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Or perhaps you should go outside?

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Photography: Berta Jänes



‘I see a new Estonia growing, supported by our heritage – young, more beautiful, more cheerful, and happier. I see a big handsome building with rare old artefacts ... And joyful people inside. They are looking. Thinking. Remembering. This is the Estonian National Museum.’

*Kristjan Raud, artist and honorary member of the ENM on 8 April 1912*

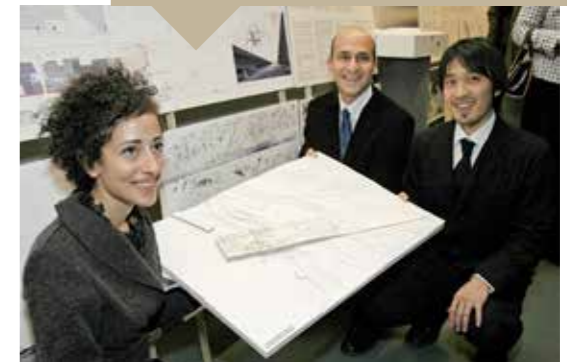


Photography: Cláudio Parada Nunes

## Memory Field

The architectural competition for the new Estonian National Museum building, announced in 2005, was an open competition for ideas from all around the world. The area, 24.2 hectares in size, was located on the border of the city of Tartu in Raadi, on the territory of the former Soviet military airfield, near the Raadi manor complex. The new building was supposed to become a landmark, a special edifice with a captivating story that would attract domestic and international visitors. The new building was not supposed to be a place for simply keeping artefacts; rather, it was to meant to be the birthplace of culture. We received 108 competing designs. In January 2006, coded envelopes were opened. The competition was won by a project called Memory Field, created by an international trio of young architects – Lina Ghotmeh, Dan Dorell, and Tsuyoshi Tane – aka the architectural firm SARL d'Architecture Dorell Ghotmeh Tane.

Lina Ghotmeh, Dan Dorell, and Tsuyoshi Tane were still at the beginning of their architectural careers when they started to design the museum building, in fact this was to be their first large-scale project. Over the years in which the design turned into a building – after repeatedly reworking the drawings following endless discussions – the novice architects became recognised masters. Lina Ghotmeh: “The connection to the one-kilometre landing strip blurs the boundaries of the museum. It is an urban landmark, an architectural object, and landscape art rolled into one.”<sup>1</sup>



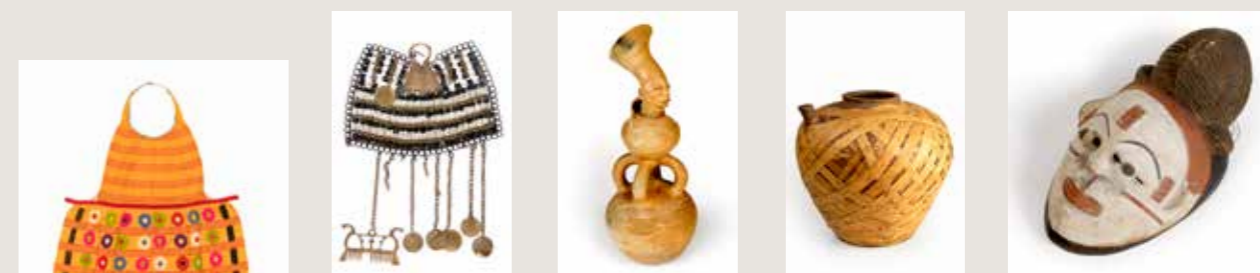
Photography: Anu Ansu

# Story of a building





# The foundation: collections, research, conservation



Current **art collection** plays the role of an ethnological indicator because it mainly consists of graphics, drawings, and watercolour paintings of Tartu and manors in its vicinity as well as artworks depicting folk costumes and the everyday life of Estonians.

**Collections representing other cultures** are based on the collection of the Learned Estonian Society and donations from missionaries and explorers.

Originally, the **cultural history collection** contained artefacts related to manors and urban culture, but in the 1940s, items from organisations that were active during the prewar Republic of Estonia (1918–1940) and then dissolved during the World War II were added. In Soviet times, flags, coat of arms and other objects with symbols of the Republic of Estonia were kept here. Today, we collect items that reflect individuals' affiliation to organizations and their official activities.

In 2008, the Estonian Postal Museum's collections were merged with the collections of the ENM, and in 2013 the collection of the Tartu County Museum followed suit. In 2010, Heimtali Museum in Viljandi County became a branch of the ENM.

## Collections

Thanks to its collection efforts spanning more than a century, the Estonian National Museum has over one million artefacts. In addition to the everyday Estonian items that are added to the **artefact collections**, the museum collects the material culture of Finno-Ugric nations and local ethnic minorities.

The most extensive **ethnographic collection is dedicated to Estonia**. Comprising over 100,000 artefacts such as folk costumes, tools, commodities, means of transportation, etc., from all parishes, it reflects our rich traditional culture.

The first items in the **Finno-Ugric collection** originated from Mordovia and reached the Estonian National Museum in the 1910s. Today, the collection contains over 10,000 artefacts from various nations in the Finno-Ugric family, making it one of the largest Finno-Ugric collections in the world. The collection primarily consists of folk costumes, tools, and home furnishings.



Photography: Anu Ansu



Artefact number 1 is a piece of skirt fabric, a replica of an old Estonian skirt from the Rakvere area presented to the museum by the Tallinn Handicraft School.





Photography: Berta Jänes



Photography: Berta Jänes

# Permanent exhibition

## Encounters

The permanent exhibition dedicated to Estonian culture 'Encounters' is a journey through time, covering 11,000 years from the Stone Age to the modern day. This journey gives us an understanding of people's everyday lives and thinking. This journey through time is supported and complemented by thematic exhibitions.

*Head curator Kristel Rattus, competition entry concept by David Crowley, Christine Gräfenhain, Markus Kaasik, Raul Kalvo, Andres Kurg, Andres Ojari, Sander Paas, Marko Raat, Ilmar Valdur, Linnar Viik, exhibition architecture by 3+1 Architects, audio/video by Marko Raat, Nora Särak, etc., illustrations by Siiri Taimla, Tanel Rannala, Jaana Ratas, etc., multimedia by Mikk Meelak, etc.*



Photography: Berta Jänes

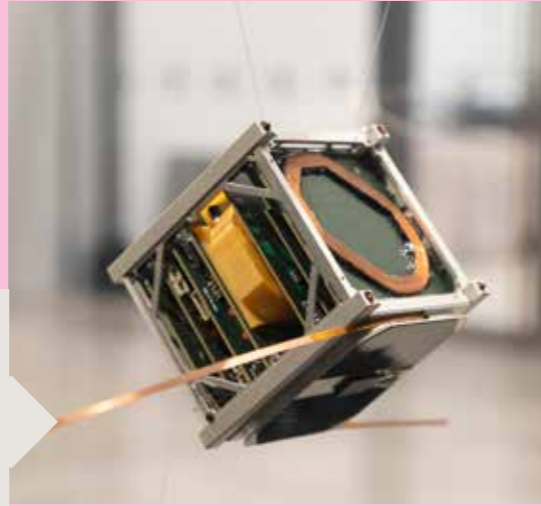


Photography: Arp Karm



# Journeys in Time

Space offers the best view of life on Earth. A model of ESTCube-1, a satellite created by Estonian students, can be seen inside the display cabinet. The satellite was used to test an electrical solar sail in low orbit between 2013 and 2015 circling the globe 9,600 times and taking 280 photos from space.



Photography: Berta Jänes



Photography: Berta Jänes

*Curators Pille Runnel, Agnes Aljas, Ehti Järv, Karin Leivategija, Marleen Metslaid, Taavi Tatsi, Rein Ahas, Marko Uibu*

In the spring of 1987, young people wearing T-shirts that bore the message 'Phosphorite? No, thank you!' appeared on the streets. This is how students expressed what they thought of the plan to excavate phosphorite in Viru County, which would have brought many foreign workers here and turned a made part of Estonia uninhabitable.



Photography: Arp Karm



## The Time of Freedoms

After Estonia regained its independence on 20 August 1991, the country had to be rebuilt: there was no currency, no border guards, no defence forces and no diplomatic representation. Having our own country meant great freedom, but also an enormous number of responsibility and obligations. The beginning was tough, but that period was also filled with faith, hope, and enthusiasm because everything we did, we did for ourselves.





Foto: Anu Ansu

## The Era of Books

38 The invention of printing in the fifteenth century led to the explosive spread of the written word and information in Europe. The first books in Estonian were published at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The first local printing press was established in Tartu in 1631. The creation of institutions offering higher education attracted a large number of intellectuals, which naturally increased the demand for books. Peasant schools took literacy to the common folk and Estonians were bitten by the reading bug.

Curators Piret Õunapuu, Kristiina Ross, Arvi Haak, Inna Jürjo, Aivar Põldvee, Lea Leppik, Riina Rammo, Viljar Pohhomov, Kristel Rattus

“...if all unnecessary hardships were removed, there would never be a person in sound mind who could not read.”<sup>4</sup>

Bengt Gottfried Forselius, a founder of public education in Estonia

A rooster welcomes the reader to a primer written in north Estonian dialect by Bengt Gottfried Forselius, published in 1694, as well as to an edition of the same book in south Estonian dialect published in 1698. The same image can be seen by a pupil in the first Latvian primer. Photography: Arp Karm



Photography: Anu Ansu

## The Arrival of Christianity

By the beginning of the second millennium, Christianity had spread to the neighbouring areas of Estonia. During the crusades and conquests of the thirteenth century, Estonian territory was added to the shared Catholic space of Europe. How did this change the composition of the Estonian people and what did the newcomers add to local life? What attempts were made to protect the former way of life and how did the old and the new learn to coexist?

This church bell was cast in 1634. It spent the Great Northern War at the bottom of a river. By the beginning of the 20th century, time had damaged the sound of the bell enough that it was turned into a gigantic ornament. For years, the bell was held in the coach house at Roosna-Alliku manor, until it was transferred to a museum located in the Paide primary school in 1923. After World War II, the bell was lost, only to resurface later, at which point it was purchased for the Järva County Museum.

Curators Inna Jürjo, Kristiina Ross, Arvi Haak, Piret Õunapuu, Viljar Pohhomov





# Finno-Ugric permanent exhibition Echo of the Urals

Photography: Berta Jänes



Photography: Ove Maidla

The 'Echo of the Urals' is dedicated to the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples who do not have their own country. It is a captivating journey through the territories and waters of our linguistic kindred nations. The everyday lives and creativity of these people are shown through the mundane activities of women and men, their main sources of livelihood, traditional art, folklore, and rituals. The journey into the mystical world of the Ugric nations goes through the seasons and along a river of light that is wonderfully blue.

*Conception by Art Leete, head curator Svetlana Karm. Curators Piret Koosa, Indrek Jääts, Madis Arukask, and Nikolai Kuznetsov. Architecture by JANKEN, design and multimedia by Velvet, photo backgrounds by Peeter Laurits, soundscape design by Taavi Tulev, animations by Eesti Joonisfilm*

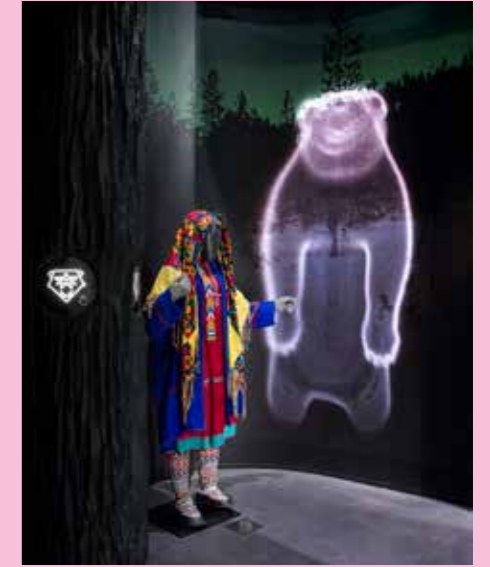




Photography: Arp Karm



Photography: Berta Jänes



Photography: Arp Karm

## The Northern Peoples

The lives of the Sami, Khanty, Mansi, Nenets, Enets, Selkups, and Nganasans follow the rhythms of nature. No one talks much during their daily lives, but once they start to chant their myths, it could last days.

The rooms of the Northern Peoples takes the visitor completely away from normal life. Wolves are howling, a strong winter's wind is whistling, and the surroundings become hard to see. Here, you will learn why Northern Peoples consider getting along with the gods and living in peace so important.

A journey along the trails of the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples is a thrilling experience. Here, you will not be a mere observer; instead, you will experience their lives. The echo of the snowy mountaintops of the Urals accompanies this journey.



## The Baltic Finns

We will reflect with the Votians on the transience of life and then go on a fishing trip with the Livonians. Hard work is rewarded with a good catch, and after a meal, you will continue the journey. There is less light because the sun is not as generous during the autumnal evening. Wandering in the shadows, you will reach the Vepsians, where a chore awaits, so you will be able to participate in creating a swidden. The work is hard, fatigue is getting to you, but it is time to continue your journey. Fortunately, you will soon arrive in a restorative Karelian sauna. A fire is burning in the sauna and its slight smoky aroma is reminiscent of a real smoke sauna where you can shake off your tiredness.



Photography: Berta Jänes