

# Arttab in a suitcase

Activity  
book

EEA grant programmes project "Culture Plant"  
No. EEZ/2022/2/18 funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA

# artplay:

Art lab in a suitcase is an art project filled with contemporary art experiences for kids and youths.

The theme of Art lab in a suitcase is storytelling.  
How do artists tell stories through their art and expression?

This activity book is created for you.  
How can you tell your stories?

We love to play with art and different materials  
in the pursuit for creative processes and developing  
aesthetic skills.

Art lab in a suitcase is developed in collaboration  
with teachers and cultural workers taking part in  
our joint project focusing on building good  
contemporary art experiences to kids and youths in  
the Jelgava Local Municipality in Latvia.

selfportraits

paintings

Artists

Rasa Jansone

Imants Lancmanis

Imants Ziedonis

Elita Patma/niece

Juris Justs

Raimonds Tiguls

Arturs Analts

collage

conceptual art

music

photography

illustrations

street photography

sculpture

installations

graphics

street art

books

# Rasa Jansone



Rasa Jansone (1973) is a contemporary artist - obtained the degree of Master of Arts in painting at The Art Academy of Latvia in 2002. Jansone mainly works in painting and has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Latvia, Germany, Taiwan as well as takes part in site-specific and environmental art projects (the Open-Air Museum in Pedvale, Roja Raku symposium, Riga city environment within the "Days of Art").

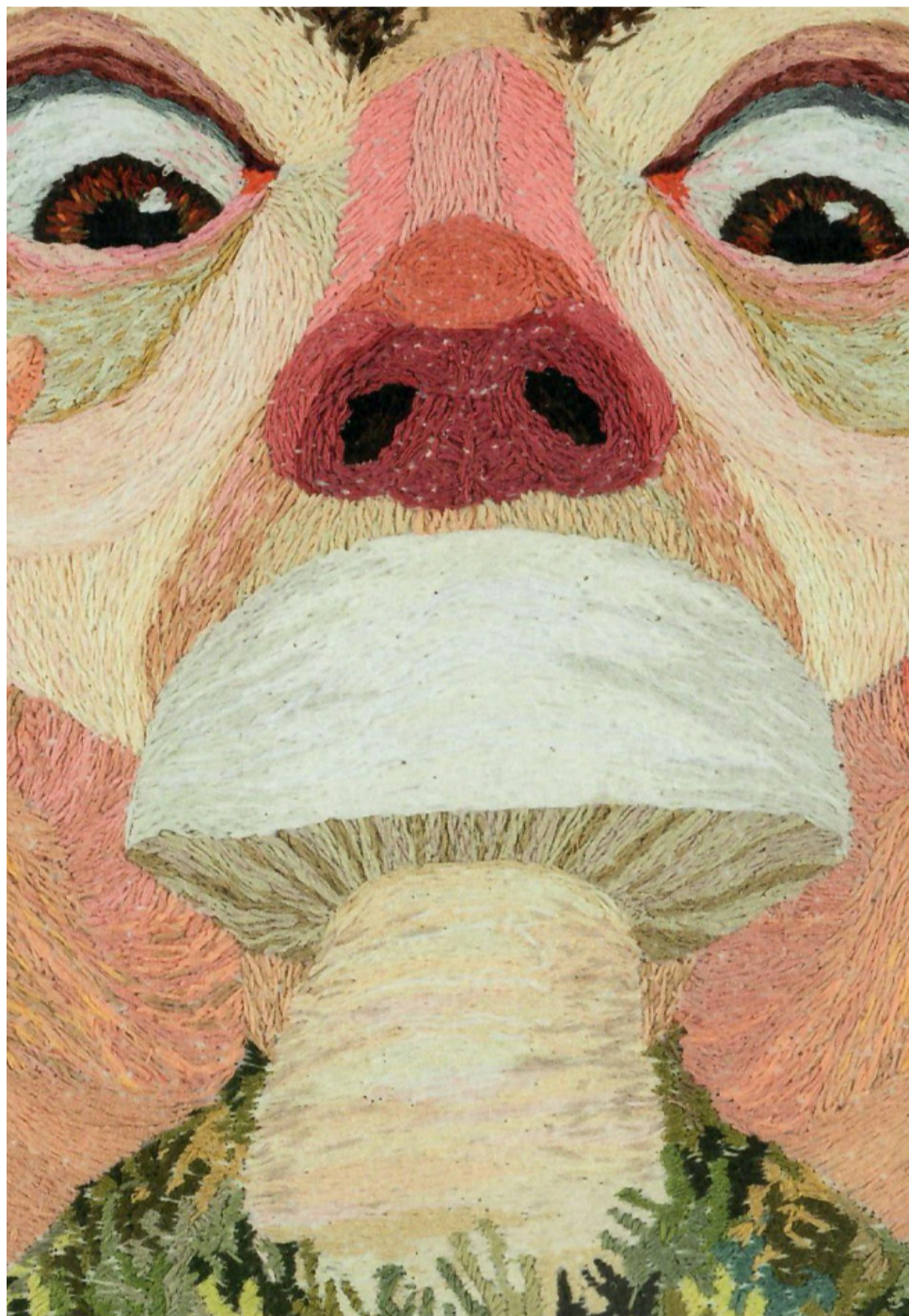
This portrait is from the family series of the exhibition "Nourishing Mist" held in the Intro Hall of the Riga Art Space in 2014, in which mothers were immortalized. It is painted in an expressive way on the faces of the artist's acquaintances, girlfriends, and their offspring, reminding us that there are no indifferent people in this topic.

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who am I?  
what do I see in myself?  
what are my colours?

Make a selfportrait on a  
cardboard with yarn and glue.  
Play with shapes and lines

You need  
cardboard,  
scissors, glue &  
yarn



draw your own selfportrait or a portrait of someone you know with words

MY NAME  
IS  
WHERE DO  
YOU LIVE  
to do?

passions

what are the colours, what do you like

# Imants Lancmanis

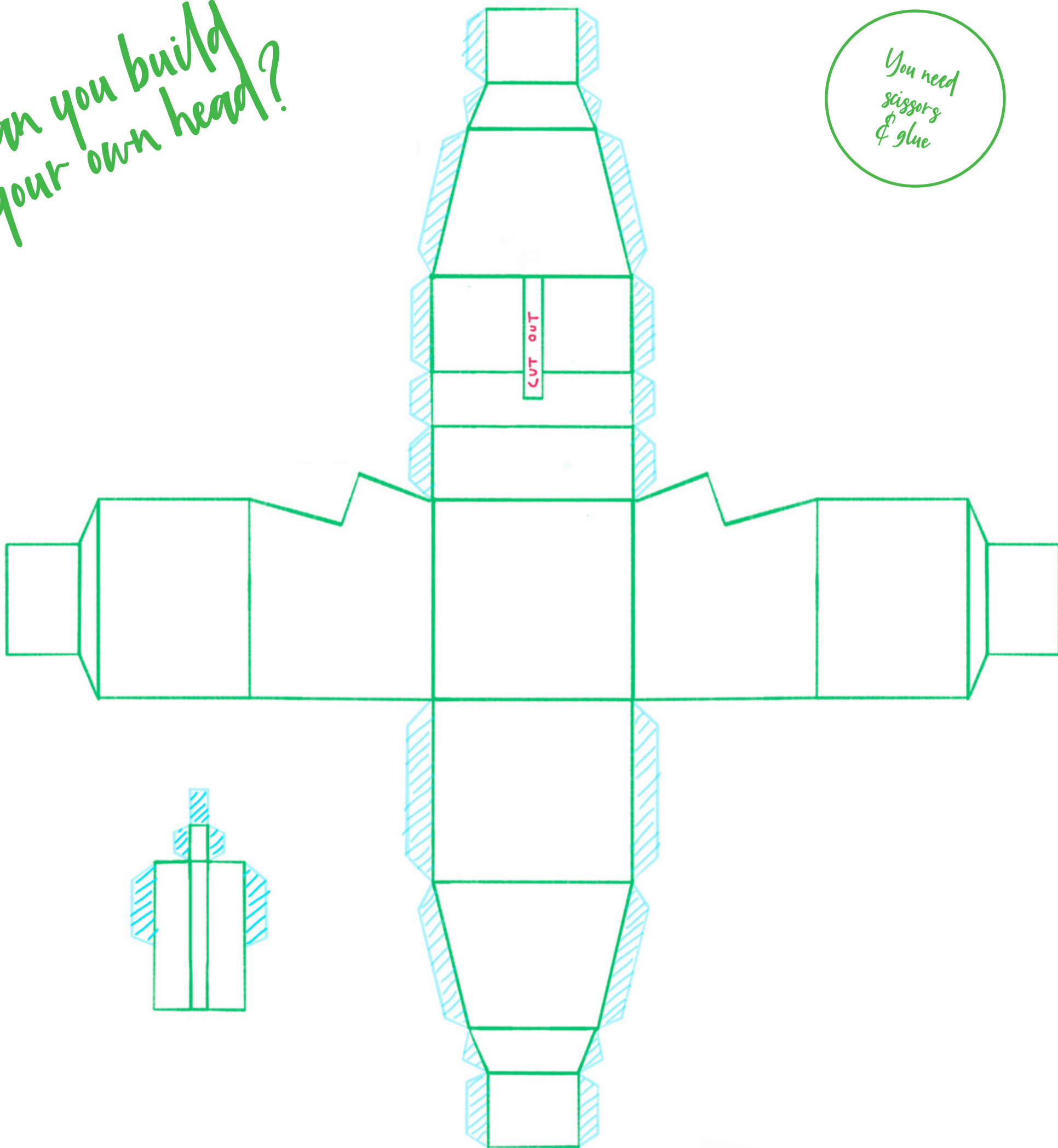


## Imants Lancmanis "Self-portrait by the apple wreath"

"I stand in it by the crown of apples. One might wonder - what does such a crown of apples mean? So you can see withered apple branches at the top, then beautiful pink buds and flowers appear, then the first apple skins appear, then they plump up, become beautiful and juicy and then... meet their end. It is a crown that seems to show the cycle of life, the cycle of the year. I imagine that by tracing the fate of an apple tree over the course of one year, we see the philosophy of the rhythm of life. We see how it is both in the life of an apple, where of course it happens faster, and ultimately also in the life of a person." Imants Lancmanis (1941) graduated from the Painting Department of the Latvian Academy of Arts in 1966. The work of Imantas Lancmanis can be gathered in the stream of contemporary postmodern painting.

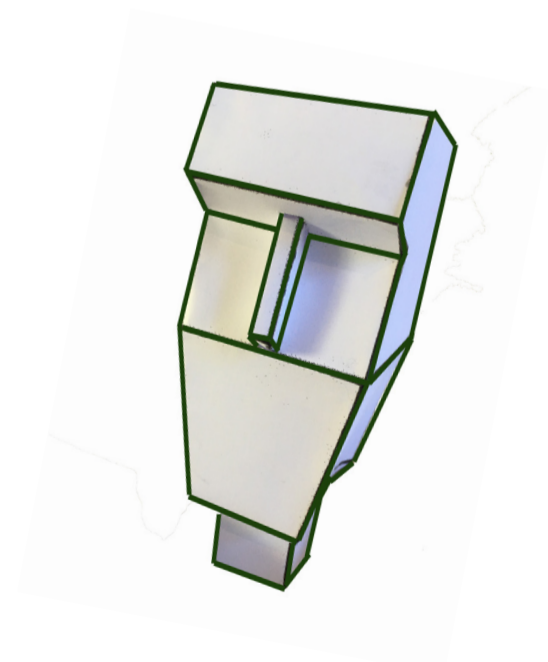
can you build  
your own head?

You need  
scissors  
& glue

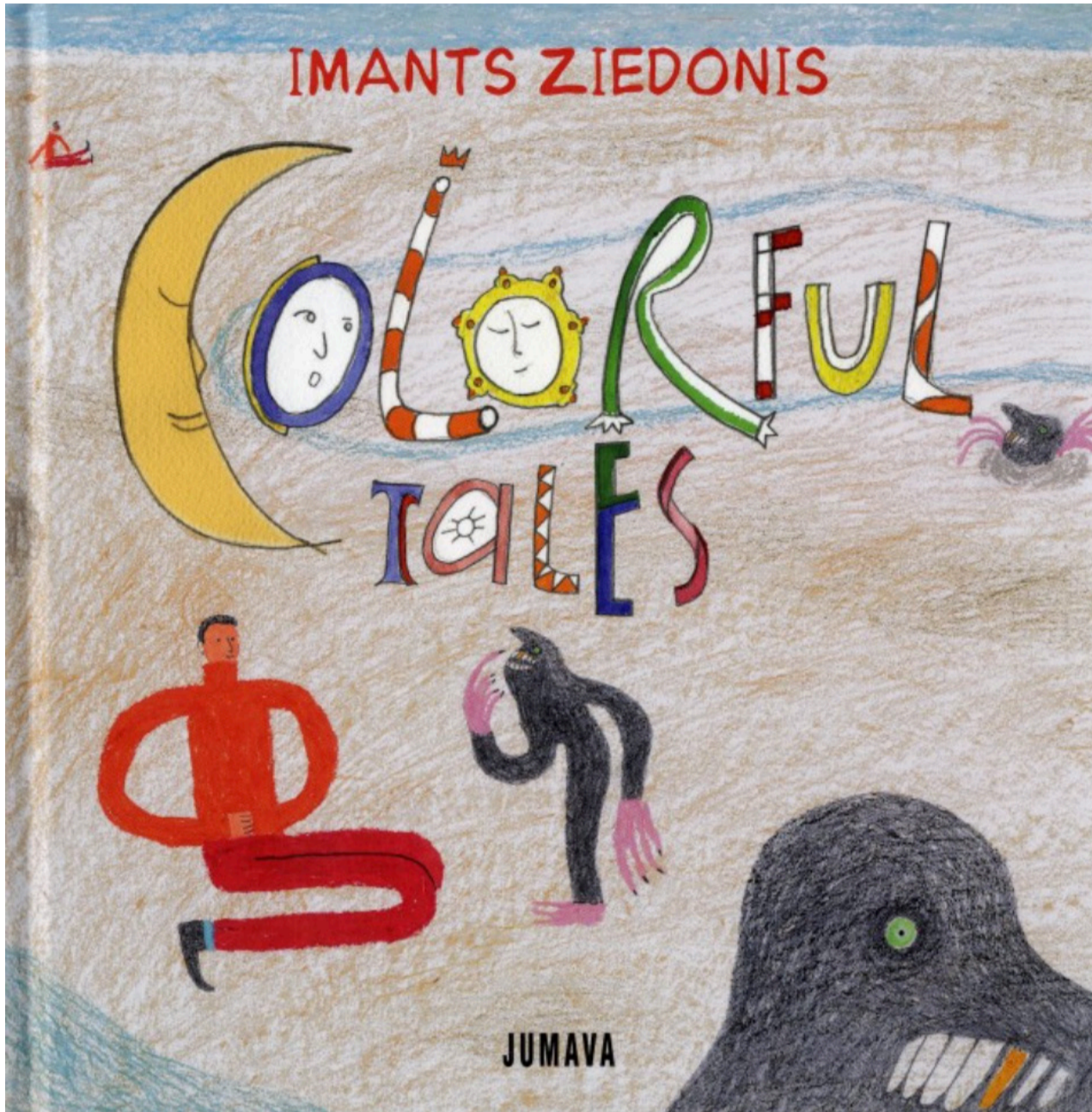


Procedure:

1. Print out the template
2. Fold the lines
3. Glue the tabs on the left side of the face and stick to the left side of the head
4. Then stick the right side the same way
5. Glue the nose and fit it in from the inside or outside
6. Draw a face or style it your way



# Imants Ziedonis



Imants Ziedonis (3 May 1933 – 27 February 2013) a Latvian poet and writer. *Colorful Tales* is a timeless piece of fiction that introduces its reader to a surreal and wonderful world of colour. A collection of eleven fairy tales written for children of all ages, illustrated by eleven talented Latvian artists, students at the faculty of the Art Academy of Latvia.

## storytelling with words & colours

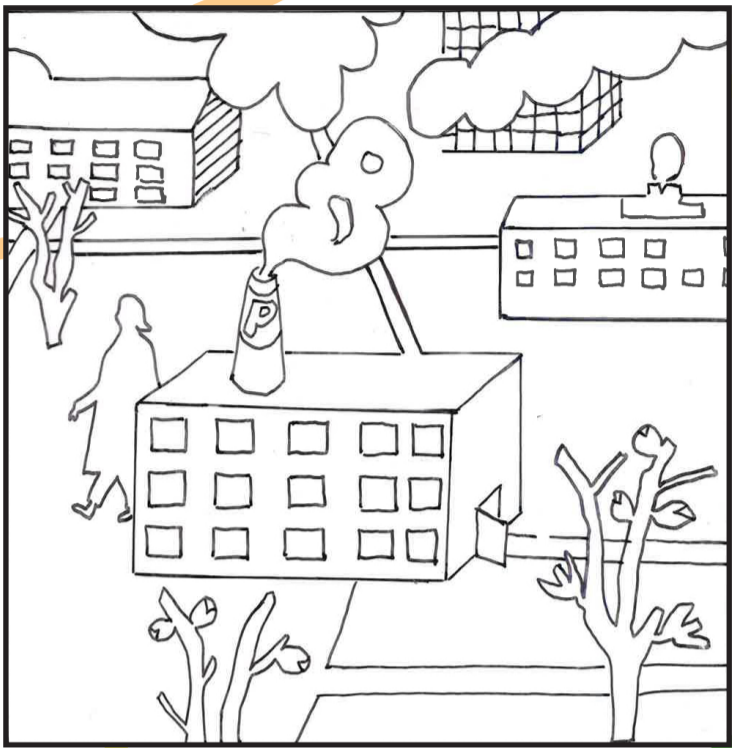
What do colours mean for you?

Colour symbolism is the use of specific colours to express a mood or state of mind.

What do you associate with red, black, white, yellow, or green?

Many artists experiment with colours throughout their artistic life.

Can you try to dance the different colours - seasons?



SUMMER

WINTER

# COLOUR SYMBOLISM



SPRING/AUTUMN

You need  
crayons

# bookbinding



You need  
9 sheets  
packaging that can be used for cover  
(cardboard, carton, packaging...)  
tape/newspapers/stickers for decoration  
awl/needle (to make holes in the back of the book)  
solid and thin thread  
scissors  
glue

Procedure:

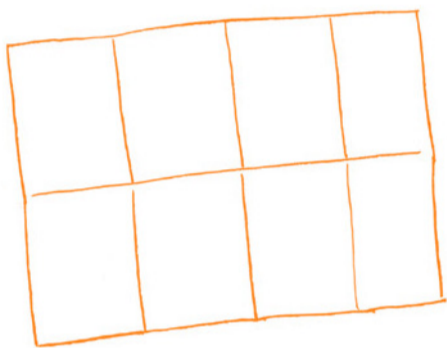
1. Find all your equipment
2. Fold 9 sheets that are added together  
3 and 3, i.e. 3 "inserts"
3. Make cover with stuff
4. Make holes in the backs of the sheets
5. Sew together with about 1 m. strong  
and thin thread

See possibilities  
in old packaging,  
play with shape and  
colour

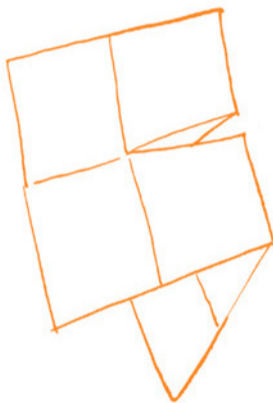
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or make a book out of a piece of A4 paper  
and write a short story

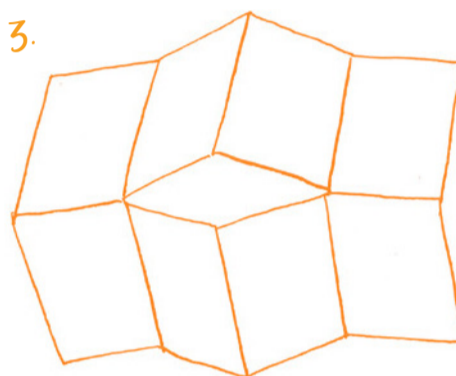
1.



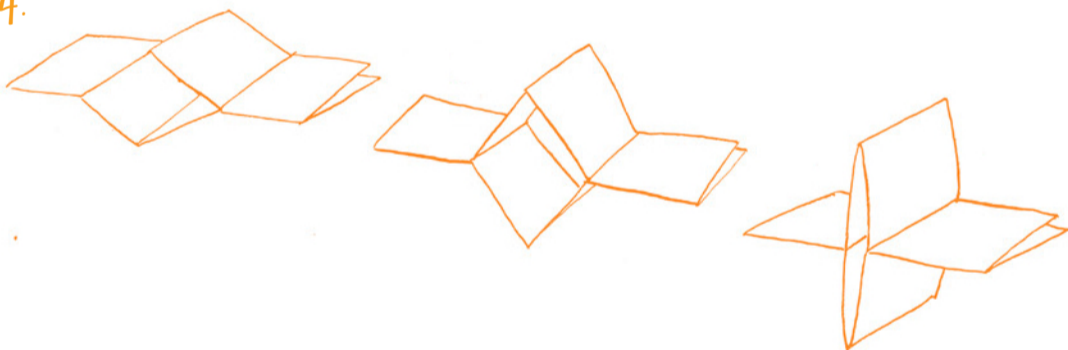
2.



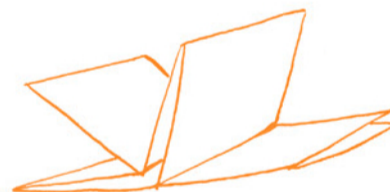
3.



4.



5.



A ghost story...?

A love story...?

A day in your life...?

A mystery...?

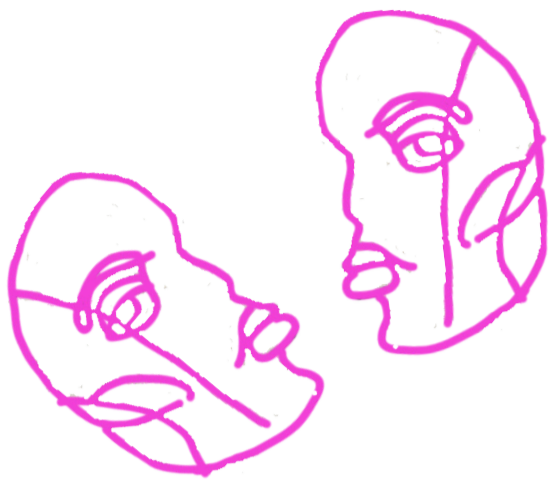
Do you need inspiration?  
Read a story, discuss it in a group and imagine a continuation  
write it down in your newly made book

# Elita Patmalniece



Elita Patmalniece (1964) studied Fashion Design and Painting at the Art Academy of Latvia - obtained the degree of Master of Arts in 2000. Only now exists - is an art space as a dedication to each and every one of us. A work of art that makes you look around, feel the energy, time and the moment that is constantly changing. Entering the colourful works of Elita, travelling to the center of it, can lead the viewer to see what is important to each of us at this moment. Surviving, feeling, being grateful for what we have. Elita Patmalniece is a painter who says: "It is a great happiness to think - that you don't have to torment too much - just do it. Happiness is found in everyday." Elita is also a fashion designer who creates costumes for performing artists, theater and opera performances, she has participated in various projects.





# IMAGINATION

Can everything be imagined?

Close your eyes in front of a partner and draw him/her

Look at the shape:

Where are the eyes?  
Draw them in



How can you tell a story in your surroundings, on the walls in your classroom or at the youth club. Or even outdoors...

What do you need?  
Chalks, stencils...?

# Juris Justs



Juris Justs - street photographer, Riga.

@riga-street-photography - a unique street photography project

"Latvia is in my eyes a grey country - therefor I choose black and white photographs in my caption of everyday life in the streets of Riga. There is a lot of structure and drama - I try to capture this. My street photographs are photos of and for local people, not for foreigners. I observe places everybody knows in Riga, the surroundings in the streets. Not the parks. It is maybe dirty. Like a second life. Social landscape. Not staged photos. I do not ask them. One, two or three shots of the motif. From the stomach level (my work position) My neighborhood. The market. The goal is to capture what interest me."

## Look around you

Try to capture a motif of reality, everyday life on the streets.

Kids riding bicycle or playing games.

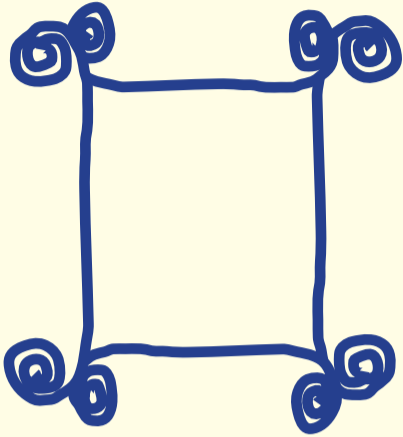
Do the people in the street convey any interests, what are they doing?

Think about the light, shadows ... are the people in a hurry?

It helps a lot if you are motivated for the task. You feel the need to capture a specific mood. Do not try to be artistic, or to make art. Street photography aims to capture reality.



## FRAME IT



Make a small frame, hold it in front of you, and take pictures of things around you.

Experiment with composition;  
surroundings, people, landscapes -  
tiny or big,  
in front or far away.



## PORTRAITS



True or staged?

Take 2 self-portraits  
one true and one staged.



Use your camera or phone, and try to  
capture everyday life.

Life on the street in your neighbourhood



True or staged?

# MUSIC

Listen to "Juras gramata" by the Latvian contemporary composer Raimonds Tiguls (1972). It is a contemporary piece of music that captivates listeners with its blend of classical and folk elements. The music takes its inspiration from the beauty and mystique of the sea. Start with a warm-up, visually expressing emotions on a sheet of paper, while reacting to the music. 2. On a long paper-roll hanging on the wall, interpret different 'moods' of music, expressing notions of horizon/landscape, bright light, water drops, angry and sad, etc. 3. The next exercise is to perform on two very large sheets of paper on the floor. Using circular movements, create floral and mandala-inspired compositions. 4. Finish off by drawing outlines of the bodies on another paper roll hung on the wall.

Ask yourself: does a person have edges?

- where does your self end and where does the other person start?
- show each other your boundaries.

Does time has a face?

- describe yourselves to each other



SOUND DETECTIVE



Be a sounddetective and hunt for  
objects that can make sound

Discover what the sound can be  
like, alone and in connection with  
other found objects. Once you have  
sound, start the process of putting  
them into system and patterns (on a  
woodcut), and this is the source of  
all music.



When you have made your own piece of rhythm-instrument,  
could you try to draw the different lines of the rhythms?

# Arturs Analts



Arturs Analts (1991) is a contemporary artist from Riga educated from Riga Art and Design Secondary School and Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design in London. Arthur Analts' interactive installation "Matter to Matter" was the Latvian contribution to London Design Biennale 2018. It represented Latvia's relationship to its natural environment using such materials as wood and water. It was inspired by Arthur Analts' native city of Riga. Due to its proximity to the Baltic Sea, Riga has its own unique climate, with a constant humidity that often leads to condensation.

The installation invited visitors to leave their own message or print and, after a couple of minutes, the temporal marks naturally disappear. Through this process Analts asks us to consider the power of nature and highlights the role of designers and architects as the creators of a responsible, sustainable future where nature and its inhabitants coexist. It is a statement about culture and transience, of secret messages, and the ways in which nature can cover over human traces.



What could be the title?  
What does the title tell us?

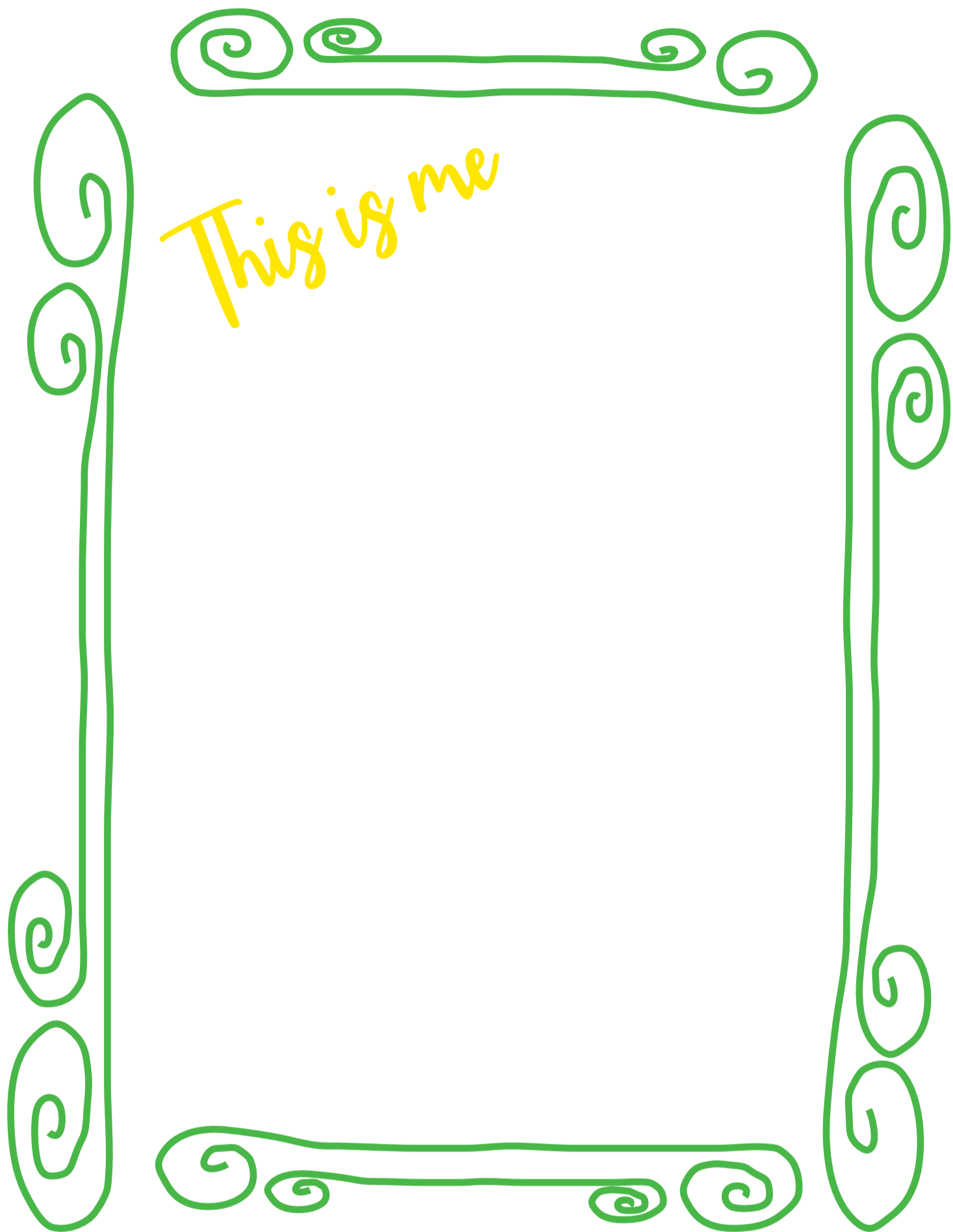
Land Art is creative and fun and can be done by anyone everywhere

It involves making art and sculptures using materials you find in nature; such as leaves, pinecone, twigs, pebbles, rocks, sand and shells.

You can make animals, patterns, circles, spirals, even life size outlines of you and your friends.

Making Land Art you will challenge your imagination, to be creative, get some fresh air and learn all about nature and natural places.

You can learn about trees and leaves; pebbles and sea creatures; the seasons, cycles of life and so much more.



## About the project Artlab in a Suitcase

Artlab in a Suitcase is a pilot art project filled with contemporary art experiences for kids and youths. It was initially developed for internal and limited use throughout the EEA grant programmes project "Culture Plant» No. EEZ/2022/2/18 funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA. This printed publication, the activity book, is thus just one part of the pilot project.

We decided at an early stage to develop this specific pilot project for Jelgava Local Municipality and we challenged the participating teachers, librarians, and cultural workers to take part. The main theme, since start, has been to improve access to professional contemporary art for children and youngsters in Jelgava Local Municipality, to promote and increase their involvement in creation of new contemporary art and cultural products.

In our work with contemporary art, we focus on an artform which is less bound to the formal aesthetic criteria of art. Contemporary art is more connected to ideas and content than technique and shape. It is often an action or an arena for social conversation, and this is a great starting point for a dialogue-based dissemination to children and youngsters. The experiences are aesthetic and sensory, and they often tell stories and give us a possibility to reflect and philosophize. Both in big and small questions. We build skills in talking about art and combine this with fun activities.

"Artlab in a Suitcase" is a portfolio-case filled with 7 different Latvian contemporary art experiences; 5 printed replicas, one book and one contemporary piece of music. Together, we have created an environment the kids/youths/students can step into, and they will be activated physically and intellectually. The kids/youths/students are invited to experience the artworks and reflect in connection with their own skills and experiences. A joint conversation/dialogue with fun activities.

### Dialogue based dissemination

Dialogue based dissemination should be built up with both conversation and reflection in mind. The adults take care of the input along the way. The communication is adapted to the young participants' grade level. Let them define the direction of the conversation. These art experiences trigger engagement, creativity, and the desire to explore. The senses are activated, from smelling the materials to feeling the different textures. Experiences that offer physical responses. It is vital that everybody listen to each other's experiences and ideas.

We practice visual thinking – a guide to work with contemporary art that opens the dialogue. We build language and listening skills to create the environment for relaxed thinking, to focus on what does it look like before you have an answer and to value each other's contribution to the talk, an open mind. It is based on asking three questions:

1. What is going on in this artwork?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can we find?

What are we thinking looking at art, and how can we find out? In visual thinking we use transition words; above, between, before, after and we focus on what everybody does well (not focus on right and wrong). It is a process to build the understanding of aesthetic development and the messy parts of generating ideas both in making art and in making sense of the art and the world.

We dive into aspects of cognition. From the objective understanding to subjective understanding. We talk about personal association, questioning, speculating, analysing and factfinding.

### Storytelling

The theme for this specific pilot suitcase and the joint theme for these seven artworks is storytelling. How do artists tell stories through their art and expression? The different artworks build awareness of how stories can be told visually and how artists use colour, line, gesture, composition, and symbolism to tell a story. The dialogue-based dissemination with activities challenges kids/youths/students to interpret and create narratives.

The artworks in the suitcase are supplemented with this activity-book and support-material for mediators (teachers/cultural workers/librarians) Thus based upon a work of art they can apply what they learn to create works of art that tell a story.

We chose the different artists and artworks based on a pitch session where the participants from Jelgava Local Municipality suggested different Latvian contemporary artists and artworks related to the theme. The diversity of media and materials represents different ways to work with contemporary art and storytelling as a theme. The wide scope gives the participants multiple ways of working with the suitcase and available materials at the different arenas (school, culture house, library...).

As mentioned, the project was initially developed for internal and limited use. This printed publication, the activity book, is thus just one part of the pilot project and suggests interesting possibilities in the dissemination of contemporary art to a young audience. There could be many more different themes, different artworks, and content-rich activities.