KGB headquarters

A Latvian's suitcase

History has seen many Latvians forced to migrate, often in difficult circumstances. What did they take with them, what did they leave behind and what reached their new home countries?

1. Ten objects: the individual and authority

Objects telling stories about the clash between the individual and governing powers starting from Tsarist times and including the years of German and Soviet occupations.

2. Museum of Fateful Objects

The Museum of Fateful Objects will collect personal articles and things belonging to the residents of Rīga and reveal the life stories associated with them.

3. Despite Everything

World War II and the accompanying Soviet occupation were one of the reasons for naïve art developing in Latvia and the majority of the works on show will be by people who suffered repression.

4. The House on the Corner

A route developed by the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia, will enable the general public to visit the headquarters of the former State Security Committee.

5. The Immanence of Friendship

Interdisciplinary exhibition aiming to create a multi-level dialogue between cinema archives and photo materials, documentary photographs and contemporary art, searching for parallels in the recent history of some European countries (Iceland, France, Latvia, Poland, Finland, Germany, etc.) during the period of the Cold War.

MAY

[may]

Magic Dance EXPO

10 to 11 May Ķīpsala

Exhibition Hall

Contemporary, competition and street dancers come together for a special grand event – a multimedia dance performance dedicated to Rīga 2014

Photomonth May Various

Rīga's Photomonth will offer a diverse programme: a number of exhibitions, presentations, workshops, discussions, a photograph market, urban projects and other activities. This will be an opportunity to express oneself and explore the latest in contemporary photography, not only for professionals, but will involve many different members of the public.

Urban Viewfinders May National Library of Latvia

The centrepiece of Photomonth – an international photography exhibition of works by Baltic, Nordic and other photographers, art curators and theorists.

LAUKI (Fields) and Art+communication 2014

15 May to 03 August Arsenāls

This festival seeks new approaches and forms in art, emphasising sustainability issues. The main event is a large-scale international exhibition with artists addressing the relationships between art and science, information and energy, technology and nature.

Bach's Organ music

16 May to 26 September

Dubulti Church, Liepāja

Svētās Trīsvienības Church and Dome Cathedral

Bach's music for organ will be played on Latvia's best church organs over 18 concerts.

Freedom Run 19 May

Brīvības iela

Under the banner of the Nordea Rīga Marathon, a Freedom run along Brīvības (Freedom) iela, as a symbolic journey through the history of Rīga's central thoroughfare.

Born in Rīga, Inga Kalna in concert 17 May Latvian National Opera

Inga Kalna (soprano) is an internationally recognised singer who has performed in Italy, France, England, Canada, the USA and around the world. Her repertoire includes almost all the famous opera pieces for lyric soprano by western European composers.

I'll Be in the Museum 17 to 31 May

NOASS Art Gallery

From 2011-2013, information on curators and artists will be gathered and the museum will prepare for its international exhibition of naïve art in 2013 and 2014. The Naïve Art Museum of Latvia will use its international collection to popularise naïve art and Latvian culture at the European level.

Seeking the Horizon 22 May to 20 July

Institute of Contemporary Art

The focal point will be the questioning nature of art – aspiration for the ideal, seeking the unknown. The exhibition will feature around half of specially created new works, with the remainder selected by the curators as being in line with the topic.

Amber in Conceptual Art Jewellery

23 May to 2 August Putti Art Gallery

Contemporary jewellery art reflecting amber as a material in conceptual and contemporary décor and meeting professional art criteria. Participants from countries on the historic Amber Road – Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Russia, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Italy and Greece.

3D Carnival 24 May Rīga city

Masks are an integral part of any carnival. Put on 3D glasses and dive into another reality, where, as you pass along the route, individuals transform into someone else – more experienced and having enjoyed something imperceptible.

Is Rīga Ready? 29 May to 29 June

Art Academy of Latvia

The project aims to become a platform for entrepreneurs, artisans, producers and designers to find out about innovation, experiment in and practice design as close colleagues.

JUN

[june]

European Children's Carnival 1 June

Esplanāde and Vērmanes parks

An event of unprecedented scope for families with all possible carnival trappings, oriented to children – entertaining and at the same time educational, giving the younger generation impressions about the culture and traditions of Europe, putting special emphasis on literature and its heroes. Organised in collaboration with embassies and national cultural centres.

Rīga Festival 1 to 30 June

Rīga concert halls and parks

Rīga Festival is a feast of high-quality music without borders, aimed at the widest possible audience of Rīga residents and visitors. Diverse musical programmes will be put on in concert halls and outdoor venues throughout Rīga.

Piens Festival 8 June

Ziemeļblāzma Palace of Culture

Stylish, contemporary picnic. A day spent joyfully and creatively in a circle of great people with the participation of local and foreign artists.

Transmedia Café 12 June to 28 September

Spīķeri creative quarter

Organized by RIXC in collaboration with *Technocité* and *Mons 2015* (Belgium). The concept is an urban contemporary and multi-functional public space, characterised by dynamism and the ability to be self-sufficient in energy. During the summer, the container will be located in the Spīķeri quarter, serving as a meeting place, fulfilling cultural and social functions.

European Solstice Celebrations 21 June

Mežaparks Open-air Stage

The traditions of Summer Solstice celebrations, today. A collaboration between national dance groups and brass bands, also involving participants from choirs, folkloric groups, folk music bands, and ethnic minorities.

Jāņi Night Mystery 22 to 23 June

Mežaparks Open-air Stage

All Europeans are invited to the most extensive joint Jāņi celebration in Europe and not only to enjoy Latvian traditions, but also find out about those of European nations, including Spanish *San Juan*, Lithuanian *Jonas*, Estonian *Jaanipäev* and Finnish *Juhannus*.

Ligo at the Riverbank! 23 June Daugava embankment

Summer solstice celebration in the centre of Rīga! Experience the rituals preserving the light of the shortest night. Enjoy music, beer, dancing!



The Book: 1514-2014 1 July to 31 December

National Library of Latvia

A unique book exhibition, organised by the National Library of Latvia, on the 500-year history of the book publishing industry, also ancient libraries. There will also be a virtual version and a printed catalogue.

Mare Balticum 3 July Congress hall

Part of the *Rīgas ritmi* festival – a concert and recording of an album of Latvian sea songs in modern settings performed by the Latvian Radio Big Band and a guest artist from the USA, in collaboration with Half Note Records and Hubtone PR, New York, USA.

European military bands 6 July Various

A picturesque parade of European military bands: an opening concert; concerts in parks, venues and squares throughout Rīga, a grand concert and culminating in a majestic march-past.

Born in Rīga 6 July Latvian National Opera steps

Famous musicians return to Rīga, where they started their musical careers, but having gained fame in the world's concert halls. Gala open-air concert by world famous Latvian music stars, modelled on the Vienna Philharmonic's concerts at the Schönbrunn Palace, in collaboration with EBU television channels.

Kremerata Baltica Amber Road 6 July Lielā Gilde

A chamber orchestra of soloists from the three Baltic States presents the most essential modern idea – freedom as an impulse for action and creativity.

World Choir Games 9 to 19 July Various

The biggest choral competition in the world, based on Olympic ideals to peacefully unify people and nations connected by song in fair competition. Rīga expects up to 25 000 participants and more than 400 choirs representing 90 nations.

Rīga Floral Ball 2014 10 July

University of Latvia Botanical Gardens

The symbiosis of nature and culture: plants from all over the world and creative, scientific and horticultural inspiration meet in a green environment. Events include exhibitions, seminars, design competitions, creative workshops and concerts.

Ladies' Paradise 1900-2000 21 July to 3 August

Esplanāde 2014

A complex of ten interactive shows, acquainting visitors with European fashion history by decade, from 1900 to 2000. A special show is dedicated to fashion of the future, involving ten of Rīga's best-known designers.

International Festival of Ancient Music

July 25 to 27 Spīķeri kvartāls

Enter into the spirit of the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque Age through music in the churches and concert halls of Rīga's Old Town. Lavish antique garments, ancient instruments, authentic performances and old-time fireworks will not leave a single festival visitor indifferent.

Esi Te (Be Here) 26 July Esplanāde park

30 July National Library of Latvia

A collaboration between outstanding artists from all over the world will create an unusual oasis – a place where everyone is welcome to relax and find their way to the Ocean, by means of a special introvert art phenomenon – a path to the human inner essence.

Simfoniskais Ceļojums (Symphonic Journey)

26 July Mežaparks Open-air Stage

This open-air symphonic concert brings together aural and visual perception.



The Age of Amber 6 August to 28 September

Museum of Decorative Arts and Design

Amber is considered to be one of Latvia's national symbols, however over the years it has faced both praise and neglect. The exhibition will study how the notion of amber's identity has metamorphosed in the cognition of the Latvian nation, from the beginning of the 20th century to the present.

Piens Festival 3 August Lucavsala

Stylish, contemporary picnic. A day spent joyfully and creatively in the company of great people. The streets, parks and courtyards of Rīga will be filled with culture, music and creative people.

Years of Travel 8 August

Dzintari concert hall, Jūrmala

The theme of travelling in music is played out and surrounded by new sounds – it has always been dear to composers in different centuries and countries. Featuring classical and newly composed works.

Contemporary Craftsmanship Market

8 to 9 August Ethnographic Museum of Latvia

A diverse exhibition of modern craft products, demonstrating articles and products that have survived, gained new value and can compete in today's market and take the name of Latvian craftsmen abroad.

Re Re Rīga Festival 8 to 10 August

AB Dambis, squares and streets of Rīga

Street art and world music concerts, dance, improvisation theatre, performance art, puppetry, circus, painting, installations. New experiences and emotions for the residents of Rīga, with events which are usually viewed indoors taking to the streets.

Towers and Stars

15 August Various

Traditional open-air concert during the festival *Rīgas Svētki*. The sounds of trumpets and interesting stories acquaint listeners with pages of Rīga's history, with first-class symphonic and opera music performances by outstanding stage artists.

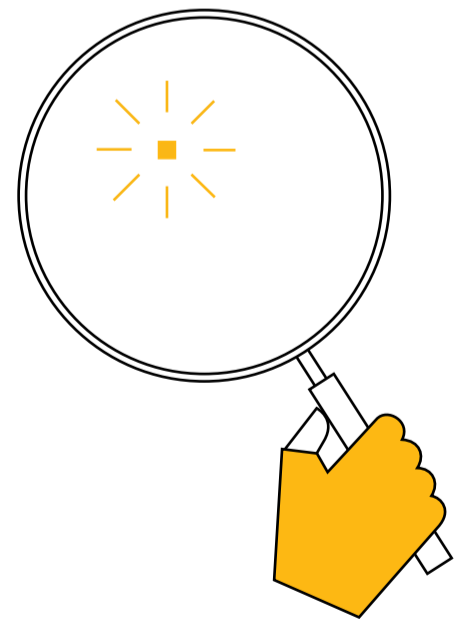
Gustav Klucis. Anatomy of an Experiment

22 August to 26 October Arsenāls

The most extensive exhibition to date of this world-renowned Constructivist in his home country with over 200 exhibits from the Latvian National Museum of Art and other European museums.

Klezmer Music Marathon August Various

The anniversary programme is supplemented by a three-day Jewish music marathon – Rīga's open-air stages will host virtuoso performances by Klezmer and Sephardic musicians from countries with diplomatic missions in Latvia.



SEP

[september]

FORCE MAJEURE. RĪGA 3 September (premiere)

Splendid Palace Cinema

The socio-anthropological documentary film *Force Majeure. Rīga* is the story of Rīga, showing the city as it has never been seen before and which we have never be able to perceive – episodes created by seven European contemporary film makers, combined into one film.

Survival Kit Contemporary Art Festival

4 to 21 September Centre for Contemporary Art

Art exhibitions in non-traditional venues, objects in the urban environment, creative projects involving the public, broad parallel programme of diverse cultural initiatives, workshops, film reviews, lectures and discussions and a theoretical symposium.

In Search of the Art of the Future

5 September to 27 October

Art Museum Rīga Bourse

A multidisciplinary project intended to popularise the work of Latvian painter, theoretician and researcher Voldemāras Matvejs (1877–1914), in light of his unique contribution to culture outside Europe – research into the art of Oceania, Africa and Northern Asia in the early 20th century.

Books Going to the Library 8 September

National Library of Latvia

A carnival procession – joyful communication among thousands of book-loving children – will march to the National Library. Dressing up in the covers of their favourite books, reading extracts, playing out episodes, everyone will feel part of a new adventure book.

Noisy Neighbours 5 to 18 September

This project will bring together literary figures from different conflict zones around the world, from areas of armed conflict, where cultures and values clash, where there is intolerance of other cultures, high levels of prejudice or historical disputes among neighbours. World-renowned literary figures will participate in readings, creative workshops, lectures, seminars and discussions.

Amber Road 12 September

12 Latvian composers create music to poems about amber by 12 outstanding European poets. A CD will be produced, but a free concert, by State choir *Latvija* and Mārtiņš Sirmāis, attended by the poets, will be held on 2014's National Poetry Day.

MY – YOUR – OUR RĪGA one hundred years ago

12 September to 31 December

National Library of Latvia

Rīga as a phenomenon – a multicultural metropolis. At the start of World War I, living in one city and mutually communicating with tolerance, the residents of Rīga also had their own versions of Rīga with social lives lead by national traditions, their own cultural and religious needs, their own information spaces.

Valentīna 19 September Latvian National Opera

A new two-act opera by Artūrs Maskats. The prototype for the central protagonist is widely known cinema and theatre academic Valentīna Freimane whose personal life story closely follows the events of Latvian and European history.

RīgaPunkts 27 September Various

A festival of science, offering new knowledge or looking at the known from new perspectives. Like the digital image formed of pixels, *RīgaPunkts* (RīgaPixel) presents a broad spectrum of activities, including lectures, expert discussions, experimental laboratories and concerts.

Where is our favourite scientist?

26 September to 27 October

Various apartments in Rīga

Merging animation and film, about the rapid pace of development in biology and physics in the modern globalised world, in a contemporary installation to evoke discussion on the world, ourselves, energy and substance.

OKT

[october]

October – children's month October Various

Every weekend in October museums, theatres, concert halls, castles, subsidized and private organizations open their doors and organize special activities for children from 4 to 12 years old.

Skaņu mežs

10 to 12 October Various

12th Sound Forest festival, introducing a more extensive programme, also including a meeting of organisers of European experimental music festivals.

Potato Opera 9 to 15 October

Latvian National Theatre

A musically splendid and broad-genre performance for the entire family about the journey of Potato Man to Latvia through the labyrinths of history and time.

TENSO Days in Rīga 16 and 23 October

St Peter's Church and Dome Cathedral

Involving top-level European professional choirs in discussion and concerts, looking to discover the latest trends in the choir music genre. Festival guideline – the junction of the sacred and profane cultural spaces.

NOV

[november]

BORN in RĪGA series: Mariss Jansons

8 and 9 November Latvian National Opera

World-famous Latvian conductor Mariss Jansons will visit Rīga with one of the most highly rated orchestras in the world – the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra for two concerts. One of the concerts is dedicated to Mariss's father, outstanding conductor Arvīds Jansons.

Light Festival STARO RĪGA 2014

14 to 18 November Various

An annual exhibition of urban environment installations over several days during which the landscape of Rīga is transformed by means of modern light and video technologies. Displays may involve buildings, squares, lifts, monuments and various other places in the urban environment.

Tutankhamun's Amber

14 November to 31 December

Art Museum Rīga Bourse

International project uniting collections from various European and Egyptian museums, dedicated to the culture of ancient Egypt. A key Amber Vein project, marking Egypt as the final destination on the Amber Road and highlighting the Baltic amber found in Tutankhamun's Tomb.

Rīga is still not ready 16 to 31 November Various

Six short science-fiction films to be produced in 3D or stereoscopic technique, examining the process of creation and attempts to execute futurist projects in Rīga. Competitors will be invited to consider what would happen, if a great discovery, e.g., artificial intelligence, were made in Rīga.

DEC

[december]

European Film Awards ceremony 13 December

Latvian National Opera
The ceremony sees the presentation of awards and recognition of personal achievements in European film.

European Christmas 1 to 31 December

Parks and squares of Rīga

Creation of a special seasonal Christmas atmosphere through a diverse range of music genres and events. Jazz and ethnic music will be played alongside academic music, multimedia projects, activities in Christmas markets and at skating rinks.

Force Majeure Closing ceremony

End of December Rīga

Emotionally deep, large-scale performance, which, alongside its artistic qualities, provides a report on and feeling of pride for what was achieved during the year: revealing the European Capital of Culture Year as a uniform wholeness, reflecting the progress made, cultural events and the most vivid emotions.



Vija Celmins. Drypoint – Ocean Surface (2nd State). 1985

Vija Celmins Art counterfeiting nature

Elita Ansons
Exhibition curator

Latvian-born American artist Vija Celmiņa (Celmins) has had a fascinating career – from being an art student at the University of California, living and working at Venice Beach in Los Angeles in the 60s and 70s, to a sought-after global star reinforcing her role in the New York art scene of the 80s and 90s. Vija Celmins's works feature in the world's most significant collections of contemporary art, representing American art from the 1960s to the present day: New York's Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Paris's Pompidou Centre, London's Tate Modern, etc.

As a six year old child, Vija Celmins fled her native Rīga with her family, finding themselves refugees at the end of World War II. Later, her early works of the mid-60s reveal memories of her childhood fears. American and German air-force planes – like monochrome scenes from historical memories. In this series of small works, lead-gray aircraft cramped into small paintings create a sense of claustrophobia. Vija Celmins also tackled the documentary nature of other emotive incidents and accidents in the pages of 60s newspapers and magazines, re-painting them in her photo-realistic style.

The intellectual contribution of pop art demonstrated that the latest news can also become a mass

consumer product. During this period, the artist began collecting magazine clippings, which served as inspiration for her works, and so photographs or other images became intermediaries between her art and the subjects of all of her future work.

Everyday objects of the 60s – a lamp, electric heater, frying pan, to be found in her ascetic studio – when painted created a strange impression of loneliness which, some critics have noted, echo the feelings of nomadic refugees. It is true that Celmins's pop art is somewhat surreal. Hypertrophied giant-sized combs, pencil or eraser sculptures also show the influence of Magritte.

The era of space conquest, when the news of man reaching the moon and the first pictures of the lunar surface became a subject for art, turned out to be important for Celmins's art. In the subsequent years, stellar fields were to become like popular bestsellers in Celmins's art – executed with photo-realistic precision in charcoal and graphite drawings, mezzotint and aquatint prints, as well as in her painting.

In addition to the stars, the ocean has attracted the artist with its unrelieved, glittering rippled surface. The desert too, its stones dotting the landscape like stars. In 1975, the artist created a series of four works entitled Portfolio featuring the desert, the ocean, the cosmos and the sky. In this way, Celmins announced the span of her subjects, related to the myriad of natural structures. Later, cobwebs would also join these structures. The ar-

tist does not tend to philosophise on the metaphysics which are undoubtedly found in the subjects she chooses. She emphasises that she only works with the surface of paper and that she only wishes to work with this surface. The artist has developed her technique to the highest degree of perfection, her works taking a long time to create, by the slow, painstaking treatment of surfaces.

The human desire to imitate what we see, as clearly manifested in the mimeographic nature of art, was conceptually demonstrated by the artist in her work *To Fix Image in Memory* (1977-1982). Bronze copies were made of eleven stones gathered in the desert and painted, mimicking the stones' natural patterns. The copies of the stones, produced with a master jeweller's craftsmanship, are indistinguishable from the originals. The 'counterfeiting' or imitation concept is still important to the artist, she has continued to produce copies of found objects in recent years.

We are proud to be able to show Vija Celmins's works in Rīga – about forty of her graphics, charcoal and graphite drawings, paintings and various items that will come from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the National Gallery in Washington, the Latvian National Museum of Art collection and Vija Celmins's artwork collection, and other collections.

Vija Celmins. Works. Art Museum Rīga Bourse.
11 April to 22 June 2014



Contemporary art developing survival skills

The city as a Garden of Eden, where every being feels wanted and lives happily in harmony with nature, the latest technologies and its creative impulses – such is the vision outlined by the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Arts. As its Director, and curator of the Survival Kit Festival and Rīga 2014 programme, Solvita Krese explains:

Within the Capital of Culture programme, *Izdziņvošanas komplekts/Survival Kit* is a series of activities involving the city's residents and in which the city's visitors are invited to participate. As the name suggests, we are bringing to the fore issues concerning survival strategies. One of our emphases is a call to return to ancient skills, but interpreted in a contemporary way. We want to show that much from the past has been undeservedly forgotten, but that these skills can be put to use in completely different ways. In this regard, the large-scale exhibition taking up the entire Latvian Academy of Art and its green environs, will be key. Academy graduands will mount the exhibition, also involving craftspeople. Manufacturers and research-

ers will work with the students. The efforts of the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum, which traditionally hosts craft fairs, have been very promising. August 2014 will see a fair for contemporary craftspeople in a similar fashion, offering products balancing on the boundaries between applied art and design.

Another important direction in developing the European Capital of Culture art programme will be the interaction between art and science to create innovative solutions. There will be a large-scale exhibition *Lauki* (Fields) at the Arsenāls exhibition hall, organised by the RIXC electronic arts and media centre. Its theme covers both renewable energy and the application of new media in everyday life. We will explore how art, interacting with new media and new technologies, can help us survive. Radio NABA is also undertaking an ambitious programme: together with scientists from the University of Latvia, they will hold scientific cafes throughout the year, bringing together artists and scientists. Discussions on complex issues will be held in an understandable way, explaining them in as simple terms as possible. This programme will culminate in Science Night, to be held in September at the campus the University is constructing near Torņkalns station. Even though it is unlikely to be completed by then, that will not stop scientists, musicians, DJs and VJs wandering through and performing over a number of nights.

Is it true that Rīga will become markedly greener in 2014?

Our urban gardening projects, involving districts' residents, promise to be interesting. A group of artists and social anthropologists, calling themselves

Iesaknotāji, will build greenhouses along with senior citizens and children and develop urban gardening skills. There will be collaboration with nursing home residents. All this will reach its culmination in the Esplanāde, either with a stand-alone greenhouse, or with plantings incorporated into the information centre. Visitors will be able to observe the plants growing throughout the summer, and be amazed by what can be grown in the city centre! It will not be a surprise if cabbages start growing in the Esplanāde square, or if vegetable plots are laid out.

Another interesting urban gardening activity is being organised by the *Serde* interdisciplinary group. They intend to plant a ledge, like an extended second-floor window box, all the way around the massive building at the corner of Brīvības and Matīsa ielas. And it will be set up along the lines of a hanging garden. This fits in well with the Vidzeme market, inside the block, where ecological plant blankets will be on display. Created by French artist Joanes Simon-Perre, these feature strips of plant seeds incorporated into traditional cloth quilts. They will continue to germinate, grow and bloom, and I think will be fascinating.

Does this mean that art will be making a stand opposing the virtual world?

I guess RIXC will be running everything with computers anyway and won't wander far from them. But they are already conducting experiments, for instance talking to plants through loudspeakers and the like.

There will be big cleanups. Landscape architects will also participate in the programme of events. Much will be going on in neighbourhood backyards,

in *Zolitūde*, *Maskačka*, *Purčīks* (slang for the Maskava and Purvciems districts)... A massive movement will be launched, with residents transforming communal back yards into lush oases with their own hands, ably assisted by landscape architects and other professionals. Artists will help build children's playgrounds from recycled materials.

In 2014, the Survival Kit Festival will speak of the utopian city and models for surviving in it. Have these ideas come about from the festival's own experience, now five years long?

The first Survival Kit exhibition was held at the beginning of the economic crisis when it seemed that culture was the only positive *force majeure* that could help people change things for the better. We concluded that the survival kit was a powerful strategy to also include in Rīga's Capital of Culture bid.

There are also numerous other projects complementing the directions mentioned, but interest in ancient skills, science and public participation are the three key principles they all have in common.

Is the goal is to find new models for people's interaction with the urban environment, making it more humane?

Yes, one of the guiding themes is to revitalise once-familiar Do It Yourself – DIY principles. The creative quarters, which have only recently become established in Rīga and are now largely considered a success story, will become active in this regard. A few years ago, the Contemporary Art Centre implemented the *Brigāde* project in conjunction with the Soros Foundation Latvia, granting, by means of a competition, financial support to creative initiatives offering non-traditional forms of business. It is pleasing to acknowledge that most of them have survived. In addition, everywhere

they appear, a viral effect follows: creative young people gather around and entertainment venues evolve. The second competition is currently underway, and new creative brigades have submitted applications. Their input will certainly be felt in 2014.

How will the traditions of urban craft and agrarian skills connect?

Everything that the Survival Kit festival is trying to do, in modelling a utopian city or seeking to improve the city, is related to the integration of horticulture into the urban environment, something that is very common around the world, but that has not to date been widely practiced in Rīga, despite it being a green city. Our plentiful and beautiful city parks lack something – they can only be looked at, not touched. Parks and gardens must be returned to the residents. Our 2014 projects will bring this dream closer.

Creative quarters flourish



Emīls Desjāņikovs / F64

Academy of Culture, as well as contemporary dance productions.

VEF

The former VEF factory is located just beyond the Gaisa (air) bridge, which marks the boundary of Rīga's historical centre. The abandoned workshops of this one-time flagship of Soviet industry have spontaneously evolved into a community of artists who have found studio space much cheaper than that in more traditional premises. What is now most visible here are the activities of the *Totaldobže* alternative arts centre, covering a broad range from artists-in-residence and exhibitions to poetry slams, electronic music and happenings. *Totaldobže* pays particular attention to introducing artists in various fields to curious young audiences who are not particularly interested in high art.

Kalnciema kvartāls

In contrast to the creative quarters regenerating urban industrialised environments, the quarter by the side of Kalnciema iela, on the way from the city centre to the airport, consists of small, elegant wooden houses, reconstructed by their owners, the Dambergs brothers. The buildings, grouped around a courtyard, now house architects' and designers'

Rīga is currently seeing creative quarters popping up like mushrooms – each with its own charm, range of activities and personality. Throughout 2014, the creative quarters will offer programmes revealing a very personal, creative and diverse side to Rīga.

Spīķeri

Between the Central Market and the Daugava river, there is a cluster of old warehouses where at least three arts institutions have found a home and are operating successfully, each in its own field. This once forbidding place is being more and more often frequented by creative young people with professional ambitions in the arts. The Spīķeri Concert Hall, operated by Latvijas Koncerti, is suitable for small-scale academic music concerts. It also frequently hosts inter-disciplinary and pilot projects, not only uniting different styles of music, but using original forms of performance and including other media. The kim? Contemporary Art Centre is like a test track for the latest in art with its two exhibition spaces and conference room. Exhibitions are often put on together with young curators and artists from the other Baltic States. The Dirty Deal Teatro theatre uses its small space to put on performances by the Umka puppet and object troupe, by students and recent graduates of the Latvian



Gatis Gierīts / F64

offices, a restaurant and a small exhibition space. The quarter's main attraction however, is its markets, offering organic foods and unique, one-off fashion goods. There are regular film screenings and musical performances. The character of the quarter has made it a favourite haunt for young creative professionals wanting to enjoy a relaxed, stylish atmosphere.

Kaņepes Culture Centre

This two-storey building, which stands out among the solid bourgeois apartment buildings of Rīga's centre, once housed a music school. While the school waited to be moved to better premises, the building was neither repaired nor particularly smartened up. This gives the building quite an alternative aspect, well suited to what goes on here: at the initiative of Dāvis Kaņepe, a young film director, parties were held here and the courtyard became populated with revellers. This was then supplemented with drawing and photography exhibitions, intimate concerts, and later, performances



Inga Nestere

and film screenings. The Centre is very attractive to young visitors, especially cyclists, students and young people who are still seeking their place in art. The location is well suited to a route typically taken by the creative alternative crowd on Friday nights: from the Čomskis, Teātra bārs, Miit and Fazenda bars on Lacplēša iela to the more leisurely coffee bars and teashops of Miera iela – or vice versa.

A photograph of a prison cell. The room is narrow and has light-colored walls. In the foreground, there is a metal bed frame with a wooden plank for a mattress. In the background, there is another similar bed frame. A window with a white frame is visible on the back wall, letting in bright light. A small wooden cabinet is on the right wall. The floor is made of light-colored tiles.

Purification of the State Security Committee ghost building has begun

A silent reminder of the decades of horrors it witnessed, the massive building stares blindly at the city with dusty and dark glass eyes, its walls retaining hundreds of terrifying stories and secrets. Number 61 Brīvības iela in Rīga's city centre, (the junction of Brīvības and Stabu ielas), is known by several names: the House on the Corner, the *Cheka*, and officially – the State Security Committee of the Latvian SSR. In 2014, when Rīga is a European Capital of Culture, this building will undergo true purification by becoming one of Rīga's cultural and historical sites and a museum with a distinctive and unique concept.

According to the design by Aleksandrs Vanags (1873–1919), the building at 61 Brīvības iela was to be a standard apartment building, with ground-floor shops. The six-storey building was constructed in 1912 and its architecture features many Art Nouveau elements typical of the time: artistically expressive facade details and elaborate interior decor. The arrangement of the hallways connecting rooms remind us that the true purpose of the building was more commercial than a conventional multi-apartment building. Until the 1930s, the building housed a motley variety of institutions, but it was then taken over by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia.

From apartment building to prison

After the occupation of Latvia on 17 June 1940, the building became the headquarters of the State Security Committee of the Latvian SSR, commonly known as the *Cheka*. It did not take long for part of the basement and the ground floor to be reconstructed as prison cells and a place of torture and execution. In the years of World War II before the Germans and Soviets commenced hostilities, about 100 innocent Latvian citizens were killed here. The House on the Corner has two courtyards, both still there – a large one with massive metal gates and a smaller one, where prisoners could walk, 'protected' from the adjacent residential building by overhead barbed wire.

There was a total of 44 prison cells with about 175 places (beds). Later, when the number of prisoners grew rapidly, the cells were packed and up to 36 people were confined in cells with 6 beds.

The hallways between the cells were laid with thick red carpet to muffle the guards' footsteps and mask the blood spilt by the people being tortured. At night, the guards would repeatedly unlock cell doors just to jolt prisoners awake and make them anxious about further interrogation. More often than not, these were false alarms just to wake the prisoners up and prevent proper sleep. The cell doors had clearly visible observation ports, but there were also additional secret 'eyes' hidden in walls, next to the doors, invisible to the prisoners. Each guard was responsible for the good behaviour of prisoners in 4 to 5 cells.

Gruesome reminder

After the Second World War, the *Cheka* prison cells were used as a remand prison during investi-

gations. No fundamental changes were made to the layout or infrastructure, the barred cells along the hallways and cell layouts remained, including such features as the cast-iron waste pipe, unaltered from Tsarist times, the archaic lift mechanism, etc. The State Security Committee remained here until 1991, when Latvia regained its independence and the State Police moved in. In 2003, a memorial plaque, The Black Threshold, by sculptor Gļebs Pantejejevs was installed, funded from public donations. In 2008, the police moved to its new, specially built headquarters in Čiekurkalns and the House on the Corner has remained empty and abandoned. Despite the building being included in the list of protected national cultural monuments and being in the 'Rīga historical centre' area of UNESCO World Heritage listing No.825, to date there has been little interest in further use of the building. Actually, this is quite understandable, because one would need enormous inner strength to take on a place so saturated with pain, sorrow and tragedy.

Cultural-historic Centre

The creative team of the Rīga 2014 Foundation was unanimous in that the darkness and the gruesome aura of mystery around the House on the Corner should finally be dispelled. Next year, when Rīga becomes a European Capital of Culture, this gloomy building will come into the light – in both actual and metaphorical senses. While there is no intention to undertake major renovations, the building will be cleaned up to the extent that it can host a number of Rīga 2014 projects.

It is envisaged that in 2014 – when Rīga proudly carries the status of European cultural messenger – the building will be home to several thematic exhibitions interlinked by historical events and the life stories of people affected by them. Six thematic expositions are planned, the development of which has been undertaken by a number of institutions involved in history, art and culture. The intention of the concept's instigators is to establish a museum with a singular notion, presenting 'living' testimonies to what has gone on in this building, characterising this historical period and environment. Everyone stepping over the threshold of the House on the Corner would feel as if returning into a not-too distant past – into the time of Soviet rule, totalitarianism and genocide. This will be an emotionally charged journey into the past, from the cellar to the highest, 6th storey, along the pro-

ject-route presented by the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia: The House on the Corner.

One of the expositions – Ten objects' stories about individuals and power – will be created by the National History Museum of Latvia. It will comprise objects from the museum archives playing the role of mediators in presenting stories about the conflicts between individuals and ruling powers during the previous century. These will be personal stories about the people to whom the objects belonged, about lives affected by power, about decisions taken either to succumb to or to resist conditions dictated by authority. The exhibition will be located on the 5th floor. The same floor will feature another exhibition A Latvian's Suitcase. What did Latvians take with them in their suitcases when forced to emigrate to foreign countries? They had to choose what to take and what to leave behind, or actually to lose forever. Visitors will not merely see these objects, but also be able to listen to recorded oral histories, watch videos and experience other modern technologies.

Moving along, the same 5th floor sees another exposition – the Museum of Fateful Objects. This will be a great opportunity to see the personal belongings of Rīga residents, things associated with particular events or with exhilarating life stories.

The top, 6th floor will host an international photography exhibition The Immanence of Friendship. Its aim is to seek the common features of the histories of European countries in the cross-section of the previous century, in photographic and film materials. The exhibition will present stories about national identity and the ability to maintain it in times when major global powers are attempting to change the *status quo*.

The exposition of the Naive Art Museum of Latvia will bring a slightly romantic feeling to the rooms of the 6th floor. Historical events, personal life stories in expressions of naivety – unsophisticated, uncomplicated, nevertheless deeply emotional art works.

There you have a journey through time and space which will leave an indelible impression on everyone closing the heavy doors of the House on the Corner behind them, obliging them to reflect on recent, real history. On events which took place here – in Latvia, in the Baltic States, in Europe.

Culture reinvents former KGB building

30 April to 26 September, 61 Brīvības street

Born in Latvia



Gidon Kremer (1947) – one of the most famous Latvian and German violinists and conductors. In 1981, Kremer founded a long-standing chamber music festival *Kremerata Musica* in Lockenhaus, Austria. In 1997, Gidon Kremer founded the orchestra *Kremerata Baltica* which has given more than 60 concerts in tours all over the world.

Sergei Eisenstein (1898 – 1948) – outstanding film director, script writer and art theoretician, pioneer in the use of montage. His film *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) is considered one of the best films of all times. He is also known for his films *Alexander Nevsky* (1938), *Ivan the Terrible* (1946) and others.



Elīna Garanča (1976) – Latvian opera singer, mezzo soprano. Began her career as a guest artist in Germany. Later she performed at *Vienna Staatsoper*, *Deutsche Oper Berlin*, the *Concertgebouw* in Amsterdam, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, *Paris National Opera House* etc. Currently collaborating with the world's leading opera houses.



Dmitrijs Sulžics / F64

Rīga Carnival – concerts, festivals, exhibitions and performances throughout the year!

Radiant, sonorous, blooming, sparkling, flourishing, singing, dancing, colourful, stylish – we would need many more such adjectives before we even got close to a full description of Rīga’s diverse and bounteous cultural landscape. Regular festivals, wonderful concerts and opera productions, theatre performances every night, brilliant artists, quests for innovation, experiments, the distinctiveness of the creative quarters.

As early as the beginning of May, when it gets warmer, culture goes out on the streets of Rīga, filling them with a festive atmosphere. Summer is rich with wide-ranging events in Rīga’s historical centre and along its Art Nouveau boulevards. Rīga loves to celebrate culture. Rīga rises to new challenges, like holding a light festival in the darkest months of autumn.

The essence of carnivals is to change and be changed, to evolve. Everything is possible at a Rīga Carnival. Putting on masks and being something else, playing roles and games without masks, discarding the unnecessary, enjoying the forbidden and turning everything upside down.

The events of the Rīga Carnival Chapter will, throughout the year, tempt you into a carousel of happenings, into having fun and being delighted, abandoning yourself to cultural experiences so that you dismount the carousel inspired, completely different, as if you have arrived at a totally new place, because for you, everything has changed.



Dmitrijs Sulžics / F64





Līgo! Līgo!

The celebration of the summer solstice is Latvia's oldest and most beloved holiday. While some like to begin this holiday on 21 June, (the longest day of the year), the Latvian *Līgo*-day takes place on 23 June and continues with *Jāņi* on the following day, 24 June. A great feast, song and dance, the shortest night of the year spent in front of a bonfire, mystical rituals and even a bit of romance – this is what makes the *Līgo* celebration or *Jāņi*.

According to ancient tradition, the shortest night of the year must be spent by staying awake all night by the glow of the bonfire. The time is

spent singing songs and enjoying traditional *Līgo* foods like cheese with caraway seeds and beer. The belief is that those who go to sleep before sunrise on *Jāņi* will be sleepy all summer long.

Jāņi songs or *līgotnes* and their traditional refrain of "Līgo!" can already be heard a few weeks before the actual holiday; but the real celebration starts on the night of the summer solstice. People sing by the *Jāņi* bonfire or they go from house to house, where the hosts greet them with beer, cheese and other foods.

The spirit of *Jāņi* can also be experienced in Rīga. A few days before the big holiday, the city organises a Grass Market – native plants with medicinal properties, oak leaves and flower crowns, *Jāņi* grasses, *Jāņi* cheese with caraway seeds, beer,

traditional Latvian crafts and *Līgo* songs – you can find everything to help create the *Līgo* holiday feeling. The day before the holiday, folk ensembles from all around Latvia flock to Rīga. Everyone is invited to participate in crown and wreath plaiting, *Jāņi* games and singing (if anything, at least with the "Līgo" refrain). These pre-holiday events are best experienced on the banks of the Rīga canal, not far from the Freedom Monument.

In 2014, the *Līgo* festivities in Rīga and partner city Sigulda will be the biggest solstice celebrations in the whole of Europe, because our Latvian rituals will be supplemented by the traditions of many other nations. Check the event calendar to make sure you are in the right place at the right time!

Born in Latvia



Egīls Siliņš (1961) – Latvian opera singer, bass baritone. He is a laureate of a number of international competitions and has been a soloist at Frankfurt and Basel opera houses. From 1996 - 2000 he was a soloist at *Wiener Volksoper* and *Wiener Staatsoper*. In recent years he has proved himself an outstanding interpreter of Richard Wagner's and Richard Strauss's music.

Peteris Vasks (1946) – Latvian composer, one of the most distinguished composers of late 20th century classical music. Since 1994, a number of CDs of his music have been released in Europe and in North America. The recording of the String Quartet No.4 performed by *Kronos* (recording company *Nonesuch*) was nominated for a prestigious *Grammy Award*.



Mikhail Tal (1936 – 1992) – Latvian chess player, the eighth World Chess Champion, six time winner of the USSR Championship, International Grandmaster from 1957. He was the winner of numerous international tournaments. From 1958-1982 Mikhail Tal played 101 games at high level tournaments and reached a record high coefficient of 81.18%.



S!GULDATHRILLS



Welcome to Sigulda – European Capital of Culture Partner 2014!

Sigulda is one of the most beautiful towns in Latvia. It has grown on both sides of the Gauja river valley and surprises visitors with its breathtaking scenery, historical episodes, magical castles, adrenaline-inducing activities and vibrant musical events throughout the year.

Winter, with its snow-capped hills and international competitions, has made Sigulda into an international winter sports centre. Summer, though, the air fragrant with the aroma of meadow flowers, the shortest night and countless concerts is the time to best enjoy the opportunities Sigulda offers.

Whether it is the golden leaves of autumn, winter's snowy stillness, the explosion of buds in spring or a summer heatwave – Sigulda thrills!

Top events 2014

December 2013 – January 2014 Environmental Art Festival Nature. Urban. Future. will be seeking solutions to the relationship between natural and urban environments. An opportunity to participate and relax in creative ways: encounter artistic expression at exhibitions, events, concerts, take a stroll through the town and take pleasure in the small-format environmental light installations created in collaboration with the Staro Rīga light festival.

1 to 9 March 2014 The Winter Festival, alongside professional sporting events at ski resorts and the Sigulda Bobsleigh and Luge Track (there are only 17 such tracks in the world), will also offer art projects, a snow sculpture championship, a unique concert by musicians who have combined artistic deeds with sporting achievements, and a fabulous Winter Carnival.

24 to 27 April Promoting cooperation between small European towns, Sigulda will host the 39th Conference of the Douzelage town twinning network. This will bring together representatives from small towns of the 26 EU countries.

21 June Summer Solstice in the Turaida Castle gardens (a cultural monument of European significance and a global tourist destination with 800 years of history) when thousands of bonfires will light up the shortest night and ancient traditions and rituals come back to life: decorating of fences, weaving of

floral crowns, cheese making, *Jāņi* songs, farewelling the sun by lighting a bonfire on the hilltop and welcoming the morning sun not much later.

27 to 30 June Gidon Kremer and his chamber orchestra of outstanding young musicians from the Baltic States will present transcriptions of well-known pieces in unconventional and innovative ways at the *Kremerata Baltica* Festival.

30 June – 9 July Over ten days, young musicians from around the world's will meet at master classes to develop their professional skills at the *Baltais flīgelis* (White Grand Piano) concert hall. The master classes include a range of activities: lectures, seminars, individual sessions, group sessions (orchestra, choir, ensembles), optional classes and concerts for everyone.

1 to 3 August The unique open-air concert stage at the Sigulda Castle sparks into life for the International Sigulda Opera Festival. Concert-goers will see a new, world-class production by famous artists, a chamber music recital, a concert for children, a sacred music recital and the Gala Concert

9 August Science, music, poetry and visual arts event *Dabas koncertzāle* (Nature's concert hall) draws its admirers to Sigulda's ancient valley to surprise them with its unique natural treasures through exploratory hikes, research and creative workshops and an evening concert. The main characters bringing this story to life will be the Armoured Fish and other Devonian fossil evidence in the unique ancient Gauja Valley.



Taking the Amber Road all the way to Egypt

The amber found by the Baltic Sea is considered to be the purest in the world. In ancient times, amber served the Balts as a currency, almost like a precursor to the euro! The old Baltic amber trade route linked the Baltic Sea with the Mediterranean and Black Seas. The new Amber Road, as a symbol of cultural exchange, has been nominated as one of the themes of the European Capital of Culture programme.

The Amber Road will be on display in several special exhibitions in Rīga's museums and galleries throughout the year. From early January, the Latvian Natural History Museum will be home to a new permanent exhibition dedicated to Baltic amber, entitled Amber Through the Ages. Later in January, the same venue will also host an exhibition, From Amber to

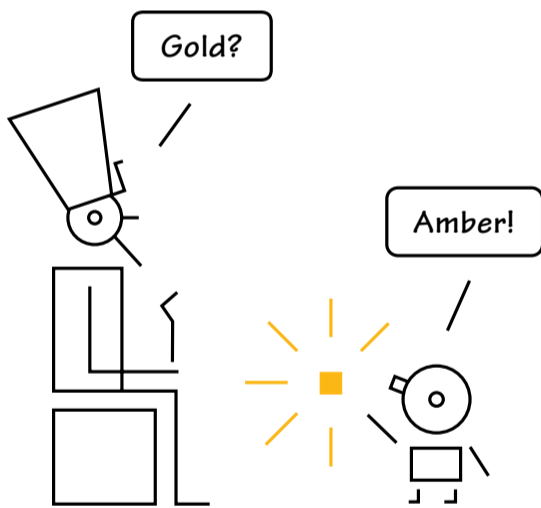
Amber Thread, featuring textiles produced by Latvian artists from amber composite filaments. Amber thread, a patented invention by Latvian researcher Inga Ļašenko, has extremely diverse scientific and technological properties. The exhibition will enable visitors to find out about the production process for amber thread and options for using amber biomaterial.

In mid-April, an exhibition will open at the Medical History Museum – Amber Road: Millennial Myths and Science, displaying the interaction between amber and people, from the times when the Mediterranean nations thought the Baltic Sea region was a mythical amber land.

In May conceptual art jewellery will be displayed in the Putti Art gallery, featuring sophisticated works by recognised décor designers from the historic Amber Road countries.

In August, more attention will be paid to amber in the applied arts. The interdisciplinary exhibition The Age of Amber will be an unorthodox anthropological study of the phenomenon of amber in the art, culture and social interaction of one nation. The exhibition aims to explore how the identity of the concept of amber metamorphosed in the cognition of the Latvian people from the 20th century to the present day.

It turns out that Baltic amber was even found in Tutankhamun's tomb. Egyptology and the story of Baltic amber will come together in the exhibition Tutankhamun's Amber, which will take place in the Rīga Bourse Art Museum late in the year and include items from the museum's own collection of Egyptian art. The exhibition is being set up in conjunction with museums in Sweden, Italy and Lithuania and an academic catalogue will also be published.



Your official guide to travelling in Latvia

Tourist sites and attractions. The app features more than 500 sites, places to visit and attractions in Latvia's regions (Kurzeme, Vidzeme, Zemgale, Latgale) and the city of Rīga.

Accommodation. Hotels, guest houses, bed & breakfasts, holiday homes, hostels.

Events. Festivals, activities, concerts, calendar.

Restaurants and cafes. Top restaurants; organic, natural foods.

Tourist information centres. List of centres in Rīga and Latvia's regions (Kurzeme, Vidzeme, Zemgale, Latgale).

Maps. Rīga, Latvia, sites, directions.

Choose your app language: English, German, Russian, or Latvian.

Developed by the Latvian Tourism Development Agency in cooperation with SIA "Mobile Rams".



Vitamin injection for Sweden's cultural life

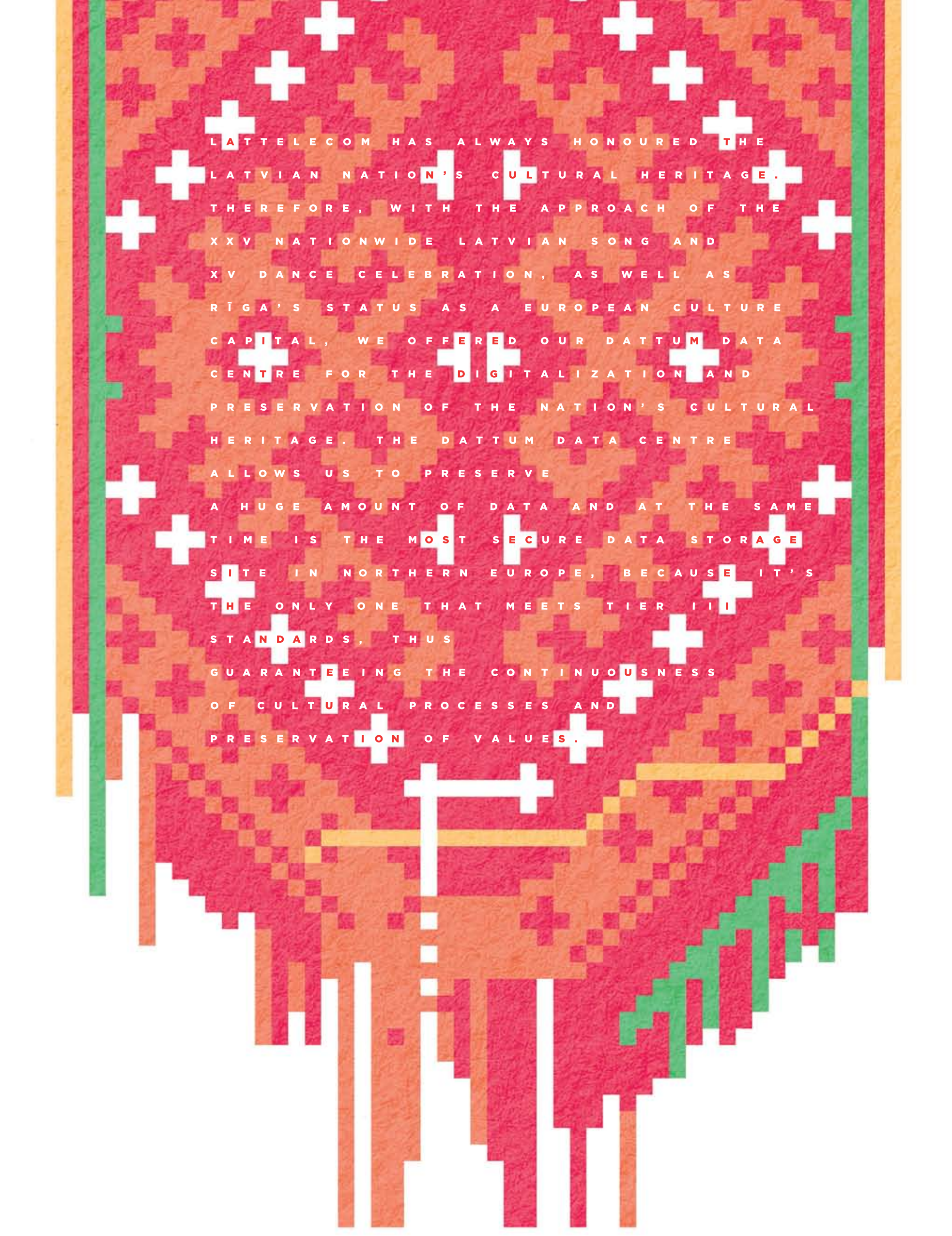


Sweden's Minister for Culture, Lena Adelsohn Liljeroth, has likened Umeå's selection as the second European Capital of Culture in 2014 to a vitamin injection for Sweden's cultural life in general. Hundreds of performing arts, music and art festivals and sports events will take place over the year, as well as countless other events which, the Swedes believe, will have a positive impact on regional development, the environment and social welfare. Umeå is located in the region of Sweden inhabited by the Sami people which is why the traditions and

contemporary culture of this northern people have been given a special role in the European Capital of Culture programme, itself divided into eight parts in line with the eight seasons traditionally marked by the Sami.

A central event has been selected for each season, a festival or other occasion, which the Umeå 2014 organisers consider especially important and worthy of highlighting. Umeå will also host events, exhibitions and festivals jointly developed by the Swedish and Rīga organisers.





LATTELECOM HAS ALWAYS HONOURED THE
LATVIAN NATION'S CULTURAL HERITAGE.
THEREFORE, WITH THE APPROACH OF THE
XXV NATIONWIDE LATVIAN SONG AND
XV DANCE CELEBRATION, AS WELL AS
RĪGA'S STATUS AS A EUROPEAN CULTURE
CAPITAL, WE OFFERED OUR DATTUM DATA
CENTRE FOR THE DIGITALIZATION AND
PRESERVATION OF THE NATION'S CULTURAL
HERITAGE. THE DATTUM DATA CENTRE
ALLOWS US TO PRESERVE
A HUGE AMOUNT OF DATA AND AT THE SAME
TIME IS THE MOST SECURE DATA STORAGE
SITE IN NORTHERN EUROPE, BECAUSE IT'S
THE ONLY ONE THAT MEETS TIER III
STANDARDS, THUS
GUARANTEEING THE CONTINUOUSNESS
OF CULTURAL PROCESSES AND
PRESERVATION OF VALUES.

XXV Nationwide
Latvian Song and
XV Dance Celebration



Dattum

Culture preserved in our heart