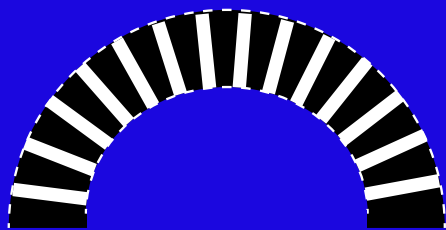
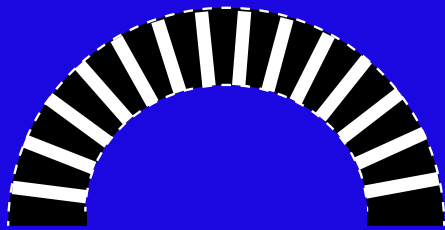


SISU

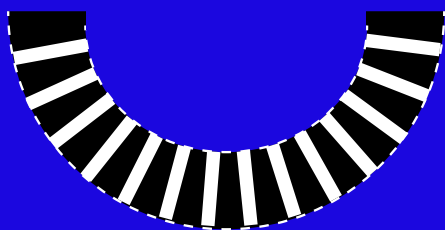
[...] AND
NOTHING IS
FOREVER*



SISU 2024 Time Capsule Project

SISU 2024 Ajakapsli projekt

[...] JA
MISKI EI OLE
IGAVESTI



The challenge of divergent durations

The pace of contemporary life inevitably raises the question of duration in the context of spatial design practices. The physical object of architecture presumably lasts longer than necessary to meet the current needs of those for whom it was intended; it lasts longer than what constitutes the duration of the contemporary socio-political processes.

¹ We live faster – and this is already commonplace – and therefore the need to continuously modify the spaces that we inhabit increases.

Spatial design, therefore, has a lot to do with an ever-faster pace of everyday life, technology that accommodates contemporary lifestyles, and finally the economy of consumption.



From Reddit (4th August 2018)

We could argue that the conventional understanding of a building as a typologically determined product with a predefined function implies the divergence between architectural project and the life of the building. The interior space is seen as an interface, a mediator, influencing socio-political processes in order for the inhabitant or user to appropriate the space. At the same time, the sustainability of an architectural project is seen within the scope of extending the process of architectural design and overlapping the design process with the physical lifespan of architecture.

¹ Piątek, Grzegorz, Trybuś, Jarosław, Warsaw's Polonia Hotel. *The Afterlife of Buildings*, exhibition, the Polish Pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennale, Venice. 2008. The exhibition was awarded the Golden Lion for Best National Participation.

Time as a context

The lifespan of architectural space inevitably exceeds the intent (visions), purpose (needs) and function (technologies) of those for whom it was created; therefore, making the designated programme compromised or even obsolete during the course of time. Therefore, there is a distortion of two durations – the lifespan of the building and the temporality of its content, users, and circumstances. In relation to this, Jeremy Till argues that “time, not space, should be seen as the primary context in which architecture is conceived.”²

From this discussion we can conclude that the overly determined physicality of a building is incapable of allowing and supporting the contingent elusiveness of everyday life. What is needed to overcome this discrepancy of two durations? How can we encode change into the design process itself?



*RECORDER: The Marion Stokes Project by Matt Wolf.
Still from Marion Stokes Tapes 01-12-1982*

Between endurance and transience



A column and a pillar, 400 years BC.

Architecture is the harmonious blend of pillars and columns, where strength meets grace, and form marries function, creating timeless monuments that stand as testaments to human ingenuity for generations to come.

Generally speaking, architecture is considered to be more related to endurance, rather than transience. Second, architecture is too slow to accommodate the fast pace of trends and fashion in design. Interior architecture, however, stands on the borderline between the two. This position should be considered an advantage, and a privilege.

Hacking these conditions as a method of creating new design might be fruitful, especially for tech savvy generations that should be familiar with what that approach implies. This resonates with a quote from Terry Gilliam's 1985 film Brazil: "Can you fix it? No, I can't, but I can bypass it."

“Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue”

Creating the new is dialectically related to preserving the old. Maybe, until we better understand how to create better, we should first consider preserving and repairing the existing. Architecture needs to adopt a contemporary, transient mode of existence with an intelligent relationship towards preservation, ecology, and especially towards repair. There is a lot of potential in developing progressive preservation methods and techniques in the contemporary design environment. After all, sometimes changing spaces does not make them better. At the same time, there is a lot of creative potential in the act of repairing the spaces that already exist.

How does the challenge of duration guide spatial design in creating, preserving and changing spaces around us?

What defines the duration of designed spaces?

What is it about Today that will shape Tomorrow?



Photo by Saleem Ahmed

TIME CAPSULE

Participants are invited to contribute an ARTEFACT³ – an object, an image, a text – that they believe is significant for the Zeitgeist in the context of their profession. The artefacts will then be presented, exhibited and finally placed in the Time capsule. The time capsule is discursive; it is shared, it is playful and straightforward, almost didactic, but very delicate.

What will you bring?



*THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH
The snuff tin time capsule and its contents from 1909*

³ An object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest. From Latin arte 'by or using art' + factum 'something made'

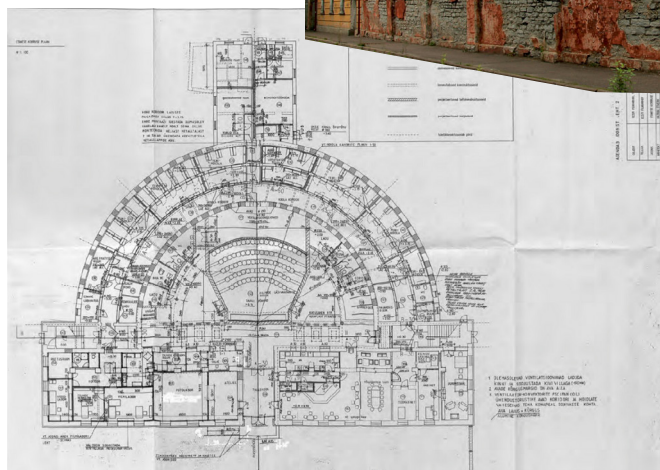
LOCATION



The National Archives of Estonia is the centre of archival administration in Estonia and has its departments in Tallinn, Tartu, Rakvere and Valga. The main task of the National Archives is to ensure the preservation and usability of society's written memory and documented cultural heritage for people today and future generations.

The Film Archives of the National Archives of Estonia includes film and video material on Estonia from the early 20th century to the present. It holds thousands of newsreels, newsreel segments, documentaries, music films, feature films, animated films, advertisements and amateur films. The organised acquisition of films in Estonia started in 1935 on the basis of the Archives Act, and focused on newsreels. From 1937, the archived films were in a rather symbolic place – Toompea castle which also housed the Parliament and other government institutions. Two floors in the mediaeval Landskrone wall tower were adapted for film storage with their 2.5-metre-thick walls expected to maintain the temperature and humidity to preserve the films. During the Soviet era, there was a plan to build a proper film archive in Tallinn, but for various reasons this idea fell through and the films were stored on Toompea and in many other warehouses. In the 1980s, the archive became scattered around in uninhabitable basement floors of residential buildings.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the young republic did not have the means to build a new archive building. However, after the departure of the Russian troops several former military buildings were left empty and were given intermediate uses. In this situation, the Film Archive was placed in the 1950s building of the Tallinn Garrison Commandant's Office on Ristiku Street . It is a rather extraordinary building, which directly expresses the idea of the panopticon developed by the English philosopher and lawyer Jeremy Bentham. An office block is located along Ristiku Street, behind which lies a D-shaped section which was originally used as detention rooms. The courtyard, which allowed the observation of the cells, was closed and roofed in the 1990s, and is now a lobby used as an exhibition space. Currently, the first floor of the crescent-shaped building houses the storage rooms, but the cells on the ground floor have been preserved in their original form. This corridor with its individual cells remains sealed in time and has been used as a film location as well as a contemporary art installation. The SISU symposium and exhibition will also be set up in these rooms.



Therefore, it is a building with an unavoidably dark history, which has not been helped by the fact that the Film Archive only temporarily operates there and is eagerly awaiting a new building. Therefore, renovation work has been minimal, keeping in mind the preservation of artefacts and not the well-being of people. But in such a controversial context, the building itself can be called a time capsule, which raises multiple questions about how the built environment preserves or carries – or fails to do so – history and memory.