TANJA MURAVSKAJA
Artist portfolio

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CONTENTS

Artist Bio
Tanja Muravskaja's Estonian Race. Text by Maria-Kristiina Soomre
Project *Lost Utopia*, photo series. Artist's Statement
Project *Estonian Race*, photo series
Projects *Lucky Losers*, video installation
Project *They Who Sang Together*, photo series
Position. Artist's Statement
Tanja Muravskaja's Positions. Text by Elnara Taidre
Project *Positions*, photo series
Project *Positions*, video
Portait book *Welcome to London*, excerpts
Press and magazine covers

TANJA MURAVSKAJA CV

HARIDUS
1996 – 2001 Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikool, ajakirjandus
2002 – 2005 Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, fotograafia, bakalaureseõpe
2004 – 2005 Westminster University, London, UK, Erasmus
2005 – 2010 Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, fotograafia, magistriõpe (cum laude)
2014 – Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, kunst ja disain, doktoriõpe

ORGANISATSIOON
2007 Eesti Kunstnike Liidu liige. Eesti Fotokunstnike Ühenduse asutaja liige.
2012 - 2014 Eesti Kunstnike Liidu Volikogu liige.

ISIKNÄITUSED (valik)
2015 Kolm õde, Hobusepea galerii, Tallinn.
2012 Kadunud utopia (koos Marina Naprushkinaga), Kunstihoone Galerii, Tallinn.
2010 Split Mind, Tartu Kunstimuuseum, Tartu.
2010 M'Ars Kaasaegse Kunsti Keskuse galerii, Moskva, Venemaa.
2009 Lucky Losers, Tallinna Linnagalerii, Tallinn.
2008 Nemad, kes laulsid koos, Vaal galerii, Tallinn.

GRUPINÄITUSED (valik)
2015 tulekul Eesti kaasaegne foto, Tartu Kunstimuuseum, Tartu.
2015 tulekul Demostrating Minds, Kiasma kaasaegse kunstimuuseum, Helsingi, Soome.
2015 Musta ruudu metamorfoosid. Malevitši tõlgendused Eesti kunstis, Kumu kunstimuuseum.
2014 Feministlik (kunsti) kriitika, Tsehh, Minsk, Valgevenemaa.
2014 Shifting Identities, MACRO Kaasaegse Kunsti Muuseum, Rooma, Itaalia.
2014 Nelgid ja Tulbid, Fuga galerii, Eesti Instituut Ungaris, Budapest, Ungari
2012 - 2013 United States of Europe. Brüssel, Belgia; Kork, Iirimaa; Pariis, Prantsusmaa, Sofia, Bulgaaria; Dresden, Saksamaa; Nikosia, Küpros;
2013 Luuserid. Üks vaade muuseumi tulmetele, Tartu Kunstimuuseum, Tartu.
2013 LadyFest Tallinn, Hobusepea galerii, Tallinn.
2012 M'artian Field. M'Ars Kaasaegse Kunsti Keskuse galerii, Moskva, Venemaa.
2012 Memoirs from a Cold Utopia. Tallinna Kunstihoone, Tallinn, Eesti.
2011 Life in the Forest. Arsenal galerii, Bialystok, Poola.
2011 A Complicated Relation. Kalmar Konstmuseum, Kalmar, Rootsi.

KUREERITUD NÄITUSED (valik)
2014 Kirjaoskus – Kirjaoskamatus. Tallinna 16. Graafikatriennaali noorte kunstnike näitus. Rundum artist-run space, Tallinn.
2011 Tallinna Fotokuu: Ma pole mina. Kunstnik Boris Mihhailov. Kunstihoone galerii, Tallinn.

TÖÖD KOLLEKTSIOONIDES
Kumu kunstimuuseum, Tartu Kunstimuuseum, Eesti.

PREEMIAD JA STIPENDIUMID
2014 Kultuurimisteeriumi riiklik kultuuristipendium.
2008 Eesti Kultuurkapitali loominguline aasta stipendium.
2007 Vaal galerii aasta kunstipreemia.

Tanja Muravskaja
Three Sisters
Video and sound installation, 2015
Installation view. Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia, 2015.

Three Sisters

Video and sound installation, 2015

Artist's statement:

The dramatic events in the Ukraine, which began in late 2013, have affected my entire family, most of whom live in the Ukraine, and the smaller part of them live in Russia, after having moved there in Soviet times. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, my parents and I moved to Estonia, and I was born here, in a small Estonian town.

Over the year, I have been observing the development of the new line of policy in the Ukraine, and, alongside with that, the ideology, which disclosed its acute nationalist traits, monopolization of the media and public space, and an intransigent attitude, as a result of military operations in the east of the country. Ideological discourse became dominant in our family, too, having divided the family – sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles – along the lines of the political map. Political and personal motives are so entwined into a single whole, and now visiting your own relatives becomes unsafe, unacceptable, and undesirable. The world split in our heads, maybe, one day will disappear as suddenly as it had appeared. Perhaps, this ideological conflict, the core one, with its long hitting range, just like an explosion at a nuclear power plant, still can be extinguished. And then we would stay ourselves and would argue about as much as what had happened to us, and how loved ones had become enemies.

Gallery press release:

Tanja Muravskaja analyses to what extent Ukrainian war that began a year ago has influenced and changed relationships between relavtives and families. The artist contemplates her own family — some of the family members live in Ukraine, some of them have moved to Russia during the Soviet era, and some relatives live in Estonia. Muravskaja shows us the ways Maidan Conflict revealed different political views within a family, turned family relationships political and caused inner conflicts in a family. The artist is intrigued by the general human question: What are the reasons why hostility emerges within families and between relatives?

Tanja Muravskaja is an Estonian artist with Ukrainian roots. She graduated from the department of photography at the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2005 and obtained a MA degree at the same academy in 2010. Muravskaja has exhaustively studied the identities of contemporary Estonia and Estonian people — the subject was summed up by the exhibition held in Tartu Art Museum in 2010. In her personal exhibition Lost Utopia held in Tallinn Art Hall gallery in 2012, Muravskaja designated the vanishing of her cultural and historical contacts while presenting photographs depicting Ukrainian villages as disappearing images of her memories.

Tanja Muravskaja

WORLD POLITICS AS A FAMILY AFFAIR

The Estonian artist Tanja Muravskaja probes issues related to the construction and definition of identity and nationality. Her work critiques and interrogates the meaning of nationalism in modern-day Estonia and how – through complex cultural and political processes – neo-nationalism has become part of the national identity.

Many of Muravskaja's works look at conflicts driven to a significant degree by nationalistic animosity and overkill situations fuelled by an inflated sense of patriotic pride in the recent history of the 'new' Estonia. The artist strives to analyse and understand the new Estonian identity in a country with a heterogeneous ethnic make-up. She also explores these issues from her personal standpoint as an Estonian-born Russian speaker of Ukrainian descent.

Muravskaja likens her role as a contemporary artist to that of an onlooker somewhat detached from the group or circumstances she is witnessing. A former student of both art and journalism, Muravskaja typically assumes the role of an outside observer, watching and documenting her 'object of study' from the sidelines. Her most recent work Three Sisters (2015) is an exception in that it focuses on the artist's personal history against the backdrop of a heated political topic: the 2013 uprising in Kiev's Maidan Square. The topic holds personal significance to the artist as some of her relatives still live amidst this prolonged crisis of ever-escalating complexity in Ukraine.

The fundamental theme of the piece is the deep rift that the crisis has created within Muravskaja's family. Some of her relatives are staunchly pro-Russian, whereas one of her cousins took part in the Maidan uprising. Her relatives in Ukraine are strong supporters of the Ukrainian government and its policy, whereas expatriate members of the family run a whole gamut of opinions ranging from open endorsement of Russia's actions in Ukraine to more liberal perspectives on current affairs.

Her video interviews expose the diametrically opposed neo-nationalistic sentiments that are firmly entrenched on either side of the border, and how they are constantly shaped and reinforced by the local media. The deeper theme of Muravskaja's work looks at how the conflict has lain bare the opposing political views of her kinfolk and how they have altered the dynamic of an already fragmented family. At its heart, the Three Sisters poses a deeply human question: what happens when your relatives and family become enemies?

Kati Kivinen
PhD, curator
Museum of Contemporary Art KIASMA
Catalogue *Demostrating Minds*, Kiasma, Helsinki, 2015.

Tanja Muravskaja
Untitled / Self-portrait I, II
Digital C-print, 90x75 cm, diptych, 2015

Metamorphoses of the Black Square. Interpretations of Malevich's Work in Estonian Art. 2015, Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia.

Tanja Muravskaja
Lost Utopia
Digital C-type photographs, 100x70, 70x50 cm (11 photos in series)
2012

Tanja Muravskaja
Lost Utopia
Digital C-type photographs, 100x70, 70x50 cm (11 photos in series)
2012

Lost Utopia
Artist's Statement

With my exhibition I wanted to talk about a lost utopia, the repulsion of history and personal memory, about the fact that one cannot talk about history any more, because the present is dictating the "right" way to look back into the past. I wanted to say that the time cannot be divided as the past and the present. Who or what is drawing this division?

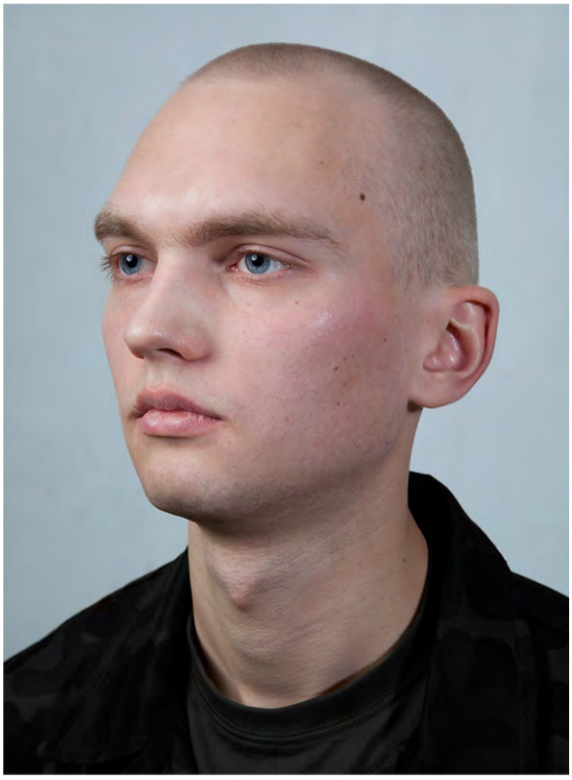
A year ago my fathers father died. He had spent his whole life in a Ukranian village. My grandfather was a farmer, he worked on the fields, did his job, raised children, drunk alcohol now and then and believed in God. His son - my father was born and grew up in the country, he served in the army in the Far-North. When he came back from the service he fell in love with a girl from a neighbouring village and together they travelled to Estonia to find a better life here. Who is making the borders?

My father worked in the police - he guarded the law and fined the youth. Then the new ideology was implemented. What is it going to offer in exchange? When I was 16 years old my father died in a car accident on his way home. Oblivion, the politics of isolation. What is utopia?

Last year my grandfather Kapiton Ananjevich died. He died in his home village, the father of two sons and 15 grandchildren. The stepping out of the borders of ideology. The idea of being continually in reception, connection, crossing borders of territory, nationalities and sex. Was the Soviet a utopia?

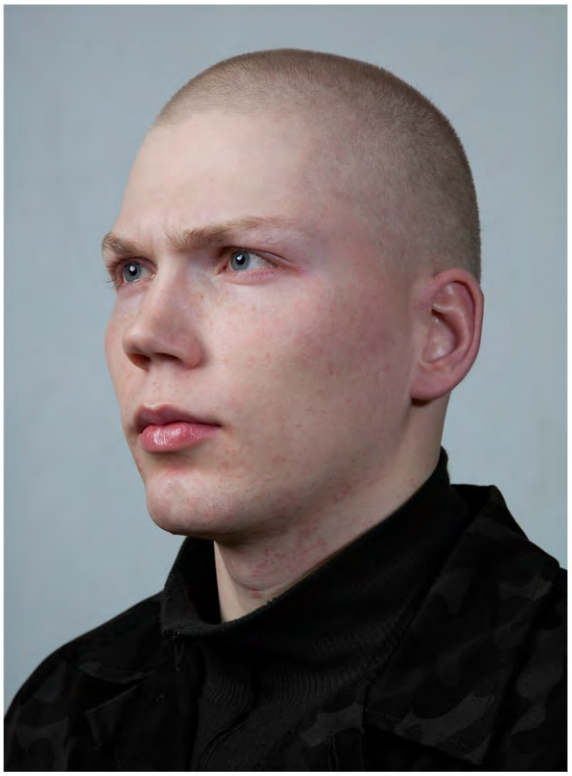
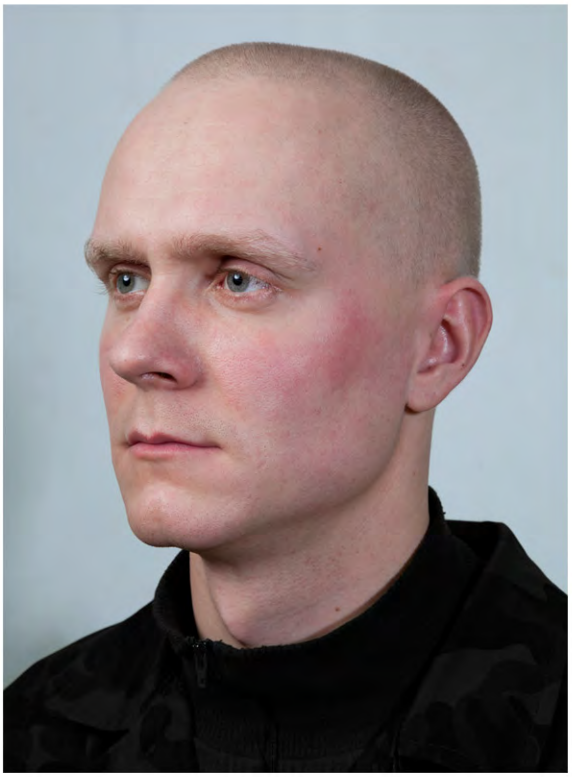
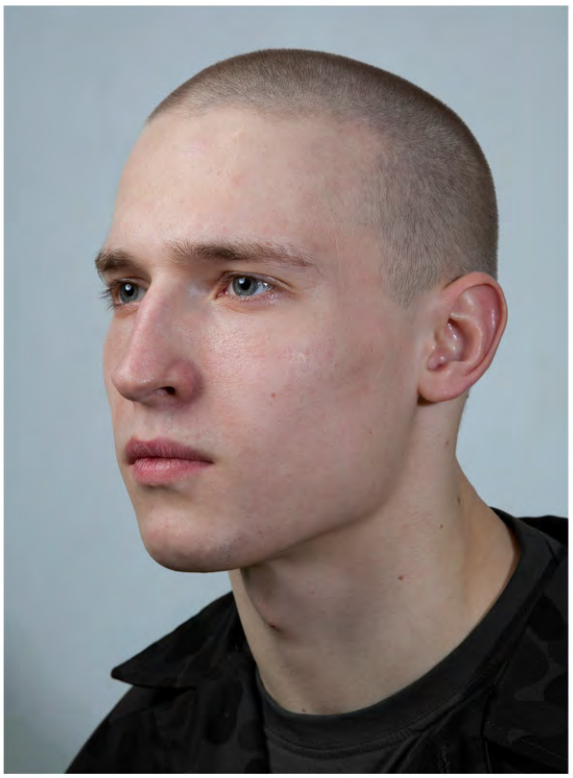
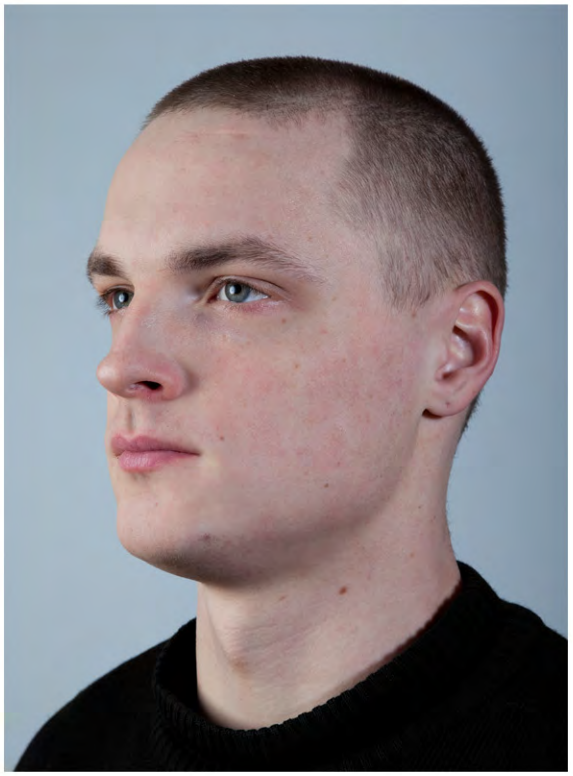
My grandmother - the wife of grandfather - was the home economics teacher and died of pneumonia. I have never been able to accept that good people amongst us have to leave. The physical death erases the private memory. But what is erasing the memory of the society?

Tanja Muravskaja
Estonian Race
Digital C-print, 110x81 cm (9 photos in series)
2010



Estonian Race
Installation view. Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia, 2010.
Photo: T. Muravskaja

Tanja Muravskaja
Estonian Race
Digital C-print, 110x81 cm (9 photos in series)
2010

Tanja Muravskaja's Estonian Race

The Estonian artist Tanja Muravskaja has addressed the issues of identity and nationality/nationalism in almost all of her works, which mainly use photography, video and installation as their media. In terms of content, Muravskaja's three latest personal exhibitions, *Positions* (Tallinn City Gallery, 2007), *They Who Sang Together* (Vaal Gallery, 2008) and *Lucky Losers* (Tallinn City Gallery, 2009), form trilogy that maps Estonian citizens with differing national backgrounds and social positions.

As an artist, Tanja Muravskaja is primarily in the position of the observer as she monitors and documents her "research objects" who, in the case of *Positions* (here: pages 13-16), were the "Young Estonia" – the young artists who posed for the author with the national flag when they were "alone" in their nakedness, freed from all the possible details that mark national identity and appearing slightly defenceless as they either attempted to cover themselves with the flag or threw it off to try and make sense of their identity. In contrast to the young artists, Muravskaja's *Positions* series offers a group video portrait of young "patriots"(here: pages 17-18), where a gang of youngsters with shaved heads and outfits manifesting a radical ideological position is serving as the "honor guard" of the blue-black-white flag. While the first exhibition of the artist showed an interest in the issue of how her Estonian age group treats the (national) republic, the second project *They Who Sang Together* (here: page 9), found its heroes in the past, in the national awakening period that happened before the restoration of independence, and portrays the former leaders and heroes – the Estonian politicians who sang Estonia free. The project offers exhibition visitors a chance to engage in a dialogue in the exhibition environment, thanks to an open microphone, or to sing songs together and to reminisce about old times. The third project, *Lucky Losers* (here: page 9), turned – logically and, in Muravskaja's case, perhaps at last – to the problems of the Russian minority and its potential leaders. Video portraits brought to the finest art hall of the capital a series of better or lesser known minority activists, politicians and cultural figures, whose muted and hesitant nature illustrated the fact that it is difficult to find common leaders and values for an identity defined through negation (non-Estonians).

A wholly new photo series *Estonian Race* (here: pages 6-8)addresses one of the "elementary particles" of nationalism as an ideology – race. Muravskaja is using encyclopaedic thooroughness to find the most typical, the „purest Estonians" among us, turning to academic authorities for help and portraying the young men who have no names or social security numbers, let alone life stories or identities in the exhibition hall, but who obviously have a nationality, at least within the framework of this visual story.

Maria-Kristiina Soomre, curator at the Kumu Art Museum.
Catalogue *Let's Talk About Nationalism! Between Ideology and Identity.* Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia, 2010

Tanja Muravskaja
Lucky Losers
Video-portaits, 2009.
Installation view. City Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia, 2009.

Tanja Muravskaja
They Who Sang Together
Photographs, 110x87 cm (12 photos in series) 2008.
Installation view. Vaal Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia, 2008.
3x photos: T. Muravskaja

Tanja Muravskaja
Monuments
Installation (limestone, glass, ca 220x150 cm), 2008.
Installation view. Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia, 2008.
Photo: T. Muravskaja

Monuments
Artist's Statement

The art project Monuments deals with the experience and impressions caused in the spring 2007 by the disassembly of the monument erected to remember soldiers who fell in World War II. The memorial – the Bronze Soldier – was removed on the order of the Prime Minister in April 2007 and the provocative action by the government was followed by mass riots and protest actions by the Russian-speaking portion of Tallinn.

The installation is composed of two equal mounds – one of limestone, the other of glass shards. Limestone is historicalcalling card of industrial Estonia and rhe former Estonian Soviet Socialistic Republic. It was precisely this limestone wall that used to be the background for the concerned-looking soldier in the monument with the official title The Monement to the Liberators of Tallinn. The installations' glass section uses glass shards and represents Estonia's newest, renovated, Europeanized and Euro-repaired history.

The loose body of broken glass is a reflection of the construction of a new monument close to displaced Soldier. The new monument, which was planned immediately after the Bronze Night, is dedicated to the victory gained in the Estonian War of Independence (1918-1920). The war ended with the signing of the Tartu Peace Treaty and the recognition of the Republic of Estonia.

By using such materials as glass and stone, I am primarily referring to the Estonian industrial past and Euro-future, to the acts of vandalism, and to the fragility of the world. The installation illustrates today's reality, which sees a dramatic conflict between national ideology and the interests of a single part of the society. Since the nation realizes that the society is divided through nationalistic mechanisms, the nation – especially the intelligentsia – was vehemently opposed to the idea of erecting another monument that the Ministry of Defense promoted immediately after removing the Bronze Soldier. The idea of symbol exchange was criticized into oblivion by public opinion. This makes it even more unbelievable that the state would make such a cold and ideological move as quickly installing a cross (made of Czech glass) in the center of Tallinn.

Tanja Muravskaja
Catalogue *Let's Talk About Nationalism! Between Ideology and Identity.* Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia, 2010.

Monuments
Installation view. Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia, 2010.

Monuments
Installation view. 2. Biennal in Katowice, Katowice, Poland. 2009.
2x photos: T. Muravskaja

Tanja Muravskaja
Positions, self-portrait
poster, 2007

Positions
Artist's Statement

Searching for self-identity and position has become the central issue in Estonian culture space for all foreigners, strangers living here.
Contemplations on which you belong to or what is your environment have become the central issue of artist creativity and searches. The painful subject of belonging and being accepted to your "circle" is transforming into simple questions: Am I really alone? Is it an actual issue for the whole society? Can culture be alienated from religion and creation, closed for the reserved attitudes of a stranger?

Tanja Muravskaja
Catalogue *Obscurum per Obscurius.* Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, 2008.

Tanja Muravskaja
Positions, solo exhibition
City Gallery, Tallinn, Estonia, 2007

Exhibition views, 2x photos: T. Muravskaja

Tanja Muravskaja “Positions”

The “Positions” (2006-2007) by Tanja Muravskaja was originally produced for the group show “Estonian Video Art” in Poland, curated by Rael Artel. The theme of the exhibition was Estonian identity. Tanja approached the topic by concentrating on the image of Estonian national flag, referring thereby to the issues of state and national self-awareness. She asked young Estonian artists to pose for her – naked, using the flag as their only requisite.

Tanja associates artists (creative intelligentsia) with the “public conscience”. As her models, she chose young artists who have been dealing with different social issues in their work. The protagonists of the retroactively revised photo series are Flo Kasearu, Jaanus Samma, Ki wa, Kärt Ojavee, Maarit Murka, Marianne Männi, ja Remo Randver.

In the next stage of the project she worked with the right wing extremist adolescents. These are young guys in the age of 16 or 17 who are defining themselves as the members of the Estonian National Movement and represent the neo-nationalist sentiment that is a widespread phenomenon in many countries at the present time.

Initially planned as a photographic group portrait, the project was finally realized as a video. The young age of all models is symbolic – the Republic of Estonia is young, these people have grown and developed together with it.

Next to the issue of "national", the main constitutional aspect of the project is the genre in which it is executed: the photographs with posing "models" as well as the group portrait of young right wing extremists display curious portraits featuring the personality, character and beliefs of the depicted persons. Tanja is not only portraying people but also their attitudes towards the state symbols: by means of different interpretations of the flag she accentuates different positions concerning national identity.

The relationship between the young artists and the flag is rather playful, they are choosing different ways for demonstrating it – in terms of their own posture as well as their attitude towards the flag, creating poetical, pathetical, comical scenes. The flag functions as a state symbol and a drapery – the classical attribute of a model. Or a glamorous accessory, flirting with the subject matter of nationality. Yet the question of identity is not dismissed, it is addressed on the level of natural, unrestricted and personal expression, the act of posing with the national flag becomes a dialogue between a state symbol and an individual. Even double identity comes into play – the slightly cosmopolitan, universal identity of artist which is at the same time inseparable from the specific social background and national context.

"National" blue carpet in the exhibition space plays with the attributes of power symbols and state rituals: the carpet, as well as the flag is an obligatory element of official receptions and summits. Another dimension of meaning is expressed through iconographic allusions: the combination of youth and the flag belongs undoubtedly into the visual arsenal of state mythology, ranging from national romantic heroes to depictions of "the future of the nation" in the art works dating from totalitarian states.

The last example associates with the position of the young right wing extremists: the flag is respectfully hovering high in the flagpole again, young people standing straightly in front of it as if wanting to cherish and protect a relic. Video – the perfect medium for rendering movement - depicts standstill this time: the guys virtually don´t change their frozen postures, camera only fixates very slight shifts in the frame. The whole scene calls to mind a guard of honor in front of a memorial or some other object of national importance. Contrary to the artists who become more fragile and vulnerable through their nakedness, the nationalists are dressed, and thereby in a way that associates with the neo-nationalist appearance. Virtually analogical clothing and baldheaded "haircut" turns them into an identical, anonymous mass; an aggressive force that does not agree to conduct a dialogue very easily.

Tanja deals with two attitudes, existing parallelly within the same state, she is combining in her approach the subjective point of view as well as the position of a distanced observer. She is neither admiring nor disapproving, rather just exploring. The national flag also plays an ambivalent role: it is at the same time a meaningful, holy symbol and an empty signifier that has been by hollowed up by political rhetoric and manipulation.

Elnara Taidre, art historian at the Kumu Art Museum.
Cheese Magazine, 22/2007

Tanja Muravskaja
Positions
Digital print, 860x610 mm, framed
2007. Art Museum of Estonia

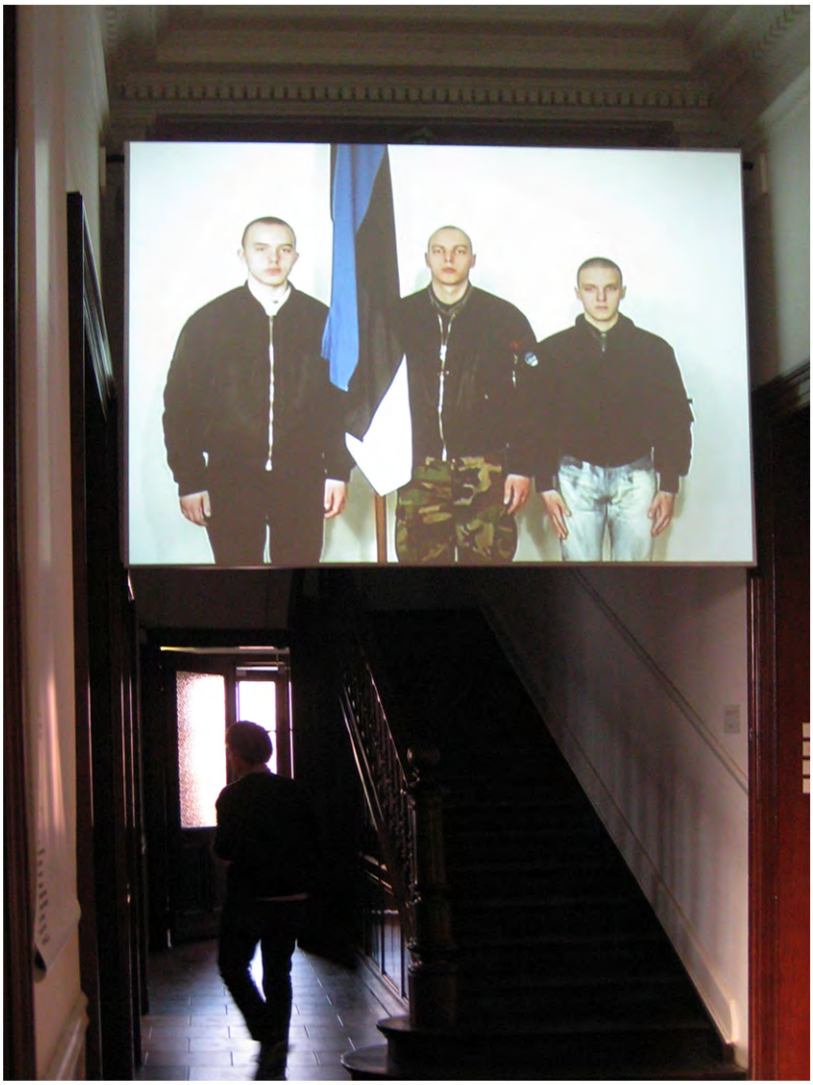
Tanja Muravskaja
Positions
Digital print, 860x610 mm, framed, 2007.
Art Museum of Estonia

What seems to be inportant for Tanja Muravskaja (Estonia) is the relationship between the national flag and the body of some particular human being, the *Position* that is taken. What does it mean: the nation? Is it some abstract idea? Or maybe it is an organism which consists of numbers of human beings, of many different bodies. Like Johnny Casg (famous Man in Black) sings in U2's cover: «Weare one but we are not the same».

Remco de Blaaij, Kamila Wielebska, curators
Press-release *Curator Curator 3. Towards Confluence*, HISK-Higher Institute for Fine Arts, Gent, Belgium, 2009.

Tanja Muravskaja
Positions
video, 3”, 2007. video stills

Positions, video,. Monument, installation.
Installation view.
The 3rd Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia,2009.



Positions, video
Installation view. HISK-Higher Institute for Fine Arts“, Gent, Belgium, 2009.
2x photos: T. Muravskaja

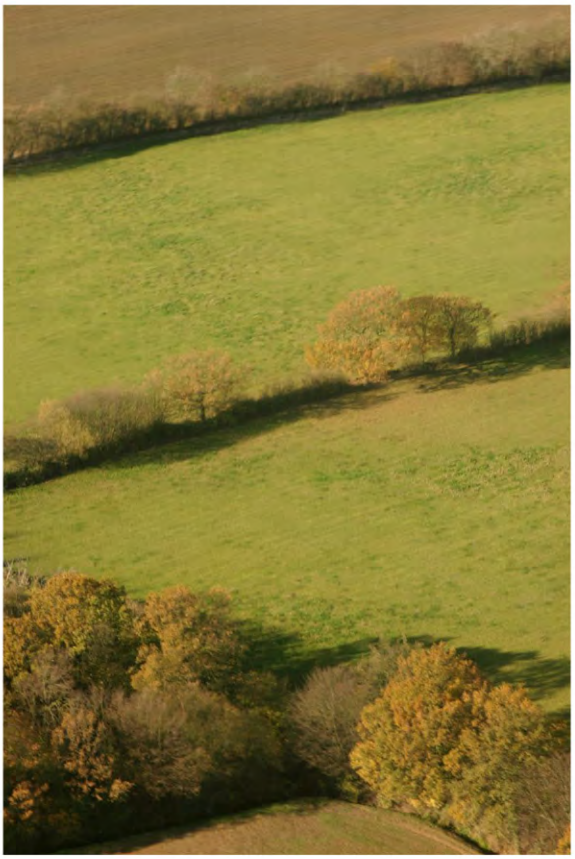
Tanja Muravskaja
One day we will win in any case
video, 4"
Tallinn, 2007, video stills

Excerpts From Catalogue *Space Oddity. An Exhibition of Young Baltic Artists*

Tanja Muravskaja, who invited the young citizens of Estonia to exclaim the most important phrase during the time of the Singing Revolution, which symbolizes the fight for the independence of the Baltic countries from the grip of the Soviet Union (One Day we will Win in any Case, 2007), shows her desperation with the system of today. Having lost the meaning it had 20 years ago, it has become a cliché for the universal person without a position. While watching the film, you don't think of the content of the speech anymore, but what lurks behind it – is it naivety or cynicism, melancholy or doubtfulness?

Egle Mikalajunaite, Dovile Tumpyte, curators
Lille, France, 2009.

Tanja Muravskaja
Welcome to London
Photo series, book, London 2005.

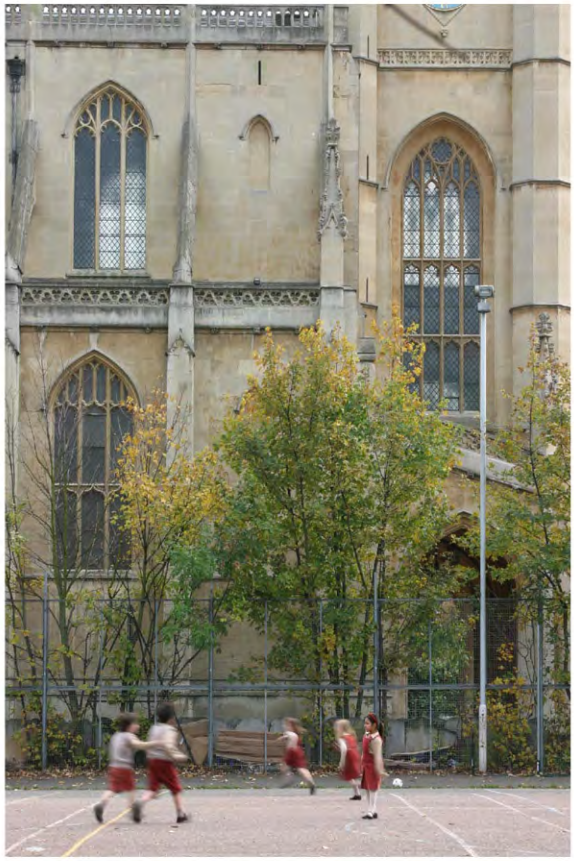


Excerpts From Portrait book *Welcome to London*

The name of the book W2 L0: Welcome to London, contains the postcode W2 which refers to the biggest area of The City of Westminster, London's cultural and entertainment heart and is an invitattion into this modern multicultural metropolis. In September 2004 I came to London and inadvertently began taking pictures of citycsapes. I had never taken any landscape photography before but felt I was discovering views of the city, which complimented my study of the people living there and gave me greater insight into their lives. Equally I found that the diversity of people I photographed reflected the vibrancy and inspiration of the city. The architecture, The River Thames and The underground create their daily image, a backdrop against which they live. The landscapes begin to coincide with the portrait: the lines of the buildings and colours of the city sky. The portrait format of the landscapeas fit the portraits and creates a new sub text for them. What is the connection between the places and the people?

Tanja Muravskaja
Portrait book *Welcome to London*, University of Westminster, London, 2005.

Tanja Muravskaja
Welcome to London
Photo series, book, London 2005.



HeaKodanik

EMSLi ajakiri kodanikuühiskonnast

nr. 3 (44)
oktoober
2008

Fookuses noored ja kodanikuharidus.

Kuskohast need head kodanikud siis tulevad?

Tekst Maria-Kristiina Soomre
Fotod Tanja Muravskaja

Puuduvat portreteerides

Tanja Muravskaja „Lucky Losers" Tallinna Linnagaleriis 16.04–3.05 2009

Tanja Muravskajast rääkides ja kirjutades jõuab kohalik kunstikriitika enamasti lõpuks tõdemuseni, et tegemist on meisterliku psühholoogilise portretistiga, briljantse teostusega fotoprofiga, kelle tööde puhul, sõltumata nende sotsiaalsest alatoonist, jääb keskseks ja olulisimaks ikkagi inimene[1]. Soovimata hetkekski selle tõdemusega vaielda, tahaks seoses näitusega „Lucky Losers" siit ometi edasi mõelda ja analüüsida justnimelt seda „liigsena tunduvat" sotsiaalsust Muravskaja loomingus.

Näitus „Lucky Losers" Linnagaleriis koosnes seitsmest videoportreest (ja sellel sõnal on siin täht-täheline kaal – tegemist oli Muravskajaliku kvaliteedimärgiga lavastatud mõneminutiliste ülesvõtetega, milles portreteeritava või „modelli" kohalolu oli pea füüsiline) kohaliku venekeelse kultuuriruumi reaalsetest, imaginaarsetest ja potentsiaalsetest liidritest. Nagu ka näituse pressitekst rõhutas, püüdis kunstnik võimalikke kogukonda ühendavaid (intellektuaalidest) liidreid otsides leida vastust küsimusele, kas siinses vene diasporaas on „võimalik taastoota vene keelel (ja kultuuril) põhinevat identiteeti", mis rikastaks ja ühendaks Eesti ühiskonda tervikuna. Näitus oli suunatud Eesti publikule, küsimus esitatud kõigile meile. Niisiis – kuigi ilmselt tegelesid ka portreteeritavad ekraanidel oma identiteedi ja positsiooni üle mõtisklemisega, siis vastus kunstniku küsimusele ei peitunud nendes kontrollitud ilmetes või tahtmatutes suunurgavõngetes ja silmapilgutustes. Vastuse, vähemalt oma seisukoha, ütles autor tegelikult juba välja väga selgesõnalises pealkirjas ja seda kinnitas ka suhteliselt ühemõtteline pilt, mis meile galeriis avanes.

Et mitte teha autorile liiga lahmivalt ja lihtsustavalt kõlava interpretatsiooniga, alustagem kaugemalt, loogiliselt võttes algusest. „Lucky Losers" on järg Muravskaja teistele Eesti ühiskonda ning siinset identiteeti ja rahvuslust lahkavatele projektidele – „Positsioonid" (näitus Tallinna Linnagaleriis 2007, vt Cheese 22) ja „Nemad, kes laulsid koos" (näitus Vaala galeriis 2008, vt Cheese 29) – see on loogiline osa protsessist, täpselt sama küsimus, täpselt sama probleem. Kui „Positsioonid" mängis rahvusliku sümboolikaga, andis ühelt poolt valitud noorkunstnikele teatud (pigem kollektiivse) „Noor-Eestiliku", rahvusliku kultuurieliidi potentsiaalse revolutsioonilise kangelase oreooli (õigemini võimaluse selle positsiooniga suhestuda) ja teiselt poolt vastandades/kõrvutades sellele nüri ja anti-intellektuaalset marurahvuslikku reliikviakultust, siis „Nemad, kes laulsid koos" astus siit olulise sammu edasi, puhastades pildipinna (ja näitusekeskkonna) sümboolikast ning valides portreteeritavad, kelle ajalooline roll on faktoloogiliselt juba tõestatud, kelle positsioon on kindel. Nemad, kes laulsid koos, need kunagised revolutsionäärid – siiski igaüks isiksus, koondportreeks taandamatud – on vaieldamatult „eliit", Eesti vabaks laulnud solistid, rahvuskangelased. Neid esitati sellele positsioonile vastavalt: üle-elusuuruses pühalikkust ja ametlikkust sisendavas formaadis. Vaala galeriis lavastas Muravskaja ka vähemalt teoreetilise võimaluse vaatajal ikoonidega kaasa laulda või neile oma sõnum edastada, paigutades teoste ette rõdule sisselülitatud mikrofoni, mis muidugi vaid rõhutas nende – liikumatute, tõsiste, kohati patriootlike, kohati lurjuslike ilmetega liidrite – kättesaamatust, „jumalikku" kaugust meie igapäevatasandist.

"Lucky Losers" koondas kahele eelnevale valimile vastandlikult n-ö selgelt negatiivse märgiga tegelased, nemad, kes „ei ole" või „on pooleldi" (eestlased, kangelased, ...) – meie ühiskonnas eituse kaudu defineeritava kogukonna võimalikud (küsimärgiga) liidrid. Rõhutatult olid nemad aga näitusesaalis vägagi „kohal", reaalsed inimesed reaalses proportsioonis, siin, galeriis, meie keskel, paigutatuna videoekraanidel ruumis sundimatult laiali, ilma igasuguse paraadlikkuseta. Formaadi võimalustest hoolimata vaikivad. Siinsamas, meie keskel, aga ometi justkui teisest maailmast. Muravskaja kasutatav videoportree formaat viib meid

Näituse vaated, Tallinna Linnagalerii, 2009.

[1] *Nt Elnara Taidre „Lucky Loosers" - Artishok (http://artishok.blogspot.com/2009/05/lucky-loosers.html).*

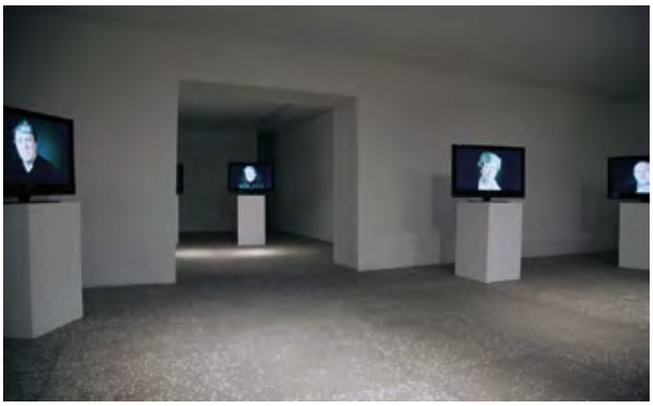
Tanja Muravskaja, Lucky Losers, installatsioon 7 videoportreest, 2009.

mõnes mõttes tagasi portreefotograafia algusaegadesse. Need kujutised meenutavad vägisi (ja võib-olla tahtmatult) möödunud sajandi algusaastate perepilte vana-vana-vanaemadest ja -isadest, nende kujutiste ajatust ja mingit seletamatut rahu – pikaaegse „jäädvustumise" protsessi pitserit[2]. Need inimesed sellel näitusel ei ole ikoonid, neil on kohati täiesti tundmatud näod, isegi nimed, nad on siin pigem sümbolid mingist teisest kaugest maailmast. Kuigi – kõik nad on siiski Eesti ühiskonnas (mõnel juhul just peamiselt eestikeelses kogukonnas) rohkem või vähem tuntud, lausa armastatud avaliku elu tegelased. Vaid vähestega neist seostub meil esimesena midagi muud kui see, mida nad „ei ole" (rahvus). Alahindamata portreteeritavate professionaalseid rolle, võime väita, et need on väikesed inimesed, kellele autor paneb ehk liigagi ränga ootuste koorma – olla intellektuaalselt ja sotsiaalselt killustunud, valdavalt mittekodanikest kogukonna vaimseteks (ja poliitilisteks) liidriteks, eestkõnelejaks nähtusele, mida defineeritakse eituse kaudu. Ei, Tanja Muravskaja ei süüdista oma „modelle" olukorras, millest ta meid leiab. Ta vaid konstateerib fakti – seitse väljavalitud venekeelset üht- või teistpidi Eesti ühiskonna eliiti kuuluvat tegelast on „õnnelikud kaotajad" – loosi teel finaali pääsenud mängijad – liidrid juhuse tahtel ja mõnes mõttes meie tänase ühiskonna „tahtest" sõltumatult. Nad on kõigest inimesed oma positsioonide, huvide ja tõeskpidamistega, igaüks oma saatusega, aga keegi neist ei ole vaieldamatu autoriteet, ei veneega eestikeelses maailmas. Näituse „Lucky Losers" videoekraanid moodustasid mõneti koondportree sellest, „keda ei ole". Kohalik venekeelne kultuur on põranda all, kui seda üldse veel eksisteerib. **Juri Lotmani** troon rahvuste- ning kultuurideülese ühendava intellektuaalina püsib tühi. Autoriteetide aeg on ümber saanud. Karismaatilisi revolutsionääre, laulvaid liidreid või radikaalseid noori intellektuaale selles kogukonnas ei ole (ega ilmselt tule, või kui tulevad, siis kas emigreeruvad või assimileeruvad, sest see on neile intellektuaalselt hädavajalik), kaotajad oleme me selles seisus aga natuke kõik, kogu Eesti keskpärastuv kultuur ja ühiskond, selle olematu multikultuursus ja mitmekihilisus.

Tanja Muravskaja ei ole kolme nimetatud projekti raames tegelenud niivõrd rahvuse, identiteediloome ega rahvusluse küsimusega, vaid laiemalt meie Eesti tänase ühiskonnaga tervikuna ning tänaste olude ajalooliste tagamaade ja võimalike arengutega. Tema käsitlus ei ole otseütlev, sellest võib aga teha küllaltki pessimistlikke järeldusi. Meid on vähe. Meil ei ole (enam) positiivseid kangelasi, karismaatilisi liidreid (ja seda rahvusest sõltumatult). Meil on erinevad (aja)lood, on ühine ühiskond, aga küllaltki väike ühisosa ning kardetavasti veel väiksem soov see ühisosa ära tunda. Muravskaja paneb meie ühiskonnas loosungitena levivad väärtused nagu integratsioon ja ühtsustunne väga ereda prožektori alla ning suunab meile julmalt (suurendava) peegli näkku. Diagnoos on suhteliselt lohutu, illusioonidele ruumi ei jää. Aga eks iga inimene – ja ka ühiskond – ole põhimõtteliselt oma peegelpildiga (sealhulgas defektidega) harjunud – seega üllatust, šokki ega traumat ei järgne. Ma ei tea, kas Muravskaja näeb oma järjekordse uurimuse, teatud mõttes arhiiviväärtusega projekti valguses mingit positiivset programmi, kas ta on võtnud eesmärgiks otsida „lahendusi". Aga mulle tundub, et valik selle üle, mis saab edasi – kas vaikne mandumine, marurahvuslik vastandumine või intellektuaalne lõimumine, on ikka veel meie endi teha. Kui portreekunstis on kõik lihtne, rollid jaotatud ja positsioonides võimalik kokku leppida – keegi seisab kaamera ees, keegi selle taga, keegi jääb vaataja rolli, siis sotsiaalses plaanis oleme me kõik samas katseklaasis koos ja eksperiment jätkub.

Lucky Losers

Having previously tackled the country's potential future leadership, and unassailable heroes from the recent past, Tanja Muravskaja now goes on to portray the cultural elite of Estonia's Russian minority. CaToomingured unpretentiously in short videos, they are displayed for the benefit of the Estonian audience, to try and figure out if this diaspora can carve out an identity consistent with the country's overall society. Questionable leaders of a community defined by what it isn't, they are not charismatic or compelling enough to supranational heroes; stopped short of glory, these seven have at least made it to the final round – and that makes them the lucky losers.



[2] *Täiesti õigustatult on kolleegid kunstiteadlased sellest näitusest kirjutades viidanud tagasi hoopis maalikunsti ajaloolistele portreetraditsioonidele. Siinkirjutajale tundub aga ka tehnikapõhine seos Muravskaja loomingu kontekstis oluline, sest pidev oma väljendusvahendi analüüs ja teatud metatasandil kommentaarid valitud formaadile tunduvad olevat üks väga olulisi tema kunstnikupositsiooni iseloomustavaid aspekte (vt näiteks Artishoki aastanäitusel esitletud „Rock-paper-scissors").*

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Vikerkaar

6/2008

Laulvad revolutsionäärid 20 aastat hiljem (**Tanja Muravskaja**, **Ly Lestberg**). Reekviem mässumeestele (**Joel Sang**). Kommunistlikud kapitalistid ja kontrrevolutsioon Ida-Euroopas (**G. M. Tamás**). **Maurice Olender** Aadama keelest, Paabeli tornist ja natsionalismist. **Boriss Eichenbaum**: Mis vallandab **Nikolai Gogoli** jutustamisvedru? Eesti kirjanduslood ning **Henrik Visnapuu** ja **Jaan Ainelo** poeetika. Vaatenurgas **Toomas Vindi**, **Vaino Vahingu**, **Elo Viidingu** ja **Olle Lauli** proosaraamatud. ■

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Tanja Muravskaja, Positions/Self-Portrait, 2007. Lambda trükk, 840 × 620 cm. Tartu Kunstimuuseum.

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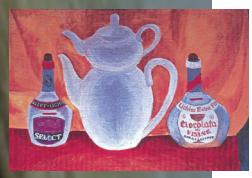

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