

Estonian Realities

April 3 - July 19, 2026

Press opening:

April 9, 2026, 9:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.



A first for a French museum, the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris is presenting an exhibition devoted to three Estonian artists whose work spans from the mid-twentieth century to this day: Olga Terri (1916-2011), Anu Pöder (1947-2013), and Kris Lemsalu (born in 1985).

The exhibition showcases the diversity and vitality of the Estonian art scene through the eyes of these three artists from different generations. They all reflect, in their own way, a creative moment in this country whose history is both enthralling and tormented.

Marked by the tension between European and Russian spheres of influence, Estonia has been able to preserve a unique, fertile, and vibrant culture, which has produced the works on view in the exhibition.

The treatment of the human body operates as a common thread between the work of the three creators: a body at times abandoned, fragmented, expanded, transformed, exuberant, or combative.

Anu Pöder, a central figure (1947-2013)

Anu Pöder has been a major art historical rediscovery in recent years. The exhibition features about fifteen works revealing the singular world of this artist whose practice developed outside the rigid academic framework of her era. The materials used by Anu Pöder—burlap, plastic, soap, aluminum—convey the precariousness of her condition under Soviet rule, while revealing the upheavals in Estonian society at the moment of the country's regained independence. The artist's body is often implicitly present in her vulnerable, fragile sculptures that defy the boundaries of traditional figurative conventions.

Olga Terri, postwar painting (1916-2011)

A series of portraits that Olga Terri painted from 1945 to 1950 are gathered in one room. This space bears witness to the personal and collective hardships experienced during the Nazi occupation and the Soviet occupation that followed after 1944. Imbued with a feeling of melancholy, the slouching posture of her silent figures, painted in muted colors, expresses an impending instability.

PRESS RELEASE

Director

Fabrice Hergott

Curator

Jean-Baptiste Delorme, curator at Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, assisted by Emma Nordberg

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Anu Pöder

Limpsijad (Lickers)

2007

metal mesh, aluminum foil, textile

Anu Pöder Estate

Photo : Hedi Jaansoo

Practical information

Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris
11 Avenue du Président Wilson
75116 Paris
Tél. 01 53 67 40 00
www.mam.paris.fr

Open Tuesday through Sunday 10am
to 6pm

free admission

Cultural activities Information and bookings

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Kris Lemsalu, a contemporary vision (born in 1985)

The exhibition ends with the display of a monumental installation as well as new works created for the exhibition by the contemporary visual and performance artist Kris Lemsalu. The artist imagines an outlandish and burlesque world inhabited by hybrid human and non-human beings, embodying a contemporary take on Estonian pantheism and a satirical vision of society today.

This exhibition is organized in partnership with the Art Museum of Estonia (AME) and the Estonian Embassy in France. It includes loans from the Art Museum of Estonia, the Tartu Art Museum, the Anu Põder Estate, the Centre Pompidou, and the artist Kris Lemsalu.

A catalogue, published by the Art Museum of Estonia, includes texts by Jean-Baptiste Delorme, Eda Tuulberg, and a conversation between Alicia Knock and Kris Lemsalu.