

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin

Creating Imagery of Latvian and Eastern European
Identity within a Devised Process

By

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Abstract

This artistic research project documents my transition from fine arts into a performative practice. I am focusing on developing a personal toolkit of methods that support this shift to a facilitator and a director. The first part is my individual exploration that includes methods such as: creating character from image, writing with objects, and working with a real site in developing a semi-fictional space (exploring site-specificity through my observations and video documentation of Riga's specific environment).

The second part is a collaboration with two artists, Ģirts Dubults and Laine Luīze Freidenberga. We use a devised process concept, *Sister Planets*, to translate our embodied cultural experiences and identities into performative language. This method emphasizes building shared poetics through methods of generating shared poems, visualisation, movement with objects, and integrating methods from the collaborators' individual practices.

Alongside methodological development, a strong interest in my identity as a maker emerged, deeply influencing my artistic inquiry. This situatedness—as a young female artist from Latvia and Eastern Europe—shapes the themes of belonging and alienation in the Scandinavian cultural context and intersectionality in my work. I investigate how cultural, gendered, and geopolitical factors inform performance and dramaturgy. These personal reflections have evolved into shared thematic concerns within my collaborations, where individual histories and embodied memories merge into a collective exploration. Through this research, I seek new dramaturgical forms that channel socio-political narratives within primarily visual and poetic contemporary performing arts language.

*estranged body of a building rises above the city
As always I walk over a bridge to reach the centre, it is a winters day,
ice blocks are flowing in the river underneath, wind is creating a whistle in the railing,
I am thinking whether the grand station could become a theatre when it will be abandoned*

Introduction

As an artist, my wish to gain more tools for working with the composition of live time-based media, developing personal storytelling, and learning how to hold space for creative processes with others led me to Performing Arts. Initially, my MA exploration began as a formal search for tools necessary for a visual artist to deepen my understanding of dramaturgy and directing. Gradually, it became more coloured by personal crises of belonging, as I began questioning my role and identity as a maker—this became a central theme.

Facing various challenges in pursuing the education and artistic practice led me to rethink my identity as a creator in relation to cultural background, gender, class, and my situatedness within the contemporary performing arts field—while moving between Stockholm and Riga, and coming from Latvia. I became increasingly interested in how the specifics of my experience—coming from a region marked by post-Soviet artefacts in cityscapes, infrastructure, economics, and public behavior—could function as a driving force for artistic exploration and for making sense of both my surroundings and my identity.

I started to treat my return as an investigation—an ongoing field trip for gathering and accumulating knowledge. Alongside my interest in the agency of surroundings, I became curious about how materials and living more-than-human entities might inform and offer alternative perspectives on the surrounding environment. These connections for me emerged in quite tentacular and rhizomatic ways, and I will try to walk you through my journey.

My reserch is now balancing on two pillars:

1. How can I make the theatre space and dramaturgy a continuous practice by integrating object and spatial composition (from installation and scenography), while embracing material agencies? How can I compose shifting hierarchies in performance by decentralizing the performer as the main center and giving autonomous expressive weight to objects, sound, light, and video projection?

2. In what ways does my cultural identity as a female artist from Latvia/Eastern Europe shape my transition from visual arts to directing, and how can I use this as a thematic foundation to invite collaborators, build shared artistic material, and define my role as a maker?

The most difficult challenge for me has been understanding how to marry these two approaches – 1. my interest in working with objects as an important compositional part and 2. Cultural identity as a thematic driving force for performance-making. The biggest dilemma in creating the performance—and in writing about it—has been the tension between wanting to represent my cultural and social context as a central theme and the pre-existing focus on post-human dramaturgies that I embraced before starting this project. For some time, I have been interested in material-driven exploration—working toward a form where the human is decentered and integrated into a non-human ensemble. I find myself torn between the desire to highlight specific regional experiences—subjective, lived experiences of myself and the performers, exploring our situatedness as Eastern European/Latvian makers within contemporary performing arts—and my interest in generating performative material as a response to materiality, space, and environment. The latter has been my primary entry point into performance-making. I wonder if it is possible to remain true to both directions simultaneously, and whether the presence of objects and the use of digital media can act as extensions of specific cultural and geographical locations and personal experiences, while carrying their own agency without becoming merely representational.

Lately, I have felt a pull toward incorporating more text and narrative into my work, partly moving away from a direct, hyperfocused attention on the “thingness” of materials and being present with them, in favor of storytelling. Yet, I remain influenced by new materialist ideas, now primarily using them to create speculative texts that give voice to objects. Text has become a significant part of our collective work with Laine Luīze Freidenberga (she/her) and Ģirts Dubults (they/she/he) alongside movement exercises exisises, helping to establish a shared frame of reference and a establish our own “Latvian” poetics, that we used in visualization exercises. This creates a paradox: the increasing use of language draws me closer to theatrical expression —both in making work for a human audience and in employing human communicative tools such as language and text. Ultimately, I find myself writing more from a personal perspective about my experience of environments. I will mention the writing practices

further in the Methods chapter. Laine and Ğirts have given me their consent to referre to the collaboration and our conversations.

I set an initial precondition that I would work within a frontal Black Box format. I have wanted to explore what working in a Black Box studio can bring into my existing practice. At SKH, I have the opportunity to access such a space and equipment. I am curious to observe what my practice and the specific performance project *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* can gain or lose in this format—what advantages the format might offer, and what might be limited by this specific context and concept, considering the traditions and inherent information this format carries. I chose to work with frontality, because it is new for me.

I have invited artistic collaborators: Ğirts Dubults and Laine Luīze Freidenberga, both of whom share a connection to Stockholm, either personally or through our studies. Together, we work within a collaborative method we call “Sister Planets.” My goal is to translate our embodied experiences of cultural backgrounds, identities as makers, and personal relationships to Stockholm into a performative language shaped through feminist lenses. In this devised process, I am drawn to exploring both the internal, fantastical spaces we inhabit and the external environments from which we come. We are crafting a semi-fictional world through worlding strategies that embrace the intersectionality of our identities.

With this reflection, I aim to trace the development of my personal methodology, crystallizing working tools and exploring how they are employed in the creation of my performance, *Petals Sprouting from Skin*.

*I walk on the frozen puddles that look like portals
transferring my body weight they break with a soft, crisp hiss
I am playing that I haven't been here, I playing that I'm gathering data
– filming small clips of puddles and garages with my phone*

Situatedness

As part of this final MA year, I have struggled to fully accept my return to Eastern Europe—moving back to Riga. At first, I narrated my time here as an “escapist field trip,” treating it as an extended investigation for my MA project, gathering observations. Over time, however, my experience softened, and I began to embrace the specific qualities of the place.

Living on the European periphery—Northern Europe but not Scandinavia—is challenging, especially given the visible disparities in wealth compared to Scandinavian countries and the proximity to Russia. While these differences are not comparable to non-EU countries, significant economic and developmental gradients still exist within Europe. My intention is not to claim this as the most difficult context, but rather to broaden the scope of grey zones and highlight these gradients. In many ways, it feels more radical to remain here; yet, from a professional artist’s perspective, it is a difficult choice due to the lack of support and infrastructure for arts and culture, especially in light of growing political tensions and militarization, which further threaten cultural funding.

As an artist, I am drawn to the idea of partial perspective by Donna Haraway, she proposes “the privilege of partial perspective” as a more honest and accountable way of knowing, in contrast to the so-called “view from nowhere” claimed by universal or objective science. (Haraway 1988, p.575–576.) — this idea helps me understand how the intersectionality of origin, gender, and class is at play in artistic content and imagery of it and how these elements relate to each other. As a Latvian woman from an artistic family of working-class background, now studying and working in Nordic countries such as Sweden and previously Norway, I find my position shaped by a specific intersection of cultural, gendered, and classed experiences. While I hold privileges as a white European citizen, I also experience a sense of marginality in relation to dominant Western/Nordic institutional frameworks — particularly as someone coming from a post-Soviet, Eastern European context, neither fully ‘inside’ nor fully ‘outside’ of the structures I move within. I try to approach my role in the room as one of partial visibility, shaped by lived history, social codes, and institutional contexts. This perspective is informed by my experience of working within a performing arts scene—particularly in Latvia and the

broader region—where reliable support structures and consistent funding are scarce. The lack of stable institutional backing creates an underdeveloped environment for producing new works, forcing artists to navigate fragmented resources and intermittent opportunities. Limited access to festivals, curated programs, and larger international networks further restricts exposure and the potential for professional growth. Compounding these challenges is the scarcity of a prepared or engaged audience, which affects both the reception and development of contemporary performance work.

I am interested in how lived experiences and environments influence internal, imaginary spaces. This experience of place feels truly special, and I often struggle to convey the atmospheric, cultural and spatial qualities that have long influenced my practice. Only recently have I begun to attempt capturing and articulating these qualities with greater care. I believe that theatre, as a complex, multisensory medium, allows me to construct aspects of these atmospheres more directly than other forms of retelling. Performers' bodies serve as containers of personal knowledge and lived cultural experiences, present and active in real time. I value the format of simply showing and listening—watching bodies move and relate to space and objects over an extended period of time, for me this openness invites deeper attention and connection beyond verbal, it is often easier for me to show than describe. It allows me to compose across different media—movement, objects, light, sound, text—in a way that gradually reveals a layered narrative or unfolding experience. Rather than imposing a fixed story, the performance emerges through a gradual layering of moments, allowing the performers' presence and histories to be witnessed in relation to the cultural and spatial contexts of the work.

In this project, I am shaping a shared space with Laine Luīze Freidenfelde and Ģirts Dubults. We all share Latvian origins and connections to Stockholm—through family, diaspora, or studies. My link to Stockholm began with family friends in the Latvian diaspora who emigrated to flee occupation; Laine's father moved to Stockholm seeking better economic opportunities; and both Ģirts and I have come here to pursue higher education – searching for access to quality education in contemporary performing arts. Thus, our collaboration weaves a network of small threads connecting personal and cultural histories. This work is made for Swedish context, but I hope to acknowledge the specific dynamics of contrast between two places that inform our work.

The specifics of this region also resonate in the academic sphere. Certain art discourses established in Western European institutions still need nurturing in Latvia's intellectual landscape. I particularly appreciate research conducted in Latvian that connects closely to my interests—such as Ieva Melgalve's work on new ontologies, new materialism, and performativity; Anne Sauka's research on the body; and Jana Kukaine's *Visceral Aesthetics: Artefacts and Feminist Art in Postsocialism* (Kukaine, 2024). These voices speak to the context in which I live and create as my project explores new forms of creating belonging to a shared place of origin and its artefacts.

Melgalve's research has been crucial in shaping my interest in material-driven exploration and post-human dramaturgy. This perspective resonates with my ongoing inquiry into how non-human entities—materials, objects, digital media—can carry cultural and geographical meanings without becoming mere representations (Melgalve, I. 2024). Sauka's focus on the body informs my approach to embodiment and the visceral connection between performer, space, and material. Her insights into how bodily experience is shaped by sociocultural contexts echo my own reflections on the intersectionality of identity—especially as a female artist from Latvia navigating the legacies of post-socialist environments (Sauka., A. 2024). This has influenced how I structure performative gestures and physicality, aiming to evoke not just individual but collective histories and lived realities embedded in bodies. Kukaine's focus on lived experience, intimacy, and the embodied subject feels especially relevant as I navigate my own relationship to this region, themes that surface in my MA performance *Petals Sprouting from Skin*. Her focus on artefacts as carriers of feminist and post-socialist memory inspires my use of objects and spatial arrangements to embody political and emotional narratives. This has enabled me to situate my performance not only as a personal story but as a performative investigation into shared histories and identities—connecting themes of gender, place, and material agency.

I have also become aware of a slight danger in my 'field trip' gaze—that of maintaining a researcher's or observer's distance rather than fully engaging with the place. However, spending more time here, I have begun to notice that knowledge I am searching for exists here in lively and integrated forms. I recently talked to Polish performing arts researcher Anna Majewska about situatedness in Eastern Europe and of validating semi-peripheral knowledges, it sparked a very important aspect for me of how do we create a new validation system that would recognise the events taking place in arts communities of this region and that would be a

more internal form of giving value and making it visible, rather than continuing the exhaustion of an unrealistic comparison to wealthier countries, this is still to expand upon in the future. But in this meeting we also realised that in order to recognise what is there we often use externally learned concepts that help us to see the good parts of post-socialist remains in new light, often domestic things and traditions from older generations, but that can be implemented in art-making, such as: care for objects around, circulating material in households, saving packaging and reusing, knowing flora and fauna, knowing herbal medicine, storytelling connecting nature elements (we connected it to degrowth and sustainability, new materialism, etc.). I want to explore how these forms of knowledge and embodied memory can be carried into artistic practice—not as nostalgia, but as a critical, situated approach to making work.

A recent moment of profound connection occurred while listening to a radio talk by Ieva Melgalve with my grandmother (Melgave, 2024). She resonated deeply with the ideas and proudly identified herself as having always been a “post-humanist,” never seeing herself as superior to any other life form. This perspective is rooted in her extensive experience working with plants in agriculture and carrying knowledge of wild plants. In her everyday life she attentively observes trees—how they feel to the body touch, and even the unique sounds each tree produces. I have learned much from her, often without actively acknowledging. My grandmother often imagines that when she passes away, she will become a small piece of dust, continuing to float around the room. It is very likely that the interest in the vivid associative thinking in my artistic work comes from her. The close relation to the material and the sculptural logic is in my mother’s sensitivity as a sculptor working with clay, where she uses her body’s pressure to intimately shape the wet matter through the bodily interaction.

I continue to wander through this semi-constructed ‘field trip,’ only to realize it has become its own kind of home. Where I can connect the artistic tools and discursive anchors and how they connect to specific regional and personal situatedness.

*I am filming out in the open field, people are passing by, it is a weekend,
Girts is coming closer to me from on a path from a distance, dressed in my coat and carrying a purse,
They are very close, opening a purse and holding so my camera and I can see inside of it, they close it and walk away, I
suddenly forget that it is a video we agreed to make, I feel sudden hit of feeling that they will just walk away and I will
never see this stranger again, and all I am left is with this intimate, but deeply confusing and almost sexual gesture of them
showing me the interior of the bag, that I can neither understand or explain.*

Working Together - framework, concept, collaborators, naming

Sisters planet as a working concept

Sisters Planet is a working concept, still forming. The phrase came to me after my internship at Verdensteatret during this MA research. In a spontaneous thank-you message, I wrote that my own practice feels like a “sisters planet” to theirs. I’ve since found this title meaningful, especially in the collaboration with Girts and Laine during the making of *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*.

For me, *Sisters Planet* suggests a way of working together that respects each person’s artistic practice as a world of its own. It’s a way of describing collaboration that doesn’t aim to dissolve individual authorship, but rather to recognise and hold space for the different practices and individuals that come into the shared work. It’s about the meeting of two or more symbiotic practices and searching for overlapping fields and meeting points with some sense of kindred parallels. I want to explore this as a possible structure for collaborative processes—one that holds both individuality and interconnection.

The term “sister planet” in science comes from cosmology, where it describes two planets that share physical and orbital characteristics (O’Rourke et al, 2023). I borrow this term to describe a relationship between practices—formed in different conditions, but capable of moving in close orbit, mutually affecting one another. The concept is also inspired by Elinor Fuchs *EF’s visit to a small planet: Some questions to ask a play* (Fuchs, 2004), where she writes about each play as its own world. In this process, I imagine each collaborator arriving with their own “planet”—and together we open them to shape a new one through the performance making. The concept is a poetic gesture. It is still fresh, and I would like to allow it to unfold over a longer period of time, so that it can develop into a more containing definition and an more outlined strategy for collaboration.

Ideally, *Sisters Planet* concept would be implemented from the very beginning of the process as a foundation for establishing shared ground. In this case, however, the process held a

hierarchical structure. My role in the project was both facilitator and director—an aspect I aimed to explore as part of this research and learning how to hold space for artistic collaborators. I had already begun shaping the project before the collaborators joined, developing the theme, conceptual framework, and some initial visual material. Additionally, the fact that the work was to be presented as part of my MA project contributed to the existing hierarchy. When the collaborators joined, they were invited to respond to the existing material and generate new contributions and bring in their practice within the structure already in place.

Framework

With Çirts, we developed the work over five intensive working sessions—each lasting 2 days—across a period of five months. The schedule was shaped by my ability to travel to Stockholm, Çirts’ availability, and the spatial and financial limitations of the MA project framework.

These in-person sessions were condensed and highly focused. Between them, I continued to develop the project independently. Laine initially joined remotely, composing sound sketches in response to textual and video material from our sessions and ongoing conversations. We first integrated Laine’s sound work during the third session. She then joined us in Stockholm for the fourth and fifth sessions, ultimately becoming a central part of the performance—as both sound designer and on-stage performer. I decided to have a structure of few fixed scenes and leaving places for improvisation inbetween. The work culminated in a public sharing for audience in the black box studio of SKH’s D-theatre.

Collaborators

It was very important to invite collaborators with whom I could reflect together on our shared cultural context.

Çirts Dubults

To create the performance, I invited choreographer Çirts Dubults. I chose to work with Çirts because of their subtle, nuanced way of working with the body and the intellectual depth they brings to their practice; we share an interest in exploring sensuality in the performing arts.

Collaborating with someone who could reflect on experiences rooted in our shared Eastern European background—while navigating the Scandinavian context—was crucial. Ģirts' presence helped shape a poetics grounded in mutual understanding. They are also pursuing an MA in Choreography at SKH, and throughout our collaboration we found common ground in our desire for more critical reflection on Eastern European artist identity, as well as in our discoveries and frustrations.

Laine Luīze Freidenberga

Laine is a musician. We agreed to collaborate during a walk along the wintry seaside in Liepāja. I have come to appreciate her both personally and as a highly talented double bass player. I chose to work with her not only because of her sensitive way of relating to the world—which resonates closely with my own—but also because I feel a strong urge in my practice to support fellow young Latvian female authors. I deeply trust her approach to sound. At this point in time, we are both navigating transitional phases in our artistic practices, each trying to make sense of our living situations and artistic paths in unconventional ways—searching for our place in Latvian society while staying true to ourselves through more experimental forms. In my work, I believe that the conditions in which we live and create strongly influence artistic expression. We've shared a sense that these post-socialist landscapes we come from often feel non-translatable in more Westernized contexts, and we were curious how this could be voiced through the soundscape in relation to the other performance elements.

On naming

I have been looking for ways to describe collaborators role and contribution. I have been in conversation with Ģirts about how to name their role in the project. My initial suggestion was *choreographer*, but we later concluded that, for them, the term didn't fully reflect the nature of their contribution. For Ģirts, choreography is a much broader framework—a way of relating to the world and a lens through which all actions are perceived. Using the term in the context of this performance would have narrowed that understanding too much. Laine also didn't feel comfortable using the word *composer*, as working with music in a compositional way is a new direction for her, musician or sound designer was closer to it. The composer label didn't reflect how she engaged with the sound material.

The word *performer* didn't feel suitable either—it failed to acknowledge the depth of conceptual engagement and intellectual input that Ģirts brought to the work. In Latvian, the word for performer—*izpildītājs*—has a passive connotation, implying someone who merely executes tasks rather than shapes them. For Laine, coming from a background in classical music, the term also carried specific associations that didn't resonate with her role in this process.

We explored other naming possibilities in both English and Latvian. One option was *co-author*, which Ģirts resonated with. The Latvian equivalent, *līdzautors*, contains the word *līdzās*, meaning “being with”—a poetic sense of shared presence that Ģirts appreciated. In the end, I chose to use the term *artistic collaborator*, as it acknowledges the substantial artistic contributions of both Ģirts and Laine. I also felt it more clearly reflected the structure we worked with and be closer to the *Sisters Planet* working concept. Still, I see this as an ongoing conversation and a fertile ground for learning and opening to new formations. In the future, I would like to further rethink naming and authorship structures and continue this dialogue—both within this group and in future projects.

two motorbikes are sharing a moment together,
I have an archive of photos of motorbikes, in silver covers
I make a rain coat from the cover and I walk around, I see a car without wheels

Methodology

This chapter outlines the core methods I have developed and refined over the past two years, many of which have been central to my artistic practice prior to the MA and have now taken on new depth and direction within this program. These methods form the foundation for generating material in my final performance work *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* and reflect an evolving methodology that bridges both individual and collaborative processes.

Individual methods

METHOD 1 – creating a character from an image (Flower petal being)

METHOD 2 – writing with objects (Flower petal and motorbike dialogue)

METHOD 3 – working with a real site in developing a semi-fictional space (exploring site-specificity through my observations of specific environment of Riga, Latvia and Rail baltica station).

Collaborative methods

METHOD 4 – generating shared poems

METHOD 5 – Visualisation

METHOD 6 – Movement with Objects

METHOD 7 – Inviting Others' Practices

METHOD 8 – Associative Timeline

In practice, these categories often are in more fluid overlap. What begins as an individual exploration can be transformed through dialogue and collaboration, and many of the methods flow between solo and collective modes of working.

*I enjoy being the only person with the windowless space , I arrange objects all day.
I invite a trolley to become the motorcycle for the rehearsal, I invite the stanchions to hold the petal. I give petal qualities to a
paper, they make a long trail on the floor*

METHOD 1 – creating a character from an image (Flower petal being)



Sketch 5 dec. blue ballpoint pen on paper

One of the methods I often return to is the act of creating a character or a scene from a single evocative image. Here I want to walk you through the process of using this method in the performance *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* in creating the ‘flower petal being’. See appendix 1.

Short description:

Noticing a thought image → Making a drawing of it → Reflection upon the information the image carries for me → Micro-research into the elements of the image → Physical creation in material based on the image → Rehearsal process to find a movement language for the character.

Noticing a thought image: Dream

I fixate the dream in writing or a drawing. The flower petal being first appeared to me in a dream some years ago. Now, I return to this image, giving it a physical form in the performance. It became one of the starting points for the work and also suggested the title. It is a slightly erotic dream about the appearance of a male figure covered in floral petals that grow out of his skin. When he moves, the petals depart and linger in the air. When he departs from Earth, floating in the air, the petals leave his body.

This is the dream written down in text and, I retell it in a radio show, a short fragment can be heard here in Latvian at 1:46:14: link <https://www.mixcloud.com/MaizeRiga/beate-poikane-dreams-recorded-in-2021>) (thanks to Michael Holland and Ernests Vilsons). It is not part of the MA reserch framework, this was made before the start of it.

Making a drawing

For the drawings I often use simple A4 white paper and a ballpoint pen, either blue or black. Sometimes I make a series of the same image until it feels right. This time, I made the sketch right away. It surprised me that in the intuitive drawing the figure was squatting, as opposed to the walking figure in the dream image. The aim of the drawing is to capture and externalize the image. Often, this helps me see it in relation to other images and think about their connections and sequence.

Reflection on the information the image carries for me

Here I am noting down some of the key points that the imagery resurfaces for me, which were important for me to take into account in the process.

Regional cyborg: A human body that is sprouting multiple flower petals. For me, it is a dual being—between a human and a plant—a kind of cyborg. I am thinking of a cyborg that carries regionally specific information: about local flora, the long winter, and the particular movements of aging people who live in peripheral areas where the apple trees mostly grow. It holds two timelines at once—the aging human body, and another timeline of the sprouting petals as a contradiction. Donna Haraway describes the cyborg as “a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction” (Haraway, 1985, p. 5). In this sense, my flower petal being is

both a poetic fiction and a reflection of lived conditions—a being shaped by place and by imagination. Magda Romanska expands this notion, writing: “Thus the posthuman body is already a bionic body prepared to integrate with, to be augmented or impaired by, the organic and inorganic matter surrounding it.” (Romanska, 2023, p.85). This framing helps me articulate how the being I’m working with is not separate from its environment, but deeply shaped by it—entangled with materials, seasons, and spatial conditions, possibly as a sign of resistance.

Character: By character, I do not mean a psychologically coherent figure. As Hans-Thies Lehmann and Erika Fischer-Lichte describe in the context of postdramatic theatre, these are abstract figurations, “decentered figures,” like Beckett’s Didi and Gogo—“no longer characters as such (as understood in the dramatic sense), but entangled in the web of signs and things—themselves signs and things.” (Romanska, 2023, p. 85). This notion of the postdramatic character as a fragmented, material-driven figuration resonates with how I approach the flower petal being—not as a stable identity, but as an atmospheric and sensory presence shaped through gesture, material, and environment.

Beauty connotations to the petal: Despite the dream origin of the character, I have been reflecting on how to avoid a mere romanticisation of the flower petal—from a human perspective—as a symbolic and cultural representation of fragility and beauty. For example, in the film *American Beauty* (Mendes, 1999), red rose petals are used as a hyper-eroticized symbol tied to a male character’s longing for a younger female figure—a very problematic aspect of the film. I am particularly critical of how such imagery often appears in Western popular media, highlighting the problematic use of floral imagery as a projection of male desire and idealized femininity. In this work, I question whether it is possible—or even desirable—to engage with flower petals without reinforcing these established connotations of the beautified and feminized. In the end, the tension for me lies between how I want to present flower petals in my work : 1. I wanted to present the flower petal as a strong natural entity, highlighting its inherent biological complexity, 2. At the same time, we created our own romanticised version of flower petal from a human perspective—revisiting the beautified image of the petal (expecially when connected to a human body). However, the romanticisation of the body covered in flower petals is not passive; it is a deliberate choice. In embodying the body-flower image, Girls holds power, actively directing the audience’s attention—for instance, by handing

petals to audience members during the performance. Fully aware of being observed, they control the gaze and ultimately decides who receives the flower petals and who does not, asserting his authority over this exchange.

Petal Micro-Research into the elements of the image

In this performance, I want to acknowledge that flower petals are complex entities in themselves. To understand the process of a petal detaching from the core of the blossom, I did a small researched plant development by reading about botanics. To develop the flower petal part – to understand how to develop movement relations to it and how to introduce the petal in text (Method 2), based on more concrete biological processes. I discovered that flower petal disconnection is called abscission. It is a hormonally regulated, multi-step chemical process that occurs as the plant ages (Taiz et al., 2015, p. 591). This information I used to bring the drawn image into next step of getting to know more about the elements that the image holds. Here I will introduce you to the petal departure stages:

1. A signal is sent to the leaf or petal, initiating resorption, during which nutrients are reabsorbed by the plant. Ethylene levels rise in the abscission zone, a specialized layer of cells located at the base of the petal where the separation occurs. Auxin, another plant hormone, decreases in this region, increasing the tissue's sensitivity to ethylene and thereby contributing to the weakening of the petal's attachment (Taiz et al., 2015, p. 591).
2. Water flow to the petal is then halted, and a protective layer forms. The cells in the abscission zone begin to break down their walls through enzymatic activity, loosening the connection and making the petal easier to detach (Taiz et al., 2015, p. 665).
3. Finally, external conditions such as wind, gravity, or physical contact help the now loosely attached petal fall away. This shedding is essential for the plant to transition into its next developmental stage (Taiz et al., 2015, p. 665).

Beyond this physiological process, I have also been curious about how flower petals might be placed on the body in performance. I imagine them as apple tree petals. Reflecting on how polypores arrange themselves on tree bark, I recalled observing cherry blossoms sprouting directly from trunks rather than branches. This unusual growth pattern is

often triggered by stress or injury and is known as epicormic growth—a survival mechanism where new shoots emerge from dormant buds beneath the bark (Britannica, 2025).

This idea supports the internal logic of the performance: the body as a living organism under stress, sprouting petals in unexpected places. I brought this concept into approaching body and the movement development process with Girts.

Physical creation in material based on the image

For the performance, I made the flower petals out of paper, fabric coated in candle wax, and I tested possibilities to make them from silicone, but they turned out to be very heavy and didn't hold onto the body, the best variation was – semi-transparent paper, hand painted with water colour and covered in white glue. In the material use, I am feeling conflicted about the representational aspects, which only mimic the visuality we perceive of the petal. It functions on an associative level, while the materials composed of multiple synthetic components are completely detached from the organic essence of a real petal. The artificial nature of these materials raises questions about authenticity and the meaning behind representation, at the same time working with materials for me is often about the sculptural and associative.

Rehearsal process to find a movement language for the character

Here, I want to flag that I am not implying this on Girts and don't want to suggest any objectifications of their body in relation to the dream. Within the work Girts is finding their own bodily expression in relation to the material.

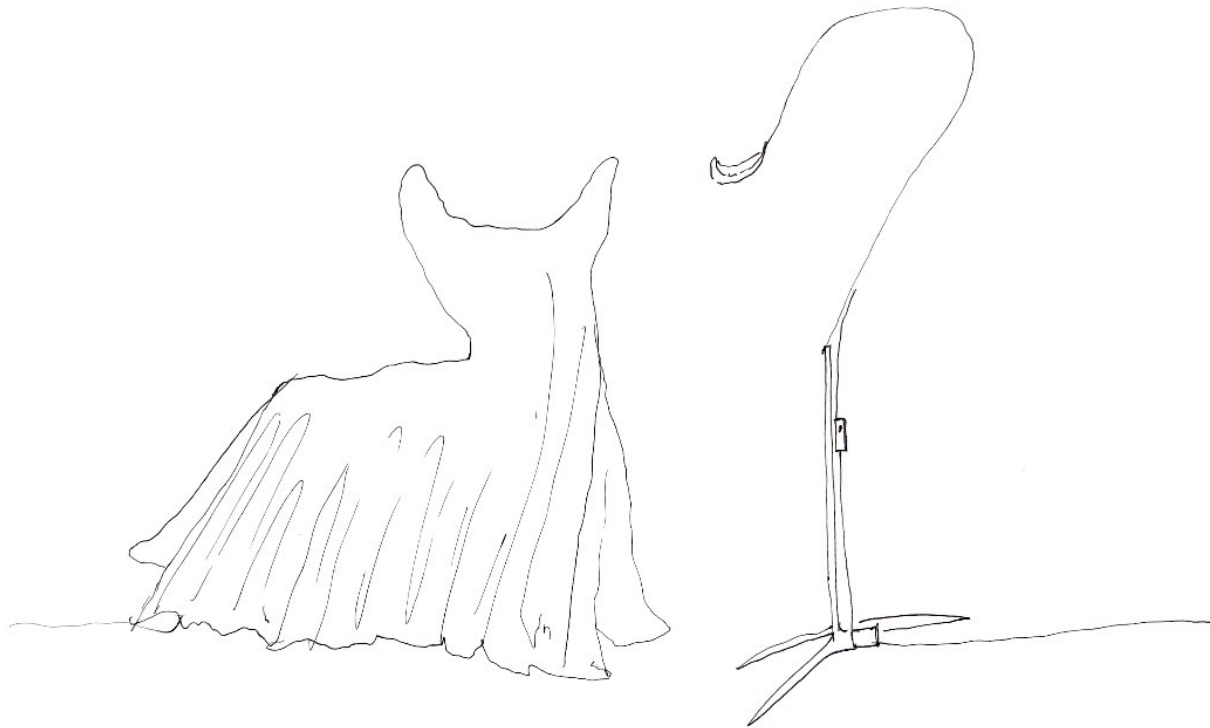
We used the flower petals in movement tests as a body extension for them to feel how it is to move with glued elements to the skin and find their own movement quality. In the rehearsals Girts had attached petals to their body, in those sessions, we tested what movement is provoked by this sensation and how removing the petals as an exisiste can dictate the dramaturgy of the 'petal being' scene.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

Method 'creating a character from an image' proceeds through sequential stages: noticing an image, drawing, reflection, targeted research, material creation, and embodied movement exploration. It allows for a structured, yet flexible development of a 'character', integrating various layers of visual semiotics. This content that is produced varies a lot depending on what information the initial image holds. The approach can be adapted to various artistic contexts, providing a clear framework for transforming an initial image into a multidimensional performative element. For me the use of this method was succesful, althought I would like to find ways to make the reflection part and micro-research more integrated into the final outcome.

*I write and vocalise a dialogue for the flower petal and the motorbike
I imagine a space where they are standing in a backyard by my primary school exit,
I don't think there was an apple tree.
Apple tree view, 20second snippet is playing in my head
it is a view from the way to my grandmother, passing by in a car, the trees blurred by speed*

METHOD – 2 writing with objects (Flower petal and motorbike dialogue)



Sketch 24jan. ballpoint pen on paper

Short description:

Choosing two objects from the urban landscape → writing a dialogue between them
incorporating observations of Rigas cityscape → recording the dialogue voicing the two
distinct voices → staging a scene where the sculptural objects are physically present, and the
voices come from hidden speakers beneath them.

I welcome you to take a look at the dialogue that is added in the appendix 2.

Here I want to walk you through the process of using this method in creating the Flower petal
and motorbike dialogue:

I want to mention that important reference for developing this method has been Sidsel Christensen research and artistic practice, she is an artist working with narrative and more-than-human beings in installation, performance and film. She introduced me to live action role play method as part of her PHD research, I was part of several sessions in voicing live dialogues of hyperobjects as performer and participant in the development workshops.

I chose two objects from the urban landscape

This method begins with an attentive selection of objects from the urban environment, imagining their histories, components, and possible interactions. The dialogue is an attempt to engage in a speculative imagination to inhabit the perspective of the objects themselves. Through this, I explore their physicality, origins, and their coexistence within the cityscape as living entities with agency. The dialogue becomes a poetic medium that opens up ways of thinking about materiality and place. I wanted the two entities to be contrasting – one organic/natural and one synthetic human-made.

Motorbike: I chose motorbike, because motorbikes have captured my attention for a long time, especially when they are covered in the silver covers for me they become sculptures in the landscape, I have often been evoked by their positioning in the city and I often start to perceive them in a slightly animalistic manner, because of their beast-like appearance. I wanted the motorbike voice to challenge the connotation to masculinity. I wanted the motorbike to be a very soft and caring character that is rather sentimental. I wanted to explore the motorbike's relation to their driver, their relation to the movement and the timeline of metal of which the motorbike is made out of as part of the character identity.

Flower petal: I chose a single flower petal as a speaking entity, knowing that it would later reappear in the work as part of the flower petal being. Here, I wanted to give voice to the petal as an individual—to zoom in on its scale and temporality. I was interested in how its small size, in relation to the human body, could shift the perspective. Placing its timeline alongside that of the motorbike created a dynamic contrast: the petal, as an individual, has a brief lifespan, yet it is part of a much longer ecological cycle—pollination, growth, decay—that spans generations. In contrast, the motorbike, while materially durable, has no such regenerative cycle. This juxtaposition allowed me to reflect on different forms of time—organic and

mechanical, cyclical and linear. I imagined the flower petal as unapologetically explorative, reckless and fearless voice.

I wrote a dialogue between them incorporating my observations of Riga's cityscape

I wrote a dialogue between them reflecting my observations of Riga's infrastructure—particularly centering on the troubled progress of the Rail Baltica project. This major railway initiative was intended to link the Baltic states with Western Europe via Poland, yet its stalled development now serves as a symbol of disrupted connectivity, uneven urban planning, and the complex geographical situatedness of the region.

Dialogue is a traditional form rooted in theatre plays, usually reserved for human characters. Here, I repurpose it by giving voice exclusively to objects, while human performers don't speak. This inversion challenges conventional hierarchies of agency and communication on stage (see in appendix).

This method aligns with a broader new materialist interest in the agency of nonhuman matter. By imagining objects as subjects capable of dialogue, I emphasize their active participation in the world rather than their status as passive props. The dialogue serves as a platform for exploring the coexistence and interdependence of human and nonhuman elements in urban life.

Recording the dialogue using two distinct voices

The dialogue was voiced with Laine – we recorded the voice using zoom recorder. I was reading the flower petal and Laine was reading the motorbike. Each voice was recorded separately and then cut and edited in post production by Laine.

Staging the of the two sculptural objects on stage with speakers

The motorbike and the flower petal are rather abstract objects on stage, composed out of stands, fabric and metal wire, the speakers are positioned at the base of the stand. See in the photo documentation in appendix.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

This method ‘Writing with objects’ can be explored in various ways and can be used in different text forms. For my performance *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* it offered a way to reimagine theatrical dialogue as a site for material speculation. By giving voice to nonhuman objects and allowing them to reflect on their own materiality, histories, and urban entanglements, I sought to create a space where empathy is extended beyond the human. The approach questions normative hierarchies of voice, agency, and presence on stage. It also opens a form of storytelling where speculative fiction meets infrastructural observation, where objecthood becomes a site of meaning-making. In this way, the dialogue is not only a dramaturgical device but also a tool for engaging with the politics, poetics, and temporalities of the other entities.

*Space is taken over by objects, video, sounds and lights
Gradually one by one two bodies emerge from that landscape,
revealing only fragmentary body parts and digitally blurred nudes*

METHOD 3 – working with a real site in developing a semi-fictional space

This method can include a range of approaches from my performance making process, but here I will focus on the mapping and writing a text.

Short description:

Starting with selected elements from Method 4 (shared poems) and previously established images from Method 1, I followed this process → Writing them down → Drawing a map → Speculating on how these elements could be geographically arranged and how they might influence one another in a newly imagined, semi-fictional space → Writing freely from this place

To ground the work, I selected three real, site-specific locations:

Latvia as a territory

Riga city

The Rail Baltica construction in Riga Central station

In my individual mapping, I was especially drawn to the Rail Baltica site. It became a starting point for imagining events and writing the dialogue described earlier. I would like to develop this further through scriptwriting, allowing fictional events to unfold within existing, real-world settings. This approach is partly informed by fantasy literature theory, particularly the world-building methods of author N. K. Jemisin, for example – drawing a map of the place where the events will take place and allowing the place to affect the development of the events, character, society. Here is mine and Girts map – see in appendix 3.

For me, this is about a two-directional, oscillating action of how spaces affect us and how we affect spaces – using text for the building of a semi-fictional world. In exploring this further, I am drawing inspiration from an exploration of a choreographer and friend, Hannah Krebs, from whom I learned the word *worlding*, as opposed to *world-building*, in her exploration "*What impact can the use of 'worlding' have in a dance practice?*" on Research Catalogue:

”*Worlding* is a term from Ian Cheng (game designer, researcher, video artist), where he states it as a different notion than *worldbuilding*, which is a term from Live Action Role Play. *Worlding* means caring for the complexity of the world that you created, rather than only being the architect of the world like the term *worldbuilding* indicates. (Ian Cheng – *Emissaries Guide to Worlding*, 2018)” (Krebs). I like that it decentralises me as an artist and invites a more immersed and relational understanding of it.

Collectively with Ģirts and Laine, the starting point we focused on was Latvia as a territory — not solely in geographical or national terms, but as a shared emotional and cultural landscape. This broader perspective felt more generative than limiting the scope to Riga, especially because both Laine and Ģirts have personal connections to other Latvian cities. My intention is to include our subjective readings of space, personal relations, the dreams and fantasies we have had in this space and about it. For me, it is about complexity and interconnectedness, as Elinor Fuchs writes in the conclusion of her essay: “Characters mean only as they inhabit, enact, fulfill, engage a succession of sites, actions, and objects under a specific set of conditions. They are constituents of a complex artistic pattern” (Fuchs, E. 1987, p. 46.), I am searching for this pattern in our shared texts. We are not focused on characters, but the images and relations we build are functioning in the same interconnected logic for me.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

I see great potential in continuing to develop this approach as a writing method for performance. The mapping process allows me to place different elements into a constellation, offering an overview of the work’s complexity. It also enables meaningful links to emerge between elements, making the structure of the performance more cohesive and layered. In reality the semi-fictional world building was happening on multiple levels – in the performance element relation and bridging in the rehearsal process, but here I am mentioning only the writing part.

*Mini bus drivers are grumpy by default,
whether news mix with unbareble music and dust
– coming in from all gaps of windows and doors.
In the shop dills are stored in a Tarhun bottle
we are no longer far, there will be baked potatoes in sunflower oil*

METHOD 4 – generating shared poems

Context:

Working session with Ģirts – “Poetesses”

Half in humorous manner, half in way we found ourselves in the roles of poets/-esses. We arrived here through tasks that I had prepared, which we altered together throughout the play session. We entered an associative space by using our own language and seeing what images were born out of cultural references and cliché assemblages. With Ģirts’s confident initiative to make a poem collection as a complementary addition to our performance. Thanks to this belief, I made a companion publication for the performance, that was selfmade assemblage of ‘poems’ and rehearsal texts – see in appendix 5.

Shared Poem No. 1 writing method

Short description:

Four category titles are written on separate pieces of paper and laid out on the floor → Each participant writes responses to the category on small slips of paper for 10 min → arrange responses in chosen proximity to the titles → Taking one piece from each category, assemble poem lines of four parts → Each line is to be read out loud after being made

Documentation of the outcome of the exercise can be found as appendix 4 .

The titles we used were: “planet/space”, “time”, “inhabitants”, ”joys/pleasures”. We had agreed to think of this process as building a fictional space—an internal world shaped by our personal experiences of living in Latvia. The idea was to explore how those experiences could become material for crafting a shared semi-fictional cultural landscape. This exercise was inspired by Elinor Fuchs’ *Visit to a Small Planet*, to start to explore our ”planet” – what are the spaces, how time functions, who are the inhabitants, what are the joys and plesures of this place and in what relations they are to each other. Elinor Fuchs in her essay introduces questions such as: ”How does time behave on this planet?”, ”What are the language habits on this planet?”, ”Is this a public world, or private?” (Fuchs, 2024).

Shared Poem No. 2 writing method:

Each participant writes the first line of a poem on a piece of paper → fold the paper to hide the line and pass it to the next player → The next player writes a new line without seeing the previous one → Continue folding, writing, and passing until there's no more space → Unfold the paper and read the resulting poem aloud

See the outcome in the appendix 4.

This method, which I call *Shared Poem No. 2*, was introduced to me as a game called “Tapala lapa” by a writer and a friend Roberts Vilsons. I have adopted it into my artistic practice as a way to generate text collaboratively and to establish a shared poetic language with my collaborators in a playful, open-ended manner. A technique that encourages spontaneity and collective authorship, which I now use to foster shared meaning-making in text creation.

Ģirts and I played it three times. In the last round, we decided to go all the way into clichés, calling it the "schlager/country music" category. Despite causing uncontrollable laughter, the outcomes revealed a lot of strong imagery and spot-on combinations that described our feelings about the cultural legacy within our associative field.

This ‘after conversation’ sparked idea for a video —*What’s in my bag?*—a reference to the pop culture trend where individuals showcase and discuss the items they typically carry in their bag, often used in magazines, or video interviews connected to celebrity culture. Insisted of the items, we would use our poems as the content of the purse – it would be done by reinterpreting the poem content into video material and then in montage the images appear from the interior of the purse. We laughed that in the next meeting we will stage in a style reminiscent of a general Latvian television shows. I imagined a video, where Ģirts opens a purse in a montage that reveals images from the poem line : “a scythe growing from an ice hole”. We filmed the video, but in the end I decided to better do it as a live scene with video shots from Riga’s cityscape.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

In the performance *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, we decided to incorporate some of the texts

voiced by Laine. The recording was meant to reference a radio broadcast. We chose this style of vocalizing to avoid the heightened dramaticism often found in poetry readings and wanted it to sound more like a weather forecast. I placed it at the beginning of the performance, as if to introduce the “weather” of the performance that the audience could expect.

The outcome of the poem-generation method varies greatly depending on the set rules, theme, and participants. I have found that the shared aspect takes away the pressure of presenting an individual poem, making it easier to engage. For me, it works well to maintain group energy and keep the writing playful and fun.

*I am walking over Dauga, part of the sidewalk has been closed for months, narrowing by the rustier it gets,
small path left*

METHOD 5 – Visualisation

Short description:

In the studio, we worked with bodily presence by choosing a word from a shared poem (Method 4) → doing a five-minute exercise embodying the word through movement and observing the sensation.

This method invited us to explore how language can manifest physically, allowing the body to express and respond to poetic imagery. We implemented imaginative exercises inspired by the *Visualization* notebook from *Reading Room: An Experiment in Expanded Reading* by Harriet Plewis, where she touches on key concepts of Karen Barad through the lens of movement practices. In this particular exercise, she uses *Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery* by Erik Franklin for support. I was particularly inspired by this publication because of its use of images to support written tasks, like imagining toes as dandelion parachutes (Plewis, 2021). This relates a lot to my drawings, which are always part of my practice, and I hadn't realized that they could be used as exercises for embodying and exploring feelings within the body, which helped me to establish a strong link. Returning to my original questions about the director's role and the shift from visual arts to theatre and time-based structures, this process has illuminated the potential of integrating visual practices into bodily practice. I have found that directing is about orchestrating multisensory experiences where text, image, and movement inform each other. Ultimately, this exploration has helped me to see directing as a continuous, relational practice—a synthesis of visual arts and theatrical time—that invites embodied meaning-making.

Then, we read the lines and spent three sessions of five minutes each embodying one sentence from our earlier steps. You needed to find where in your body this image was located and then understand how your body and movement were affected by it. For example, some images that came to us were: spine as pieces of ice in a river, or snowdrop flowers growing out of the stomach and thoracic cavity. We shared one of the five-minute outcomes with the other.

This act for me was in conversation with Rosi Braidotti's reading of Gilles Deleuze's idea of becoming: "The concept of 'becoming' is essential here—the idea that we need to open up our

sense of identity to relations, to a multiplicity of other axes or entities. It is in opposition to identity as something completely closed, fully formed, and static forever. We are always subjects in process, always becoming something” (Braidotti, 2021, p. 47). Through physical movement, we were exploring the possibilities of stretching the limitations of human imagination and capacity to embody and to become. For me, it is about diving into exploring the relation to the surrounding environment and other entities within it from a posthuman lens, but also opening up to a more collective human body of our region that carries histories and cultural layers.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

This method helped me to create a bridge between the images/words and the bodily practice. Through this method, we shaped various movement exercises for the final performance. This is a new method for me, but I see it significantly helping me to make the working process more coherent, and I am interested to explore how exercises can be developed in participatory performance further on.

METHOD 6 – Movement with Objects

Here I will introduce several methods we used. Awareness of the Authentic movement method has become more present during my study years, but the improvisation with setting intention came earlier in my practice, but has been less defined and it gains from establishing closer understanding of contemporary dance practices and contexts.

1. Authentic movement with objects

Short description:

All participants move at the same time → practice **internal** witnessing while moving (as opposed to original external witness) → engage with the objects present in the rehearsal space (fabric, clothing, purse, metal stands, etc.) being actively aware of them → Movement is guided by impulse and sensation, exploring relationships with the space, body and these materials → At the end share experiences in two ways 1. through a condensed, reconstructed movement version of highlighting our discoveries to the other person. 2. Simply telling the other person (one person talking at time).

Background of the method – Authentic Movement is a somatic movement practice grounded in the idea of moving from inner impulses without premeditation, while being witnessed in a non-judgmental way. The practice emerged in the 1950s through the work of Mary Starks Whitehouse, and was further developed by Janet Adler and Joan Chodorow. In its original form, the practice is often done with closed eyes and in silence, with one or more movers and a witness. It emphasizes internal sensation, spontaneous movement, and presence.

Adaptation of the Method in making of Petals Sprouting Out of Skin performance –

We adapted this practice to suit our own performance research and collaborative setting in the rehearsal sessions with Girts. Girts has an extended practice rooted in contemporary dance, so this process was largely held and instructed by them. My need was to find ways how to connect to the objects and theatre space on a bodily level.

2. "Place yourself in the picture"

→ One person becomes the witness and sits in the audience position → The other person enters the stage/rehearsal space → They place one object in the space → They then place their body in relation to the object and the surrounding space → Pause and hold the composition → Swap roles

See appendix 6. This exercise echoes the *Spatial Relationship* and *Architecture* viewpoints from the Viewpoints method developed by Anne Bogart and Tina Landau — particularly the attention to how bodies are placed in relation to objects and space, and the performative significance of those choices. We did this exercise as part of the MA program in a short workshop with Becky Hilton, and for me, it was a significant rediscovery that aligns strongly with my sense of working with a room and exploring spatial meanings.

3. Improvisation with objects and video projection

Arrange scenographic elements in the space, set up video projections and run them during the session → Enter the space with full body awareness and attentiveness to objects and environment → Explore the body placement and movement response to the objects, projections → Exit discussion: 1. People who were in the share their findings, propose what they want to keep 2. I share my observations from outside, propose what I would like to keep → The elements we agree on are written down and placed into a proposed timeline for the performance.

This we did in rehearsal session 4, closer to the final performance, together with Girts and Laine. The focus was on maintaining body awareness and attentiveness to space and objects. However, in these two sessions, the work was more goal-oriented—aimed at generating movement material that would become part of the final performance. The scenography was arranged in the space as planned for the final setting, and we ran the session together with video projections. These projections were used as playful material for movement interaction and as a way to respond to the content of the videos through actions and body placement. The session concluded with a selection process—we chose which materials to keep and continued working with those selected actions, out of which I would propose composition and an initial draft of a performance score.

Working with objects in performance is a recurring element in my practice. I have explored this method extensively in earlier collaborations with artist Clea Filippa, particularly in *Oscillating Beasts and Other Revelations* (2022) and *Thing Tails* (2023). Together, we would conduct extended movement sessions centered around material exploration—responding to curiosities in material and body relations, associative qualities of the objects. These sessions laid the groundwork for developing this methodology for working with material led composition and movement.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

This approach, combining structured somatic practice with improvisation and scenographic play, is something I intend to carry forward and keep refining in future works. The rehearsal sessions with Girts marked a pivotal shift. Their background in contemporary dance structured the sessions, but space remained for my own interest: connecting to objects and theatre space on a bodily, sensorial level. Authentic Movement—grew more present. While improvising with intention had been part of my process before, it gained new depth when placed within a clearer understanding of contemporary dance contexts and frameworks. This method deepened my attention to relationality, entering a somatic and impulse-led mode of movement that allowed me to generate embodied material with the collaborators and establish a stronger link the physical material and the image list.

Method 7 – Inviting Others' Practices

This method focuses on actively integrating the interests, skills, and personal practices of the collaborators into the performance-making process. Rather than approaching collaborators solely through the lens of their visible or assumed skill sets, the emphasis here is placed on *listening to what they want to bring into the room*. This aligns with the ethos of devised performance—where the process and contributions of each artist help shape the outcome.

Short description:

→ Share space and begin a conversation about each person's interests, practices, and what they might *want* to bring into the process → Invite collaborators to introduce or guide parts of their practice within rehearsal sessions → Explore what kind of performative material emerges from these inputs → Identify resonant bits and test how they interact with other performance materials → If possible, translate or explore the bits in another medium

Observations from the process

This method played an important role in the collaborative development of *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*. In a discussion with Laine I learned that she wanted to develop her voice in music making in a larger sense, transitioning from being a double bass player into music creator. The other aspect she was curious to explore was the double bass in contemporary experimental instrumental music, outside the restrictions of the classical music setting. Together we ended up using the double bass as an instrument, object, movement companion, and reflecting Laine's personal relationship to her primary instrument for years.

Çirts brought in physical practices rooted in contemporary dance and their deepened personal practice – lipsync. Çirts has been working on expanding choreographic exploration of lipsync in their current artistic work (Lipsync or lip synchronization is the technique of matching a performer's lip movements to pre-recorded speech or singing, creating the illusion that they are actually speaking or singing live).

We used the lipsync practice in lipsyncing poems that were generated in Method 4. The most concrete example of the method of inviting others practices from the process of creating *Petals Sprouting out Of Skin* is the *Double bass slipsync* scene. There we combined a portrait video of Çirts lipsynking a poem (silent video) and a live double bass on stage played by Laine, that

is trying to mimic the voice, following the movement of the lips in the video. See in appendix 7.

For me personally this scene functions as a symbolic representation of speaking in a non-understandable language, but hearing the phonetic expression of it. This for me speaks about Latvian language as a small language that cannot be understood by many, having this (as opposed to English for example). Importantly, the practice of asking what someone wants to bring—rather than assuming based on their visible strengths — the aim is to create more space for vulnerability, surprise, and mutual trust.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

This method has become a core principle in how I want to work in the future — placing the collaborator's desire at the center, rather than simply their existing skill set. I felt like in this process I was still preoccupied with assumptions of other collaborators skillset, that I would like to revisit more critically. To continue developing this approach, I want to strengthen my practice of asking intentional, open questions early and consistently throughout a process. This method reflects one of the foundational values of devised performance: that the process is shaped by the individuals in the room, and that each person's practice is welcomed. Here I find it challenging in choice making – how the choices are negotiated and who makes them in what way. In this process I tried to do it in discussion with each collaborator, but I was the one who was choosing from the material contributed and offered my proposals for how they would be used in the overall composition, then asking for consent in that.

METHOD 8 – Associative Timeline

This method was used as a way to process and reflect on the performance material from a personal, imaginative, and emotional perspective. It allowed for the emergence of imagery, associations, and connections that may not have been addressed during more practical or movement-based rehearsal tasks.

The task was to write an associative reflection based on your own sequence in the performance. See appendix 8.

Short description:

Follow your sequence of actions and internal sensation during the performance (run through) invite associations or imagery that arise within it → Write for 10 minutes freely, without editing → If more time is needed or someone asks for it, allow for extension → Read the results aloud in the group.

We used this method as an exit task after a rehearsal. It became a meaningful turning point in how I understood the inner landscape of the performance, both for myself and in relation to my collaborators. Writing in this way allowed us to trace not only what we were doing, but what we were experiencing and imagining while doing it.

In my own reflection, I found myself drawing connections between the actions on stage and a larger Eastern European and specifically Latvian cultural and visual imaginary that had been developing throughout the process. Somehow, this creative writing captured the tone and atmosphere I had been trying to build, and revealed it more clearly to ourselves.

The act of reading aloud created a moment of shared intimacy. We each entered into the internal perspective of another performer—how they felt during a moment, what memories or visuals surfaced, where they struggled, or what moved them. The writing offered access to the more vulnerable and intuitive parts of our experiences, which aren't always easy to articulate in direct feedback sessions.

Conclusion, what I am taking with me:

This method helped me to more intimately understand the internal processes of others. In a non-direct, creative way, it revealed emotions, moments of discomfort, and points of strength. It also sharpened my awareness of what needed further attention—where clarity was lacking or where something resonated deeply. This tool could be incorporated earlier on to understand how to make the process safer and more comfortable for people taking part.

Personally, I was surprised by how my own text clarified my intentions to others. It created a bridge between what I was trying to communicate and how it communicated more directly through poetic text with concrete references to our shared environment. It linked my internal understanding to the shared reality of the performance.

I see this method as a powerful tool in collaborative setting—where internal narratives and emotional associations often shape how a piece is received. I plan to return to this writing practice regularly, both as a generative and reflective tool.

Notes on Facilitating/Directing Negotiating a role, holding Space, Content – Form relations within *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* Devised Process

Throughout the process of creating *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, I attempted to navigate the tensions between authorship, facilitation, and co-creation. The structure of the project—born within the framework of my MA research exploration, that was largely connected to accumulating a toolkit as a facilitator and a director within devised practice — held hierarchical traces. Yet within this structure, I sought to open spaces for the individual creativity and practices of Girts and Laine to exist in a shared ecosystem.

In the process of naming, articulating, and reflecting on the methods that were already present in my practice—though often used intuitively—I have gradually accumulated a more conscious methodology for creating material for performance. This has given me a clearer overview. It has also made me realise, with growing conviction, that developing as a director is mostly about developing a toolkit for facilitation. Even though I entered the MA with this intention in mind, I've come to understand that the most crucial toolkit turned out to be a slightly different one than I expected. Over the past two years, I have begun to more mindfully identify the gaps in my knowledge. I now know that I want to learn more about how to: hold space for others, guide exercises, carry ethical responsibility, navigate conflict, and develop practices of care.

I used to treat the “artistic” side of my work as somewhat more separate from the work, but it has become increasingly important to me to consider the process design and the work as a whole—an inseparable organism, both individually and in a collective process. It has also been thought through in conversations with artist Laima Jaunzema, who over wider period of time has taught me various lessons of how any decision is political and that there is no “backstage” for the overall responsibility that is held over a creative process. In my future work, I want to strive for an approach that puts greater emphasis on: the people involved > the thematics > the form > and how the performance-making process itself can be designed to align with it more critically.

Perhaps my resistance is particularly strong because theatre institutions—even independent or experimental ones—have rarely felt open or accessible to me. In a traditional sense, I don't

quite fit the title: I come from a fine arts background, I haven't trained as a stage director, and I haven't worked with actors in conventional dramatic productions, so I sense a lot of mistrust.

I think the tension lies also in the situatedness in Latvia, the slow changes in the institutional theatre, which for me is a combination of post-Soviet organisational remains and a strive to prove that we are as "Western" as the other European countries. From like-minded among Latvian practitioners, I deeply value artists who address regional problematics with their approaches: Agnese Krivade, Laima Junzema, Barbara Lehta, Katrīna Dūka, Liene Pavlovskā. Yet overall, I feel a lack of support and resources for developing new work in the Latvian performing arts field and lack of critical education in performing arts. As a result, many voices and practices remain unseen and peripheral.

I've been increasingly internally and externally conflicted with the label of "director." There's a persistent tension between calling myself a "theatre director" versus a "theatre maker." The former title seems to carry more institutional weight—greater access to resources, recognition, and legitimacy within systems of funding and production. But I also feel unease with this power dynamic. I want to have access to doing creative work, to spaces and resources for production, and to inviting people to work with me. Despite this, in a recent discussion with my coursemate Espen Hjort, we talked about the possibility that I could make a deliberate choice to use the term "director"—consciously—as a way to stretch and challenge its definition and practice. I am still negotiating whether it is something I want to do as a way to gain legitimacy within more traditional frameworks.

For some time now, I've been interested in orchestrating extended human / post-human ensembles—working with bodies, objects, sound, and digital media in spatial-temporal compositions. One pivotal moment that made me imagine myself as a theatre maker was encountering the work of *Verdensteatret*. Their materially-driven dramaturgy resonated deeply with what I was searching for. Their approach gave me a kind of permission to step into theatre without abandoning my artistic grounding. I felt like I can allow all my artistic interests to develop simultaneously in the same place, as in *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* I employ different means of expression and I find it the most exciting part to play with connections between them in the dramaturgy.

Connecting to my first artistic research question: Some of my earlier inspirations from well known makers include Kris Verdonck, whose post-human directing practices challenge the role of the human performer, and Philippe Quesne, who, like me, moved from scenography into directing—using scenographic logic and objects as narrative tools. I’m also influenced by Kate McIntosh, particularly in works like *Lake Life*, where she combines more-than-human imaginaries with embodied audience activation.

Coming from fine arts, I often feel that my work sits between two practices—it exists somewhat outside both canons: performance in fine art gallery contexts and contemporary theatre and performing arts venues and festivals. I sense that the performances I’m making are considered too “visual arts” within fine arts circles, yet too “theatrical” within theatre and performance circles. I have also learned that this experience is common among more established makers, for example, the artists collective at Verdensteatret, whom I visited as part of my MA research, mentioned that when they situate their work as theatre, visual arts and music concerts, it becomes difficult to be programmed. That traditional theatre venues and festivals often don’t book them, and even major festivals like Festspillene in Bergen, Norway, struggle to fit them into established categories like Dance, Theatre, or Concert. With my performance *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, I have encountered a similar range of challenges.

This has led to an internal ethical dilemma: I need resources to create my work, yet I’m uneasy how these resources are attained based on prestige. I question the implications of assuming the title of creator—what it says about authorship, authority, and how stained or scarce resources are used. After completing this research, I hope to find new ways of navigating these tensions—between access and critique, power and transparency. I’m seeking more articulated and careful ways of being *with* the machine of theatre production—even in its fragmented, underfunded, or inaccessible form.

My MA project has been an attempt to understand what it means to compose in a time-based format and to hold space for collaboration as this process unfolds. Throughout this period, I have been working toward a more conceptual and precise approach, developing a more articulated a personal methodology. Moving forward, I want explore methodologies can be designed in direct response to conceptual framework and specific thematic inquiries—tailored to the questions each project brings. In this case I wonder what would be the specifically designed

tasks to comment on Eastern European cultural landscape and how to deepen my now mapped out methodology to illuminate this.

I realise that the practice of directing is also about guiding direction—about how we frame and hold space for knowledge to surface, especially knowledge that doesn't always conform to dominant, institutional, or Western models of validation. Through conversations with other Eastern European practitioners and during my time spent in Latvia, I have begun to reflect on how to give recognition to region-specific ways of knowing, and how to hold space and facilitate this exploration—both intellectually and through embodied search.

Making of *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* Reflection

This MA research has been a journey of navigating and intertwining two fundamental, yet sometimes conflicting, pillars: the compositional practices rooted in material and spatial dramaturgy, and the deeply personal, culturally embedded exploration of identity as a Latvian/Eastern European female artist. Through the creation of *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, I have come to understand that these two axes—object-centered post-human composition and culturally situated storytelling—are not mutually exclusive but can coexist in a dynamic tension that enriches the work.

Initially, my artistic inquiry was driven by questions around how to compose theatre as a continuous, evolving practice, embracing material agency and decentralizing the human performer within a multisensory, scenographic ecosystem—a post-human ensemble. This focus grew out of my background in visual arts and installation, bringing new perspectives to performance-making—“1. How can I make the theatre space and dramaturgy a continuous practice by integrating object and spatial composition (from installation and scenography), while embracing material agencies? How can I compose shifting hierarchies in performance by decentralizing the performer as the main center and giving autonomous expressive weight to objects, sound, light, and video projection?” Yet over time, I recognized the limits of starting with material-driven dramaturgy when it risks accumulating similar material or becoming overly determined by physical elements introduced too early in the process. This realization has shifted my practice toward a more nuanced approach: mapping thematic and intellectual concerns first. I learned more towards environmental observation and the collection of images and sensory details. A paradox emerged as I found myself increasingly drawn to narrative and text-based modes of storytelling, simultaneously expanding and challenging my earlier commitments to material presence and object agency. This tension reflects my evolving understanding of theatricality—not as a fixed category but as a flexible, negotiated space where visual, performative, and linguistic elements intertwine. Language, embodied movement, sound, and object all contribute voices to a collective exploration of identity and environment.

My interest in more-than-human and post-human dramaturgies deepened—not only as formal strategies but also as ethical and political commitments to open space for rethinking relationships to natural entities and human-made materials in our everyday surroundings. I have

also been exploring how certain regionally specific sites can function as information carriers in visual representation.

In this specific project, I realized that the second question—about cultural identity and visibility—became even more urgent and important to me. I came to understand that “decentralization” is not exactly what I want to pursue. I felt a contradiction between wanting to give voice to people from my own context and wanting to do the opposite: raise their visibility and presence in the work. At the same time, I believe it is possible for an extended ensemble of objects to function as a kind of “playground” for interaction and self-expression, which itself can be a form of giving voice, inviting exploration and play. Within the devised process, some actions were suggested or set by me, while others were developed by the collaborators themselves within the framework of our shared poetic system. This allowed for a structure of set scenes and individual agency—moments of improvisation—to coexist in the performance.

The continuity of practice made perfect sense to me since working with concept and composition remains the same (for me) as I have always done in visual arts. The new aspects of working with live time-based medium played out well. I accumulated nine key methods of my current tools for generating material. I am open to exploring different methods for developing different content in the future. The conclusion that came out of the methodology mapping became more about the realization of the weight of facilitation skills—an area I want to explore further after the MA project.

The second question, “2. In what ways does my cultural identity as a female artist from Latvia/Eastern Europe shape my transition from visual arts to directing, and how can I use this as a thematic foundation to invite collaborators, build shared artistic material, and define my role as a maker?” became more urgent and prominent. My shared cultural history with Ģirts and Laine shaped our conversations, aesthetics, and the kinds of questions we could ask together. Our common roots in post-socialist Eastern Europe created an unspoken context—a layer of nuance in how we handled themes like memory, a slight sense of disbelonging in Scandinavian and other Western contexts, or resistance to normative structures. Working from this shared, yet varied, experience allowed us to question how identity is encoded in materials, sites, and in the body. It also influenced how I started to think about framed care, authority, and invitation in the rehearsal process.

What I have been rethinking here is the precondition of working within a black box. The plus I saw in the beginning was that I thought this would give flexibility for the work to be shown in different venues. At the moment I am writing this, I am not sure that this is the reality for this work. Based on two aspects—financial and network absence (as a non-Swedish resident in Sweden and in Latvia due to a lack of venues and festivals)—my capacity to stimulate the work to be shown further is limited. But more importantly, I am not sure if touring involves the sensitivity my collaborators need at the moment. I am faced with the delicate nature of inviting people to work with me—people’s capacities to participate are changing (personal and mental needs play a role, and interpersonal relations). I understand that for me this is a piece which can only be played by Ģirts and Laine; for me, it is a piece largely focused on their specific qualities and special way of being, and these people have become irreplaceable in my more personal process. That also means there is a fragility in how many times a work can be shown based on the ever-changing nature of working with real humans, which makes it more special for me but also more unpredictable.

Further on the Black Box space, I have been rethinking that just by being in the Black Box invites specific aesthetics—of the Black Box as a type of room and prominent performing arts space (for me, similarly to how a gallery with white walls and tall ceilings suggests prominence). I think I am not fully at ease with this choice, because although it holds great possibilities for the use of light, sound, and just having a big private room to rehearse in is a luxury I wanted to explore, I am confronted with this wish to prove that I can work as an artist in a Black Box theatre and that my practice can expand in it, rather than just “being.” Here, by “being,” I mean trusting that the work doesn’t need to be spectacular, but putting artistic interest as the foreground driving force for the exploration and seeing to what format it leads. I see this proving motivation as strongly linked to the resource absence in my normal environment, but I don’t want this artistic insecurity to dictate.

I am lingering between the need to fill in the structural void by claiming space and by displaying that for me and others in similar situations it is possible to exist in such spaces, and the need to reject this and choose not to present works in such spaces, but search for more strange and characteristic spaces. As an end reflection, I am thinking that if I were to start the work now, it might be outside the Rail Baltic station itself. This also aligns more with my growing need to find ways to practice more critical performance-making regionally. It might make more sense to make this piece primarily for a Latvian and neighbouring region audience,

rather than showing it to an audience in Stockholm. Although this choice might risk imposing “contemporary art” on public spaces that don’t belong only to us but to the communities that inhabit them every day. But I am sure that this would be a completely different work.

The making of *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin* allowed me to learn through immediate doing to begin to establish a methodology. Perhaps its function was to open up a new layer of understanding—one that explores how to create a more critical close-knit internal structure between core themes, form, and the performance-making process, particularly in relation to an Eastern European situatedness, which has become a persistently evolving trajectory in my work.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank several people. I try not to limit my thank-you lists, as I want to be more transparent about the support systems we are part of. It's important for me to acknowledge that I am not a separate individual, but part of a collective, interconnected network. I am deeply grateful to everyone who has contributed to this process. As highest education is still a luxury.

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Amalia Rudström

Ellen Flowerhill

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MA project

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Objects & Materials

Inspired by a tradition I learned from my former teacher and friend **Sidsel Christensen**, who credited the equipment and materials as part of in her artistic work PhD presentation – and by **Verdensteatret**, who listed objects “starring” in their performance *Flat SUN*, which I assisted on – I’d like to acknowledge the objects that supported my work:

74 flower petals,

Silver motorbike cover,

Double bass and bow,

Pink fabric,

Legs sculpture,

Big gray fabric,

5 stands,

2 Mini projectors,

Sony projector,

2 moving heads spotlights (ETC Lonestar),

4 moving heads wash (Clay paky Aleda wash K-10),

4 frontlights (ETC color source fresnel),

Genelec speakers,

Q lab program,

Sound mixer and light control panel,

D theatre room,

And all the cables and micro parts.

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Poikane, Beate Appendices
Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 1



Petal being character exploration. Digital photo – cutout drawing on a digital photo collage on computer retina display, Method1, 2025.



Petal being. Material tests – fabric petals in candle wax, Method 1, 2025.



Petal being. Material tests – hand painted paper petals covered in white glue, Method 1, 2025.



Petal being. Material test on a body. Method 1, 2025.



Petal being. Video still from a rehearsal, testing movement with petals. Method 1, 2025.



Petal being. Publication image, digital photo collage. 2025.



Photo from the performance, Per Bolkert, 2025.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 2

Petal and Motorbike dialogue. Method 2, Version 1.txt was used to make a voice recording (it changed in the recording process).

P: apchi (sneeze)

M: sorry, I think I gather all the dust by standing here

P: you look, towering from here, I have never seen you from this perspective. don't worry my dear motorbike, I smell you, recognise you from earths crust you have always been around, now in your strange wheelshape. You are so shifty - sometimes here and sometimes not, usually I see you only late at evening hidden in the dark, wrapped there carefully.

M: yes, he does it, he is very afraid someone will take me, he is good at it, he covers me and puts me behind this pile.

P: Yes, I don't know what can feel like. for me It's always the same journey, yet each time feels... new. All the petals before me have made this distance between the branch and been caught by the ground below. We fly different trajectories, sometimes twirling for a long time or dragging against the side of the road, along with passing vehicles.

M: sorry for causing the wind for all your others,

P: ayyy, it is not too bad, they enjoy an extra lift, a prolonged spin,

M: on the radio inside of me, my rider was listening to, I heard that a flower petal is attached to the flower base called receptacle. That you and your sisters are connected to the receptacle by the floral stalk, which contains cells that hold you in place until you depart from the tree abscission as they say, or if someone pulls you off, some, external force, - a wind or a human hand.

P: oh you have a good memory,

M: Yes, I have trained it by memorising all the streets I have taken, I overdraw the map with each time anew.

P: So interesting what you say about the radio, I have only heard radio from afar, I sometimes recognise myself in songs, but never heard something so anatomical about me. didn't know it had such names I only have my embodied petal body feels (/awareness), I intake the nutrients coming in from my bottom, from the base, the opposite of a fall I feel the juice traveling upwards resisting gravity.

M: I wanted to ask you, do you feel so called pain when someone pulls you?

P: No, I don't have such nervous system, as the animals, but I get something like a 'shock' and tend to get defensive, I for example climb higher and higher in branches to avoid it, or try to squeeze myself away from the windy sides. It is probably close to when sidewalks slightly forces against you, giving you scratches, then you watch out from them. But winds I don't mind, maybe there we are the same that we ride alone with them..

Your driver sounds like an interesting guy!

M: Yes, I think he is very interested in your kind, listening to this botanics radio show. Sometimes I sync with my driver, I hum and he hums silently. We move as one, I as a metal am very good temperature transitioner, body heat. Is hard to tell who drives who.

I sense him. He comes from far away he feels uneasy when he stops, he is not so welcome here, at the move we make he feels at home.

P: you are so kind, sometimes people think that I am the most romantic thing, they are so silly, maybe you are more what they are longing for. I don't get all that thing, you are telling me about, it I like all the pollens and insects in multiplicity, I like them all flying around...

I saw a strange shell skeleton while lingering down from top, have you seen her? I don't think she will ever become humans home, something is odd about her pro-long stillness. Do you recognise her metals?

M: no, they come from other far away soils, they do not respond.

Of course I have seen her many times, we ride past her multiple times a day, she is in my map, she is a bit spaceshipy, but silent, only as winds blow thought the construction site like a flute.

P: I can no longer peep at her gigantic body from here, but I sense that some of us will move there soon I feel from the seeds ripening at the mother base. I feel like she will be my station, not the strangely- speaking human station. The seeds are traveling there, I know, to the freshly duped up soil. I think that poor metal thing they are waiting for, - the poor train - one of your new body companions, will never get over the river.

M: Kha, oh I feel occasional gag in my motor, I might go join you there under her arching back. It is not that I want to go I am sad to leave this union, but my phase as a motorbike is unavoidably ending soon.

I wouldn't want to be a track, if they ever re-melt me in another shape, I have always dreamed to be a street lamp so I could see a bit more from above, I am always close to earth since I'm so heavy.

or I would also like to be a sunshade, the folding movement is so satisfying I have never been bent in this magnetic umbrella like way.

P: ha if you become a sunshade we will look a bit alike in my bigger body with all the!

M: It is now in my nature to be molded and remolded. I have always done so, but recently these transformations are getting out of wheel.

P: Soon you will soon be even more beautiful rusty colour! But then you will need to be patient and still, there are even iron bits in me, maybe you will recognise them, you can watch as I decompose in small particles by fungi and bacteria!

M: yes, I would like that!

P: The other day from the top I saw a small van with an advertisement, it stopped to deliver something downstairs - the same like your guy, on the side of the car the print showed some strange version of her, very slippery, I would be fun to slide on her, but I think they will never get so far, for the dark figures to stand on the balconies, i think she will rust like you. As we all play, as you watch us and pollen flying through the metal grid!



Petal and Motorbike on stage, scene where Laine is holding a microphone to “interview” them.
Photo from the performance by Per Bolkert, 2025.



Petal and Motorbike on stage, scene where Laine is holding a microphone to “interview” them.
Photo from the performance by Per Bolkert, 2025.

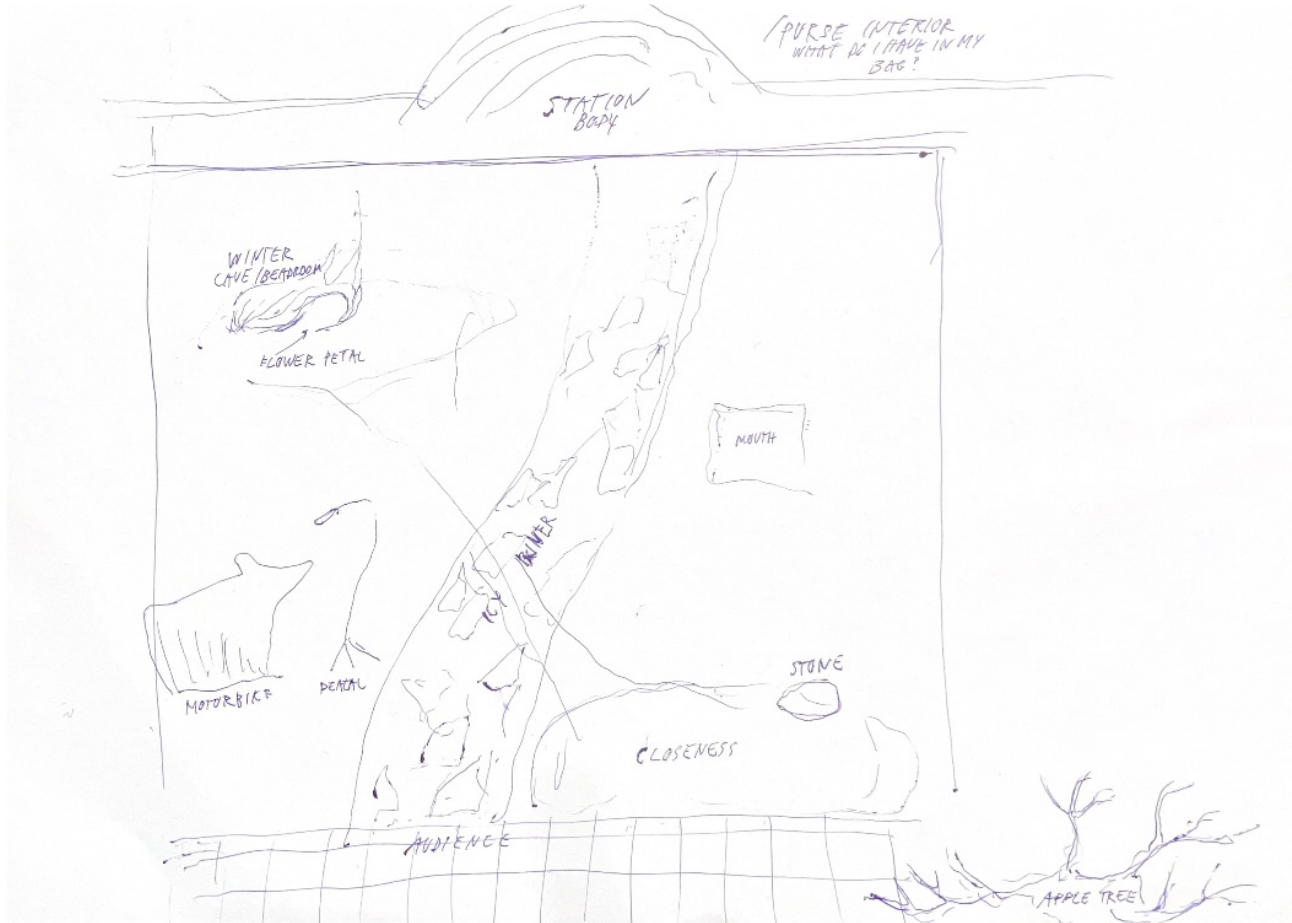


Silver coat Laine is wearing is made from a motorbike cover. Video in the background with Rail Baltic station and the image of a back from Petal being.
Photo from the performance by Per Bolkert, 2025.

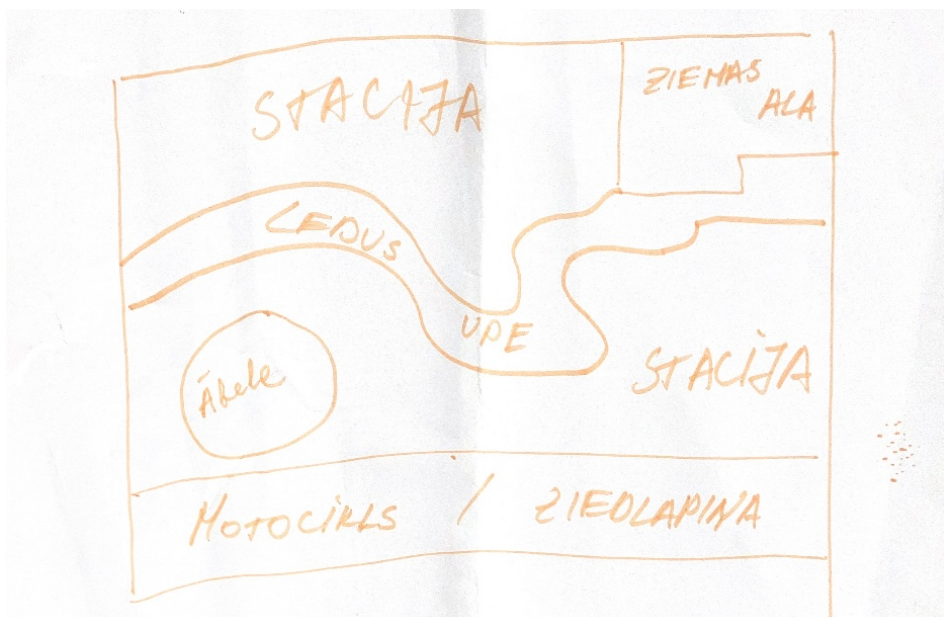


Motorbike variations2025.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 3



My map. It shows where different poetic elements that came up in the rehearsal process, would inhabit the stage – apple tree, Rail Baltic station, icy river, winter cave, motorbike and flower petal, mouth, stone, closeness. I tested writing based on this map and me and Ģirts tested imaginary geography in rehearsal process.



Ģirts map. It shows where different poetic elements that came up in the rehearsal process, would inhabit the stage – apple tree, station, icy river, winter cave, motorbike and flower petal.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 4

Compilation of shared poems Method 4, Shared Poem No. 1 writing method

SARMA, SVEŠĶERMEŅI, APSTĀJIES SAJUST KĀ MATI SMARŽO PĒC MAZGĀŠANAS, ZIEMAS ALA, SKARBI/JŪTĪGI, SNIEGPULKSTENĪŠI, NEPIEEJAMS TVAIKS SLĪD PĀR VIRSSMU SMAGS ĶERMENISS IET PĀR TILTU, SKAISTI CILVĒKI SABIEDRISKAJĀ TRANSPORTĀ, IERĀVIES SEVĪ DRŪMI, MITRI DUBĻI, SILTA VĒJA PLŪSMA UZ ĀDAS, MAXIMA APMEKLĒTĀJI, PAVASARIS - KATRU SEKUNDI BRIESST PUMPURI – TROKSNIS, GAIDĪŠANA, NELIELA LAUKU SKOLAS SKATUVĪTE, AUKSTĀ ZUPA, AITAS, PAŠAPMIERINĀTI, SASALUŠU PEĻĶU SALUŠANA AR SAVU SVARU, LĒZENI SKATI, SIENĀŽU SISINĀŠANA, IEZIEMOTU MOTOCĪKLU CILTS, NEVAR ATSTĀT MĀJU, GAISMA–TUMSA–GAISMA–TUMSA, UGUNSSKURS, GUĻAMISTABA, PELD LEDUS GABALI UPĒ, ROZĀ PUSSCAURSPĪDĪGS SAKROKOTS AUDUMS, SLAPJAS KĀJAS, VILNAS ZEĶES, MIKROAUTOBUSA ŠOFERIS KLAUSĀS RADIO, SLĪD AINAVA, SILTUMNĪCAS SMARŽA – MELNZEME UN TOMĀTU STĀDI, NOVILKT ZIEMAS DRĒBES, LIETU IZKĀRTOJUMS DZĪVOKĻOS, APCIEMOJOT CILVĒKUS, PĻAVAS ZIEDU PUŠŠĶIS, VOID

FROST, FOREIGN-OBJECTS/BODIES, PAUSE TO FEEL HOW HAIR SMELLS AFTER WASHING, WINTER CAVE, HARSH/SENSITIVE, SNOWCLOKS, UNAVAILABLE, STEAM SLIDES OVER THE SURFACE, HEAVY BODY GOES OVER THE BRIDGE, BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT, WITHDRAWN INTO THEMSELVES, GLOOMY, WET MUD, WARM GUST OF WIND ON SKIN, MAXIMA SHOPPERS, SPRING – EVERY SECOND BUDS SWELLING – NOISE, LONGING, SMALL RURAL SCHOOL'S STAGE, COLD-SOUP, SHEEP, COMPLACENT, BREAKING FROZEN PUDDLE WITH ONE'S WEIGHT, GRADUALLY LEVELLING GAZES, CRICKETS CHIRPING, WINTERED MOTORCYCLES TRIBE, CANNOT LEAVE THE HOUSE, LIGHT-DARK-LIGHT-DARK, BONFIRE, BEDROOM, FLOAT ICE CHUNKS IN THE RIVER, PINK SEMI-TRANSPARENT WRINKLED FABRIC, WET FEET, WOOL SOCKS, MINIBUS DRIVER LISTENS TO A RADIO, SLIDES LANDSCAPE, GREENHOUSE SCENT – BLACK SOIL AND TOMATO SPROUTS, TO TAKE OFF WINTER CLOTHES, ARRANGEMENT OF OBJECTS IN APARTMENTS WHILE VISITING PEOPLE, MEADOW FLOWER BOUQUET, VOID

Shared poems, Method 4, Shared Poem No. 2 writing method:

1.1.
DRUPAČAS
NORIJOT SIEKALAS
SARKANKRŪTĪŠA AZOTE
VIŅA APSĒDĀS NEPAREIZAJĀ VIETĀ UN
RINDĀ
DEBESIS SAVVAĻĀ
KAUT TEĀTRA TEHNISKAIS
DARBINIEKSS SMĪNĒJA
ČEMUROS SAPINIES AKMENS
FRAGMENTĒ IEKŠĒJO AINAVU
TU ATCERIES KĀ PATEIKT
VIENAS NĀSS PLATUMS
TE MAN PIRMOREIZ NOGLĀSTĪJA PIERI

1.1.
CRUMBS
SWALLOWING SALIVA
RED-THROATED NITROGEN
SHE SAT IN THE WRONG PLACE AND
ROW
SKY IN WILDERNESS
EVEN IF THE THEATRE TECHNICIAN
SMIRKED
IN A ENTANGLED STONE
FRAGMENTS THE INTERNAL
LANDSCAPE
DO YOU REMEMBER HOW TO SAY
IN THE WIDTH OF ONE NOSTRIL
HERE, FOR THE FIRST TIME,
MY FOREHEAD WAS CARESSED

1.2.

VIENS EZERS ASARA MEŽĀ
NO ŠĶŪNĪŠA NES MALKU
SUNŠ VĒRO LAUKUS
KABATLAKATIŅŠ SĀNOS
IZTEK MATI
TORŅKALNA KAFEJNĪCA-BĀRS
CIRVĪS BULĶĪ ATRADIES
KAUT VIŅA NEKAD NEBIJA TO
NEVIENAM PATEIKUSI
DEBESMANNĀ PASLĒPIES
KLUSUMS IZTECĒJA LĀSSTEKĀS
AVEŅU SĒKLIŅA ZOBOS
SKABARGA AUSĪ

2.1.

BIEZPIENS
VAGĀS
KRĀNA ŪDENS PIEGARŠA
RŪSA
VECAS SIEVIETES VAIGU KRUNKĀS
BASĀM PĒDĀM ČIEKUROŠ
SPĀRNS PLIVINĀJĀS PĀR MARGU
PIENS
BRUŅAS LAISTĪJĀS
IZŠŪTOS PĒRĻAINOS ŅIEBUROS
ZEM AKMENS GLABĀJĀS VĒSTULE
DRAUGI DZĪVO TUR

2.2.

IZLIEKTA MUGURA
ATROSĪTĀM PIEDURKNĒM
SLIKTAS KVALITĀTES SKAĻRUŅOS
SPĀRES, NIEDRES, MELLENES
KĀ ĀDAS PLĒVĪTE STARP PIRKSTIEM
RASA
AUTOMĀTISKO DURVJU SENSORS
IZKAPTS
NO ĀLIŅA IZAUG
NOJAUTĀ ZEMENĒS
SVAIGAS NAGULAKAS SMARŽĀ

1.2.

ONE LAKE TEAR IN A FOREST
FROM A SHED BRINGS FIREWOOD
DOG OBSERVES FIELDS
HANDKERCHIEF ON THE SIDE OF THE
BODY
FLOTES OUT HAIR
TORNKALNA CAFE-BAR
THE AX FOUND IN THE BULK
SHE HAD NEVER TOLD ANYONE
HIDING IN DEBESMANNA
SILENCE FLOWED OUT IN ICICLES
RASPBERRY SEED IN TEETH
SCABER IN THE EAR

2.1.

COTTAGE CHEESE
IN FURROWS
TAP WATER AFTERTASTE
RUST
IN OLD WOMEN'S CHEEK WRINKLES
BARE FEET, IN PINE CONES
A WING FLUTTERED OVER THE
RAILING
MILK
ARMOR SPARKLED
IN EMBROIDERED PEARLY CORSETS
A LETTER IS STORED UNDER A STONE
FRIENDS LIVE THERE

2.2.

CURVED BACK
WITH ROLLED-UP SLEEVES
IN POOR-QUALITY SPEAKERS
DRAGONFLIES, REEDS, BLUEBERRIES
AS A MEMBRANE OF SKIN BETWEEN
FINGERS
DEW
AUTOMATIC DOOR SENSOR
SCYTHE
GROWS OUT OF THE ICE OPENING
PREMONITION IN STRAWBERRIES
IN THE SCENT OF FRESH NAIL POLISH

3.1.

JĀNĪTIS DRUVĀ AIZIEDAMS
ČAU RASMA
ŠE BUČO VAIGU MANU
NESOLI DAILI JAUKU
NE ZARIŅA NENOLAUZU
DANCO, DANCO, DANCO
KĀ CAUR NĀTRĒM
CIET KLUSU, NOSLĒPIES
KANDAVAS BASEINA NEPTŪS
LIEDEGĀ PRECĒJIES
LIEPU LAIVU
SAPIN VAINAGU, MĀSIŅ MANU

3.2.

MANA MEITA STALTA BALTA
KRODZIŅĀ GALDIŅŠ VIENMĒR BRĪVS
RĪGA NEKAD NEBŪS GATAVA
NAUDU BĒRU ZĀBAKOS
SUDRABA TRĪSAS
KUMEĻAM NOPAKAĻ,
PAKAVOS ATMETIES
UN ES SKRIENU SKRIENU VĒL
SAKTAS, PASTALAS, SEĢENES
MIRDZ UN LAISTĀS LUKTUROS
MUCĀ AUDZIS BĀLELIŅŠ
PURVĀ IESTIDZIS

3.1

JĀNĪTIS LEAVING IN THE FIELD
CIAO, RASMA
HERE, KISS MY CHEEK
DO NOT PROMISE A BEAUTY NICELY
DIDN'T BREAK A SINGLE TWIG
DANCE, DANCE, DANCE
AS THROUGH THE NETTLES
KEEP SHUT, HIDE
KANDAVAS POOL NEPTUNE
ON THE SAND DUNE MARRIED
LINDEN BOAT
WEAVE A WREATH, SISTER MINE

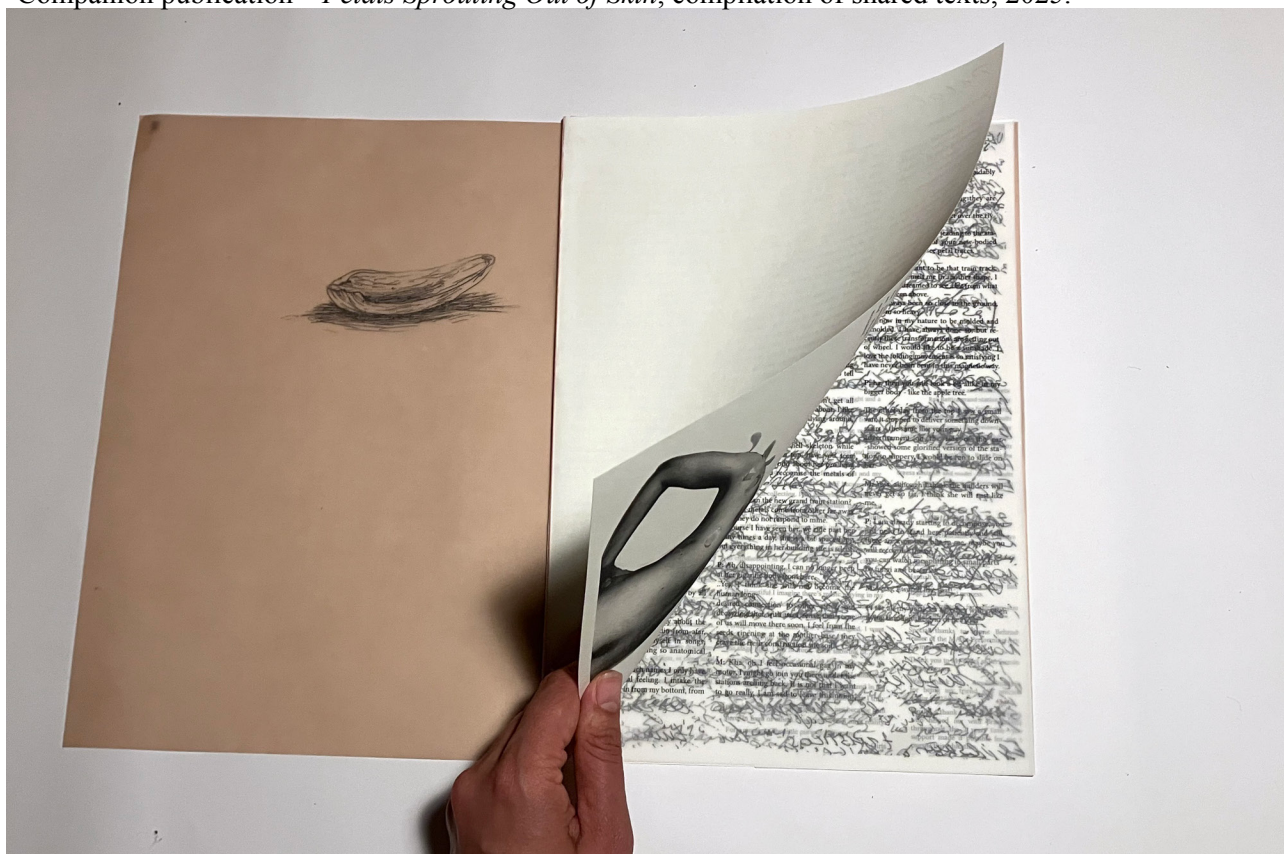
3.2.

MY DAUGHTER STATELY AND WHITE
IN THE TAVERN THE TABLE IS ALWAYS
WELCOMING
RIGA WILL NEVER BE READY
I POURED MONEY INTO THE BOOTS
SILVER SHIVER
FOLLOWING AFTER A PASING FOAL
HORSESHOE IN MOTION
AND I RUN AND I RUN STILL
BROOCHES, BAST SHOES, BLANKETS
SHINE AND GLITTER IN THE LANTERNS
A LAD GROWN UP IN A BARREL
STUCK IN THE SWAMP

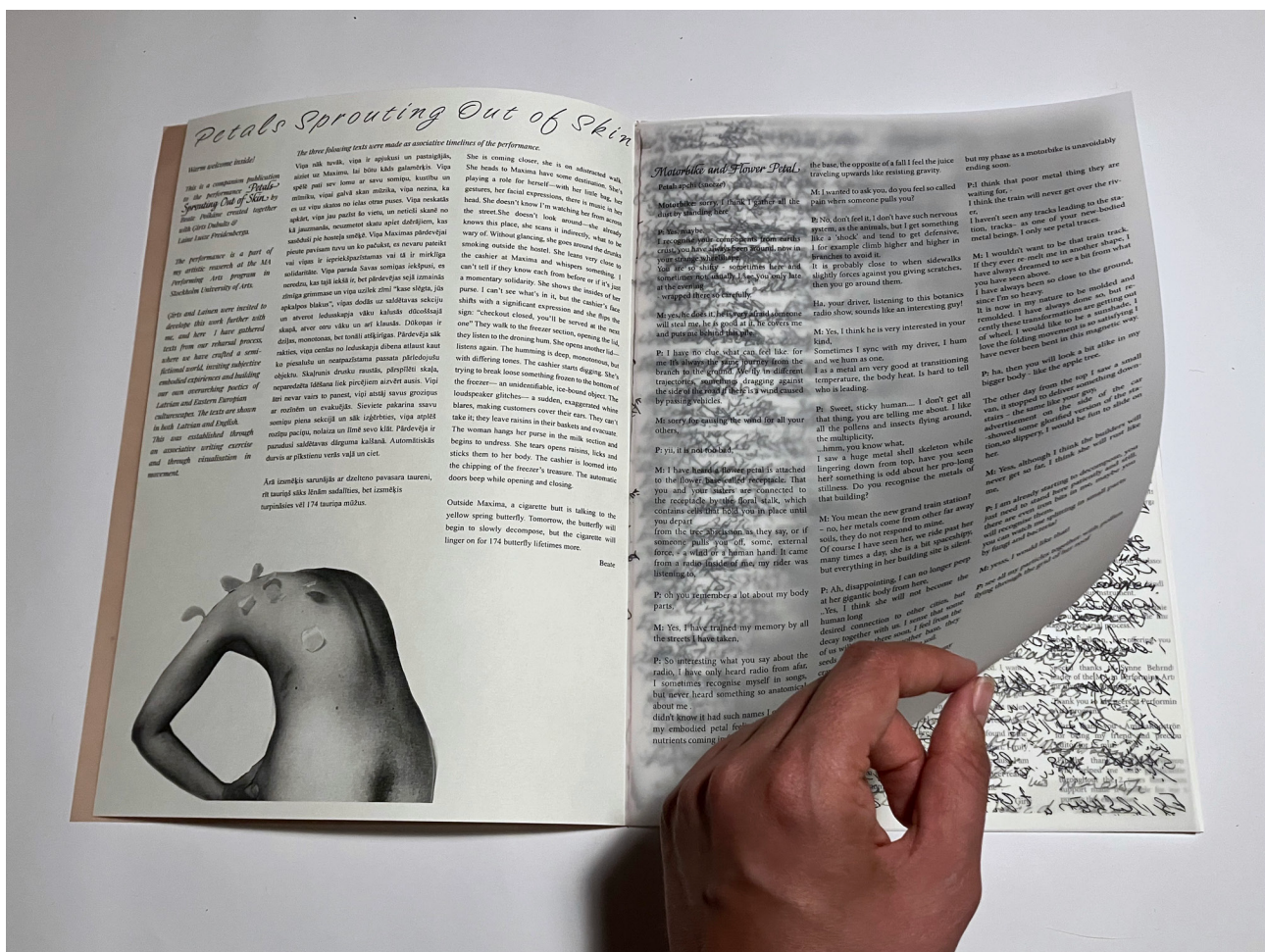
Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 5



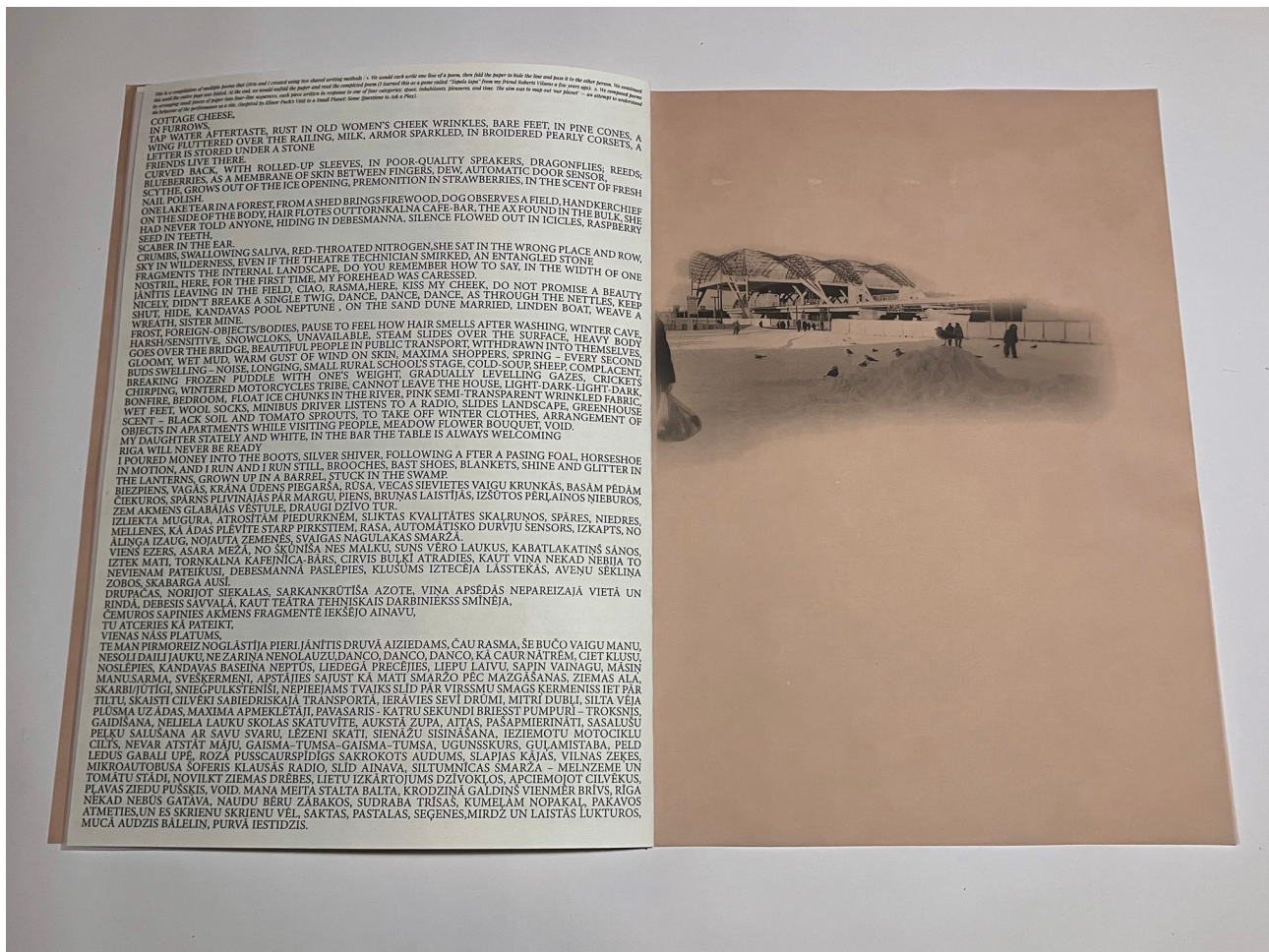
Companion publication – *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, compilation of shared texts, 2025.



Companion publication – *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, compilation of shared texts, 2025.



Companion publication – *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, compilation of shared texts, 2025.



Companion publication – *Petals Sprouting Out of Skin*, compilation of shared texts, 2025.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 6



Method 6., 2. “Place yourself in the picture” exercise, 2025.



Method 6., 2. “Place yourself in the picture” exercise, 2025.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 7



Method 7– Inviting Others' Practices, Lipsync double bass scene, Photo from the performance by Per Bolkert, 2025.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 8

Method 7. My text of the associative timeline of the performance. It was used as a video projection in a refined, shortened version.

She is coming closer, she is confused and walking. She heads to Maxima to have some destination. She's playing a role for herself—with her little purse, her gestures, her facial expressions, there is music in her head. She doesn't know I'm watching her from across the street. She doesn't look around—she already knows this place, she scans it indirectly, what to be wary of. Without glancing, she goes around the drunks smoking outside the hostel. She leans very close to the cashier at Maxima and whispers something. I can't tell if they know each from before or if it's just a momentary solidarity. She shows the insides of her purse. I can't see what's in it, but the cashier's face shifts with a significant expression and she flips the sign: "checkout closed, you'll be served at the next one" They walk to the freezer section, opening the lid, they listen to the droning hum. She opens another lid—listens again. The humming is deep, monotonous, but with differing tones. The cashier starts digging. She's trying to break loose something frozen to the bottom of the freezer— an unidentifiable, ice-bound object. The loudspeaker glitches— a sudden, exaggerated whine blares, making customers cover their ears. They can't take it; they leave raisins in their baskets and evacuate. The woman hangs her purse in the milk section and begins to undress. She tears opens raisins, licks and sticks them to her body. The cashier is loomed into the chipping of the freezer's treasure. The automatic doors beep while opening and closing.

Outside, a cigarette butt has a conversation with the first yellow butterfly of spring. Tomorrow the butterfly will be gone, but the cigarette will keep decomposing for 174 butterfly lifetimes.

Viņa nāk tuvāk, viņa ir apjukusi un pastaigājas, aiziet uz Maximu, lai būtu kāds galamērķis. Viņa spēlē pati sev lomu ar savu somiņu, kustību un mīmiku, viņai galvā skan mūzika, viņa nezina, ka es uz viņu skatos no ielas otras puses. Viņa neskatās apkārt, viņa jau pazīst šo vietu, un netieši skanē, no kā jāuzmanās, neuzmetot skatu, apiet dzērājiem, kas sasēduši pie hosteļa smēķē. Viņa Maximas pārdevējai pienāk pavisam tuvu un ko pačukst, es nevaru pateikt, vai viņas ir iepriekš pazīstamas vai tā ir mirklīga solidaritāte. Viņa parāda savas somiņas iekšpusi, es neredzu, kas tajā iekšā ir, bet pārdevējas sejā izmainās zīmīga grimase un viņa uzliek zīmi "kase slēgta, jūs apkalpos blakus". Viņas dodas uz saldētavas sekciju un, atverot ledusskapja vāku, klausās dūcošajā skaņā, atver otru vāku un arī klausās. Dūkoņas ir dziļas, monotonas, bet tonāli atšķirīgas. Pārdevēja sāk rakties, viņa cenšas no ledusskapja dibena atlaust kaut ko piesalušu un neatpazīstamu, pārledojušu objektu. Skaļrunis drusku raustās, pārspīlēti skaļa, neparedzēta īdēšana liek pircējiem aizvērt ausis. Viņi ātri nevar vairs to panest, viņi atstāj savus groziņus ar rozīnēm un evakuējas. Sieviete pakarina savu somiņu piena sekcijā un sāk izģērbties, viņa atplēš rozīņu paciņu, nolaiza un līmē sev klāt. Pārdevēja ir pazudusi saldētavas dārguma kalšanā. Automātiskās durvis ar pīkstienu veras vaļā un ciet.

Ārā izsmēķis sarunājas ar pirmo dzelteno pavasara taureni, rīt tauriņa vairs nebūs, bet izsmēķis turpinās sadalīties vēl 174 tauriņa mūžus.

My text, vide projection version.

SHE IS COMING CLOSER,
SHE IS CONFUSED AND WALKING.
SHE HEADS TO MAXIMA, TO HAVE SOME DESTINATION.
SHE DOESN'T LOOK AROUND—SHE ALREADY KNOWS THIS PLACE,
SHE SCANS THE SITE INDIRECTLY, GOING AROUND THE DRUNKS SMOKING OUTSIDE THE
'HOSTEL'.

SHE LEANS VERY CLOSE TO THE CASHIER AT MAXIMA
SHE SHOWS THE INSIDES OF HER PURSE.

I CAN'T TELL IF THEY KNOW EACH OTHER FROM BEFORE OR IF IT'S JUST
A MOMENTARY SOLIDARITY.

CASHIER'S FACE SHIFTS WITH A SIGNIFICANT EXPRESSION
CASHIER FLIPS THE SIGN: "CHECKOUT CLOSED, YOU'LL BE SERVED AT THE NEXT ONE."
THEY WALK TO THE FREEZER SECTION, OPENING THE LID,.
SHE OPENS ANOTHER LID—LISTENS AGAIN. THE HUMMING IS DEEP, MONOTONOUS, BUT
TONALY DIFFERENT.

THE CASHIER STARTS DIGGING.
SHE'S TRYING TO BREAK LOOSE SOMETHING FROZEN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE FREEZER. —
AN ICE-BOUND UNIDENTIFIABLE, OBJECT.
THE CELING LOUDSPEAKER GLITCHES
—A SUDDEN, EXAGGERATED WHINE BLARES,
ELDERLY CUSTOMERS CAN'T TAKE IT;
THEY LEAVE
RAISINS
IN THEIR BASKETS
AND EVACUATE.

THE WOMAN HANGS HER PURSE IN THE MILK SECTION
SHE BEGINS TO UNDRRESS.
SHE TEARS OPEN RAISIN PACKAGES,
LICKS AND STICKS THEM TO HER BODY.
THE CASHIER IS LOOMED INTO THE CHIPPING
OF THE DEEP END MAXIMAS FREEZER'S TREASURE.

THE AUTOMATIC DOORS BEEP
WHILE OPENING AND CLOSING.
OUTSIDE :
CIGARETTE BUTT IS TALKING TO THE YELLOW SPRING BUTTERFLY.

TOMORROW, THE BUTTERFLY
WILL BEGIN TO
SLOWLY DECOMPOSE, BUT THE CIGARETTE WILL LINGER ON FOR
174 BUTTERFLY LIFETIMES.

My music starts playing, I'm on stage, but I'm lying down, I feel dysfunctional. I don't want to play, I don't want anything, I'm lying down thinking about my trauma with the old skin on my back that should have fallen off long ago. Will it fall off? Do I have to wait for that moment when it happens, or will it happen when I choose it myself? Try? Watch? I'm trying to find my language. I'm trying to speak in my late music. It has to come from me. Adaptation. Or are we already speaking the same language without even trying to adapt? Maybe that's how we'll truly meet, rather than by following. I'm aware of the ice. I'm aware of the difficulty. I see it now and I understand I need to act, but again I lie down. Indecision. To be here or there. A choice. Not trusting myself... in moments when I... ...? Do I have the chance to do it? Or am I just waiting for a miracle that will never come? Does it even matter, to be loved or unloved? Maybe neither would change anything. We are here anyway, and we are doing. Is this my depression? Did I perform it into being? Cover. Remove. Cover gently. My instrument. ... the petal. Why remove it? Does it bother me? This petal, this skin that has clung to me. It has its own little soul too. Its own pattern.

sāk skanēt mana mūzika, es esmu uz skatuves, bet es guļu, jūtos disfunkcionāla. man negribas spēlēt, man negribas neko. es guļu un domāju par savu traumu, par veco ādu uz muguras, kurai sen vajadzēja nokrist. kad tā nokritīs? vai man jāsagaida tas brīdis, kad tas notiks, vai arī tas notiks, kad es pati to izvēlēšos? mēģināt? skatīties? es mēģinu atrast savu valodu. es cenšos runāt savā mēlē – mūzikā. tam ir jānāk no manis. pielāgošanās. vai arī tomēr mēs runājam vienā valodā, pat necenšoties pielāgoties? iespējams, tā mēs drīzāk spēsim satikties, nekā ejot viens otram pakāļ. es apzinos ledu. es apzinos grūtību. es tagad to pamanu un saprotu, ka man ir jārīkojas, bet atkal eju gulēt. neizlēmība. būt tur vai citur. izvēle. kā tvert savu gājieni? vai es paņemu kontroli? vai man ir iespēja to darīt? vai es tikai gaidu brīnumu, kurš nekad nepienāks? vai vispār ir svarīgi – vai mīl vai nemīl? varbūt neviens no tiem neko nemainītu. mēs tāpat esam šeit un tagad darām. vai šī ir mana depresija? vai es to izspēlēju? apsedz. noņemt. mīļi apsedz. savu instrumentu. noņemt ziedlapu. kāpēc noņemt? vai tā man traucē? šī ziedlapiņa, šī āda, kas man ir pieķērusies. arī tai ir sava dvēselīte. savs nospiedums.

Ģirts associative timeline, Method 7.

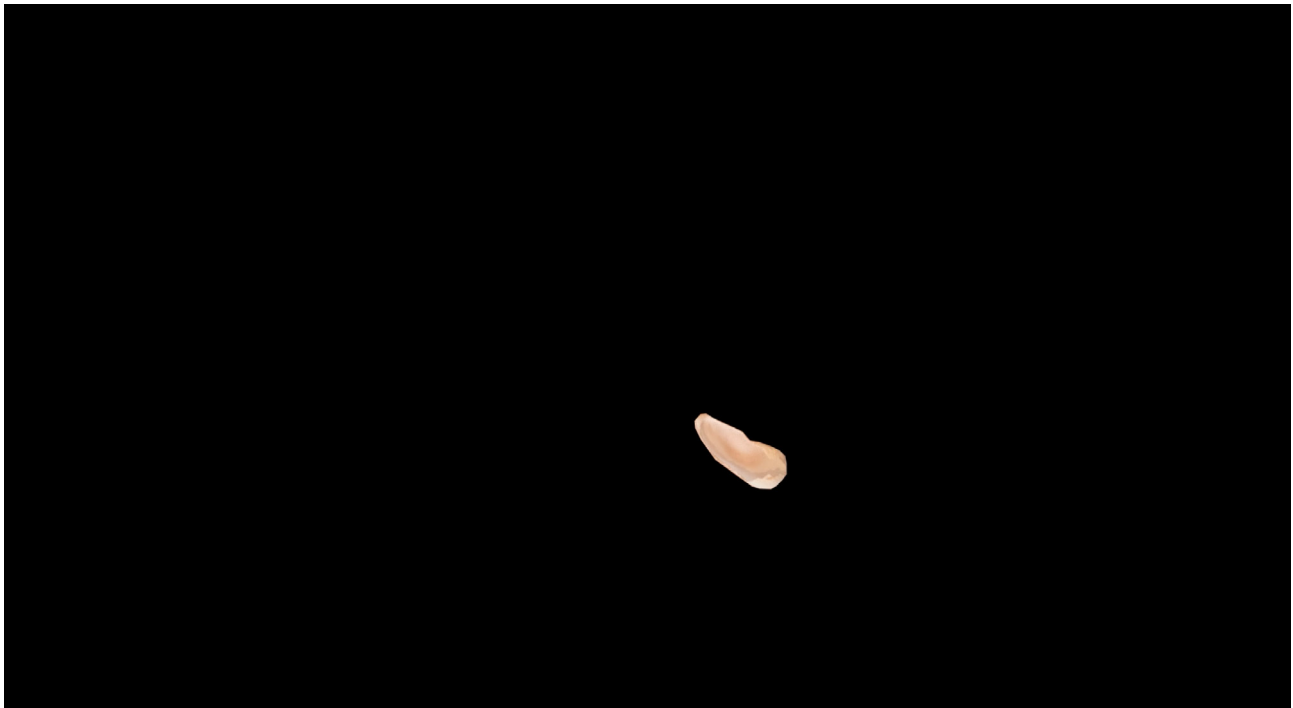
I want to show that I'm hesitating. Hesitating to show a little bag with a tiny light and a little heart in it. I have to stand on the left side of the projector, and before that, the light is a bit in front of me and to the right. Then comes an intense moment of openness, of vulnerability. I suppose I simply am. Maybe that's enough. I go into the forest and hang my little bag on a branch. Pine trees. I have time for berries and weeds. I have time for the earth and my fingers. I have time to be with myself because I am picking. I am collecting. I am gathering* little lingonberries, herbs, and other tiny important things. Until for me there is nothing left. I carefully put the little bag with the gathered things back into the purse and return to the tent to freshen up. I take off my clothes — it's hot. I am still in summer. It feels like I've returned to childhood. I'm in my "trusiki" undies and close to my mother's wardrobe. I want to adorn myself, I want to decorate myself with fabric. I want to be elegant. Chic. Beautiful. I imagine there's music playing in my headphones — I don't know the song, but there's a girl and a guitar. A few little bells. Maybe Alise Joste. Perhaps. I want to share how I've entangled. I want to share this joy with someone. I turn a little bit into the stage light. I am in front, I am showing off. I get ashamed and go to put down the fabric. I want to let go, to be undone. I feel small and weak. I remember the lingonberries and breathe in the tears found in the bag, to go to my friends. I bloom as I fall apart. I truly reveal myself, I am vulnerable again just because I am here, in front of others. I look into eyes. I meet reality. For a moment. The purse is calling me.*

*"lasu" – can also mean "I am reading", it holds double meaning)

*"mani sauc" – can also mean "my name is"

Es gribu parādīt to, ka es vilcinos. Vilcinos parādīt somiņu, kurā ir maza gaismiņa un sirsnīņa. Man jānostājās kreisajā pusē projektoram, pirms tam gaisma ir man nedaudz priekšā un pa labi. Tad ir intensīvs atklātības, ievainojamības brīdis. Es gan jau tikai esmu. Ar to laikam ir gana. Es dodos uz mežu un pakaru savu somiņu uz zara. Priedītes. Man ir laiks ogām un nezālēm. Man ir laiks zemei un pirkstiem. Man ir laiks pabūt ar sevi, jo es lasu*. Es vācu. Es krāju mazas brūklenes, zālītes un citus svarīgus nieciņus. Līdz man vairs nav ko. Es rūpīgi noglabāju somiņā maisiņu un atgriežos teltī, lai atspirdzinātos. Novelku drēbes, ir karsts. Es vēl aizvien esmu vasarā. Man šķiet, ka es atgriežos bērnībā. Es esmu "trusikos" un tuvu pie mammas skapja. Man gribas sevi izdaiļot, man gribas rotāties ar audumu. Es gribu būt eleganta. Šika. Skaista. Es iedomājos, ka man skan mūzika austiņās – es gan nezīnu to dziesmu, bet tur ir meitene un ģitāra. Nedaudz zvaniņi. Alise Joste. Iespējams. Es gribu dalīties ar to, kā esmu savījusies. Es gribu dalīties priekā ar kādu. Es nedaudz pagriežos skatuves gaismā. Es esmu priekšā un izrādos. Es sakaunos un eju nolikt audumu. Es gribu atskausēties. Noskausēties. Es jūtos vājš un mazs. Es atceros par brūklenītēm un ieelpoju maisiņā atrastās asaras, lai dotos pie draugiem. Es uzziedu, nobirstot. Es tiešām atklājos, es esmu atkal ievainojams vien tāpēc, ka esmu te un citu priekšā. Es paskatos acīs. Es satiekos ar realitāti. Uz mirkli. Somiņa manis sauc*.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin Appendix 9
Video projection stills



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.

INTO THE CHIPPING OF THE DEEP END MAXIMAS FREEZER'S TREASURE.

Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, Video still, 2025.

Purse scene, use of video.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, purse scene with 30sec fast paced video of snippets of cityscape photos and videos, Photo from the performance by Per Bolkert, 2025.



Petals Sprouting Out of Skin, purse scene with 30sec fast paced video of snippets of cityscape photos and videos, Photo from the performance by Per Bolkert, 2025.