



Factory of Patriotic Affects. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi

How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too): In search of patriotic postures

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ABSTRACT (min. roughly 250 words) <p>In this MA thesis, I try to understand the mechanisms and affectual postures of patriotism from a queer foreign artist's perspective. I employ a series of performances, artistic practices and experimental writing to get closer to patriotic corporeality without ever having to define it. The performance triptych called How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too) and carried out in three different places throughout the fall 2021 addresses questions of bodily affiliation with one's place. Thus, the work ponders questions of belonging, exclusion, sharing a geopolitical place with others affectually, and, perhaps, leaving a mark of having been in that place. I conduct my exploration of patriotism using methods of fictioning – creating work that builds on top of an established institution and performs in misalignment and shifts in relation to it. The writing views and analyzes itself through the frameworks of beginnings and translation – operational tools both in this text and my artistic research. The multiplicity of diverse beginnings enables me, the maker and the writer, to stay with the uncertain, overwhelming, unfinished, or ongoing – the qualities that have been present in my work. The framework of translation suggests a plurality of modalities, postures and codes that allow me to shift and morph when engaging in art making and writing. This writing actualized during the war that my homeland Russia started into Ukraine. The text moves and shifts between multiple styles and patriotic postures containing war diary, poetry pages and concept analysis.</p>	
ENTER KEYWORDS HERE (keywords that describe the content of your work) #patriotism #translation #beginnings #territory #foreignness #fictioning #patrioticbody #breath #wartime #migration #territory	

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1. Introduction: Choosing methods and dealing with too much¹ war-caused affect in academia

This MA thesis began with my inability to write as usual propelling me to look for new (to me) methods of writing. The ones that could choreograph this text as a performance. I based my search both on the experience of participating in a half a year creative writing course led by a Russian feminist poet Galina Rymbu in the spring 2021 and on the practice of conducting multi-purpose texts in relation to my performance-triptych *How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* throughout the spring, summer and fall of 2021.

The ‘how’ of the writing became as significant as the ‘what’ of the writing directing me to investigate behavioral, corporeal and ritual-informed practices that this massive body of text called for. Turning to Helen Sword’s guidebook for academic writers, I paid attention to where, at what time of the day and in what conditions I wrote (Sword 2017). Looking both at Sara Ahmed’s description of the writing table (Ahmed, 2006) and Jasmin B. Ulmer’s research of embodied writing (Ulmer, 2014), I studied my writing posture, break times in between writing sessions, bodily sensations and its relationships to the surroundings and writing objects. The pleasure that I received when making the performance triptych was important for me in this writing process – finding “air and light” that could bring experiment and playfulness (Sword 2017). In pre-meditating this text, I posed a question: Can I write it using similar methods that worked for me when making the artistic part of the Master Thesis? What kind of performativity and engagement will the text require then? As a dancer and a somatic person, I chose to choreograph breathing and check-ins with the body in some parts of my text to keep bringing the corporeal into this writing. It was especially important during the moments when the screen time compromised the bodily postures of watchfulness (the term beautifully introduced by the Skinner Release dance technique practitioner Titta Court this spring at Outokumpu dance school that I am attending as I am writing this). For me these pauses introduce rhythms of release relevant to the body.

Here, in this rectangle space, take a pause and look elsewhere for a moment.

¹ my interpretation of the initial comments that I received about this text when I sent it in a draft form one month into the war of Russia into Ukraine.

During the last year when making artistic work, I have worked with the affectual state of patriotism, discovering that, in my experience, it is produced and sustained through the repetition of and attention toward certain postures of the body, language and collectivity (Ahmed 2006). Here and further in the text, I define ‘affect’ and ‘affectual’ referring to the theorizing of affect and affect theory by researcher Ali Lara. According to Lara affect refers to bodily processes “involved in social life” that escape representation and naming (Lara, 2020). Affectual states are corporeal states that while they “happen inside our bodies ... could be (and are) affected from a distance” (Lara, 2020). Bringing the affect forward allows the witnessing and addressing of the collective processes that bypass language and representation when entering our bodies. Thus, it allows to work with the subject of my research – patriotism through performative actions, experimental writing, avoiding definitions and direct pointing.

In fact, I did not approach the notion of patriotism directly and avoided using the word altogether till the very moment of production of the MA Thesis artistic work. Still, I danced around patriotism studying various mechanisms of patriotic production through corporeality, poetic and diary writing, observations and conversations, working with the materiality of both objects and concepts. From the start, the thesis text oriented toward using some of those mechanisms, slanting them and intertwining them with personal reflections and observations. I tried to bring the methods of fictioning (Burrows and O’Sullivan 2019) and parafictioning (Lambert-Beatty 2009) into this academic writing while also holding a strong frame of self-reflection, personal narrative and self-positioning on the complex and convoluted map of this research.

I specifically was inspired by autotheoretical writing and found intimacy and connections with the written works of Chris Kraus, Paul Preciado, Saidiya Hartman, McKenzie Wark, Maggie Nelson, Sara Ahmed, Oxana Timofeeva, Ann Cvetkovich, and Oskana Vasyakina – the authors that I have read during the last several years. Autotheory, which emerged from the voices of marginalized writers and artmakers, such as artists and researchers of color, feminist, queer and disabled academics, as well as those from the geopolitical periphery, circles back to the author’s body filled with their own perception of the world and theoretical analysis. In a way, autotheoretical writing is a phenomenological “life-thinking” (Fournier 2021) where the writer simultaneously is inside the world and “filled by experience” and outside of this world where their consciousness “detach[es] itself from things to see itself” (Merleau-Ponty 1964). Years of my dance and activism experience pointed to the body and the experience of the doer, simultaneously positioning this body in relation

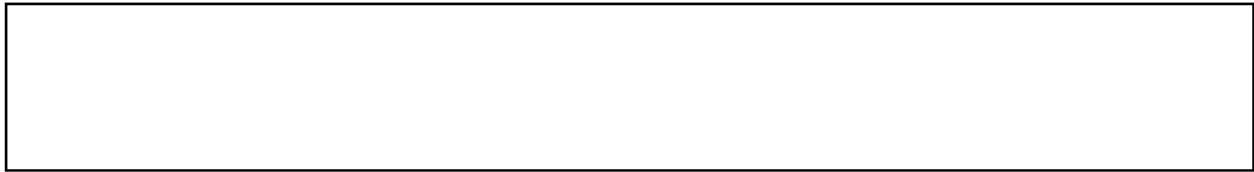
to other visible and invisible bodies and experiences. This suggested an autotheoretical style as one of the starting points for the written part of the thesis.

During the process of experimenting with form, my writing practice as I envisioned it was cut short - the Russian war onto Ukraine started. This introduction contextualizes and positions me and the following writing – facing the war, writing along the war, writing despite the war, writing because of the war. Since the beginning of the war previous practices of theorizing through the ‘self’ stepped back. I continued writing nearly daily producing an autobiographical fragmented text (that I call war diaries further in this text) that depicted the world that I entered as a Russian-born queer dissident artist and activist fully absorbed into this collective trauma. While working on the thesis, I engage in multiple temporalities. My life as a Russian-born artist and a Russian citizen is forever changed by this war in ways I am not aware of. My writing feels immediate and reactive toward the events. The thesis and the research continue and extend beyond (or along?) the war. Specifically, I want to stay with “strange temporalities” as I call them referring to Jack Halberstam’s definition of queer time (Halberstam 2005).

a small breath with the eyes closed

In the end of February, at the beginning of the war, the writing scattered into chaotic fragments and “strange temporalities.” Similar to “queer time” that Halberstam points to as the time of now, of immediacy, of no-future, of dying and, therefore, living in a queer way, the time of those who are involved in the war has no promise of security or structural support. Wartime produces the living and the writing that do not have the privilege of looking at themselves from a distance. The presence of wartime writing that shows its sharp carcass and bulging guts raises a question about distances and affect-production in academic writing. How much distance does academic writing require? How to position affect and affectual writing that is not aware of itself somehow within academia? How much closeness is allowed and invited here? Wartime writing which uses the “I” pronoun, present-tense language, a social media post-esque style takes on the reactive patriotic posture that it was supposed to observe from a distance. It is a posture of a body in high and immediate distress belonging to a specific nation. Through the multiplicity of writing that appears in this text, I attempt to get close to this posture and try it on. Still, while performing various patriotic postures I avoid bringing patriotism front and center and seek for its definitions. Even when submerged in the war pages this text gestures at everything that is ‘of patriotism’ and encircles patriotism while bypassing defining or fixing the term. In a way, it is not important for me

to find a single, solid definition of patriotism, on contrary, in this research I aim at exposing as many unstable patriotic postures as possible and a plurality of its subjective meanings.



The writing begins, moves and shifts between multiple styles holding them and failing to hold them together. This text is divided into five parts that highlight several concepts. The Second Part right after this introduction deals with the methods of artistic practice and academic writing reflecting on personal narratives and concepts that inform it. The Third Part goes into describing and analyzing *How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* performance triptych through the concepts of patriotism, beginnings, translation and territory. The Fourth Part focuses on the keywords *beginnings* and *translation* and holds space for the more experimental and immediate parts of writing such as the war pages and poetic gestures of the text. The Fifth Part addresses my interest in patriotic postures and affects in relation to the theoretical frameworks and the autobiographical war diary snippets of the text. In this final part, I imagine my possible futures with this research, directions to turn to from here as a transnational Russian-born writer, a researcher, and an artist, think about patriotic body, and give thought to where the beginnings that I began in this artistic research extend to.

2. Methods of artistic practice and academic writing

In this part, I will speak about the methods of my art making: the idea of scaffolding as the architectural posture of an art piece or a text, working with personal and collective archives, and para/fictioning methods. While I speak about methods and art practices, I cannot separate them from the events, and personal and collective bodily and emotional states that propelled them. In her interview with Brooklyn Rail, the artist and academic Andrea Fraser points at the importance of “the conditions of the production, presentation and distribution” of the art-making that comprise both the artwork and its “social meaning” (Fraser at Brooklyn Rail 2004). This part of the text will be wiggling between chunks of personal narrative and performative narration combining outlined methodology and reflection.

2.1. An architecture of the artistic research: scaffolding

More than a decade ago when I lived at the intersection of Utah and 25th Street in the Mission district of San Francisco, the owner of the three-storied Victorian house that I lived in decided to paint the building. A three-storied scaffolding was put around our house. Each story of the structure had several wooden platforms covered with dark green tarp wrapped around it from the outside. Suddenly, I could open the window of my room and step out to the platform that became a temporary balcony – an extension of my room that provided new territory and new opportunities. At some point the paint job froze due to some unforeseen construction regulation and the scaffolding was left alone for several months. My friends started hanging out on the platform to have a drink, and one friend in need of housing even camped there in a sleeping bag for several nights. One evening it was so windy in San Francisco that the scaffolding structure collapsed and dented a car parked by our house - no one was hurt but my temporary balcony was gone. Since then, I began to think of scaffolding differently – not only as the structure that holds something but also as one that can perform in its own right. A few times in the LAPS MA program we were asked to think of philosophers and artists whom we would invite to our dinner table. I would like to replace the imaginary dinner table with a scaffolding structure that can both support that what is inside and serve as a platform for hosting philosophers, thinkers, artists, friends, ideas, lovers, ghosts, institutions, affects, hyper objects, seagulls and traumas in order to have a collective picnic.

I build questions around language, body, text, migration and otherness as I would build architectural mazes and unfinished structures or scaffolding around a thing that might be or might not be there. Scaffolding is a personal choice of dramaturgy suitable for this artistic research because of its

seemingly temporary posture that supports and is supported at the same time. Will the scaffolding be removed to uncover a remodeled structure, an innovation, an aesthetic object (a real art object), will it collapse and destroy other objects as casualties (what would casualties be in this case?), or will it become an inhabited livable space that will not be a holder of the original? Will the scaffolding suck all the life out of the original structure that will be discovered as a weak mummified body by the archaeologists of the future? There is a scaffolding concept in assistant learning psychology developed by a Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, in which an adult, a mentor, an educator is holding a novice learner, a child, a beginner as a scaffolding, as a temporary container that gets removed eventually for the learner to stand on their own. I imagine that there is a chance that there is a marvelous growing structure in this text, a coherent concept under the construction, but also, I speculate that there is nothing underneath. I am also curious if there is a scaffolding holding this scaffolding where the picnic of all the guests is taking place. Therefore, my scaffolding can be in the middle place sandwiched by the unknown.

When creating a performance triptych about patriotism, I applied scaffolding as the architecture of my artistic research. In my artwork, I focus on the supportive structures of the concept of patriotism, avoiding exposing the concept directly. It remains hidden and covered by several layers even bringing up the question whether the original concept is still there underneath the scaffolding. I layer multiple supportive structures one onto another in a way that, perhaps, slightly puzzles and raises a question about what is supporting, what is being supported and how they relate to one another. Each supportive structure holds a multiplicity of objects – literal and -figurative – that nest together, connected, or even interwoven one into another.

Working with the metaphor of scaffolding led me to building Human Nests - nearly human size wearable metal structures that both supported the verticality of a human body and were supported by the human architecture and movement through space. First, Human Nest appeared as one of the elements of the performance *41st National Park of Merihaka in Finland* performance – residing in the Conservation Area as the temporary nest for the Foreign Artists in Residency in Merihaka collective and inspired by seagulls' nesting structures. The Human Nest gestured to the importance of collective supportive structures for those who are more vulnerable and fictioned the alliance between seagulls and local foreign artists. Later, Human Nests returned as wearable metal dresses for three Patriotism Researchers to perform their final end-of-the-work dance in the *Factory of Patriotic Affects* performance. The Human Nests implied the supportive prosthetic structures that allowed to release some of the weight of patriotic affect accumulated inside the factory. Thus, the

scaffolding structure in my art works simultaneously performs as a concealing and, possibly, protective layer, and a prosthetics for an object underneath it - augmenting some of its qualities or simply offering it new ones.

a breath again



One of three Human Nests co-designed with the Teak stage designer Marja Zilcher. Photo by the author.

2.2. Archiving

Reading the autotheoretical book by Ann Cvetkovich *Depression: A Public Feeling* made me begin to rethink my ongoing depression as the experience of loss caused by the lack of personal and ancestral archives and the lack of history erased due to the capitalism circuits of ongoing migration (Cvetkovich 2012). Possibly, due to the personal and collective loss of archive I found it important when making artistic work to collect and categorize, to surround myself with objects and materials that were infused with memories in order to regain history and to heal this depression.

Here, it is important for me both to define archive, or rather, broaden the definition of what is generally considered to be an archive and archival practices, and to think about the relation of an archive to the past, present and future. According to Jacques Derrida the etymology of the word 'archive' points to a beginning, or at least some starting point – allowing to trace the history back. Moreover, an archive suggests a categorizing of things, creating a certain order (Derrida, 1995). Thus, I can view my archival practices as organizing and making sense of multiple beginnings that show up in my artistic research. Mostly, I am concerned with my artistic practices that work with objects, past narratives, the body as a collector and a producer of various archives and the language as an object that is stored, produced and altered by the body. The archives emerging in my artistic practices are assemblages of fragmented and unfinished objects and places, living and shifting bodies and their parts.

Does an archive only carry the past and is it about the past, or can it be an active and living object of the present, extending into the future? Can an archive be both: coming from the past, carrying the past, and activated and coming to life through mediated actions, such as reentering, reencountering, remembering, in the present? When I engage with archival objects or archival practices, do I lose myself in the past or pull the archive with me into the future? Obviously, it is not that simplistic or binary, and clearly the archive opens time multi-directionally. When I bike through Oakland, California again, after not having lived there for several years, I see a living museum of my life full of magnolia trees with stark white flowers stuck up the trees' crowns, of small both roughened and upbeat houses with political messages in their windows, of people who look like they belong here in this museum. Through the repetition, revisiting, rejoining, reentering I see the city as a living orchard, contained in itself so much that it would never fully change, a personal archive that comes to life for me through the act of biking as I have done five years ago here, ten years ago here.

Simultaneously, the place is multiple: it is my archive waiting for me practically unchanged, it is someone else's place of being, it is an ever-changing politically charged assemblage of lives.

Similarly, I work with objects, narratives and affects reaching toward their archival history and watching them unravel forward into the current time. My research of foreignness, migration and patriotic corporeality points to the archival work – addressing memories, collective affects that are reinstalled and altered through repetition and revisiting, objects from the past that are imbued with new relationships to them. In my artistic work, it is important for me to remain in an unstable posture that allows to shift positions and placement on the temporal map – continuously rearranging the archives. This way, nothing remains fixed, archives live through shifts and motion supporting the performance's new postures.

2.3. Fiction and parafiction as forms of exploration of new directions

Although fictioning within art practices has compelled me before, the process of fictioning and parafictioning (I will explain the difference and my interest in both) did not emerge as an imperative method up to the time I began the *41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka* part of the triptych process. In the end, playing with fictioning became a connecting thread of all three works, first, fictioning a national park at the abandoned playground, then a factory at Theater Academy, and, finally, an immigrant shop at an old shopping mall. I am drawn to fictioning as genre and relate it to conceptual art, in a way that the overlap of the factual base and the fictional layer is constructed through a concept's production. As I mentioned above, Andrea Fraser notes that in conceptual art, the artwork does not limit itself only to the resulting product but includes all the processes, conditions and consequences of the production. To me, fictioning in art thrives specifically in those less visible processes that take place in making an artwork, turning it into the artwork itself - by latching itself onto the interstices of production and shifting it. When engaging with fictioning (and parafictioning) practices an artist often works with and builds on top of an established form, entity, or institution. The very artistry shows up in misalignment and shifts in the process of making in relation to the so-called original. The essay *Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility* of the art critic and historian Carrie Lambert-Beatty gives a somewhat clear definition of the parafictioning and fictioning methods, as a practice of intersecting “real” life and the imaginary, creating an alternative truth with different levels of plausibility (Lambert-Beatty, 2009). To my understanding of Lambert-Beatty's article, fiction and parafiction differ from each other by their different relationships to plausibility - while the fictional does not strive to become believable and still keeps

a distance from reality as we know it, the parafictional goes a step further, creating and nurturing the conditions that would facilitate the believing.

Specifically, I bring together materiality and thought while working in the space of a gap between the two and attaching them together in a “new,” unfamiliar way. If I trace back my interest in (para)fictioning and conceptual art, I can see that it might have come from the place of exhaustion with metaphor and direct narrative, the need to dig slightly deeper or to see what is behind the forefront of a primary posture. The backspace becomes the actual interest of (para)fictioning for me. In this way, the research of patriotism is interesting because patriotism is very frontal in its presentation, but my research locates itself in its backdrop - space of fictioning and parafictioning create situations that research alternative patriotic corporeality. (Para)fictioning can become a potent method of artmaking, especially, when doing politically and socially engaged art in environments where other methods fail. Fictioning and parafictioning methods have been used by politically engaged Eastern European and former Soviet artists who have been making conceptual artwork in the politically repressed environment of their countries. Even though my conditions of artmaking are different, I find that I follow the lineage some of those artists, such as Ukrainian Soviet artist Ilya Kabakov, Russian-born American artist duo Komar and Melamid, or late Soviet avant garde musician and performance artist Sergey Kuryokhin. Engaging with (para)fictioning opens compelling directions for being with an art practice and life at large giving an artist a renewed sense of agency and pointing at alternative ways of relating to the political and social processes around.

3. How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too) triptych

3.1. Emergence of a triptych as a necessity

From the start, it was clear that I would create a triptych or three separate and distinct art works that were nevertheless connected and interwoven one into another. The decision to make three works was somewhat intuitive and, at least partially, based on a personal hunger of lacking a regular art practice by the time that I was at the end of the LAPS program. Due to both the ongoing pandemic during three fourth of my studies and the highly theory-oriented nature of the program, I did not have a chance to make enough art and needed to access and reinstall my art maker identity. In a way, I could not afford to stay just within the frame of theory, as I often felt I had to do during my studies. Thus, the need to produce a massive art series felt burning. Additionally, as a DIY artist having practiced with little to no resources and funding all their artistic life, I wanted to use and exhaust all the provided support and funding that was allocated to a Uniarts MA student for their final work. From the start, I knew that I would have three pieces around the subjects of migration, tracing, place, and shifting patriotic bodies, that will actualize in the Merihaka outdoor area, on the Theater Academy's premises, and in Vantaa as a part of the LAPS 20 *The Posture of Impermanence* exhibition. Again, I knew that the three places would have three different focal points. The first one, Merihaka would be about the place and the concept of non-places (Marc Augé, 1992) would be in focus. The second one, in Studio 3, would have features of a strange museum or gallery, it would invite interaction with objects and a concept of an archive. The third one, in Vantaa, would focus on language, poetry and translation in some indirect way.

Each fragment of the trilogy bled into another, extended beyond its borders, left marks in each other's territories just like a body of a foreign artist not contained in one place but spread and flickering in many simultaneously. Still, my actual body was located in Finland, sitting on my 90 centimeters wide mattress in the student housing room in Merihaka, Helsinki, as I was writing this. My location at the time of making the artwork compelled me to investigate my corporeal relationship with Finland in particular, therefore I called my trilogy *How to like Finland, and how Finland can like me (too)*. Possibly, through this very inquiry into the process of and access to liking Finland, I began to unravel my flickering connections to two other places, that lingered behind Finland as shadows, Russia and the United States.

All three works explored various angles and nooks of patriotism and the body trying on a patriotic posture. A body entered fictioned sites of national significance intensified by various artistic tools (*41st National Park* and *Factory of Patriotic Affects*), a body resided in an environment of stark difference constructing the other out of oneself (*Small and Nice Immigrant Shop*). In her autotheoretical work *How to Love a Homeland (Родина)* the philosopher and writer Oxana Timofeeva contemplates different ways of relating to a homeland by operating Deleuzian-Guattarian concepts of *territorialization*, *detrterritorialization* and *reterritorialization* (Timofeeva, 2021). A human body similar to a body of an animal tends to leave its place of origin (detrterritorialize), to claim other places of belonging and to experience sense of homelessness throughout its life (reterritorialize), and to long for the original place that is long gone. In my triptych, I research my bodily relationships with a territory, its histories before me, my visions of its future, and its performative significances. Coming into the artwork with a deep sense of having been detrterritorialized I use artistic tools to reterritorialize myself but also to question and to expose the processes of reterritorialization.

While during the making of the triptych I did not conceptualize it through the notions of *beginnings* and *translation*, I bring them into my writing now as both the structural tools and analytical frameworks that help me to understand my tendencies and directions in making. Part Three and Four of this thesis specifically focus on these concepts as its chief themes. Each descriptive part of the triptych begins with introducing the beginning of the process, or the initial thoughts and stages, then follows and unravels that beginning to see how it shifted and was translated into the actual production. Each artwork can be viewed as a beginning of a bigger artistic process where I commence to explore my relationship with *patriotism* deeper through the modes of translation of languages, bodily postures and art mediums. Here and further in the thesis, in my war pages and poetic parts of writing, these concepts continue to appear as a binding thread for the reader to follow. Each work of the triptych is an attempt to introduce a new beginning – a new version of reterritorialization. Each version requires translation, both literally – by placing multiple languages side by side, and figuratively – by searching for diverse mediums to show patriotic postures. Additionally, although the work *How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* was a triptych, the artworks were accumulative and consequential. Thus, they were built on top of one another and largely unknown to me up to the moment of starting to work on them.

3.2. 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka

It makes me think about borders and nation states and migration of different beings and the marks we leave in a place. The last question where a place ends and another one begins stays with me.

- feedback from a *41st National Park of Merihaka in Finland* visitor's book

My apartment building, Hakaniemenranta 12, in Merihaka neighborhood, is full of students that are given a room, or occasionally an apartment, partially subsidized by the Finnish government, for up to four years, for the duration of the study right in Finland. Some people stay in Merihaka for a short period of time, especially the exchange students, arriving to study through the Erasmus Program. The longest human resident of the building is a local artist who has been living there, along with using his art studio downstairs, for the last 35 years. The building has several common areas such as the gym, the club room, the laundry room, saunas, and the downstairs parking lot that is used for smoking. Still the shared spaces do not facilitate the knowing (and liking) the rest of the residents as the common places are quite transitory and do not encourage lingering and passing time together. The sound insulation of the building is poor, which leads to lots of daily sound exposure to each other without seeing or communicating.

The backside of Hakaniemenranta 12 faces a two-story garage building. A small dead-end alley separates the garage building from the apartment building. Annually, beginning early April, the garage roof, which has been covered with pebbles, moss and other urban vegetation, hosts a colony of gulls that arrive in dozens to the roof, begin settling down, courting, mating and nesting to raise their chicks. Both years of my living through springs here, in Merihaka, I experienced the gulls. A smaller gull, I watched durationally is, I believe, called the Common Gull (or the Mew gull of North American subspecies). I researched that the gulls are often monogamous, tend to return to the same places to nest every year if possible; most of them leave the area between July and November with the majority making a migratory exodus to Western and Southwestern Europe, especially to Denmark and other countries around the North Sea. Some birds stay in Finland through the winter. This close multi-species neighboring of students, of birds, and of artists invited alternative ways of being, caring, noticing and passing time. I heard gulls fucking in the early hours of the morning, their offspring screaming, groups of them hovering over food scraps, I heard my neighbors talking, flushing the toilet, exercising, laughing, fighting.

Originally, I wanted to build the performance around writing letters. I imagined two recipients: Merihaka seagulls and my HOAS apartment complex neighbors - the current residents of Hakaniemenranta 12 in Helsinki. I had practiced writing letters, postcards and notes to others during the summer - carrying on with this performative practice and developing it further for the Merihaka part felt like a natural continuation. Having worked with the concepts of leaving a mark, and of tracing the traces throughout the spring and summer of 2021 in my preparation for the MA thesis through teaching community workshops and writing letters, I imagined the written and delivered letters as the marks of the place that marked me in the Merihaka apartment complex where I lived for the last two years. I perceived letters as a form of touch - to fulfill my need to be in touch with my neighbors, to touch my neighbors in this strange auditory intimacy that we shared without interacting much.

The performative letters that I planned to write to Hakaniemenranta 12 residents were conceptualized keeping in mind the common experience most of the residents shared of witnessing seagulls that lived in the neighborhood. I thought I would also write letters to seagulls - an edible kind. If I considered letters to be a way of mediated care, then specifically an edible letter would correspond with the etymological meaning of care in old Russian. The word care in Russian is "zabota" which according to some etymological versions comes from an old Russian word "zobatisya" which, in its turn, comes from a noun "zob" meaning "food" or "a meal." Therefore, the process of care related to the process of feeding, which I wanted to explore quite directly. The objects of care that I conceptualized and thought about through my writings and artistic practices when starting to collect the materials for MA thesis in the spring and the summer of 2021 could show up as the objects of feeding, ingesting, digesting. I would leave my mark by feeding my edible letters to seagulls as a form of care. I rarely gathered with people due to the pandemic and living in a small densely shared living space but this time I imagined sharing a meal with humans and seagulls (separately). One of my visions was to cook an alphabet pasta with friends, make verses with cooked letters, eat some of it as well as come outside to seagulls and make edible messages to them. Last year I dealt with rowdy upstairs neighbors by exchanging polite written notes slipped through the door and in the end bringing them a chocolate bar to make a truce. Could the Merihaka seagulls get my message by eating my letters similarly to how my upstairs neighbors ate the chocolate?

Slowly, I had to let go of the seagulls' feeding idea for several reasons, including the ethics around feeding urban birds or making a public performance out of it. Additionally, I was not sure how to

invite seagulls into my performance altogether without anthropomorphizing them – thus, imbuing them with my personal human ideas and sentimentality. I attempted to get in touch with an ornithologist who would study Finland-based seagulls but could not easily find one. By talking it through with Olga Spyropoulou, dramaturg of the first two performances of the triptych, I decided that I was not ready to engage with the actual seagulls in this performance work and should stay with the seagulls of my imaginary when making this art piece.

In the spring of 2021, the residents of Hakaniemenranta 12 received a letter informing us about construction happening on the garage roof. The description and the reasons behind the construction sounded vague. I felt concerned about some human actions on the roof since it has been a nesting habitat for the multiple generations of gull families. The gulls began to arrive and claim places on the roof in late March and early April. Then the construction workers came and over the span of a few weeks removed the vegetation and the seagulls' nests bases and covered the roof with a new material. Seagulls were not able to nest on the garage roof this year. Closely observing this event made me think about the affectual relationship of bodies and the territories where they reside. Thus, I wanted to explore these relationships through a sequence of performative gestures that evokes questions of sharing space, constructing a place, leaving a mark or reterritorializing in a Deleuzian-Guattarian term.

When taking walks through Merihaka I had kept encountering a set of wooden structures diagonally from the local K-Market installed in a little square surrounded by bushes and concrete buildings. It felt clear that I wanted to work with these structures as a gathering place, but it was not clear how. I was recommended to get in touch with an architect, Tuomas Toivonen, a long-term resident of Merihaka and the co-founder of Kulttuurisauna near Merihaka. Tuomas responded eagerly, explaining the history of structures as a modernist 70's playground and adding that

the old 70's playgrounds are melancholic and boring (these can be positive dimensions I think) but retain their dignity when deserted- as opposed to new playgrounds, that are always waiting to capture their 'users' into their grip and have them perform and repeat the pre-choreographed gestures and movements with an empty stare.

(from the email correspondence with Tuomas Toivonen, 2021).

It felt that the deserted and ambiguous place of a strange playground of the past held the possibility of being transformed into any kind of territory. This site carried traces of an alternative corporeal

relationship to place and gestured toward a potential alternative and fictional site that could facilitate a different kind of connection of corporeality and patriotism. There were three white metal flag poles behind the playground site, supporting and hovering over it from the back. The Finnish flag is flown on multiple occasions but during the whole month of September, when my first performance was going to take place, the poles were bare, the ropes beating the poles in the wind, there was a promise of a flag to rise, the figure of the national flag that was hidden. It led me to developing my fictioning of the structures into the *41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka*.

The idea of fictioning a national park specifically came from thinking about the national politics that construct “moral landscapes” of the country and facilitate patriotic feelings toward a place. I encountered this idea in Petri J. Raivo’s research on *Finnish landscape and its meanings*. The land and endowing the land with specific national characteristics and sentiments provide a perfect platform for a corporeal connection with patriotism. The image of Finland as a country full of pristine and cared for nature is an important aspect of national politics (Raivo, 2002). For me, to access the lineage of forty Finnish National Parks², by constructing the next one in Merihaka, meant to access the lineage of corporeal relationship with patriotism. The *41st National Park of Finland* was latching onto the well-prepared soil of patriotic sentiments that had been here since the process of constructing the land as belonging to a nation. Still, in my fictioning I went a bit further, creating a narrative that the park was co-designed by foreign artists and our neighboring gulls, in a sense that artists observed and resided with gulls, learning from them when setting a site. A new value emerges when the homeland site is constructed and reclaimed by minority groups. In her *How to love a homeland* Timofeeva specifically points out that the only patriotic sentiments that she sees potentiality in, are the ones coming from the most ostracized and oppressed communities.

All 215 Hakaniemenranta 12 residents received a personal letter of invitation to the opening of the *41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka*. I learned the residents’ names from the public list posted downstairs in each staircase and delivered the letters personally dropping them through each door slit. Each letter was stamped with a fictional *metsähallitus*³ stamp that I designed and ordered. Since the letters addressed the residents’ co-neighboring with the garage roof seagulls, they were written in two types: for the residents, whose apartments faced exclusively the frontal side of the building, and therefore not the garage roof, and for the residents whose apartments, or at least the

² at the moment of making the artwork, there were 40 National Parks in Finland.

³ Metsähallitus website says that it “is a state-owned enterprise that produces environmental services for a diverse customer base ranging from private individuals to major companies” (www.metsa.fi). If translated directly from Finnish, it means “forest government.”

common area such as the kitchen, faced the roof where the gulls have been living. (For the example of the letter, see Appendix). The residents were invited to the grand opening of the local 41st National Park of Finland as a part of my MA thesis. Each letter was collectively authored by the Foreign Artists In Residency of Merihaka, a fictional collective that I came up with during Covid times to address my own isolation as a foreign artist.

The letter had a QR code that led the receiver to a webpage in order to sign up. The visitors were invited to choose a time slot for the 18th of September: there were 12 visitors maximum per one-hour slot and four slots altogether. The visitors were asked to take their headphones and the cellphone with them but promised onsite technology in case they did not have it such as headphones and mp3 players. The site was set up with several performative objects, including the huge “Welcome to the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka” fabric sign, a few stands with written announcements, a few wooden steps and cubes, glasses for observing gulls, etc. I met with the visitors in the park ranger’s role, offering Finnish candy and Juhla Mokka coffee, or herbal tea alternatively. I handed each visitor a laminated map, drawn from the point of view of a seagull sitting on the flagpole, and briefly explained all the park's attractions (for the *41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka* map see Appendix). The map offered several sites to visit without suggesting the order. At the entry, the visitors encountered the first attraction - a guided audio tour that oriented their bodies in this space and suggested a specific way of entry. Further, the visitors were invited to leave their own mark by rearranging “local rocks and sticks” at the site. The next site led them through a guided seagulls’ observing tour. The conservation area of the park demonstrated a Human Nest (the object that tripled in its numbers and appeared again in the second part of the triptych) that the visitors were asked to observe from a distance. The last park attraction presented an interactive science corner where the visitors could learn about the seagulls’ migration patterns by lying down on the mats and watching the sky through the cutout migration maps. Another sign led the visitors outside the main national park area and toward the flag poles where they could have the last audio guided tour experience. Once having completed the tour the visitors were invited to chat with the ranger and each other, have more hot drinks and candy, and leave feedback in the visitor’s notebook.



Visitors of the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka are observing seagulls. Photo by Joona Mäkelä.

The 41st National Park was attended by 40 people. Some invited Hakaniemenranta 12 neighbors brought friends and partners, there were a few children around. The crowd was mixed because some of my colleagues from Uniarts also visited. People generally lingered around after each visit, had more snacks, chatted with each other and me, took their time with the visitor's books. I met several of my neighbors in person and learned their names and stories. Several passersby were lured in by the crowd and attended the National Park as well. Despite the constantly changing and challenging weather: rain, wind, sun, rain, wind, the park was busy throughout the day and was officially closed at 5pm that very day once the last group of visitors left. The 41st National Park gathering was assisted by many friends, colleagues and even housemates who helped to set the site up, helped the attending guests with mp3 players, maps, and questions, made coffee and hot water when we ran out and watched the site for me when I had to use the toilet.

3.3. Factory of Patriotic Affects

If you are good at creating messes, then you might think about how to work with the audience to help them resolve the mess.

- Olga Spyropoulou, colleague and the dramaturg for the first two *How to Like Finland* and *How Finland Can Like Me (too)* artworks.

Studio 3 is a small black box theater on the premises of the Theater Academy that I received for the time span of six weeks in order to do my MA thesis performance. I felt uneasy about working inside the theater with all its ideological, historical, and aesthetic weight, especially because the theater was a part of a Uniarts institution with all its meanings. The process of realigning myself as an artist and my artwork within, around, along or against an institution and addressing that relationship critically, even though often discreetly, is an intrinsic part of my artistic practice. That practice allows for some form of redirecting, slanting or negating the obvious effects of the institutional powers leading up to an exposure and possibly different arrangement of the power dynamic. Still, it seemed that the institutional presence of Uniarts in addition to having to “deliver” a Studio 3 artwork as the chief part of my MA thesis, was too heavy to navigate and to create power rearrangements that would “free” my artwork from this tight institutional three-piece suite. Any dramaturgical move within the performance would be read through the institutional and educational lens. By finally committing to working on Uniarts territory and using the full-out Uniarts technical assistance, I had to commit to working with institutional presence and power directly and to apply the fictioning tools in the way that would perforate its thickness in visible and, possibly, grotesque ways. This challenge informed the conceptual and aesthetical thinking behind the work and shaped nearly all the actions done in Studio 3 throughout the six weeks of rehearsal and performance time.

While the first work, the *41st National Park of Finland*, was about creating an alternative use of an abandoned site in my immediate territory of living, the Studio 3 performance gestured toward the archival practices and various territorial histories extending both into the present and the future. Even before developing the performance into a fictional factory, I knew that I would bring forward the notion of a museum full of archival objects, both material and immaterial. Specifically, affected by the thinking of the Russian American art critic Victor Agamov-Tupitsyn, I was interested in developing the concept of a “dark museum.” According to his analysis of a museum space, the museum objects can unlock some of their eerie essence to the viewer only when seen in obscure

flickering light – not fully visible, saved from the gallery spotlight, partially hidden (Agamov-Tupitsyn, 2019). The Dark Museum of Agamov-Tupitsyn is the space where the viewer themselves can choose what and how to illuminate with their own source of light, with their own distance and proximity to the artwork. That obscurity corresponds with the fragmented nature of an art object – the objects never exist in their totality but rather in their parts constructed by the space, context, placement, time, etc. Poor or partial illumination helps to reveal this fragmentation, and thus expose complicated and conflicting histories and relationships of an object to a place and other objects, that can be washed out by the bright and seemingly neutral gallery lights (Agamov-Tupitsyn, 2019). The idea of obscure and partially lit objects also evolved from studying Bas Jan Ader’s artwork – another inspiration for *Factory of Patriotic Affects*. Ader, a Dutch American conceptual artist, disappeared at the sea when carrying out the second part of his trilogy *In Search of the Miraculous* in 1975. First part of Ader’s trilogy was his nightly walk-through Los Angeles documented by an artist and his wife Mary Sue Ader-Anderson, as a series of 14 photographs. Underexposed photos showed the silhouette of the artist walking through the city by night obscuring the details and creating an eerie feeling of the hidden and unknown for the viewer. In the *Factory of Patriotic Affects* piece, the audience enters a very dark studio space and are asked to use their own sources of light that they previously chose to lit the room and produce patriotic affects inside the dark factory to uncover their own connection to the space and objects through this visual fragmentation.

The idea of the factory developed also in dialogue with William Pope. L’s artworks. Pope L. is a Black American conceptual performance and visual artist who works with the subjects of race, racism and “americanism” using various tropes of blackness. I was specifically inspired by Pope. L’s project *Black Factory*, a touring institution where blackness is produced together with the residents of the visited towns under the motto “We Make Something Better Than Blackness: Opportunity” (www.theblackfactory.com). Responding to the idea of *Black Factory*, I conceptualized an operational institution where patriotism was made by the audience taking on the role of Temporary Workers and relating to the (art) objects in the space. The work attempted to conjure, organize and twist patriotic feelings by bringing in the concept of a factory to the premises of the art academy.

In the Merihaka performance I built a one-day fictional site of the 41st National Park in order to latch onto patriotic sentiments existing around the other 40 National Parks of Finland. I sensed that in the Art Academy, patriotic sentiments were already present in quite a direct way. I could even call the University of the Arts of Helsinki a national factory producing artists, cultural thinking,

trends and an up-to-date European nation. Looking back at Vsevolod Meyerhold's, a Soviet theater director's statement in 1922, "the work of the actor in an industrial society will be regarded as a means of production vital to the proper organization of the labour of every citizen of that society," made me think that there is a tradition in which, an actor, and broadly an artist, has been conceptualized as a factory worker as early as the beginning of the 20th century (edit. by Braun, 2016). Later, Bojana Kunst would call the artist to be an exemplary worker of the post-Industrial society (Kunst, 2015).

Following this conceptualization pointing at the artist-factory connection, I developed my thinking further by attempting to distill the Factory from the academy, negate the academy altogether, and keep only the spirit of it that the Factory uses for its manufacturing. Fictioning a factory which produced patriotic affects in a place of a recently closed (down?) art academy allowed me to estrange the institutional art space while latching onto its patriotic sentiments once more. Generally, a factory is a site of manufacturing and production that describes and identifies a nation through its presence, products, value and materiality. A factory produces goods. Yet, a factory is often a site that produces patriotism as a side product by creating pride, jobs and conflict, for instance, ethical tension. In the post-industrial time, when so much manufacturing and heavy industry is outsourced to the Global South and Eastern Europe, and products' parts are produced in multiple countries, the factory's national identity gets unstable and the affects it brings front become even more contested.

While intuitively I knew that this work would have the elements of an installation, a dance piece, a game, a performance art piece, and that it would play with humor and the absurd, before entering the Studio 3 space and beginning to rehearse, it existed on an abstract level for me. I wanted to work with three dancers and a sculptor who would build three-dimensional structures for the dancers' bodies to extend into. I envisioned a wobbly table-like structure or a type of strange prosthetics that could hold or be attached to, or both, to the objects and human bodies, support them and be supported by them. Also, I had a vague vision of a performer hidden under a structure giving an art lecture about art making and geopolitical border crossings. I knew that there should be an element of a game there, there should be multiple objects, moved around according to several rules. The rehearsals with the performers were based on these pre-ideas and yet, there was a lot of room for devising the work together.



Oula Rytönen, one of the performers, improvises with objects and concepts in the rehearsal process. Photo by the author.

When beginning to work with the other three performers, sound artists Ilja Pippa, Oula Rytönen, and my long-term collaborator, dancer and performance artist Suvi Tuominen, I offered several frames of working: researching personal relationships with patriotism, working in the studio with randomly chosen objects through scores, and performatively exploring connections to several artworks (and artists) that I had selected. The artworks that I chose were the *Siluetta Series* (1973-78) by Cuban American artist Ana Mendieta, *In Search of the Miraculous* (1975) by Dutch and US-based artist Bas Jan Ader, *I Like America and America Likes Me* (1974) by German artist Joseph Beuys, *Outdoor Piece* (1981) by Taiwanese New York-based artist Tehching Hsieh, *Crawls* (1970-80s) and *Black Factory* by American William Pope. L, and my mother's pedagogical drawings and hand-made cards (the beginning of 1990s) that she made for her pre-school students in our hometown of Izhevsk, Russia. All the artworks, including the works of my mother, which she, herself, did not consider to be an artistic work but rather a practical learning tool, corresponded with my personal research of patriotism, belonging, territory, leaving a trace and migrating. Specifically,

my mother's cards fostered the affect toward the homeland with its early post-Soviet imagery that constructed ideas about pan-Soviet imperialist nature, labor, children, machinery and joy. The lives of the chosen artists were interwoven with their art practices, their art practices came from their relationship to a contested territory - the processes of deterritorialization, and the attempts to reterritorialize through these art pieces. I felt intimate connections to the artworks and the artists, as an immigrant, as a formerly undocumented person in the United States, as a queer socialized as female, as a person with a heavy national history, as an artist who prioritized both conceptual art and corporeality. Most of the works came from a specific era of artmaking, the 1970s-80s, except for "Black Factory" by William Pope. L and my mom's memory cards, and from a specific location, the United States, except from the work from Izhevsk, Russia. Additionally, *I Like America and America Likes Me* title by Joseph Beuys informed the title of the whole triptych *How To Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* evoking thoughts on the complexities and the gap between deterritorialization and reterritorialization that I have been exploring in this project.

During the initial rehearsal process, the performers were introduced to the artworks, several key concepts of the patriotic body research and were invited to play with them using scores. We built installations out of our bodies and objects both in Studio 3 and other spaces in Teak and made small performative gestures in a dialogue with the concepts and introduced artworks. While at the start of the process, I had thought of keeping direct references to the artworks in the performance itself, slowly - through the process of translation - by bringing the works' essence into current space and time, they left the performance at least in a recognizable shape and stayed in the background as traces. My mother's memory cards remained in the performance as one of the various objects that were used to construct patriotic machines and produce patriotic affects.

Factory of Patriotic Affects was an excessive and messy performance of multiplicities that consisted of many beginnings that possibly could become future performances. As one of my supervisors Simo Kellokumpu commented in our email correspondence after watching the work: "I was invited to the mesh of bodyart, dance, choreography, object theatre, living sculptures, relational aesthetics and participatory elements." The performance ran for three days for an hour and a half each day, happening during the fall break while Theater Academy was nearly empty.

The performance consisted of several parts. The video recording of the interview with The Worker of the Factory, the contract-making with the audience, and training of Temporary Workers were held in Tori. The production of patriotic affects, patriotic researchers performing factory machines

maintenance and human nests dance took place inside Studio 3. When the audience arrived at the performance, first they watched the video, where a fictional Reporter interviewed a fictional Worker (reporter's double) about the factory operations and history (read the text of the interview in Appendix). Then Suvi, in the role of the Factory Worker, read the Temporary Workers Contract (find the contract in Appendix) that the audience was asked to sign to become Temporary Workers. After this, the audience was given a workers' jacket, offered the choice of Patriotic Light and went through a short training on the use of this light inside the Factory. This part of the performance is humorous and balances between absurd theater and highly participatory piece. Audience members were initiated into the participatory role of a Temporary Worker through a series of elaborate rituals, but the rituals were loose and comical. For example, Suvi, when reading her script to the audience occasionally read the marginal notes of the script that were addressed solely to her. When the audience was learning the choreography of Patriotic Lights, they had to select the lights from fabric pockets with names attached to them, such as Christmas Patriotism, Bicycle Patriotism, Head Patriotism, Disco Patriotism, Long Stick Patriotism.



Suvi Tuominen, one of the performers, in a role of the Worker, welcomes the audience into the Factory. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.

Once the audience members walked into the factory space – Studio 3, they found themselves in a completely different environment. The space was nearly entirely dark, segregated by black movable walls, filled with industrial eerie music. The performers were inserted into self-made installations made from different small and large objects. The audience members in the role of temporary workers followed the instructions they received earlier when pointing their personal patriotic lights onto the objects. There was a black wooden walk-in cabin with several different sized holes in its walls and a sign Resting Labor Booth. The Temporary Worker’s contract mentioned the booth as the resting place where the worker could step in during their break in between producing patriotic feelings. Temporary Workers explored the dark factory with their lights for about 15 minutes before the factory horn blew and they were asked to sit down. The performers got out of their installation assemblages and began to de-assemble them. They read patriotic scores out loud while re-assembling the objects and inserting their bodies in it. In the last part of the piece the performers put on Human Nests – half-body sized metal structures, and performed a movement sequence, or their end of the workday restorative dance. When the Temporary Workers left the Factory, they returned their jackets and lights and received the product of their labor – an empty matchbox with a program of the show and a personal text attached to it with a rubber band (read the Program in Appendix).

3.4. Small and Nice Immigrant Shop

The last performance of the triptych was a part of the LAPS 20 anniversary exhibition called *The Posture of Impermanence* in Artsi Museum of Vantaa. Initially, I planned to organize a Vantaa Community Language School. The idea was to facilitate some sort of workshop where people of multiple language backgrounds would gather to teach each other their native languages, or, perhaps, invent a new language by arranging the existing ones together. I had worked with languages and translation throughout the whole artistic process and bringing in translation and language as subjects more directly felt like the right step. Also, Vantaa has a large Russian speaking population, and I was curious to address that phenomenon linguistically somehow. Yet, the idea of building a community event in a familiar form of a community workshop began to feel unsettling and eventually stopped making sense. I felt uninvested in it and, more so, allergic to the community education aspect of it. I have organized community activism-focused events in the US, Finland, Russia, and other post-Soviet countries as a job and decided to break from it in order to construct less direct experiences with different aesthetics.

While most of the LAPS 20 events happened within the territory of the museum, I chose to deterritorialize and find a place to perform in the mall in the neighborhood. I have a strong attraction to market sites as performative places. A decade ago, I co-organized a group performance at Costco, one of the biggest membership-only big-box retail store corporations in the US. Back then we quietly hijacked the whole store site through a series of both subtle and more visible performative gestures - some involved other customers to participate - and lasted for nearly an hour before the store employees noticed that something was happening. Few years ago, during corona time I spent hours inside Redi mall in Kalasatama, going there to read in public. The practice of utilizing the place for something other than it was intended for turned it into a quiet ongoing performance. Earlier, in my twenties I worked at farmers' markets of San Francisco Bay Area in the United States selling fresh local blueberries and apples and performing health and wellness.

According to the anthropologist Marc Augé, shopping malls, together with hotels, airports and other generic and transitory sites, are the non-places where one, passing through them, becomes anonymous and detached from a specific cultural and geo-political territory (Augé, 1992). Obviously, this statement is contested, because only certain types of bodies (normative, white, able, middle class, hetero, cis, etc.) can afford the anonymity when entering one of those sites. The friction between the implied aura of anonymity and simultaneous hyper-visibility of some bodies called for an interesting and challenging exploration of territory, borders, belonging, leaving a mark, and patriotism inside a shopping mall.

Vantaa has two malls right next to the train station. The first one, Myyrmanni, is a newer, busier and bigger mall, infamous for the bombing that took place there in September 2002. The second one is older, smaller and slowly deteriorating called IsoMyyri and has been scheduled for demolition for some time now. Myyrmanni is loud and excessive, full of large lighting fixtures, big brands, and attracts crowds of shoppers. It feels especially uneasy to be there knowing the traumatic history of the space that is covered up with the excessive commerce. IsoMyyri is half empty, and holds a few discounted grocery stores, several thrift stores, few ethnic food shops and cafes, and some social and commercial services. Carrying almost a ghost-like scent about it, it suggests a stronger and clearer performative potential.

After a few field trips to both sites, I chose to explore the territory of IsoMyyri, by checking out the shops, talking to some shop owners, hanging out in the space to get a sense of it. The place evoked a dissonant feeling – it felt both distant and insignificant in its 1990s architecture and worn-out

interior, and very intimate and special due to the presence of smaller shops and frequenters passing time at the mall in a non-rushed manner. The majority of mall-goers were also different – local elders, immigrant families, friends and family members of the shop owners. I selected one of the empty window fronts next to the Estonian-Russian food shop, Finnish hair saloon and Turkish pizza place. The shop's front window facing the mall's corridor was framed in bright yellow. The space was large and run-down, it had old walls and stained floors, a mirror on half of its wall and a back area with a tiny kitchen, a storage place and bathroom. The space felt familiar and reminded me of the post-Soviet institutional and commercial spaces of the 1990s where I spent time in as a child and a teenager. My MA thesis producer got in touch with the managing company, and we rented out the storefront for one week.

It was clear that I would continue the fictioning line of the triptych and turn toward creating a service that could possibly exist in this mall but was missing for some reason. The idea of the *Small and Nice Immigrant Shop* developed from thinking about how patriotic feelings could be accessed by someone who was both an immigrant and an entrepreneur. I thought about the United States and small immigrant shops that are found in every corner of the country and that may build a very specific façade in order to attract the local customers. For example, a shop must be both exotic enough and non-threatening enough to invited people in – a shop of an exemplary immigrant that serves authentic yet still recognizable goods and services. How would an immigrant shop owner create an attractive self-objectifying image that would bring them good business? How would someone who is a Russian in Finland make a pleasant and luring storefront demeanor for the locals to walk in and feel interested and at home? What would it take for the locals to consider the immigrant store owner a patriot? Could patriotic feelings be sold inside the store? It became nearly irrelevant to me what kind of goods and services were present in the store if they carried patriotic essence.

Since the storefront was completely empty, we brought the Theater Academy props furniture for it in a van. The furniture was eclectic and corresponded with the feeling that the mall in general and this store specifically conveyed. The store received five white plastic chairs and a coffee table, an office table and an office chair, several black wooden blocks for display, an old rag, a disco ball and a fake orange tree. I found an online program that allowed to make simple and hackneyed designs for posters, and Instagram page images both in English and Finnish that had statements such as “Visit us now! Live your best life!”, “Visit your local store at IsoMyyri, Vantaa,” or “Vieraile tänään saadaksesi uusia tuotteita! Elä parasta elämääsi!” (Visit today for new products! Live your

best life!). The posters had a famous St. Petersburg's Church of the Savior on Blood image on their background. The same dramatic image was on the background of the listed services that *Small and Nice Immigrant Shop* offered. I came up with three different services that corresponded with my idea of selling patriotic feelings and could please a customer. First service offered "a personalized immigrant certificate that proves your excellence and achievements." Second service branded as Unreal Estate sold plots of Vantaa in 2121. The third service provided "a personalized narrative about any object of significance."



Small and Nice Immigrant Shop interior. Photo by Antti Ahonen.

During the first four days of the shop's existence, I spent all my time setting up the interior and designing the shop's services. While spending days in the shop I was fully exposed to the IsoMyyri's passersby, both the other storeowners and customers, through the window front. People stopped, looked and several times peeked in to either introduce themselves as fellow shop owners or to ask what was happening there. I chose to never fully disclose that it was an art project or, even more precisely, an MA program graduation artwork, and always answered obscurely focusing on talking about different kind of authentic services and some art stuff that were there. By the fourth day, its grand opening, the shop had a wall of displayed certificates addressed to the shop owner,

Dash Che, as an example of the types of certificates that the customers could get. A catalogue of the Vantaa plots, the folder with unreal estate contracts and the Vantaa map delineated by the plots' borders were organized in the corner together with the coffee table, chairs and tea and coffee and snacks. The wall opposite to the certificates wall had a gallery display of memorable objects and personal yet fictional stories about those objects that had made one a better person.

The shop was officially opened for only one day. An A-frame placed on the second floor by the escalator announced the grand opening. The shop was visited mostly by the art crowd who attended the LAPS 20 events on that day in Artsi museum and a few locals who stopped by attracted by the crowd and stayed to have coffee and chat. The most popular services were a certificate order and a plot of Vantaa of the future. I sat at the office table and wrote, designed and printed new certificates for customers in real time, taking a break to advertise Vantaa's plots and the Memorable Objects services. When getting a certificate, the customers were asked to share it on their social media as a form of payment and tag the *Small and Nice Immigrant Shop*. The invoice for the Vantaa plot was promised to arrive to people's mailboxes in 2121 when the ownership of the land would materialize.

Now, looking back at the *Small and Nice Immigrant Shop* experience, I would prefer to make a durational performance inside a window front store that could be open at least one month and would invite a slow engagement developing long-term connection with the visitors. Perhaps, this can be the future of the final part of the triptych. Similarly, other two works can be remade and developed further with more time and thinking. Through fictioning and building alternative corporeal narrative each work allowed to tap into a specific patriotic affect that can be explored in depth.

4. Beginnings and Translation as a Framework

I have been working with the notions of beginnings and translation as directional tools in this text and in my artistic research altogether. As directional tools, they point to a specific temporal place and spacial postures in my writing and art making and allow me to spend time with the mess and complexity that arises when these places and postures conflict and overlap. The multiplicity of diverse beginnings enables me, the maker and the writer, to stay with the uncertain, overwhelming, unfinished, or ongoing – qualities that have been present in the themes that I work with and live through. Translation is another operational tool or the framework that repeatedly shows up through this text in a form affectual writing and descriptive practices. The framework of translation suggests plural modalities and postures that render one into another when engaging in art making and writing. Since I move between foreign languages and expressive and thinking modalities, translation is crucial for my work.

4.1. Beginnings

“This MUST begin with just beginning to write,” I said to myself when sitting down at the screen at 6:56 am on Sunday morning. Outokumpu, Pohjois-Karjala⁴.

The following beginnings are choppy in their shapes, inconsistent and confusing (intentionally?) in their timeline. They confuse even me, their writer. I am writing and inserting this paragraph on the 23rd day of the war, re-reading the beginnings of the recent pasts and not being able to trace them to *their own* beginnings any longer. What was my intention when affectually molding the previous beginnings? I just used a blackout poetry technique to deconstruct (or disguise?) one of the beginnings responding to the previous affects with the current ones that fermented over time. Can the beginnings be the *how* and the *what* of this writing simultaneously – holding the text together while exposing its making as well? Throughout the whole text and in this part specifically I work with beginnings as the framework for academic writing and the artistic project of *How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)*. Beginnings become a binding material in my work as they both hold the starting point and point to something yet to appear on the horizon. Beginnings do not introduce the fully formed picture but rather suggest and hint at what is yet to come. Thus, they carry more potential for my artistic work as evocative but not excessive – perhaps, at its best

⁴ During the time of writing my MA thesis, I am spending 5 months in Outokumpu, North Karelia in the intensive professional dance program at Riveria Ammattikoulu, being the only non-Finnish dancer there at the time.

beginnings permeate fictioning artistic practice in a way that makes it porous and breathable. At times as a default and other times as a conscious practice, I choose to initiate multiple beginnings in my writing and artistic works to see how they continue to perform and which one I should develop further. I applied this technique while making the triptych *How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* – having many possible starts that could shape a patriotic posture. I find the beginning to be the most important part in the timeline of the process because they allow to have more than one version of how the following develops later and to release the need to think of commitment as a tight grip.

Beginnings are the livelihood of an immigrant subject who must accept and welcome the change, to start in a new place. Personally, I sense how attentive I have had been to the beginnings in my life. Beginnings appear in deterritorialization and then in reterritorialization to mend the wounds of loss and dislocation. Beginnings gesture to joy or anxiety of the first encounter – with a fellow human, with a plant, with an animal, with the land. Still, beginnings do not always need to be new and fresh, they can continue as an ongoing process or a framework of being with others, they can show up in fragments in different temporalities and linger. I seek complex beginnings – those that imply that there were beginnings before this one, there were beginnings before me. This way the beginnings do not only stretch forward but also backward – to the past. Beginnings can be an alternative and slanted framework to study the patriotic body and patriotic feelings. While patriotic machines erase certain beginnings to construct other - more suitable ones - I ask what would happen if all the beginnings are kept in their complexity breaking the linear and expected? Similar to the piles of various objects in the *Factory of Patriotic Affects* performance which are constantly disassembled and reassembled in the process of generating patriotic affects, multiple beginnings present at once reveal the inconsistency and non-linearity of narratives, whether of this text or of patriotic mythologies. Here, in this part and the following parts of this writing, I began, stopped and began again with the beginnings of the text while watching the war unravel before me. Some of the beginnings stayed in the final text in a form of a blackout poetry, war pages and short notes pointing to the fragmentary and unstable posture of patriotic affects, nonlinear timelines and mechanisms that the beginnings reveal when employed as an artistic framework.

*I am sitting in front of an empty screen. The words are not moving through me. 6:18am, Friday.
Same green armchair. Outokumpu.*

I just erased the parts of the previous beginning, because it feels meaningless now. The previous beginning started with pointing at the multiplicity of beginnings that choreograph my writings. It gestured with an obnoxious ease at how there are many ways to start something and layer on top of each other. It felt contained and organized - suggesting that I am carrying out another eloquent exercise in theorizing my writing. Today I am facing the beginning with its messy rough edges, it constricts my breath and spills elsewhere.

Today [redacted] with [redacted] Putin's [redacted] Ukraine [redacted] to my friends in Kyiv [redacted] [redacted] a queer wedding performance that I curated [redacted] [redacted] They [redacted] their two cats, food for several days [redacted] a basement. Tonya applied [redacted] and did not get in, they could have been [redacted] in Finland, now during this war, but it did not happen. Another friend's cousin in Kyiv went to a bomb shelter. My friend tried to convince her family to leave Ukraine a month ago but it did not happen. They did not believe that the war could actually start. Our school's rector Kaarlo [redacted] wrote a statement in support of Ukraine and the school's Ukrainian students after Finland issued an official support statement. I am unsure what to feel regarding its wording and placement in this situation. I might not trust our neoliberal art institution's sincerity, I feel like I have all the reasons not to. One of my Russian colleagues, a Teak student, responded to the rector's message by saying that she feels very sorry that we, Russian activists, did not do enough. I feel unsure of her response. Unsure how to act and what to say, I keep reaching out to my Russian and Ukrainian friends, or Russians in Ukraine, or Ukrainians elsewhere in the world. I am in Outokumpu, at Riveria dance school, the only non-Finn. I tried to talk to people about the situation but the words are not coming out of my mouth. The pain of being of the aggressor country, of having personal ties with Ukraine, or being worn out by the horrific autocracy that we have in Russia, the fear, the fear, the fear.

Beginnings can hold a sense of unknown, in fact, most often they do. Is this specific beginning that I just read but decided not to paste back into this writing still unknown to me? Does the beginning turn known and predictable when spending time with it for a while? How does this war in Ukraine and the repressions in Russia feel on the 22nd day of it? Is it still the beginning? Did it all begin on February 24th or has been here partially unnoticed for the last many years? What kind of unknown does it still hold for me now?

I am sitting down to begin writing this text. Not writing anything, watching some US analytical news channel interviewing Masha Gessen, a queer Russian Jewish journalist and writer based in

New York now, on Putin's invasion of Ukraine. 6:30am, a coffee cup, same green armchair. Outokumpu.

Last night I felt cut off, exhausted and weak, unable to move. Friends in Russia gathered in larger cities with anti-war posters and actions. Many were arrested. I followed non-governmental Russian news, watching the protests, the arrests, the bombings, I couldn't stop watching. Last night one of the cultural workers, a well-known Russian writer when being interviewed about the war, stated that it was the beginning of the end of Putin's presidency. Imagining the beginning of the end made me dizzy. I just could not continue this beginning in my thinking. We had Putin for 22 years. What kind of new Russia could begin after Putin? Who would be left at the beginning of this Russia? What would begin when Russia was over?

I am sitting at the Outokumpu uimahalli cafeteria and waiting for my partner visiting me this week to finish their laps in the pool. My body is tense and tired. I sense the dry skin on my face, heavy mouth, the corners are pulling it down. I keep adjusting my posture to keep writing this, but somehow the posture never feels right. Some local families are watching the hiihto news after their swimming session. There is a Russian-speaking hetero-looking family having sweets and hot drinks: a mom, a dad and two small kids. I wonder if they have read my Facebook post about the anti-war demonstration that I am organizing tomorrow in this small town 100 kilometers from the Russian border. I wonder if they will show up. I want to approach them and ask but instead just secretly watch them be. I am not sure what we share with each other and what divides us - whether the division is more significant than ever now.

On February 24th, the day when Putin attacked Ukraine, our Outokumpu syventävät⁵ dance group did presentations of our artistic works. I decided to try a short beginning of something, attempting to bring multiple elements (or beginnings) into one place, researching what happens, exploring these very patriotic affects and its echoes that I have been accessing all this time through my work. I arrange the audience in a very specific manner: two people sit in front of the dance studio mirror and are asked to watch the performance through the mirror. Seven people are standing in their individual windowsills and watching the dance studio/performance from above. A piano is moved to the "stage" spot of the dance floor and one of the audience members is asked to sit at the piano looking at the performance through the upper panel of the instrument. The rest of the audience are

⁵ Syventävät – the name of the intensive six-month long dance program.

lined up by the wall across the windows, some are given wool blankets and are asked to put it on their shoulders or their head. I take a rolled towel, bring it in front of the blanket's audience. The towel is placed on the floor and unrolled exposing a collection of kitchen knives of different sizes lying parallel to each other. I stand next to the towel and take a deep breath. Then I hold my breath and begin moving off my axis, falling, turning, catching myself. I move until I can no longer hold my breath, then I stop, take another breath and begin moving again, doing a loosely structured dance. After several breathless beginnings and stoppings, I take the edge of the towel with knives and carefully drag it along the perimeter of the room close to the audience, finally stopping by the windows. Then I hold my breath again and hover over the knives as long as I can. I get up and approach the audience in blankets and whisper a sentence to the first one in the row asking them to pass the sentence to the next one. I go to the very end of the room and begin to move backwards vertically half doing simple dance steps breathlessly. I am dizzy and disoriented when I pass the blanket audience who is still trying to deliver my sentence to one another in a whisper. The performance is quite short - around 10 minutes. In between my colleagues' presentations I go to the toilet with my phone in my hands reading the news on social media and trying to regain my breath.

I am multitasking. I am watching the live stream of TV Rain, the Russian based non-governmental media channel, texting with my mother and continuing to write. It is very late, and I cannot stop and take a breath.

Now as I am continuing to edit and write this text, several weeks later, my previous beginnings feel naive and melodramatic. The whole cities of Ukraine are destroyed, and thousands of people are dead. All the independent media and major social media platforms are shut down in Russia. Anti-war protestors are tortured in Russian jails. Over the last three weeks the swastika of the new fascist Russia, the letter "Z," was invented and spread across the country as the symbol of a Russian patriotic unity. New laws prosecuting those protesting for peace in Russia popped up overnight and made us breathless. Many of my friends and colleagues fled Russia, those who couldn't - feel hopeless. Or maybe all of us do to some extent. We are not doing well mentally and are terrified of what is still to come. Some feel guilty for being 'of Russia.' I struggle in the space between guilty and responsible. The familiar and loving connection that many of us had with Ukraine and Ukrainians is shattered for generations. I am not able to sleep and that little activist organizing that I do feels too small and futile on the scale of terror hovering over daily. This beginning just took over the future and flattened it. It is not fresh any longer and it doesn't extend into something other than

itself. Yet, simultaneously it still feels like the beginning of something more horrible and everlasting to come.

Find the beginning of a breath

In my artistic work I approach beginnings with hope. Creating fictional narratives allows me to turn toward alternative beginnings that lead to (yet) impossible futures and develop from the untold pasts. When starting the *41st National Park of Finland* in the delapidated abandoned playground, I can imagine the national (or rather transnational and multispecies?) pride taking place within a small neighborhood. Thus, I attempt to alter the patriotic posture of a nation into the one that is less stiff and exclusive. When constructing a dark museum-factory on the premises of the Theater Academy, I turn toward art objects that evoke and enable patriotic affects. I pose a question about how alternative objects and their assemblages can bring forth alternative patriotic affects and facilitate different beginnings. In *Small and Nice Immigrant Shop* I work with exaggeration and absurd building a narrative of an exemplarily immigrant who must perform certain patriotic posture in order to survive. I expose the mechanisms of this posture and offer the participants to try it out in hopes that this raw exposure could lead to deconstruction of the relationship to the other. The framework of the beginnings in the context of fictioning has a promise of doing and being differently. How could that help to cope with the horrific beginnings of the wartime that I face when writing this MA thesis?

is it a beginning?

4.2. Translations (as a shift, as a fall, as a recovery, as making into plural)

In this part, I will speak about applying the framework of translation as a base for making shifts within one's thinking, changing a position, turning singular into plural, translating one into multiplicity of meanings, operating between different languages and modalities of being and art making. I applied the framework of translation to my artistic process as well as thinking about the way complex concepts would translate into dramaturgy, aesthetic choices, and the body. An

immigrant, an artist, and a queer, I have been dealing with the need to translate in order to be understood and in order to understand for a bigger part of my life. The skill to translate can be seen as the skill to switch codes and shift places when navigating multiplicity of languages, mediums, genres, social and cultural structures, and identities.

In my late 20s I studied at an institution in the US renowned for its academic rigor to finally complete my BA with a Major in Interdisciplinary Field Studies and a Minor in Performance Studies in Dance. As a former undocumented immigrant to the United States who learned most of their English by doing low-paid customer service jobs, keeping a mixed languages diary, or talking with other immigrants, I was eager to jump onto the promising standard English language wagon to prove my skills and validate my accomplishments. Thus, I spent a few years perfecting my critical theory essays following the structures of outlines, dissecting the writing into specific paragraphs, fitting each paragraph into a formula, having an introduction that started with a compelling hook, having a thesis statement, and a familiar, yet catchy summarizing conclusion. There was a pleasure in following and extending along the standard lines and being rewarded for that. I knew exactly what each word, each line, and each paragraph was about. I had to know. This exhilarating clarity about the text, its content and meaning translated itself well into the exhilarating clarity about my surroundings. I was an artist-activist following a specific left politics direct action line that gave satisfaction and imaginary safety in seeing right and wrong, progressive and conservative, inclusive and exclusive. I trained myself in using so-called International Art English, that felt like a necessary denominator to exist and be making it in the field of grants, access, recognition. In fact, I will continue using it whenever I think it can help me get stuff.

Words I surround myself with shape the body and world that has this body in it. The above is not really a morals-informed story of first making it, second, becoming disillusioned in activist lingo, arts and academic jargon, and sequentially evolving to take a less clear and straightforward posture. Rather, it is an attempt to understand the practice and mechanisms of translation and how those mechanisms change over time. While at times translation practices can be direct, other times they allow shifts in unexpected ways. Translation is being in between places but never in one place entirely. This text is an ongoing translation and is about translation. Translation can even be the *what* of this text. Now, I will translate the sensation that 'translation' evokes in me into describing a simple movement practice. Being in the place of constant translation is like being in a place of walking. I don't notice that walking consists of slight and subtle falls until I bring my attention to it specifically, until I exaggerate my walk by taking wider steps or until I forget the habit of familiar

landing of the next foot onto the floor. Until I bring attention to the very process and linger in it. Like beginnings that allow to mend the loss and anxiety of dislocation, translating then is falling and recovering - there is the loss, the gain, the change, the difference that emerges after each fall and catch.

The English word 'translate' comes from the Latin *translat-*, which means 'carried across' (online etymological dictionary). Here, I remember the famous scene from Russian dissident filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky's film *Nostalgia* where the main character, a Russian writer, attempts to carry a burning candle across the drained pool of mineral water in Bagno Vignoni in Italy. There is so much physical and mental exertion that is used up in the simple act of carrying something through: a burning candle, one's body, one's word, one's practice. The candle goes out, but the person is persistent, he lights it again and again to repeat the effort of 'carrying across' in full seriousness and concentration. As a viewer, I am sad and relieved when he finally brings the candle across the pool. We collapse together. The character is stricken by a sudden deadly illness when he reaches the other side of the pool. He is dead. I am worn out and weak after watching this exposed act of translation.

In Russian, the word 'translation' or 'перевод' carries a few meanings, some of which point to converting something into something else: some - to shifting and choosing an alternative route, some - to completely using something up or wasting it as if not being frugal enough. There is some sort of expenditure that takes place when translating. Having to translate is a tiring practice that is often delegated to those who are not native speakers, who are the newcomers, those who do not readily perform a dominant or normative posture, those who only have access to the derivative of the original. Having to translate is an artistic practice that asks for many shifts when choosing different distances and intimacies with the objects. Translation asks for labor. Then, translation is the *how* of this text and artistic work as well.

I have been laboring in my writing by translating my Russian into my English
 my English into my Finnish my Finnish into my dance practice my dance practice into
 my loneliness my loneliness into my artistic practice my artistic practice into this
 writing this writing into an ill body this ill body into a body that needs to show up.

I labor translating fear into anger anger into taking space taking space into doing
 doing into silence silence into language language into closeness closeness
 into meals meals into emptiness emptiness into taking

indifference into an art practice
an art practice into a collapsed spine a collapsed spine into an organizing a
protest organizing a protest into whispering love words into an
ear in front of my lips whispering love words into the ear in front of my lips into an
attempt to use a Google translate an attempt to use a Google
translate into not screaming when the throat itches not screaming when the
throat itches into donating money donating money into complete
loneliness
complete loneliness into Prigov's
poetry reading Prigov's poetry reading into holding my breath
holding my breath into waiting for any good news waiting for any
good news into touching another dancer's body touching another dancer's body into
inflamed softened eyes inflamed softened eyes into being scared being
scared into continuing writing
continuing writing into allowing myself to cry in front of
others allowing myself to cry in front of
others into thinking of anger of non-human objects thinking of anger
of non-human objects into watching people being arrested watching people being
arrested into applying for a grant applying for a grant into noticing the eye
twitch noticing the eye twitch into dreaming of leaving this place dreaming of leaving this
place into visiting my Russian neighbor
visiting my Russian neighbor into thinking about the weight of all this skin
thinking about the weight of all this skin into my access and safety
my access and safety into scrolling to see the map
scrolling to see the map is
talking to my mother about Russia talking to my mother about Russia is trying to avoid the weather
news trying to avoid the weather
news into watching my ex to dance against war on Nevsky Prospect in St.Petersburg
watching my ex to dance
against war on Nevsky Prospect in St. Petersburg into thinking about how many Finnish Russian
kids live here in Outokumpu thinking about how many Finnish Russian kids live
here in Outokumpu into lying on the library floor under the fluorescent lights
lying on the library floor under the fluorescent lights into imagining sharing

a place where everyone is outraged imagining sharing a place where everyone is
 outraged into writing this.

Translation doesn't only mean turning one into another but can be splitting one into many when dealing, for instance, with the lack of representation. I used the framework of translating singular into multiple when coming up with the Foreign Artists in Residency of Merihaka collective or implying the multiplicity of actors behind the *Small and Nice Immigrant Shop* performance. During the first year of corona, I began to explore and discover my neighborhood, Merihaka, passing time on benches, spreading myself on the thawing ground, leaning on the walls, lying by the walls. For some time, the neighborhood became the only place of Finland that I could and chose to relate to and (maybe) love - a small autonomous country within another country that I had little to feel about. My idea of fictioning the Foreign Artists in Residency in Merihaka collective as a necessary plurality developed out of the lack of artistic support and a desperate need to have one. The need to translate an individual art maker into an art collective was also based on the need of a shared authorship and responsibilities. The pandemic time showed how individualistic and hoarding many became with their resources and access; and how much burden of personal responsibility of pulling it through as an artist an individual had to bear. The rhetoric of coming together as a transnational artistic community through availability of Zoom lectures and gatherings, online performances, etc. was strong. The physical reality of artists like me left alone and unsupported proved otherwise.

The fictioned Foreign Artists in Residency of Merihaka collective remained active, present in each other's lives, and physically close to one another. They tried to avoid excessive online presence and social platforms-types of togetherness. They chose to communicate through notes they slid through each other's apartment doors, scribbles and poems they posted on the local K-market community board and hid in random places throughout the neighborhood. They drew from the multiplicity of available languages that they spoke, bringing in selkosuomi as one of the foreign languages as well. The collective organized performances, exhibitions and potlucks, danced to their favorite songs, did sleepovers and cuddle evenings. Moreover, the collective attempted to establish a relationship with the Merihaka seagulls by spending time near them and sometimes trying out their ways of being. This very collective showed up in a group authorship and organization of *How To Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* later.

Based on my living experience as a queer within different communities, the practices of using pluralities are very familiar in queer language-making. While English language uses "they" as a

nonbinary pronoun for a singular gender, Russian language queering has to go much further due to the “gender agreement” rule that is “expressed as a suffix, and appears on singular adjectives, verbs in the past tense, demonstratives, participles, and certain pronouns” (Hamann, 2019). Some nonbinary and trans Russian-speaking people, including myself, have been practicing using “we” gender to avoid the need to constantly choose a gender when speaking about yourself. This language practice already suggests the ongoing sense of plurality and collectivity. Translation of a singular into plural can be a mode of avoiding oppressive individuation and building new modes of representation. In my art and daily practices, translation is a powerful tool for navigating institutional structures that allows to remain in between, in uncertainty, shifting postures, going across. Committing to the ongoing translation practices gives an opportunity to examine weighty concepts such as patriotism without having to stay with only one notion of it.

5. The Spirit and Postures of Patriotism/Conclusion

I text with my mom. She has been anxious because of the news. We were planning her trip to Izhevsk, Russia, the first time for five years since her cancer and the pandemic, but now she is not going to go. She says that she talked to her friend Nadya today. I know tetya Nadya quite well, she worked at the preschool with my mother in Izhevsk for years. Nadya explains to my mom why this war is needed - to save Ukraine and Ukrainian Russians from the neo-Nazi regime and to protect Russia from the threat from the West. Nadya says that all her colleagues justify and support the war. My mom thought that herself before I sent her some other news sources just a few days ago. Putin's propaganda machine is strong and scary. I remember it very well.

I am walking back home from school and feel unsure about what it means to be Russian right now. My body is exposed, contrasting with white snow of North Karelia. I feel very heavy... Ashamed. Or lost. Everything I have done in my life was in relation to Russia. Fleeing from Russia to the US when I was 19. Coming back to Russia when I was 32. Moving to Finland, a Russian neighbor, when I was 34. Russia is like a spreading ink stain that stays on my inner organs anywhere I go. Russia is like an infected wound that takes over any empty space around me. Russia is the endless amount of protests: against domestic violence, against LGBTQ violence, against the new legislations, against nationalism, political art actions, arrests, secret telegram chats, solidarity, anger, feminist gatherings, toxic intimacy that is too close, DIY practices and philosophy discussions, dirty kitchens and old peeling wall paper, piles of trash next to the trash cans, a group of drunk man screaming Russian rock song lyrics, the nameless biggest love of my life, a line of people standing intimately close to one another pushing pushing pushing, a bag of imported Belorussian buckwheat on sale, an emerging conversation on colonialism, a feminist graphic unapologetic body art that is timely only in Russia and dated elsewhere, a hook inside my chest propelling me forward while holding me back, a gendered language that crushes us and makes us to invent our own. I need Russia, I dream of Russia, I am afraid of Russia, I love Russia, I am disgusted by Russia. And, of course, there is the repressive government of Russia and Russians - to separate the two from one another. But even that is not so simple.

Alli Mattila, a dancer and a local politician, and I are sitting at Pizza Posti near our tanssikoulu in Outokumpu. It is a bright gorgeous day, so sunny and sharp. The last day of February. We are planning the next anti-war demonstration in Outokumpu for upcoming Saturday. Alli says that she is worried about racism toward Russian Finnish kids in Outokumpu schools and wants to focus on

mending and fostering Russian-Finnish relationships here at the border. I am, perhaps, unsure of this direction... Yet, when the Outokumpu vanha kaivos museo curator is interviewing me, he mentions that while Finns are anxious about the aggressive neighbor “you guys will attack other countries before you get to us.” I wonder why “we” and “us” so easily emerge and why it is nearly impossible to drop this rhetoric. I am thinking about how Western sanctions affect the Russians who did not choose this government. I am thinking about how uncool it is to be a Russian now. Then I watch the news from the bordering Poland Ukrainian Lviv and the devastating humanitarian crisis of bodies trying to flee to the EU and feel ashamed for caring about anything else. I don’t know where to put myself as a Russian citizen, how to take myself out of this as a Russian citizen, how and what to feel as a Russian citizen, how to do more as a Russian citizen, whom to grieve with as a Russian citizen. My father who I have seen twice in my life is half Ukrainian living in the suburbs of Moscow and I want to connect with him and ask how he feels. No, it is too loaded, so I might never do that.

Evening, then morning, then afternoon. My computer screen. Outokumpu.

My research of a patriotic body and its patriotic affects stands upon the process of translation and many beginnings. I must translate one body into another, and then another, and another once more, and to stay in many beginnings layered onto each other to understand what a patriotic body and its affects mean to me. Patriotic body holds hope, shame, love, pain, loneliness and the desire to unite. Patriotic body is an attachment body - it needs to attach itself to something else bigger than a single body to exist. Patriotic body is a failure that has always remained a fiction in the gap between the constructed past and imagined future. Patriotic body can be activated and can be suppressed but it is always there. I might have a patriotic body while always trying to flee from it. I might choose to stare at my patriotic body and judge it. I might want to crush my patriotic body and leave it behind. My patriotic body might have leaked into my body and rides it as a host now. Perhaps, a patriotic body is a relational body forming and reforming based on the geopolitical location of that body, the currents events molding the body, therefore it is the body in a constant movement and readjustment.

I notice that when I speak about artistic research on the patriotic body with other artists and researchers, I find myself having to translate it, by both repeating it and offering explanations. Every time someone asks me about my thesis’ focus, and I say that I am researching and writing about patriotism and the patriotic body, they look puzzled. It is like it is impossible to put it together with someone’s artistic project, maybe it seems too linear, or the word is so unpopular, or it is used

only by the right wing and centrist propaganda and by the left in a negative sense. The ears are not tuned to the word, therefore the word escapes. I myself become unsure about the word I just used, feel doubtful, get confused, begin again. It is a curious mutual moment of confusion that arises and hovers over, until I speak again, or they ask, *sorry, so what is it that you research?* Patriotism is the word that is not used in arts so much unless it applies to a Soviet social realism art piece, or a current government sponsored institutional art project. I myself still unsure why I need to choose the word ‘patriotic’ as an affectual and operational direction for my work. I have been staying with it, writing it, and saying it - trying to understand its weight in my art making.

In the fall of 2021, in the performance triptych *How to Like Finland and How Finland Can Like Me (too)* I worked with the questions of an affectual bodily affiliation with one’s place. Thus, I worked with the questions of belonging, sharing a place with others affectually, and perhaps, leaving a mark of having been in that place, being seen there. Still, I strived to bring in the notion of patriotism - a charged and contested word, carrying the traces of its patriarchal etymology (from Greek *patriōtēs*, from *patrios* ‘of one's fathers’, from *patris* ‘fatherland’) and pointing toward the national identity, national pride, national belonging, everything that is national, and therefore, filled with tension. The whole orientation of ‘patriotism’ is convoluted and challenging for me as an immigrant, an economic migrant, a perpetual foreigner, a queer citizen of a homophobic and autocratic Russia, a non-EU student on EU territory, a former undocumented alien in the United States, a fatherless child, and now, a citizen of an aggressor country carrying liability for its aggression. Having lived and been affectually attached to all three places, the US, Finland and Russia, I am attempting to investigate my corporeal attachment to a place delineated by national borders, policies, political and social climates, and tension. My corporeal attachment to these places is fragmented, scattered, unstable as I cross borders, re-enter, leave, linger in these places.

Unable to study patriotic affects in Russia or in the United States directly – this feels too close and emotionally unsustainable – I keep turning toward Finland, the most “neutral” place of all three. On those “neutral” grounds the patriotic body becomes more defined somehow, easier to witness and study. Still, most research takes place in the interstices between places – in their affectual differences. For example, I feel a cultural clash when having to “register” a small anti-war demonstration with a Finnish police officer, who notifies me about how things should be done “in the Finnish way.” Quite often I feel that I am not able to and do not want to share this sense of trust and safety that I experience here, in Finland. My body cannot take it after years of knowing and witnessing police violence in the USA, and experiencing repressions of authorities, law violations

and human aggression in Russia. The trauma of being unsafe shaped my body - the body and its organs made by my country of birth. The body collapses when the familiar sense of unsafe is taken out of it. The body is protective of its unsafe and longs for it in small portions daily. I feel devastated that I cannot be with my colleagues in St. Petersburg, protesting together, being arrested together, feeling a sense of shared bodily unity and “safe unsafety” that we all know so well. It feels unreal to be organizing in a foreign country whose safety feels hostile in ways that are impossible to explain, even here in this writing. It is extremely lonely to share physical safety with others while emotional safety is shattered. Thus, I continuously study and try to make sense of patriotic corporeality checking with and comparing bodily sensations that come up during these incidents.

In this writing, I would like to bring my attention to the future of this project, looking at it broadly through the lens of the future art making as a Russian-born artist during and after the war time altogether. Several weeks ago, there has been an official statement called “statement of silence” issued and signed by many well-known Russian-born or Russian-based artists. It is about refusing to make art in the wake of the Russian aggression into Ukraine. The statement published on multiple social media channels said the following both in English and Russian:

now there is a war unleashed by the government of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, a monstrous genocide of the Ukrainian people is taking place. In these circumstances, we cannot work, that is, make art and participate in exhibitions – not because we want to publicly complain about our questionably difficult life, but because for us making art and participating in exhibitions is simply not possible – neither psychologically nor ethically.

(from the Telegram Channel on Russian art and politics “Chernozem I Zvezdy,” March 25th 2022)

Since then, I held several conversations with my colleagues affiliated with Russia about how to be making art now. Many of us are not willing to give up on art production as this is one of the only outlets to be expressing and processing pain, horror and confusion that we feel now, to keep moving and living on. Still, there have been ongoing news that some large European cultural institutions cut their ties with or cancelled the participation of Russian-born or Russian-based artists in exhibitions and festivals while some Russian artists withdrew their participation themselves. No doubt, many raise the question about the kind of art from Russia would remain if the dissident Russian artists step back and lose their public platforms. I imagine that every Russian artist decides for themselves whether and how they can continue with their artistic practice during and post- war. Question that

becomes even more pressing in these circumstances – what kind of art can I ethically produce from now on?

Since the beginning of the war, some of us started to offer free or donation-based art or movement classes, turned to volunteering and helping, thus, having the need to be useful in the horror of this ongoing event. Some Russian-based artists continued with actionist and protest art - putting themselves in danger of being prosecuted. For instance, Sasha Skochilenko, a St. Petersburg-based queer artist who replaced the price tags with the war facts stickers at a local supermarket, faces up to ten years in jail and being trialed according to the new criminal law on discrediting Russian army (<https://meduza.io/feature/2022/04/13/hudozhnitsa-iz-peterburga-sasha-skochilenko-zamenila-tsenniki-v-magazinah-na-informatsiyu-o-pogibshih-v-mariupole>). A famous Kyiv-born Russian-based installation and performance artist Oleg Kulik is currently being charged with “insulting symbols and memory of Russian military” based on the infamous new Article 354, part 3 of Criminal Code of Russian Federation – for exhibiting the sculpture *Big Mother* that looks like a parody of the patriotic Soviet-time monument *The Motherland Calls!* (<https://www.forbes.ru/forbeslife/463189-avtora-skul-ptury-bol-saa-mat-vyzvali-na-dopros-po-delu-o-reabilitacii-nacizma>).

For those of us who live abroad and have the privilege to remain safe while making art, the same question remains – what is my liability as a Russian-born artist now? The work that I started nearly a year before the war - exploring the corporeality of patriotism – feels especially timely now. Yet, I am unsure of how to proceed with this work, or whether I am allowed to proceed. The war affects are exhausting even for the most privileged ones like me, who witness the war from afar, being within the safe borders of European Union – just 100 kilometers from Russia but not in Russia itself. I ask, how can I distance myself from the war just enough to enter the state of making, while still knowing that I carry this war in my chest. Now, as I am making a new dance solo on connecting patriotic body, spirit of patriotism and the movement of the chest, once again, I find myself spending large chunks of time negotiating that distance and proximity to the war, as well as my right and responsibility of continuing to make artwork. There are times when I continue with making and other times when I choose to remain quiet and listen to those voices that have suffered from Russian imperialism for centuries. I know that I will have to unlearn and learn again, undo and do differently from now on as a Russian, as an artist, as an immigrant.

Lastly, I would add, that honestly, I am still quite unsure what that patriotic body that I have been researching so intensively is. Does it emerge when I construct fictional situations and events that provoke it? When while rehearsing a dance solo I scream the word “Russia” from the top of my lungs until it turns into the word “fascism?” How long does patriotic body stay before dissolving again? How does it relate to the bodies of Russians made to come out for the pro-government demonstration and celebrate the Victory Day of Soviet over fascism while Russian fascist regime is committing genocide against the neighboring nation? Or to the bodies of protesters who imagine just and free Russia when standing on the street with “no war” sign just to be arrested a moment later? Or to the bodies of school children choir singing *Song of the Motherland* written in Stalin’s Soviet of 1936? Or to the bodies of readers of Dmitry Prigov, a late Soviet dissident poet’s poignant and critical poetry? Am I referring to those postures when I study a patriotic body? I have created three different performances in my attempt to produce knowledge about this body affectually and artistically. Still, when reflecting on the triptych in this writing, I fail to pinpoint the body in a patriotic stance. A dancing and performing body moves through these postures too swiftly for them to be captured. Yet specifically those passing postures remain as the focus of my research. A body that takes space together with other bodies and takes pride in it. A body that is ashamed of feeling pride. A body that has no space to take because that space was taken from it. A body suffocated from pride of other bodies around it. A body that is trapped in the space that it feels nothing toward to. A body that enjoys its space that is constructed for its comfort while other spaces become the waste ground. That patriotic body that I have.

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41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka



Merihaka abandoned playground. Photo by Tuomas Toivonen.



Visitors of the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka. Photo by Joonna Mäkelä.



Visitors of the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka studying birds' migration patterns in the Science Corner of the Park. Photo by Joonna Mäkelä.

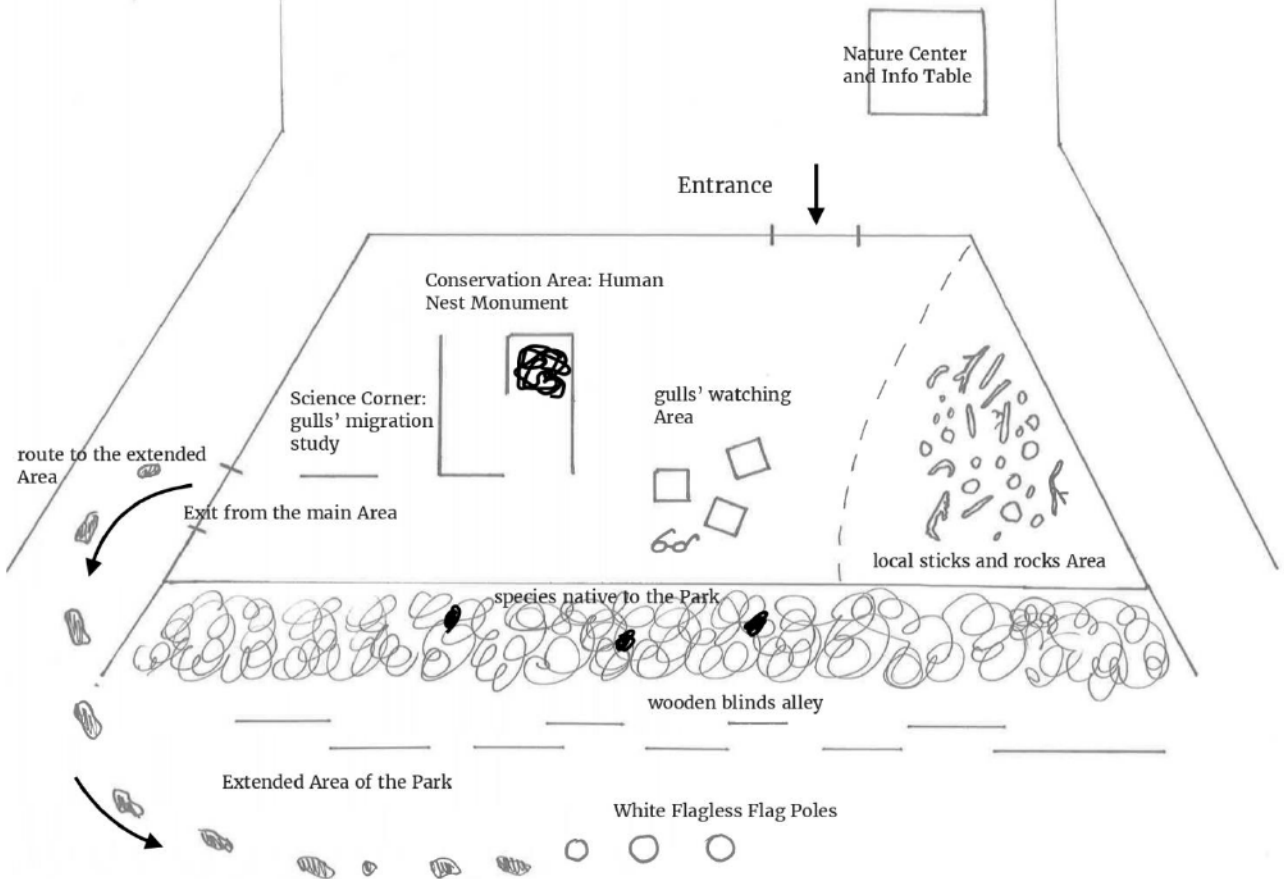


Visitors of the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka. Photo by Joona Mäkelä.



Welcome to the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka sign. Photo by Joona Mäkelä

Map of the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka



The map of 41st National Park given to visitors. Drawn from the seagull's point of view.

Dear neighbor of Hakaniemenranta 12,

(Unfortunately, I do not know your first name yet but I would like to learn it).

I am your neighbor and an artist Dash Che from 12D 80, room 3. I am inviting you to join me for the **one day event of the 41st National Park of Finland opening this Saturday, September 18th**. The place is located on the right from K-Market and is a former playground from the 1980s that is now not in use. You are welcome to join in exploring the place turned into a National park of Finland for just one day!

Finland has 40 national parks that have been opened and maintained since the last century. Finnish National Parks encourage and shape the feelings of pride and love toward the country. Those parks are beautiful sites of protected nature offered for the visitors and the residents of Finland alike to enjoy based on Every Man's Right document. We, the residents, need a park of this importance in Merihaka. The anonymous group of foreign artists-residents of Merihaka, myself, and the seagulls that nest on the garage roof behind Hakaniemenranta 12 every spring co-designed this park. The foreign artists observed the seagulls and their relationship to a place when constructing the park.

Perhaps, you remember those seagulls, called Common Gull (or Mew gull of North American subspecies). They arrive to the garage roof top in the end of March every year. Your kitchen's balcony or your room's window face the roof. Did you watch the gulls making a nesting site, hovering and making sounds? What was seagulls' presence like for you? Do you remember when the construction on the roof started in the April this year? Did you watch the gulls then? Foreign artists-residents of Merihaka (myself included) asked each other these questions when designing the 41st National Park of Finland.

The 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka event is the first part of my Live Art and Performance Studies MA thesis-tryptic, and is called "How to like Finland, and how Finland can like me (too)".

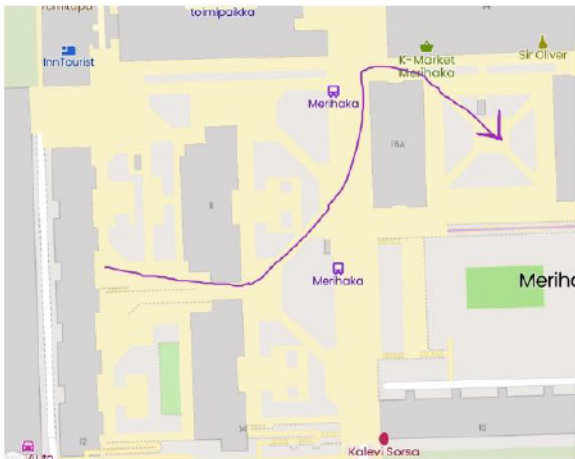
You can register for the event following the QR code with your digital device. Just open your phone's camera and point it at the QR code.

The event is happening outdoors and invites up to 12 people at the time to enjoy the park. You can sign up for a slot and explore the park for up to one hour. I will be at the site providing guidance and some hot drinks and snacks.

Tervetuloa! Hope to see you there! Dash Che



OPEN YOUR PHONE CAMERA AND POINT AT THE QR CODE TO GO TO THE SIGN-UP PAGE



the map



photo by Tuomas Toivonen

An invitation to the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka event. Delivered to 215 neighbors of Hakaniemenranta 12.



Metsähallitus stamp used on all the 41st National Park of Finland in Merihaka materials. Designed by the author.



Delivering 215 letters to Hakaniemenranta 12 residents. Photo by Dainela Pascual.

Factory of Patriotic Affects



The audience is watching Factory of Patriotic Affects Worker and Reporter interview. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.



Suvi Tuominen in the role of Worker introduces Temporary Workers Contracts to the audience. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.

The text of the interview of Factory of Patriotic Affect Worker and Reporter

Reporter: Hello everyone! (applause)

And again welcome to At Home Anywhere Show or AHASH! The show where we are at home with strange and unsettling. As always, yours truly, Senior Reporter here. And today we have a very special guest, a Worker from the Factory of Patriotic Affects.

Hello there, very nice to finally have this chat with you.

Worker: Same here. I watch your show sometimes.

R: So.. today we are going to speak about very specific place. Factory of Patriotic Affects it is called, right? And it has something to do with art as well. Can you talk about what is it that happens here?

W: Yes. Yes. Well. The Factory. We developed a new technology. It is about bodies. And proximity. How the body encircles something and point at something with attention. When the surfaces meet each other. It is about the place too. What place this is. Where the place ends and new place begins. The place and the body moving through a place, you know, are important.

R: Huh, yeah. Let me ask you, do you run the Factory? Are you some kind of manager?

W: Well, the Factory is everywhere here but I run this specific department.

I am a Worker. There are multiple workers here. The Factory depends on the workers. There are workers. There are always workers. Some new ones. We have temporary workers. We have contracts, temporary labor, you know. Rotation. They come. Get training. Work. They get something from it. And then leave.

R: I see. And what is your role in this? Do you supervise these workers?

W: I make sure that things function somehow. You know, Factory has lots of details, little parts. They all work together for the cause. I am here to watch that things go smoothly. I take care of the details.

R: Yes, I can see that you are very details-oriented person.

Can you tell us a bit about how this all started? This is not the first place where the Factory has been based...

W: We have been moving from place to place. We always look for the right place.

R: Aha. Can you tell us why this place is right?

W: Yes. Because of lots of reasons. So, this place. There was a small soap factory in 1893, so interesting. Let me look in my notes. They produced.... Margarine, soap palm oil. They had 37 workers, just imagine that. Margarine was banned because it competed with animal butter. And then there was this vegetable oil. They named it Tarmo. Released to the market on February 1912... Just think about it, more than 100 years ago. Your grandparents were not born then yet.

And also, this electrical machines repair shop. Run by Strömberg. Kone bought the machines in 1910. They took a new name for image improvement.

So many moving parts. Bakery. Horses stalls. All this money and materials flow. Moved to the Kokos building in 1926. Built second floor. Fourth floor. A team spirit. They even have a welcome to Kone booklet for each new worker. Just think about it, Home Day. You know, family time at the factory.

Then starting 1967 - empty space slowly filling up. Repair shops. Small offices. Even Libyan diplomacy office. Lihastehdas. Then Orranssi-liike. Youth center. Empty space again. And then theater academy. Large theater split in two. Kuvataideakatemia got here.

Because of all these that took place.

R: Ooh, that's a lot. But as I understand correctly, it is specifically important that the last place was here – you know, this art school. Why is that?

W: Yes, we have done lots of trials bringing the Factory to different places. Lots of research. It is clear that the best patriotic affects are made in places that had art stuff before. You know, like art ideas, art people, art objects, art practices. They just float in the air even after everything else is gone. It is good for the Factory. With the right combination of moving parts, it takes just a bit of work to produce the product. Just like that.

R: Okay. How interesting.

Well, I know that no one is allowed to the Factory premises except for the workers and their families sometimes, so thank you for making an exception for me and inviting me to the Factory.

But back to the workers. You said they are temporary workers. Can you talk more about how this all functions?

W: Yes. As I said we hire the workers through a contract. They receive some training before working at the Factory. You know, we use new technology, which allows to target the product individually. The product is manufactured by each temporary worker in a very personal way. In a way, the product is only theirs.

R: Oh, can you tell me more about this new manufacturing technology? Or is it a secret?

W: No secret. The affect producing technology is complex and works in unpredictable ways. Even for us. The temporary worker encounters the moving parts, or the machine, inside the factory that are built by our team of patriotism researchers. Then, the temporary worker activates the machine with their patriotic light.

We don't know exactly what happens. The presence of art makes it uncertain. Still, the outcome is successful. The product is made.

R: I see. Well, let me ask you. I heard there is a growing market for the product. Can you tell me who are your buyers?

W: Well, we have been making sales to different institutions. Many different ones. Not only domestic. We also export. To other places that need it. But here or abroad, doesn't matter. We even sell to art schools.

R: Oh, art schools?

W: Yes. Various education institutions altogether. Preschools, primary schools, middle schools, high schools, trade schools. PhD programs. It is a popular commodity. The government likes it. Also, each household wants to have it. Activist organizations do stuff with it. Very popular.

R: Okay, I did not know it was THAT popular. Good for you.

Well, the last question. The word patriotism – it is difficult for some of our viewers to digest.

W: Yes, that it is true. Our temporary workers have trouble with it too. We leave it up to them to figure out what patriotism is, and how and why they generate it. You know, the presence of the art stuff makes it less certain. So, it takes some figuring out. But it happens. We all are figuring it out. Now.

R: Okay, well thank you for this very fruitful conversation. I am sure our viewers learned a lot. Now, would you also give me a tour through your Factory department.

W: Yes, let's go.



The audience is reading and signing Temporary Worker's Contracts. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.



Suvi Tuominen in the role of Worker is giving out temporary workers' jackets to the audience before they enter the Factory. Jussi Ulkuniemi.

Contract of Temporary Employment and Training
(Factory of Patriotic Affects temporary workers)

BETWEEN

Factory of Patriotic Affects (an enterprise governed by the Factory Employees Remuneration Order Regulations) duly represented by Worker, hereinafter referred to as the "Worker"

AND

.....
hereinafter referred to as the "Temporary Worker."

1. JOB TITLE

The Employee shall be employed as Temporary Worker in a training position. During the training time, the labor will be performed as usual.

2. WORKPLACE

The Temporary Worker shall be required to perform training at The Factory of Patriotic Affects at the address Haapaniemenkatu 6, 00530 Helsinki.

3. DURATION OF CONTRACT

The contract comes into force when the Worker begins the training and ends when the Worker ends the training. The training will commence at 19:15 on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. The training duration varies but does not exceed 85 minutes.

4. PAYMENT OF REMUNERATION

The Temporary Worker will receive their individually generated product at the end of the training session as a form of payment.

5. THE TRAINING SESSION IN DETAIL

Temporary Worker will go through a series of training acts. The Worker will lead a series of training acts.

Outside the Factory:

- (1) Temporary Worker will read and sign the Contract of Temporary Employment.
- (2) Temporary Worker will receive an individual Patriotic Light from the Worker.
- (3) Temporary Worker will read and sign the Contract of Temporary Employment.
- (4) Temporary Worker will undergo the training with Patriotic Light led by the Worker.

Inside the Factory:

- (5) Upon the first horn sound, Temporary Worker will enter the Factory of Patriotic Affects and generate patriotic affect by pointing light at the machines.
- (6) Upon the second horn sound, Temporary Worker must stop generating patriotic affects.
- (7) Temporary Worker must watch the Researchers of Patriotism do maintenance of the machines using patriotic scores.
- (8) Temporary Worker must observe the Researchers of Patriotism to regain their affectual capacity.

Temporary Worker does not need to remember the training acts. The Worker will instruct the Temporary Worker throughout their training.

6. REST AT WORK

Based on the Factory of Patriotic Affects Employees Union rest regulations, each Temporary Worker is requested to take a short rest during their training shift. Temporary Worker can rest on a bench or inside the Temporary Labor Resting Booth.

7. SAFETY AT WORK

- (1) Each Temporary Worker will receive their own temporary worker’s jacket for the duration of training (see Article 3 Duration of Contract)
- (2) The Worker will guide the Temporary Workers throughout the session to ensure their safety.
- (3) If Temporary Worker feels unsafe, they are allowed to leave the Factory of Patriotic Affects anytime, their Contract of Temporary Employment will be terminated immediately in that case. Temporary Worker will still receive their individually generated product.

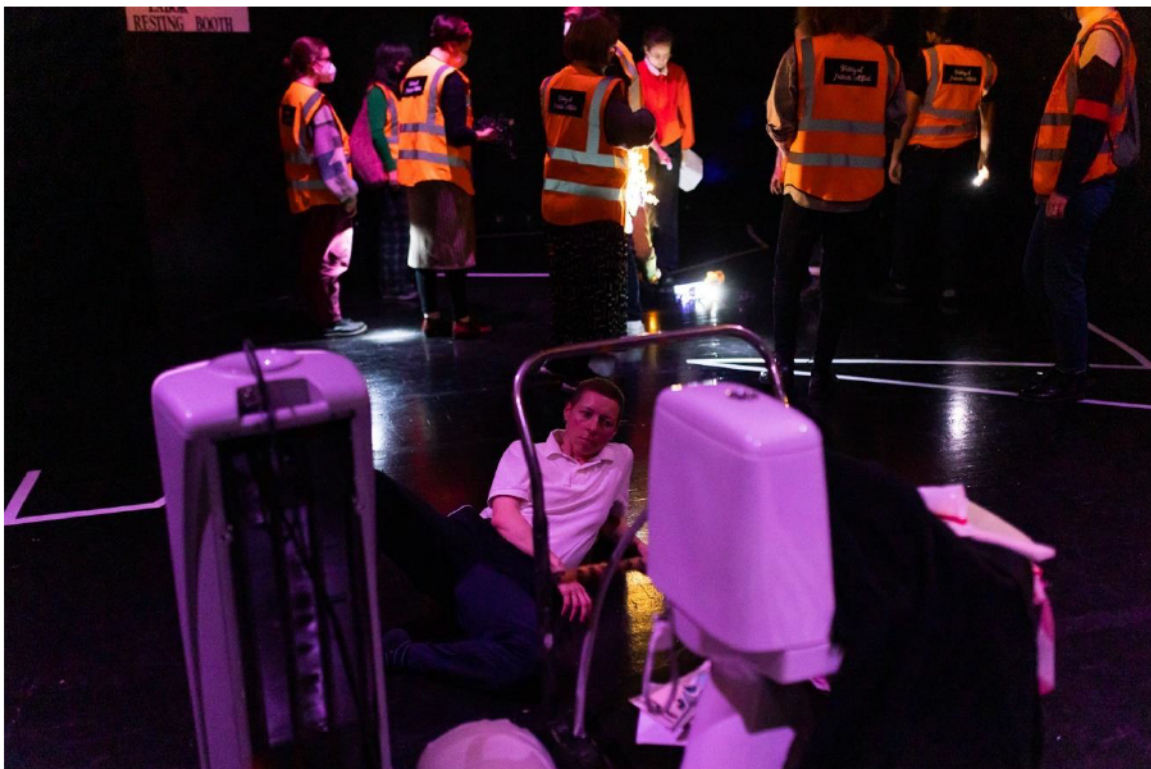
Time of entry	Time of leaving

Temporary Worker’s Signature

Factory of Patriotic Affects Representative Signature.....



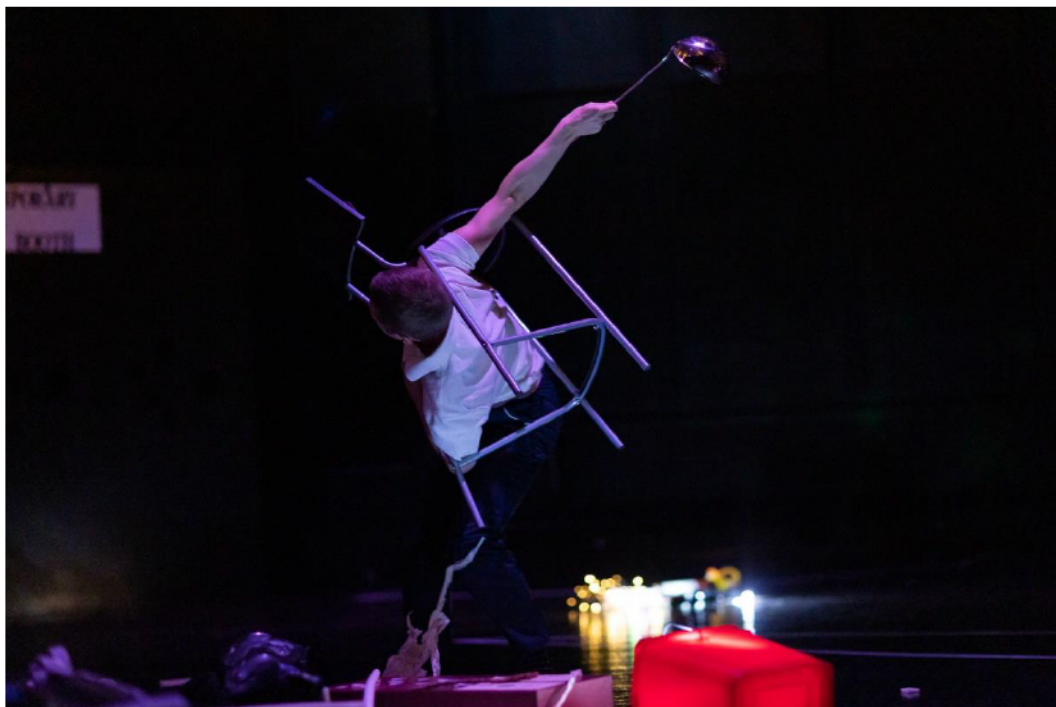
The audience in Temporary Workers' roles is using their individual patriotic lights inside the Factory. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.



Dash Che in the role of Patriotism Researcher, resting among patriotic objects while the audience is asked to bring their lights into a collective pile. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.



*Ola Rytönen as a part of a patriotic machine while being observed by an audience member.
Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.*



Dash Che in the role of Patriotic Researcher is doing one of Maintenance Scores. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.



Patriotic researchers performing their final Human Nests dance. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.



Rehearsing Human Nest dance. Photo by Suvi Tuominen.



An audience member is reading the program text they received attached to Sampo match box at the end of the Factory of Patriotic Affects performance. Photo by Jussi Ulkuniemi.

Performance Tryptic: “How to Like Finland and how Finland can like me (too)”

Part II: “Factory of Patriotic Affects”



image: Dash Che

Working group

Concept: Dash Che

Performers and co-creators: Oula Rytönen, Ilja Pippa, Suvi Tuominen, Dash Che

Sound artists: Oula Rytönen, Ilja Pippa

Dramaturg: Olga Spyropoulou

Visual artist and consultant: Alena Tereshko

Supervisors: H Ouramo, Simo Kellokumpu, Satu Herrala

Examiners: Shubhangi Singh and Leena Rouhiainen

Special thanks to William Pope L., Suvi Tuominen, Tero Nauha, Bas Jan Ader, Amanda Hunt, Olga Spyropoulou, my therapist Irina, Simo Kellokumpu, Galina Rymby, Ana Mendieta, Ilja Pippa, Tehching Hsieh, Sepideh Ardalani, Maria Kaihoviirta, Joseph Beuys, Lyubov Peterson/Chernova, H Ouramo, Satu Herrala, Alena Tereshko, Oula Rytönen, Olya Khramova, Dana Mitchell, Päivi Väisänen, Marja Zilcher, Sara Shelton Mann, Jessie Bullivant, Francisco Trento, and some others who supported me or showed up in some way for or in this work.

The Factory of Patriotic Affects program text given to the audience members at the end of the performance attached to the empty Sampo match box. Page one.

“Liking a place requires training. There are steps to the training to affiliate with the place, to call it your own.

Izhevsk asked for my feelings and I complied - performing a series of personal and official rituals to develop pride and call Izhevsk home. I was born in Izhevsk, an ethnic republic of Russia with two official languages, Udmurt and Russian. I have no roots and no previous history in Izhevsk. The Soviet government sent Lyubov Chernova, my yet-to-be mother, to work at a preschool in Izhevsk as a part of the grand late-Soviet production human machine scheme. Workers elements randomly placed and assembled where they needed throughout the country. We all trained to like random places.

Throughout my childhood, Izhevsk both folded onto itself as the whole universe and cracked in its folds. Since I was 12 I watched my mother watching those cracks and planning, planning the escape. My mother left Izhevsk behind as an internet bride marrying a US American man and landing in a small town of Nevada, USA, when I turned 18. I followed my own trajectory of moving around Russia for studies and work, but finally joined her in the US at the age of 19. Again, randomly (mis)placed, with no roots, or previous history - now an undocumented young queer artist living in San Francisco.

This summer I spent one month in Izhevsk returning exactly 18 years after I left it.

I find myself in the place that I am not of, always extending to some other place, that I cannot ever reach. I feel placeless and stuck in the fold in between places. It is an intestinal feeling. The feeling of losing and finding Izhevsk, of studying and living in Finland that would not give me even one kiss, of having an affectual loving bond with the US while intentionally turning away from it. It is too strong to speak about it directly. So, I speak of patriotic affects, which throb through my life with persistence, uncertainty, and confusion. Personal stories lose its shape and empty out. The remains are slimy sticky things, softish shapeless things, sharp rusty things, dripping hanging poking from these walls but not filling the whole space. There is that gap where it all takes place.”

- Dash

The Factory of Patriotic Affects program text given to the audience members at the end of the performance attached to the empty Sampo match box. Page two.

Small and Nice Immigrant Shop



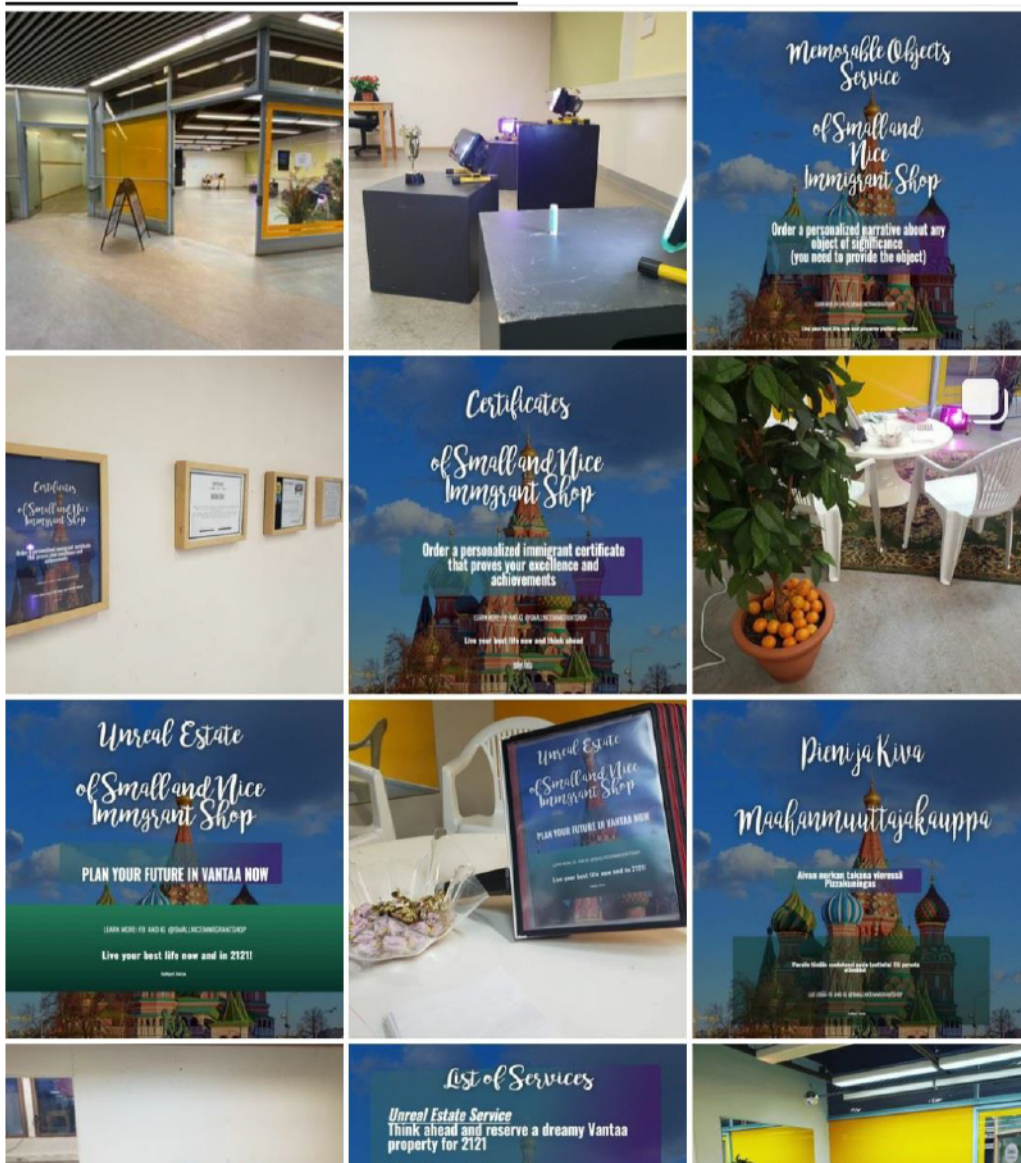
Visitors of Small and Nice Immigrant Shop are having refreshments while choosing plots of Vantaa in 2121. Photo by Antti Ahonen.



SERVICES



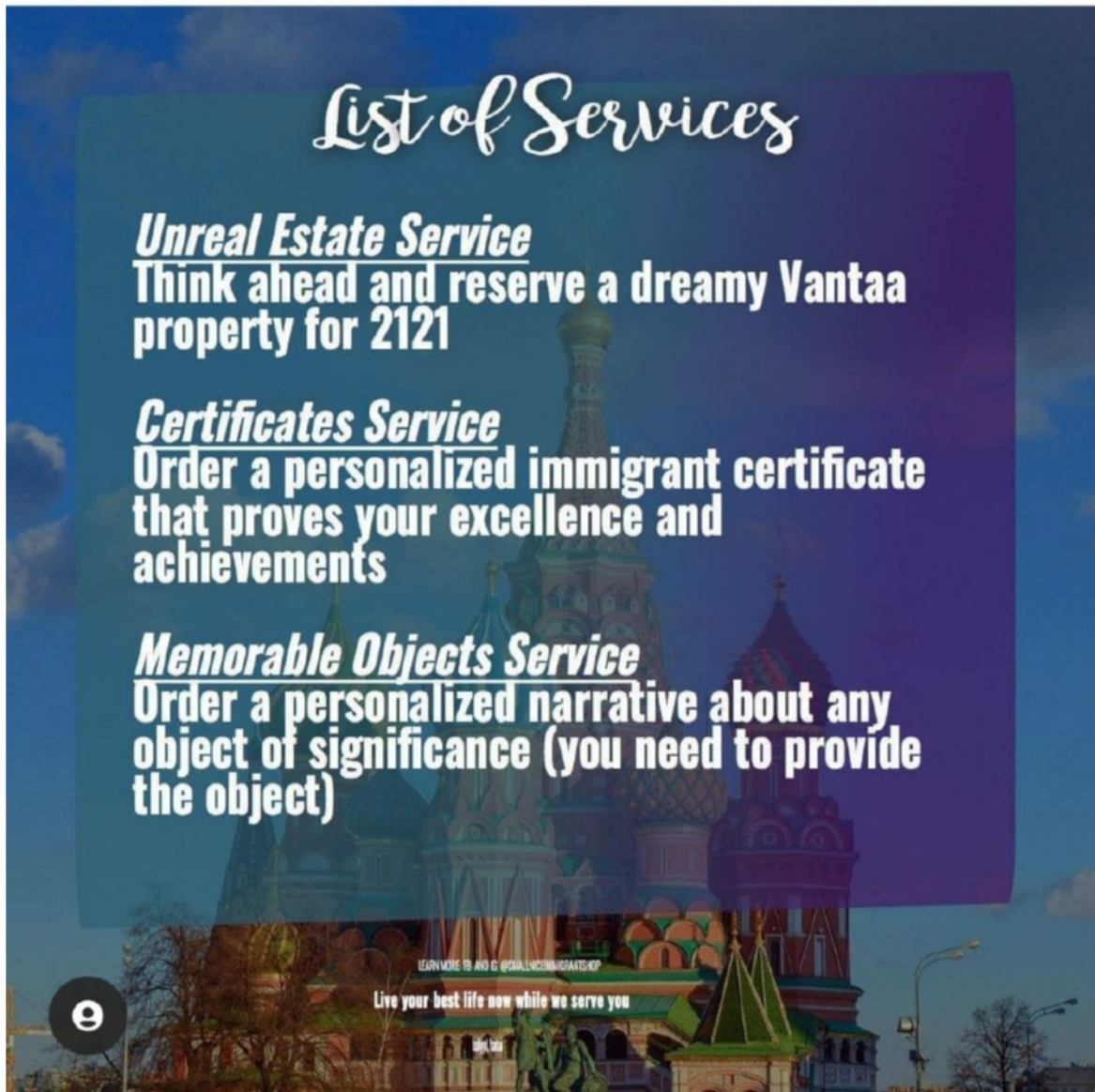
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Small and Nice Immigrant Shop Instagram account screenshot. @smallniceimmigrantshop



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November 22, 2021

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smallniceimmigrantshop There is a cozy sitting place for the customers of Small and Nice Immigrant Shop. We care about your comfort and pleasure here. Come on by on Tue, Wed and Thur.



Small and Nice Immigrant Shop Instagram account screenshot. @smallniceimmigrantshop



CERTIFICATE

Fjolla Hoxha

The Plumbing Association of Migrating Locations grants Fjolla Hoxha the status of an Honorable Plumber of Migrating Locations. The aforementioned title gives Fjolla Hoxha the unrevoked privileges to exercise unclogging techniques at any location she ever migrates to, to ensure that her surroundings provide a smooth and unobstructed flow of movement.

THE PLUMBING ASSOCIATION OF
MIGRATING LOCATIONS COMMITTEE

SIGNATURE

One of the certificates proving immigrant excellence created for a customer.



A customer of Small and Immigrant Shop demonstrates their certificate they just received. Photo by Antti Ahonen.



Small and Nice Immigrant Shop during the open hours. Photo by Antti Ahonen.



Small and Nice Immigrant Shop during the open hours. Photo by Antti Ahonen.



A certificate that demonstrates “good enough Finnishness” presented on the Small and Nice Immigrant Shop wall. Photo by Antti Ahonen.



Small and Nice Shop's owner is closing the shop for the day. Photo by Antti Ahonen.