

# A shifting zone with a changing content, Goodbye, Eastern Europe!

Eastern Europe and the way it is (mis)understood in the world is becoming a shifting zone with a changing content. Since the regaining of their independence in the 90s' the Baltic states, traditionally considered as part of Eastern Europe, have increasingly moved towards the North. Although in geographic terms the region has stood still, its value system as well as the cultural and political content has been in constant transformation.

Much like the glaciers that leave behind the changing landscape, the deep inner shifts within the region of Eastern Europe marks the transformation of identities. What do we talk about when we talk about Eastern Europe? Are we still a part of it? Is it – and if yes – why is it so important for Lithuania and the Baltic states to escape it? What visions support and how far have we gone in our journey towards the North? How is the cultural identity of Eastern Europe changing and how can we reflect ourselves without stepping on the old patterns of D.I.Y. culture and reproducing the images of dysfunctional systems?

A shifting zone with a changing content. Goodbye, Eastern Europe! – is an evening dedicated to short talks, questions and stories focused on the shifting and the northwards moving identity of Eastern Europe.

Participants: Dr. Eglė Rindzevičiūtė, Jacob Mikanowski, Ignas Krunglevičius, dr. Viktorija Rusinaitė and Miglė Bareikytė.

## Programme:

**Dr. Eglė Rindzevičiūtė**

**GOODBYE EASTERN EUROPE? GEOLOGIES AND GEOGRAPHIES OF THE FUTURE**

What happens when geopolitics asks to put a new system of meanings in place of the old ones? What does it mean for the Lithuanian society to belong to the Northern space? What kind of geologies and geographies of the future does the end of Eastern Europe on the Baltic shores entail? In this intervention dr. Eglė Rindzevičiūtė will outline the history of geopolitical shifts that situated Lithuania in large transnational regions. Because the North is just as equally charged notion as the East, suggests the author. The talk will explore the construction of the North as a geological space that was shaped by a particular frontier politics of nature.

**Jacob Mikanowski**

**HELLO, EASTERN EUROPE!**

A text by Jacob Mikanowski "Goodbye, Eastern Europe!", published by the Los Angeles Review of Books (LARB) is also used to name the event. In the text the author analysed the diminishment of Eastern Europe in the literature, the academic world and the cultural consciousness. Despite of its Cold War baggage, and the fact that it usually only becomes visible outside the region itself, Jacob Mikanowski suggests that Eastern Europe remains a useful category to think with - and not just in terms of what have too often become clichés of socialism and post-socialism. It is a zone stretching from Estonia in the north to Albania in the south characterized by intense contact between rival faiths and distance from centers of capital empire. It is a shared periphery, most easily seen observed in literature, but in a host of other phenomenon – including art – as well.

**Dr. Viktorija Rusinaitė and Miglė Bareikytė,**

**IN-BETWEEN STATE BECOMING - THE POLITICS OF MULTIPLICITY TODAY**

Just before the second world war Lithuanian geographer Kazys Pakštas (1893-1960) proposed that Lithuania, along with small

The event is curated by Monika Lipšic and Ieva Sriebaliūtė. Graphic design: Gailė Pranckunaitė.

The event is organised as a part of the The Good Neighbour project [www.thegoodneighbour.lt](http://www.thegoodneighbour.lt).

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The event is in Lithuanian and in English



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neighbour countries could have their borders established by international tribunals. Then they could more effectively resist the spill-outs of the ideological conflicts between the Germanic and Slavic mega-states. Some claim that mega-states need buffer states to delay the enemy invasion into their territory. Others say that nuclear armament solved the buffer problem for mega-states, because buffer can no longer delay the strike.

In this presentation they ask: how identities of the region are constituted by the buffer-zone politics? What alternative geopolitical identities could go beyond those, which support instrumentalized nationalistic centre-periphery debates? What kind of subjectivities these identities produce? People from multiple cultures and ethnicities have always lived in the territory of Lithuania, which allows to state that Lithuania has always been a multicultural state. Moreover, Lithuanian emigres constantly modify identities they brought from Lithuania while abroad and change them yet again upon their return. The presenters propose to expand the understanding of Lithuania as a buffer and peripheral state, supported by ethnically uniform identities by applying the politics of multiplicity.

**Ignas Krunglevičius**

**INDETERMINACY (PERFORMANCE)**

Ignas Krunglevičius is a visual artist, whose work focuses on the political and the existential realities that evolve around the advancement of technology. In his performance he will retell the stories about Norwegian structural economy, oil industry and life of an artist the way he experiences it. This performance-talk is based on a work by John Cage Indeterminacy (1958) where, during the public talk, he read short stories he had written, one minute each. If the story was short, he had stretched it out; and if the story was long, he had had to read it as fast as he could. In his performance the artist will read short stories he had written in a similar way - one story per minute.

# Biographies:

## Dr. EGLĖ RINDZEVIČIŪTĖ

Dr Egle Rindzeviciute is an Associate Professor of Criminology and Sociology at Kingston University London, the UK and a Visiting Scholar at the Department of History and Philosophy of Science, the University of Cambridge (Jan-June 2019). She is the author of "The Power of Systems: How Policy Sciences Opened Up the Cold War World" (2016) and the editor of "The Struggle for the Long-Term in Transnational Science and Politics: Forging the Future" (2015), with Prof. Jenny Andersson. She is the P.I. and director of the AHRC research networking project "Nuclear Cultural Heritage: From Knowledge to Practice" (2018-2020) and the CoI of the research project "Atomic Heritage Goes Critical" (2018-2020).

## JACOB MIKANOWSKI

Jacob Mikanowski is a writer and journalist based in Berkeley, California. He studied European history at Princeton University, followed by graduate work at the University of California, with an emphasis on Poland and its neighbours. Since then, most of his work has been in arts journalism and reportage. He has written for The New York Times, The Guardian, Harper's Magazine, Cabinet, The Atlantic and the Los Angeles Review of Books. He is currently at work on a book.

## Dr. VIKTORIJA RUSINAITĖ

Viktorija Rusinaite, PhD is a researcher, activist and consultant interested in regimes' transition in Central Eastern Europe. She is currently the Head of European Security Programme at Vilnius Institute for Policy Analysis. Viktorija is a co-founder of research unit Balticada combining academic, journalistic and artistic know-how to explore and analyse socio-political developments in the post-soviet sphere. She was one of the organisers of Congress on Public Spaces in Vilnius and co-creator of location based demilitarisation games in Šančiai, Kaunas and Karoliniškės, Vilnius. Her recently defended PhD thesis on Belarusian Political Nomadism explores situations of in-betweenness experienced by traveling activists and organisations.

## MIGLĖ BAREIKYTĖ

Miglė Bareikytė is a PhD student at the DFG-funded research training group Cultures of Critique at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany. She holds degrees in Communication studies, Media studies and Political theory from Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University and Free University of Berlin. She is an alumna of The Hertie Foundation and The German Academic Scholarship Foundation (Studienstiftung). Her current research focuses on the ramifications of actors and practices that have produced the Internet as infrastructure in post-socialist Lithuania, with the special attention given to telecom geopolitics and media anthropology in the Baltic states. Her general interests comprise topics of transformation, digitalization and distribution of power in Europe. Miglė currently resides in Berlin.

## IGNAS KRUNGLEVIČIUS

Ignas Krunglevičius is visual artist living and working in Oslo, Norway. His installations, videos, and sculpture often combine sound, and text, where he explores the intermix between the agency of power, economy, nature and existential realities generated by global technological development. Since 2001,

Krunglevičius has exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions. In 2010 he was nominated for the Nam June Paik Award. Recently, he has been invited to participate in many major international art venues, such as Sydney Biennale, Australia (2011), Aichi Triennale (2016) in Nagoya, Japan, ICA Philadelphia in USA (2017), the 6th Moscow International Biennale for Young Artists (2018), Nam June Paik Art Center in South Korea (2018).

## CURATORS:

### IEVA SRIEBALIŪTĖ

Ieva Sriebaliūtė is a recent MSc graduate in European affairs from Lund University, Sweden, holding a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science. Her academic and artistic interest is focused on the cultural and political aspects of memory, remembrance and identity. Recently, as a member of artist collective "Money Haven", Ieva participated in a group exhibition "Dignity" at the Contemporary Art Center in Vilnius. Her collective "Money Haven" was shortlisted for JCDecaux prize 2018 and received a special mention. Currently Ieva is participating in an alternative education program at Rupert – a centre for art and education in Vilnius.

### MONIKA LIPŠIČ

Monika Lipšič is a curator, artist and mediator active in the field of contemporary art, social practices, exhibition making and performance art. She engages curatorial methods to present art in its complexity to the subjects of history writing and rewriting, identity politics, metaphorical thinking, representation of absurdity among other themes. 2012-2015 she worked in Contemporary Art Centre (CAC) in Vilnius, also Nomas Foundation Rome, later she was granted CEC Artslink award to go to CCA Wattis Contemporary Art Institute San Francisco in 2017. Monika curated exhibitions, performances and events in Blaffer Art Museum University of Houston (group exhibition The Future Is Certain; It's the Past Which Is Unpredictable), Texas, Calvert22 Foundation Londone, Lithuanian Composers' Union Vilnius (The Deep Splash), CAC Vilnius (Slavs and Tatars: Mouth to Mouth), CCA Estonia Tallinn (Timelines, they're multiplyin') and elsewhere. Monika is also a curator behind [www.thegoodneighbour.lt](http://www.thegoodneighbour.lt).

### THE GOOD NEIGHBOUR

The Good Neighbour - is a growing online video platform producing and commissioning videos centered around concepts of migration and exile. It first started as a series of interviews with Lithuanian émigré artists, and aims expanding to conversations, studio visits and a showcase of video works by multinational culture figures, often based in several places at the same time. The ongoing project of The Good Neighbour (previously The Deep Splash, founded by Juste Kostikovaite in 2014) can be seen as a form of hospitality enabling synthetic thinking – a channel regularly layering new videos, conversations and contexts, questioning the very concept of national identity, migration, exile and globalism, morphing ideas, modes of artistic production and – most importantly – sharing sources of inspiration.