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Gallery: Estonian artist Mall Nukke opens new exhibition in Tallinn



Estonian artist Mall Nukke's at the opening of her new exhibition in Tallinn. Source: Ken Mürk/ERR

NEWS

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Estonian artist Mall Nukke's new exhibition "Time of Illusions" ("Illusioonide aeg") featuring 22 newly-created works is now open at Tallinn's Allee Gallery.

According to Nukke, the works in the exhibition were the result of two-and-a-half months of intensive work, during which she painted for three to six hours a day, seven days a week.

At one point, after an intense period of work, Nukke had the feeling that she no longer loved painting. Now, however, she has realized she cannot be without it,

and already has new ideas for future works in mind.

"Time itself inspired me to create illusions, it's the milky foam on top of the milk, so you can't see underneath and what's boiling and bubbling under there. It's an extremely inspiring time right now, and that's how all these paintings came about," said Nukke.

Mall Nukke emerged on the Estonian art scene in the early 1990s, with work seen as commentary of nascent mass culture and consumer society in newly independent Estonia. Her early collages combined various cultural references and created new media characters based on real entertainers and public figures. Since the 2000s, Nukke has concentrated on creating photo-manipulations and mixed media paintings inspired by Eastern Orthodox icon art.



Mall Nukke's exhibition at the Allee Gallery in Tallinn. Author Ken Mürk/ERR

With "Time of Illusions," Nukke presents 22 of her latest works created especially for this exhibition between 2024 and 2025, using her own unmistakable technique. The exhibition is curated by Harry Liivrand.

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Editor: Rasmus Kuningas, Michael Cole

Photo reportage from the exhibition 'Earthly Borders' by Mall Nukke at Draakon gallery

November 18, 2021

Author [Echo Gone Wrong](#)

Published in [Photo / Video from Estonia](#)



Mall Nukke opened her personal exhibition *Earthly Borders* in Draakon gallery on November 2nd, 2021. Exhibition will be open until November 20, 2021.

Mall Nukke: “We love to watch the horizon – that liberates our senses and lets us feel ourselves as a part of the universe. A beautiful sunset on a summer evening is an experience that helps us to overcome the winter darkness when the foggy, grey sky and bluish white fields of snow become one with the horizon. What will become of this enchanting, even romantic view when there is something totally haunting appearing on the earthly border? Paintings at the current exhibition depict a vision of the state where the mankind has led itself to, while actively rearranging nature.

What we see while observing the horizon depends on where we are at the moment. The two largest paintings at the exhibition – “Horizon I” and “Horizon II” – interpret the idea that according to our position in a landscape one and the same view can have a totally different effect. When you have taken a seat too low, then the horizon will seemingly appear somewhere far away, out of reach. And the future the horizon could forecast is also vague and looks foggy. This makes us feel insecure since our mind’s eye is veiled. When you have climbed too high, yearning for partaking in a transcendental experience; and then you are suddenly hit by despair because there is no beautiful border between the earth and the sky behind the concrete landscape polluted by artificial environment.

The symbiosis of previous paintings has been depicted on the painting “The Earthly Border 2” where two opposing worlds meet – the pure, pristine sky on one hand and the human carpet covering the ground that has been devastated by aggression on the other. The artificial god of war is standing in the middle of the horrendous creation, amidst human remains, while stretching wings and getting ready for conquering the sky that is still intact.

The painting series “Below the Horizon” is in a way a continuation to the painting “The Earthly Border 2” but the series follow the form of the watercourse of the world’s largest rivers – Amazonas, Mississippi and Volga. Nukke’s paintings depict human rivers streaming all over the world, at times flooding and then again receding. Human rivers carrying greed, ignorance, hunger for power and indifference flow through the devastated landscape. However, one should not fall into deep depression while viewing the exhibition since my paintings are never unambiguously dead serious – there is always a tiny drop of irony included in my work. Instead of forwarding the message about the imminent apocalypse, paintings at the current exhibition simply confirm the state of things. So the mankind can be also viewed as flourishing mould, as a so-called carpet people whose horizon is set low, in the middle of dust bunnies. Among other things, I was also inspired by the possibility to return to my older artwork in order to re-use the collage technique, but this time to interweave it with oil painting.”

Mall Nukke is a graphic artist and painter. In 1992 she obtained MA degree in printmaking at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Afterwards the artist became known for her collage pieces, but her artworks include also oil and acrylic paintings, coal drawings as well as graphic art. Nukke has emphasized that the conceptual side of her artwork is very simple and the artist approaches her work with “a clear head and open heart”. She can be considered more of an idealist than a rational thinker with her attempt to make the world a better place. She began exhibiting her work in 1991 and has held more than 40 personal exhibitions in Estonia and abroad, including Finland and Australia. Nukke’s artworks belong to the art collections of Art Museum of Estonia, Tartu Art Museum and several private collections.

Exhibitions in Draakon gallery are supported by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, Estonian Ministry of Culture and Liviko Ltd.

Exhibition by Mall Nukke

Title: *Earthly Borders*

Open: 02.11.-20.11.2021

Draakon Gallery, Pikk 18, Tallinn.

Mon-Fri 11.00-18.00, Sat 11.00-17.00

Photography: Anna Mari Liivrand





