

# What about **Guggenheim**

Design Ethics Course 2014  
Creative Sustainability Program  
Department of Design

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# What about Guggenheim

Collection of student works from  
Design Ethics course in 2014 and previous years  
Creative Sustainability Program  
Department of Design  
Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture

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# | What about **Art?**

Introduction by Eero Miettinen

Art is a growing area of interest with many faces. The consumption of art is increasing thanks to the time and wealth to be spent on it. At the same time art as business employs in a way or another more people globally. Some of the recent research results tell that art as a livelihood is more appealing to younger generations than ever. The freedom of lifestyle and expression seem to be more important things than financial success and influence. Making art helps many people to balance their hectic working life or the lack of it.

The conclusion can be drawn, that art is not anymore for the connoisseurs only but belongs to everyone. The millions of people gathering to painting and drawing classes every evening represent an enormous potential in all aspects of art. If only the very few become stars, less meaningful is not the joy of creativity experienced by every individual.

The artists need their audience and the point of interaction plays a critical role. The static concepts of museums and galleries and the highly commercial set ups of art fairs only satisfy their narrow target groups. They have to compete with the emerging new artists communities in their own districts and estates.

The 2014 Design Ethics project wants to participate in the public discussion about having a Guggenheim museum in Helsinki, the capital of Finland. Without taking a fixed stand on whether the museum should or should not come to Helsinki the international group of students wanted to come out with new ideas with the main focus on art, artists and public.

Lowering the threshold of making and experiencing art is common for all three teams' works and asking the essential questions aloud is one of the concepts. At the same time the visual image is as friendly as the family painting on home wall. Defining the target groups of enjoying art and approaching

them in their own language is the second concept. When essentialized, it is surprising, how narrow the offering is. The third concept calls the very specialists and the millions of art makers to meet at least for one day in the year, exchanging maybe also the missions and branding of both parts.

We are not artists, architects nor businessmen, we are designers and as such the representatives of common human needs. Those seem to get so easily forgotten in the some times very heated political, financial discussions around the topic. We want more people to enjoy more and better art and this is our way to do it.

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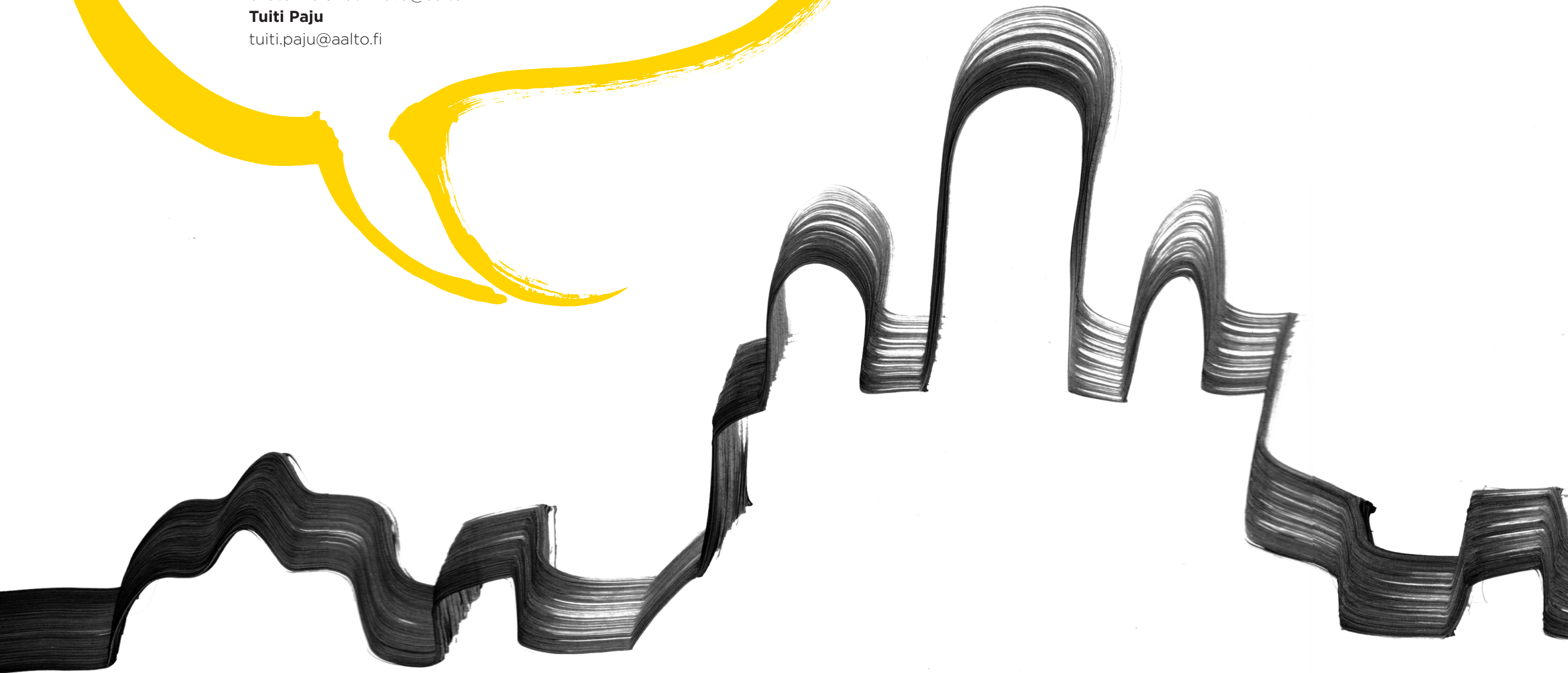
# What about **Guggenheim**

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# What about Guggenheim

WHAT ABOUT GUGGENHEIM HELSINKI? -project is a team of two students of Design Department in Aalto University of Arts, Design and Architecture. The goal of this project is to join the discussion around possible establishment of Guggenheim museum in Helsinki and rise some new perspectives on the issue.

## GENERATION WITH THE PREFIX SELF

During last few decades we could have noticed a change in the cultural and professional scenes and the way they are perceived and used by people. It is a transition from the production of goods to the provision of services where knowledge becomes a valued form of capital. Present time is marked by an increased valuation of creativity, involving and participatory culture, openness and different kind of collaboration between all parts of creative process.

It is clear that we are going through changes also in socio-cultural and media landscapes. Instead of reading newspapers many of us are checking news from blogs, Wikipedia seems to be our main source of knowledge instead of traditional encyclopedias and it keeps growing embracing more and more information. We create our own video and audio contents and communicate them to the world with various interactive platforms.

Also education is becoming more oriented towards offering skills answering the needs for self-actualiza-

tion, self-education and all kind of self-expression. It is a beginning of the era of opportunities made possible by collaboration and openness.

## CREATIVE KNOWLEDGE

Open culture is growing involving more and more people and encouraging them to find their hidden potential and possibilities. New creative communities of all kind established under the ideology of participatory culture and total openness are already there providing such things as open universities, free libraries, Peer-to-Peer-learning, multi-



disciplinary collaboration and open knowledge. Creative learning labs and workshops are spreading all over the world where know-how is shared often just for free.

## PARTICIPATION

Participation creates social connectedness and strengths believe in opportunities of common contribution. More people are involved in all phases from decision making to implementation. Openness and transparency make processes more democratic: while finding best solution for the majority of representatives at the same time all kind of minor opinions are taken into account as well. These approaches also allow immediate and constructive feedback. Through participatory learning ever more people become active actors instead of being just passive consumers.

## WHAT IF...

A rise in participatory expectations within communities of the world gives an amount of challenges but also offers opportunities for museums to deal with. But still even nowadays when there are more transparency and collaboration, visitors of museums still mostly perceived as just customers. It is recently discussed widely in museum communities what if citizens would be more than just an audience.

What is art and who is an artist? We can give various definitions suiting our personalities or aims but art - whatever it is then - is also at least a product of people of our time. Emotional load of contemporary art is often temporal. It supposed to be shared at certain moment with the people who have same aesthetic language and understanding of cultural codes. Museums collections



inherit our culture and history but why only limited amount of people have right to decide on what should be shown or preserved for future generations? How to make these decisions more democratic? So does current state of museums support art to be shared or restrict it from being freely accessible?

What if museums would not be longer sacred temples but a meeting-places, where visitors can exchange ideas and participate in cultural experience. What if museums would be free of charge offering equal access for all members of society anytime? What if museums would offer also other activities rather than just watching? Would it be nonsense if there would be much stronger civil participation on such decisions as financing of the museum, it's architecture and propose?

It is fact that with the new technologies and ever growing accessibility to the global information resources museums are no longer one of the authoritarian sources of knowledge. So in order to find a new source of inspiration for museums it requires changes in the content, space and time suiting needs of local communities and the local environment. It requires changes in attitudes and responsibilities of museum personnel, probably even a change in structure and meaning of museums and in the way how we percept role of museums in our society today.

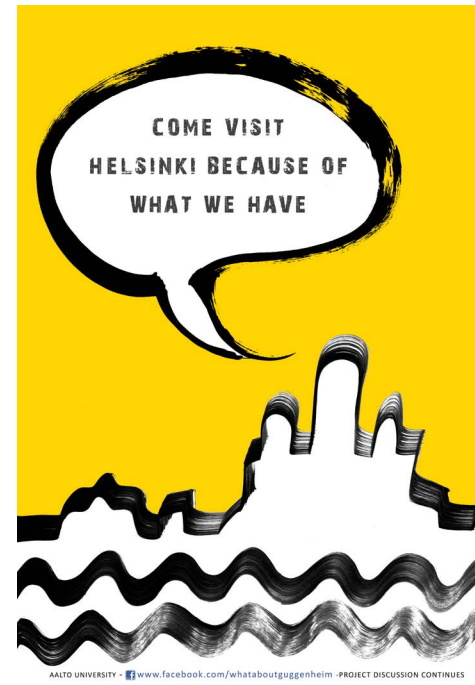
## DOES FINLAND NEED BIG NAMES?

It is said that Finland is one of the greatest countries in the world but it has shyness problem. Having an amount of great things such as wild nature, pure water, great education, social equality, we do not advertise ourselves enough to the world. There is a point in this opinion but it only proves that Finland got all it needs for the success on its own. So do we need big names from abroad to get more attention from the world or are we capable to do it ourselves?

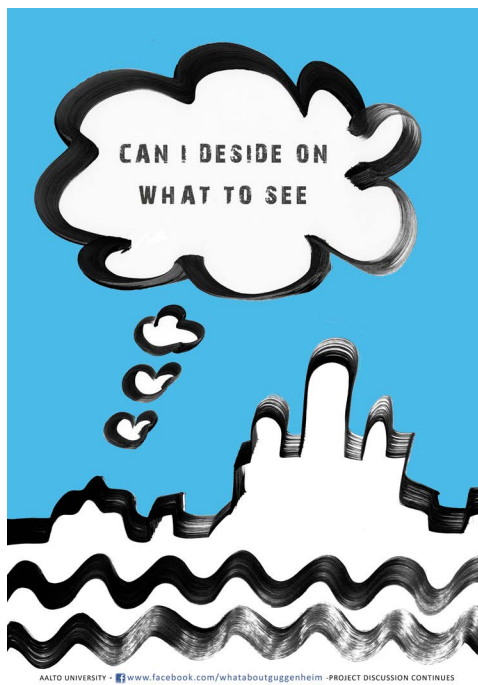




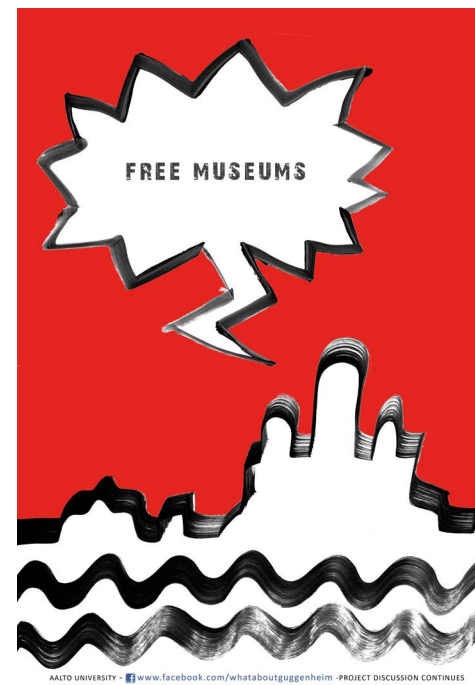
Role of museums in our society at the moment is definitely under change. What else museums could be?



Finland is young country and it has great chances to become well known spot on the world map. So why do we really need big names to attract attention or can we do it on our own?

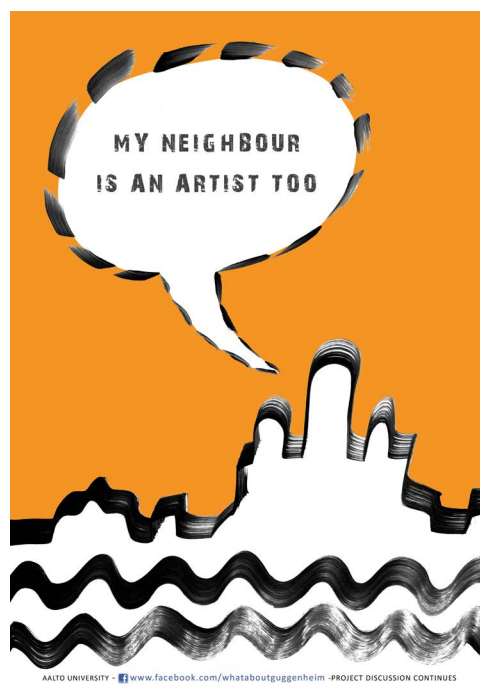


Era of participatory culture invites ever more people to be involved in decision making processes. Wouldn't it be great if we could decide on museum's collections?



Accessibility of the museum is one of the most important issues. Accessibility allows equal treatment of all parts of society such as children and elder people, people with low income, people with special needs or disabled people. Museums inherit our culture and history, so let everyone in!





How to define art and who is an artist? At which point hobby grows into profession? With the concepts of openness and sharing more people found their hidden potentials. So maybe your neighbor is an artist too?



Emotional load of contemporary art is often temporal. It suppose to be shared at certain moment with the people who have same aesthetic language and understanding of cultural codes. Maybe modern art does not need museums?



# GUGGIS

A museum experience  
attractive to all



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# 1. mission statement and target groups

## GUGGENHEIM MISSION STATEMENT

Committed to innovation, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation collects, preserves, and interprets modern and contemporary art, and explores ideas across cultures through dynamic curatorial and educational initiatives and collaborations. With its constellation of architecturally and culturally distinct museums, exhibitions, publications, and digital platforms, the foundation engages both local and global audiences.

## GUGGIS MISSION STATEMENT

(Co-)Experience for everybody

Beside of fulfilling the mission of Guggenheim foundation, Guggis has a strong mission to lower the thresholds of all people to enjoy art and architecture. Guggis should be seen as a place that brings people together, and decreases biases towards modern and contemporary art. Guggis challenges the concept of an art museum by making it more available to people and also encouraging people to enjoy it with all senses.



## THE TARGET GROUP OF GUGGIS IS DIVIDED INTO FIVE DIFFERENT SUBGROUPS

Each of them has an own unique symbol for evaluating the ideas and showing the problem they are focusing on. The core idea of Guggis is to respond to the issues that have been brought up in the public conversation about Guggenheim Helsinki. One of the biggest problem has been that it serves only a small group of local people, even though they are taking a big risk on it's success in Finland

## 2. parallel pathway



kids



no time

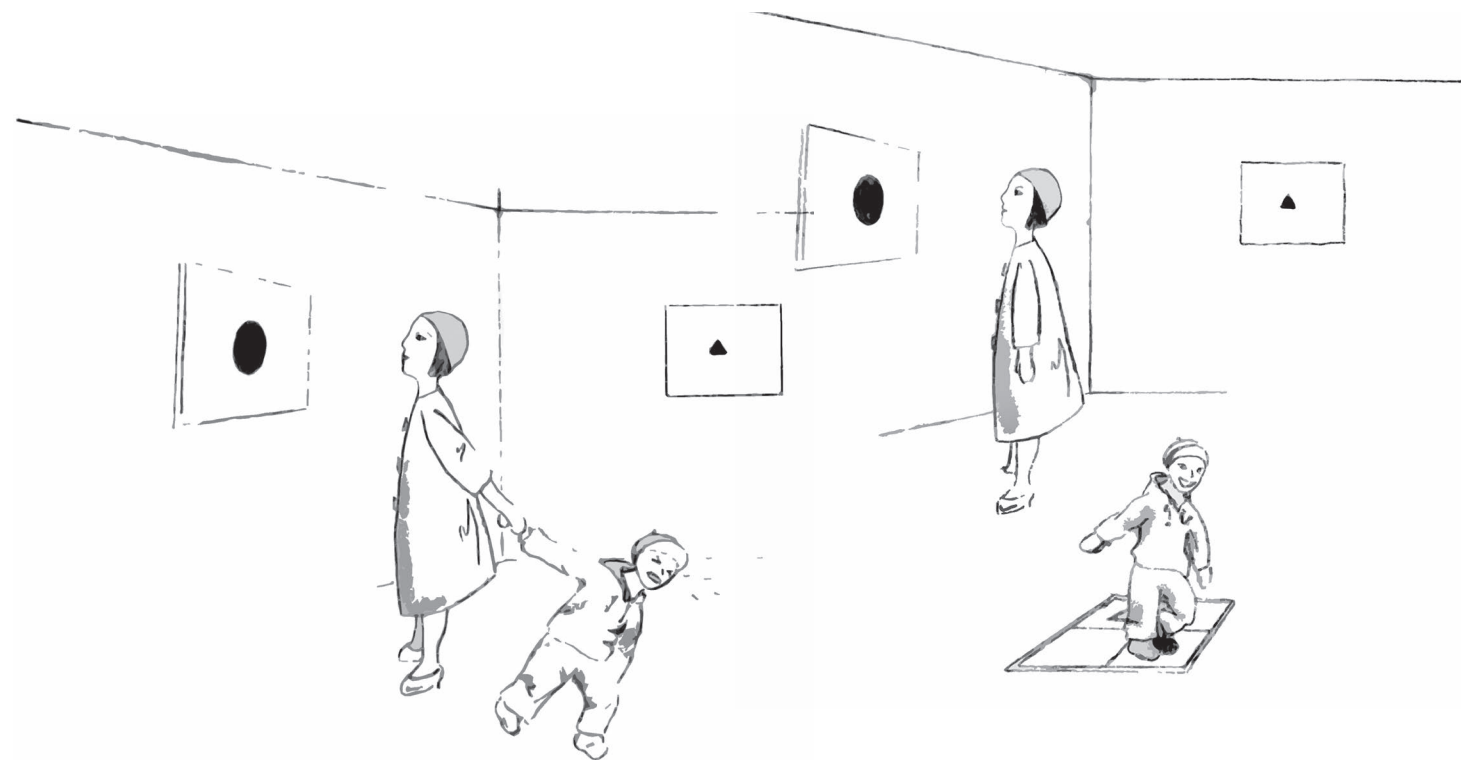


disability

Generally in the art museums people watch artworks in an environment, that has a minimum amount of distractions. Unfortunately people are also seen as a distraction in this kind of way exhibit art, and that brings a good amount of rules into the museum. No running, no pointing, no touching, and no misbehaving leads to the point that there is at the end just one way to experience art, and that is staring it quietly. It is important that the environment won't bring any extra meanings into the artwork, but the message of artwork could be interpreted to other forms to reach more people. That would bring art also to the people with disabilities, to the ones who don't have knowledge about art, or just are not interested. Especially what comes to modern art, many people have a feeling that they don't understand it, and therefore we should ask the question that how we want the audience to exhibit art? Is the price of minimizing distractions to zero, that most of the audience feel themselves dumb, uncomfortable and outsiders,

instead of enjoying of the art?

Guggis offers parallel pathways for people with different backgrounds, and physical features. These options could be invisible most of the time, but could be taken out from the floor or wall, or technology that could be turned on and off. For instance, visually impaired people see with their hands, so Guggis would offer a way to see the masterpieces with their way of seeing, by touching and through other senses. These alternatives could be made by other artists, or art students, and it would also bring conversation among artworks. Parallel pathway offers solutions also to the kids, and youngsters, instead of forcing them to act in a museum against their nature. In Guggis people can enjoy of art through their own nature.



### 3. artist residence

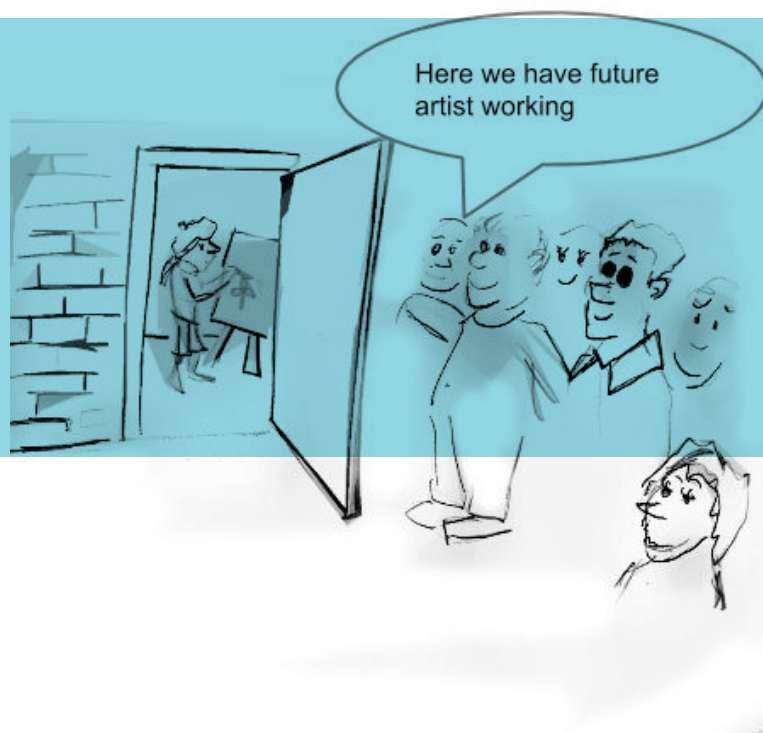


artists



education

Everyone should have an access to see art. Therefore Guggis includes an opportunity to pay entrance in alternative ways. These alternative ways of paying could be for instance working for common good, like maintaining green roofs, urban garden, or cleaning. For artist that is also an excellent opportunity to keep workshops for getting into the exhibitions for free.



### 4. alternative way of paying



artists

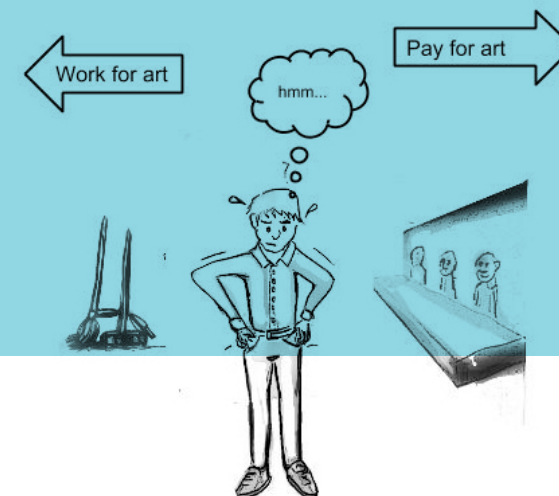


education



no money

Guggis pushes educational limits of museums even further. To understand better how artists work, GUGGIS offers residences to upcoming artists. In that way artist would have an excellent grounds for working. It would also be an interesting opportunity to showcase works and working methods an artist. This concept would promote a new kind of interactivity between the artists, art experts, and the audience. It would bring a new meaning into the future concept of an art museum





## 5. multifunctional. night shift



tourists

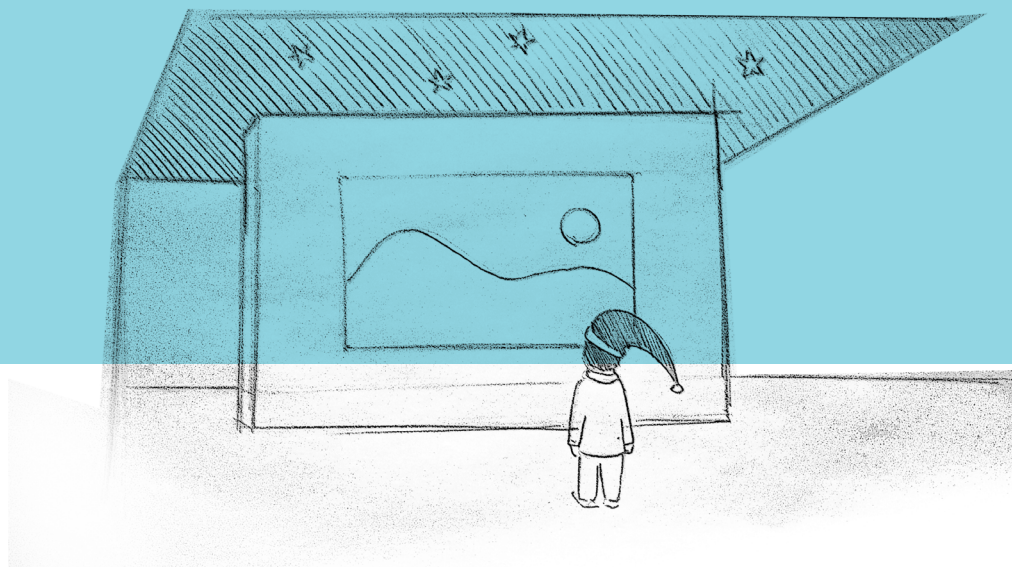


no time



artists

Very often people are too busy during the day to see art. Also there is an expectation for a non-stop ubiquitous service of everything. Hence “night-shift” opening hours would make an arts collection much more attractive for various groups.



## 6. multifunctional. cafe beside art



no interest



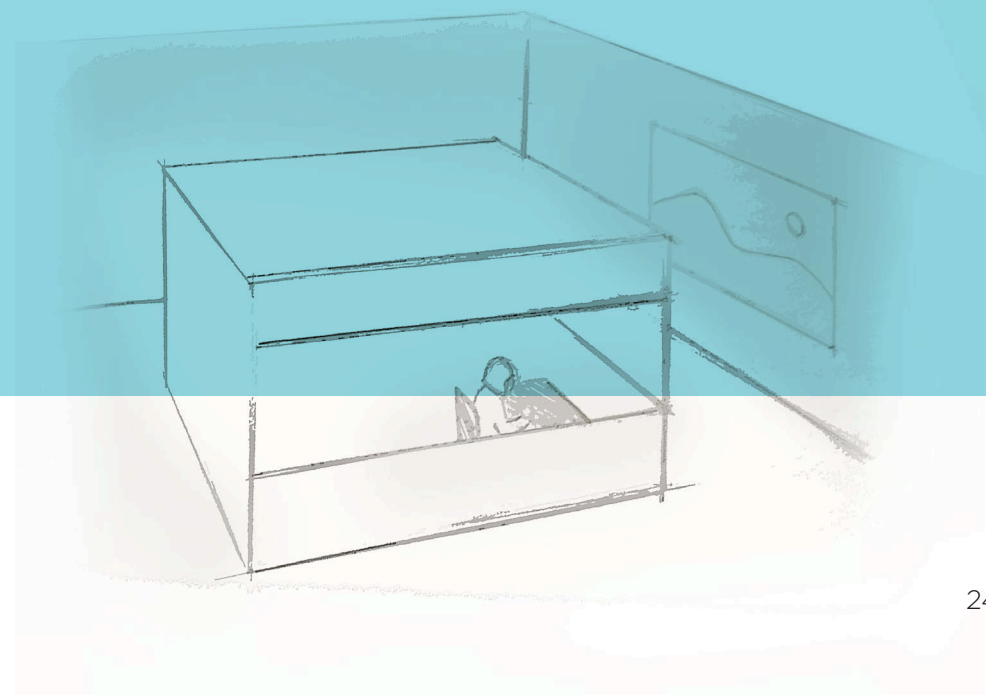
tourists



education

Usually you walk through an exhibition, and after a while you might sit down to have a coffee at the museums cafe, where you can not see any artworks anymore.

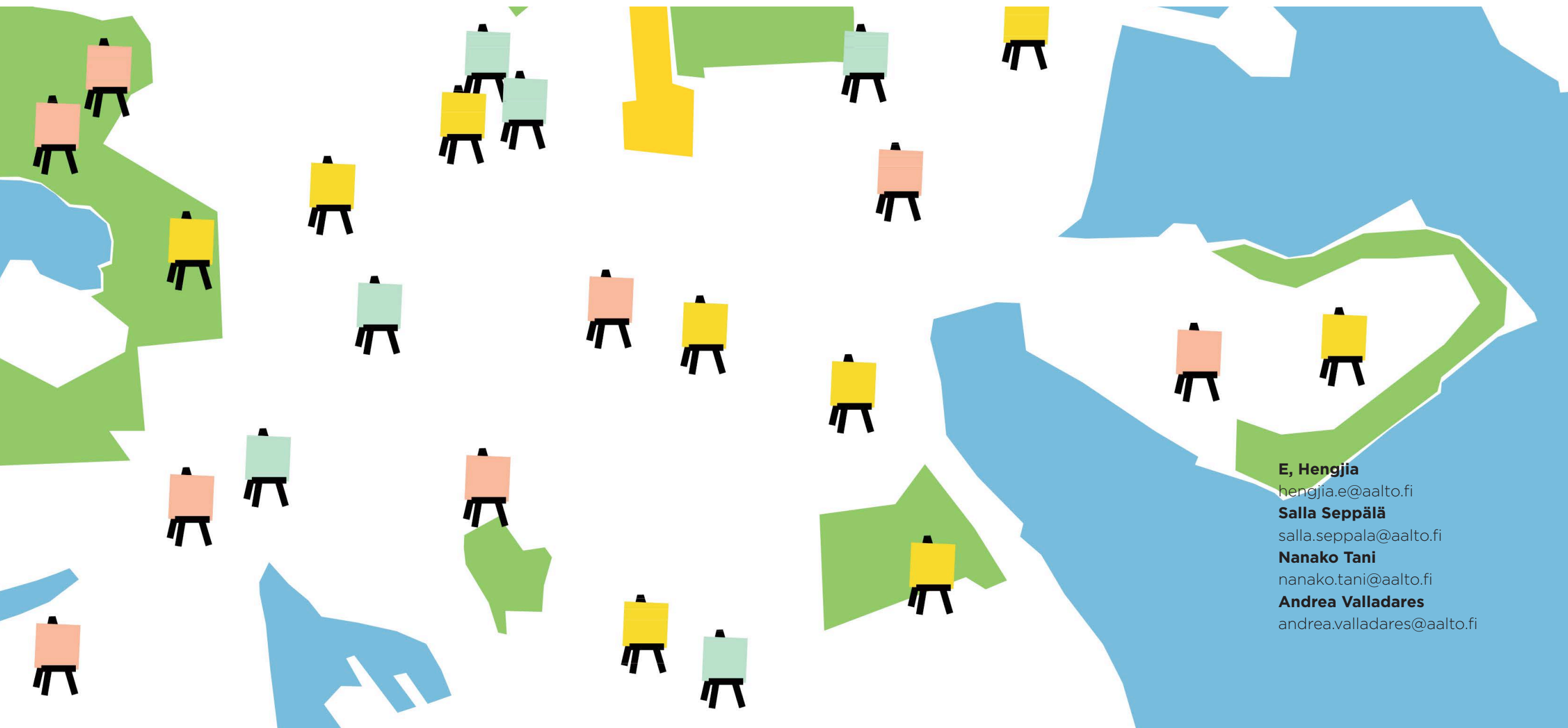
How about creating a “second way of observation” and sit down in a cafe placed in the midst of the artworks.



# TAIDEPÄIVÄ

Art Day.

**A Grassroots Approach.**



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# TAIDEPÄIVÄ

Art Day. A grassroots approach.

Briefly, Guggenheim has tried to set a museum in Helsinki twice. The first attempt (2011-2012) failed in many ways. The project was considered being snobby, prepared in secret and having a too high price tag, and it never gained the trust of politicians nor people.

The second time Guggenheim Foundation took better care about public relations and hired Milton, a PR company to do the lobbying. This time the process has been more transparent but yet the idea of Guggenheim museum isn't widely accepted.

The doubts are justified. Excluding the original Guggenheim museum in New York and the world-famous Guggenheim Bilbao, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation has very little to tell about successful museums. It is highly unlikely that a Bil-

bao-like miracle would happen again in another location. An extravagant piece of architecture with an American tourist attraction concept brought Bilbao fame and success almost two decades ago (and it still does), but it was the first of its kind. Copying the same concept elsewhere wouldn't have the same enchantment, not to forget that the world in 2014 is different from 1997.

Mostly there has been discussion about money, for example if tax money should be involved and if the Guggenheim museum can become a profitable investment. Of course money is also playing an important role. However, more discussion about the identity of the museum and the art is needed. What kind of art would be interesting, even desirable? Whose works would the museum be exhibiting?

## GUGGENHEIM HELSINKI - FOR OR AGAINST?

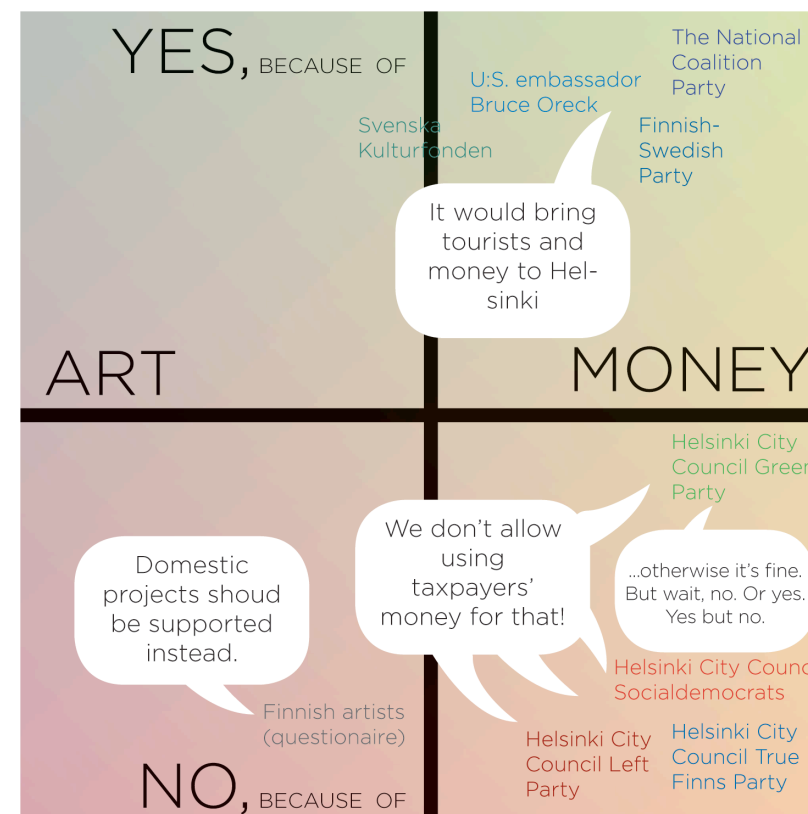


Chart of some opinions and arguments in public discussion about Guggenheim Helsinki.

Main source: Helsingin Sanomat

### WHY HELSINKI?

Finland has a glorious history in art and design. While the traditional industries, such as Finland's big employers, paper and metal industry, are leaving Europe, the latest success has been reached in the game industry. Maybe creativity could be the new paper industry of Finland? In addition to creative potential, Finland is one of the most equal countries in

many aspects, which makes it a good platform for start-ups and grassroots movements that can grow big. One of the good examples is Ravintolapäivä, the restaurant day, that has spread to 190 cities in more than 30 countries.

Inspired of Ravintolapäivä, we try to find channels for grassroots art to be made, seen and celebrated.



# taidePÄIVÄ

## INTRODUCTION

Our idea is to organize an Art Day in Helsinki. It calls for recognized and hidden artists of Helsinki and international communities to come out to show their works. Exhibitions, workshops and various events about art with different scales and themes will happen in every corner of the city. It is a good chance to have fun, share new experiences and enjoy our common living environments together.

## -Equality

In Art Day, there are no expensive tickets. All events are free of charge. Everyone can join in this big celebration. The event organizers, even though they may not be professional artists, can also hold an exhibition to share their art work. There are many talented artists who are now still the unknown people of Hel-

sinki. There's a great chance to find new artists on Art Day.

## -Exploration

When we mention a museum, the first thing that comes to our mind is always the building, rather than the art works inside. Is it really so that if we want to have a Guggenheim museum, we firstly need to spend so much money on building a grand piece of architecture?

Through Art Day, we want to explore the possibilities of new forms of future museums. Every place can be a museum: a home, garage, yard, street, etc. There are many unused places in the city that can be utilised for holding various events as well. It can not only extend the value of these places, but also guide citizens to see a new face of the city.

## -Interaction

On Art Day, visitors have the chance to talk with the artists, listen to the stories behind the work, and learn how the work is made. Artists also can get reflections and suggestions from the visitors. It

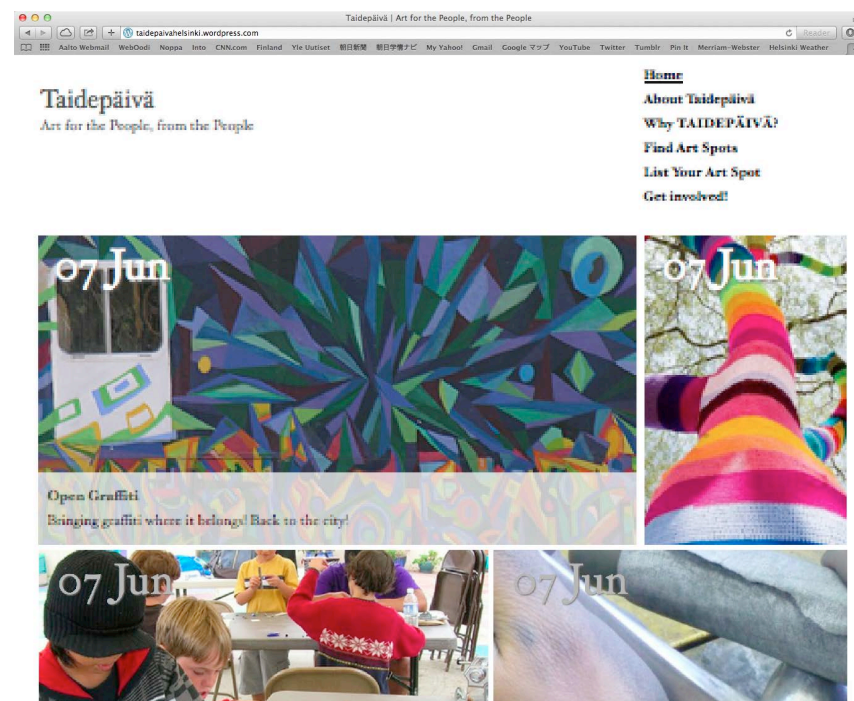
is a good platform for visitors and artists to communicate and interact with each other. Furthermore, people can also take part in the art creation through workshops, and can try different kinds of art and have new experiences.



Art Day is a grassroots movement to show politicians what artists and people want and how they prefer things to be done. It is another way of approaching and looking at art. Maybe it is a more Finnish way of doing things? Not too extravagant – simple is beautiful.



http://**taidepaiva**  
**helsinki.**  
wordpress.com



The Taidepäivä webpage will be our initial platform for organizing the Art Day.

The menu consists of:

### 1. About Taidepäivä

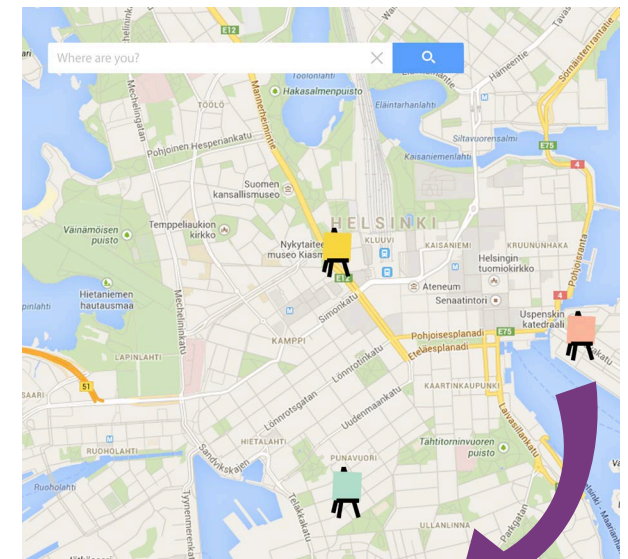
Here we have explained what the Art Day is.

### 2. Why Taidepäivä?

Here we mentioned the Guggenheim and explained how the Art Day could provide new insights to art in Helsinki.

### 3. Find Art Spots

To find an Art Spot to visit on Art Day, here you will find a map (right). You can type in your location, and the nearest Art Spots will appear. By clicking on one of the markers, it will lead you to a detailed description of the Art Spot (below right); the title, artist, exhibition time, and tags such as indoor/outdoor/workshop. Below you can find a more detailed map, and links to other related Art Spots. Another way to find an Art Spot is from the themes on the top page (left page). The images indicate different themes such as painting, crafts, or workshops, and you can choose one that you are interested in. By clicking the image you will be able to find a list of related Art Spots.



### UAA Workshop



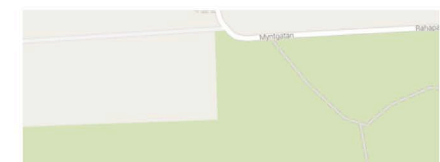
Artist: UAA (Upcycling Art Association), Aalto University, School of Arts, Design & Architecture

Location: Katajamokan puisto, Helsinki

Time: 11.00-18.00

Tags: Outdoor, workshop, participatory

The UAA of Aalto University are hosting their first upcycling workshop this summer! We will be waiting with some materials, but bring anything you aren't using anymore at home, and we will help you to transform it into a completely new art piece.



### 4. List Your Art Spot

If you want to promote your Art Spot on the internet, go here or use Facebook to register. Information about public places that are provided by the city is also stated here, as well as the possible material support by companies. Underneath is the registration form.

### 5. Get Involved!

We are always waiting here for any new ideas or suggestions about Taidepäivä.

# WHAT DOES TAIDEPÄIVÄ HAVE TO DO WITH GUGGENHEIM?

The main problems in the Guggenheim arriving in Helsinki have been the lack of trust and the public discussion concentrating mainly on money. After all, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is – in its own words – “dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art”. That message hasn’t probably been conveyed enough and, if it is, it has definitely not been heard.

The Guggenheim Foundation needs to do things differently to be seen as a friend or a companion instead of a colonialist conqueror. In our concept the Guggenheim Foundation has a chance to enhance its public image, be visible in a positive context and promote art.

Taidepäivä is an independent concept that is not dependent on whether there’s going to be a Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki or not. Like Ravintolapäivä, it can be organized entirely by individual people and NGOs.

But as a noticeable partner in organizing Taidepäivä, Guggenheim could upgrade the event and offer people experiences by utilising its resources and networks. Guggenheim could for example help in promoting the event, offer spaces for Taidepäivä exhibitions and workshops and maybe invite some international artists to participate in the event.

In return, Guggenheim would probably be seen as a patron, a godfather of the local art movement – or at least an organization that is more good than bad and is honestly interested in Helsinki.

If the Guggenheim Helsinki would have will and courage to exhibit fresh, local and not established artists in the museum – in addition to the big names – they could find new talents and unprecedented content from Taidepäivä.

## “Grassroots Guggenheim”



## REFERENCES

[archdaily.com/475322/what-the-guggenheim-should-consider-before-building-in-helsinki/](http://archdaily.com/475322/what-the-guggenheim-should-consider-before-building-in-helsinki/) | [guggenheimhki.org](http://guggenheimhki.org) | [guggenheim.org/guggenheim-foundation](http://guggenheim.org/guggenheim-foundation) | [hel.fi/hki/helsinki/en/Services/Culture+and+libraries/guggenheim-study](http://hel.fi/hki/helsinki/en/Services/Culture+and+libraries/guggenheim-study) | [hs.fi](http://hs.fi) | [restaurantday.org](http://restaurantday.org) | [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org) |

# History of the Design Ethics course

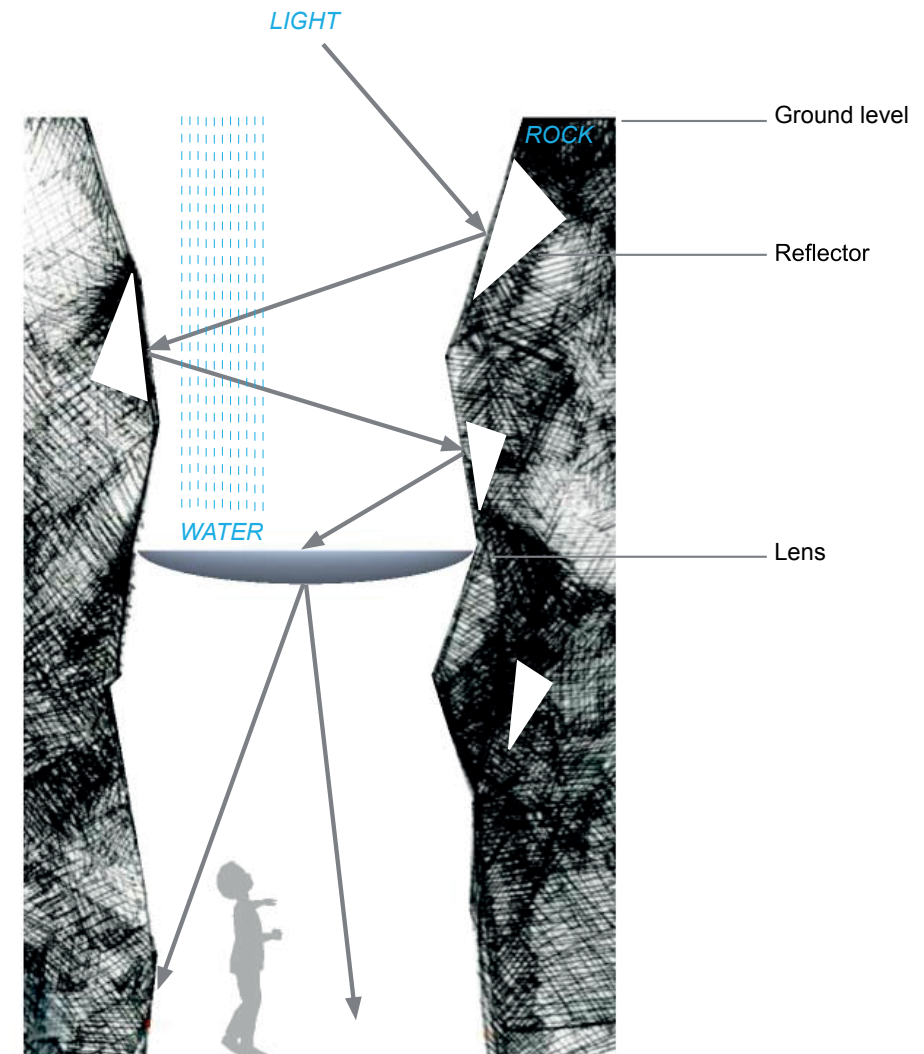
The Design Ethics course has been running in the program of Creative Sustainability for four consecutive years. The content represents the fundamental issues in design. However, it has proven out that every year class has an approach of their own to the topics discussed and everybody, also the professors and visiting lecturers need to be reminded of them.

**The first part** of the module gives a short overview into the history, legacies, values and responsibilities of design. This is achieved through a series of lectures, assignments and working sessions where students find, explore, discuss and analyze examples from the cultural history of art, architecture and design. **The second part** of the module explores the contemporary business and globality-related conditions such as global economy, sustainability, political context, social context. A series of lectures, case-based assignments and intensive working sessions train the students to understand and champion the ever changing conditions in corporate and international communities. The course also aims to make an forecast of a specific field of design how the values and responsibilities develop. **The third part** of the module explores copyrights on an individual, corporate, legal perspective. **The fourth part** of the module explores design critics. How to participate in and lead design debate - public and private. How to evaluate and give critics on design through discussions and practical workshops in creating and evaluating good and bad design.

**The outcome of the module** is one or more articles or artifacts that want to leave a longer life message to next year classes and generations of design students.

Some partners throughout the years; Design Discussions, Nokia, Kone and Retretti Art Museum have to be gratefully mentioned.

As an example of the kind of a message the students wanted to leave was when two years ago the students designed works of art to be found from the caves of the Retretti Art Museum in 3000 years time from now.



## KNOWLEDGE IN TIME

Work by Kätlin Kangur - 2012

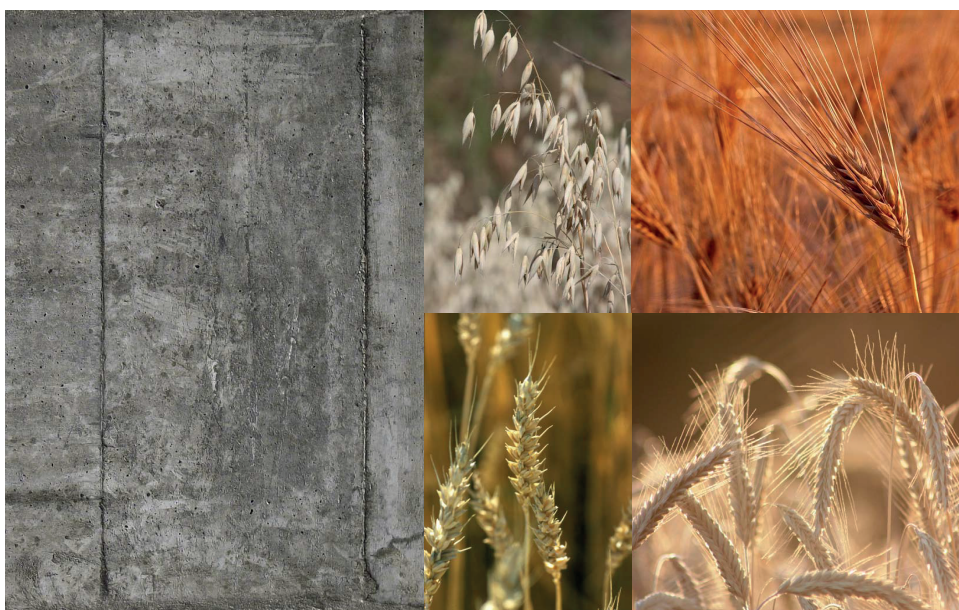
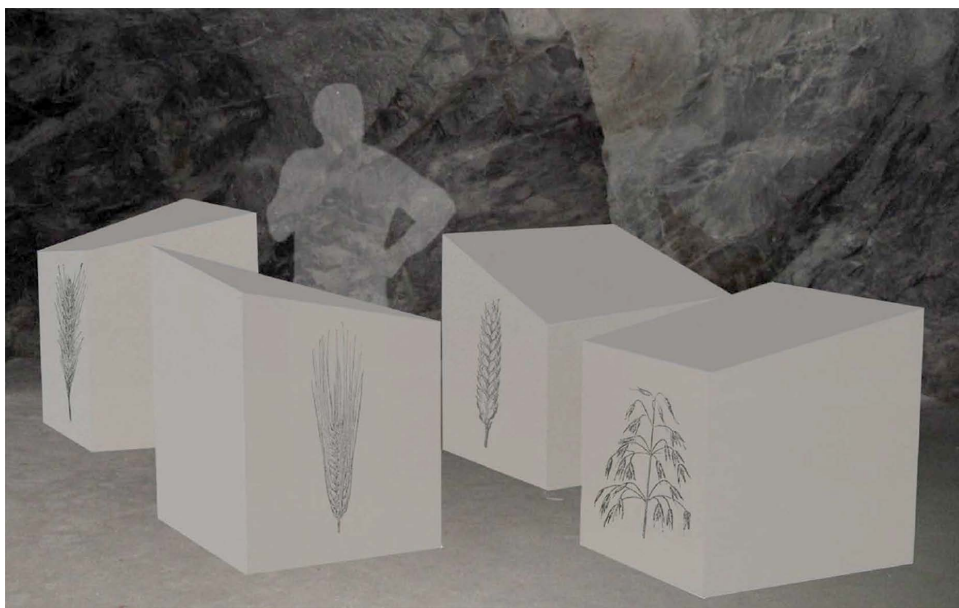
Kätlin's idea was to bring life inside the cave by building a large lense that collects water and light with the help of mirrors. The point is to guide light and water inside the cave and therefore enable possibility for new forms of life. Furthermore the combination of a large lense, water and light also creates a special visual experience for the museum visitors.



**SEED BANK**

Work by Suvi Kajamaa - 2012

Suvi's idea for bringing life in to the cave was to make different mixes of concrete and different grains such as rye, barley, oat and wheat. The idea is to add the grains inside the concrete block where they would most likely last for 3000 years for the future generations.



I would like to take the opportunity to sincerely thank the Creative Sustainability program leader Tiina Laurila and the programme coordinator Naoko Nagakawa to have made the course possible and for their support throughout the years. I also want to thank my two research assistants Jukka Isosaari and Timo Halko without whom everything would have been not as organized.

Last but not least I like to warmly thank all the students who attended the Design Ethics course. The discussions have been the best of interaction with such a strong charge of empathy - the essence of design.

Eero Miettinen

# What about **Guggenheim**



[www.facebook.com/whataboutguggenheim](http://www.facebook.com/whataboutguggenheim)

-PROJECT DISCUSSION CONTINUES

