

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

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CREATION OF STREET ART IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY

Master's Project

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Introduction

My artist name is Sänk, an internationally recognized Estonian street artist whose work spans a wide range of techniques and styles, including graffiti, street art and muralism. My artworks are represented both in Estonia and abroad. I have conducted workshops and training sessions in Estonia and in countries such as France, Russia, Belarus, Sweden, Norway and Luxembourg and I have participated in art projects in Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Spain and Mexico. I give street art lectures at the Pallas University of Applied Sciences, Tartu Children's Art School, Võru Gymnasium and Jaan Poska Gymnasium in Tartu. I am also an active graphic designer and multimedia artist.

My thesis focuses on the creation of community murals with the aim of connecting different generations and enriching public space through art. In my experience in today's society, the gap between generations is becoming increasingly noticeable and natural points of contact between younger and older people are diminishing. This project is based on my professional belief that shared creative activity can help restore social cohesion and strengthen the sense of community.

Having worked with street art for over 25 years, I noticed that most supergraphics created in Estonian public spaces are made by foreign artists. These murals are usually produced as part of street art festivals such as Stencibility or RUA. Both festivals are of high quality and bring together a diverse group of artists from Estonia and abroad. Street art and murals are powerful visual forms of expression, but they often reflect the vision of a single artist. The artwork is created based on the artist's worldview, experiences and aesthetic sense, but in my experience the community in which the piece is placed may not understand its meaning or context. In such cases, the mural can feel foreign or even alienating, as the local residents and their stories were not considered in the creation process. I think that if the community does not feel connected to the artwork, a bond with the public space will not develop and the art will remain merely a visual object rather than a medium for communication or a carrier of shared identity. Such a situation can also lead to misunderstandings and conflict- I will try to prove this over the course of my thesis.

The article “*Public Art and the Art of Public Participation*” emphasizes that involving communities in the creation of public art fosters a stronger sense of ownership, identity and belonging. It argues that when residents are part of the artistic process, the resulting artworks are more meaningful, better received and contribute to community cohesion, while projects without public input can feel imposed or alienating. (Brennan, 2019)

My project’s approach is distinct in that it creates an opportunity for the active involvement of the community in the process of creating the artwork. This means that the mural is not solely a form of the artist’s self-expression, but a collective creation that reflects local values, stories and identity. I believe that such an approach strengthens the sense of community, fosters participation and ensures that the resulting artwork is understood, meaningful and respected as both an artistic and social expression.

The topic of my bachelor’s thesis was illustration within the science fiction genre, for which I also created an augmented reality experience, a soundscape and a video introducing a digital painting in a 3D environment. My bachelor’s work primarily focused on the artist as an independent creator - a creative practice where the artist expresses their inner world, aesthetic perception and personal ideas. The process emphasized my own vision, technical execution and the development of a personal artistic language. This approach allowed me to delve deeply into my distinctive style and shape my artistic identity more clearly. At the same time, I also experienced a certain limitation - particularly in how little the final result related to other people, their experiences and perspectives. (Taro, 2023)

For my master’s thesis, I aim to consciously shift this approach. I want to move beyond a solo project toward a direction where art becomes not only a means of self-expression, but also a tool for communication and a platform for shared dialogue and collaboration. I am interested in how art can bring people together, allow them to share their stories, perspectives and values and through that, influence public space and community relationships.

1. Muralism

Muralism is an artistic movement that involves creating large-scale artworks directly on walls or ceilings, often in public spaces. It is characterized by its accessibility to the general public and its focus on conveying social, political, or cultural messages. (Jerwood Visual Arts, 2024)

I don't want to delve too far back into cave paintings or the Renaissance when discussing muralism. Instead, I begin with the muralism movement that started in Mexico in the 1920s. Muralism, particularly rooted in Mexican political art movements of the early 20th century, has evolved into a powerful medium for public expression, cultural identity and socio-political commentary. Originally seen as a post-revolutionary tool of national unity, it has since diversified across the globe, influencing contemporary street art, activist education and urban renewal projects.

Unlike Western Europe or the U.S., Mexico used monumental mural art to unite peasants, workers and indigenous people in a national project that fused Marxist populism with visual aesthetics. These murals functioned both as tools of political expression and as vehicles for national identity, critiquing Western imperialism and capitalism while promoting indigenous and mestizo cultural values. Although muralism was supported by the Mexican state, tensions arose between state control and the movement's civic aspirations, especially during the Cold War and neoliberal periods. Over time, artists like those in Tepito Arte Acá and the Chicano/a muralists in the U.S. distanced themselves from official nationalism, using murals to represent local or marginalized identities (Anreus et al., 2012).

In her thesis *The 20th Century Muralism in Mexico*, Petra Binková emphasizes that the cultural value of muralism is primarily political and social - murals are not merely visual objects but respond to the social environment and influence public space and discourse. The success of muralism depends on its ability to engage with the audience and take into account the context of the place, the balance of social forces and the meaning-making processes of the public (Binková, 2005).

In his book ``Mexican Murals in Times of Crisis,`` Bruce Campbell supports the idea that a mural does not function as an independent visual object, but that its impact and meaning emerge only through its relationship with a specific place, the community and public discourse. (Campbell, 2003)

Lefebvre develops the concept of “monumental space,” in which an artwork must move between private and public discourse, creating a temporary consensus. If this connection is absent, the artwork becomes “out of place.” (Lefebvre, n.d.)

Contemporary examples reflect this shift in muralism’s function. The *Murals for Communities* initiative in Europe showed how participatory mural practices can foster intercultural dialogue and strengthen social cohesion in urban neighborhoods through collaborative creation (Petroniené, S., & Juželėnienė, S., 2022). Similarly, collectives such as *Colectivo Moriviví* in Puerto Rico and the *Aravani Art Project* in India demonstrate how muralism can empower marginalized communities by giving visibility to local narratives, gender perspectives and resistance movements (Reichard, 2019).

Beyond aesthetic expression, muralism today is a tool for reclaiming space, voicing underrepresented stories and co-constructing meaning in public environments. As such, it remains a dynamic and relevant form of socially engaged art that directly supports the objectives of inclusive urban development and cultural dialogue.

Muralism continues to evolve as a dynamic form of public art, adapting to contemporary urban landscapes and societal needs. Recent developments highlight its role in community engagement, urban revitalization and the integration of technology.

In Italy, the “New Muralism” project explores how site-specific public artworks are reshaping urban spaces, emphasizing the importance of community involvement in the creation process (Billiani et al., 2025). Similarly, in India, the St+art India Foundation has been instrumental in transforming urban areas through murals that reflect local narratives and foster community pride (St+Art India, n.d.).

The fusion of art and technology is evident in projects like the use of NFTs to preserve street art, ensuring its longevity and accessibility beyond physical limitations. Additionally, artists are incorporating augmented reality and digital elements to enhance viewer interaction and engagement (Shirodkar, 2022).

These developments underscore the enduring relevance of muralism as a medium that not only beautifies spaces but also serves as a catalyst for social connection and dialogue.

Muralism originated in 1920s Mexico as a political and cultural movement aimed at unifying society through public art. Over time, it evolved into a tool for community engagement and the expression of marginalized voices. Petra Binková and Bruce Campbell emphasize that murals gain meaning through interaction with place, audience and public discourse. Contemporary muralism integrates technology, such as AR and NFTs and enters private spaces as a medium for personal storytelling. It remains a dynamic form of socially engaged art, bridging aesthetics, activism and innovation.

1.1 What is difference between street art and muralism

Street art is a form of public visual expression that exists between unauthorized graffiti and official public art. Unlike traditional public artworks that are institutionally sanctioned, street art often appears in public spaces without permission, aiming to engage a wide, non-specialist audience.

Street art is defined more by the act of making it than the final product. It is typically associated with underground culture, post-graffiti movements and a subversive or independent discourse, not intended for the commercial art market. Street art is ephemeral by nature and its legitimacy is often rooted in this temporariness. While its roots trace back to prehistoric cave and rock art, modern street art includes murals, stencils, posters and stickers. Initially linked to politically neutral subcultures like hip-hop and punk, contemporary street art now often carries strong political, critical, or social messages. ((PDF) *The Evolution of Street ART: From Graffiti to Social Commentary*, 2024)

According to Baldini, street art should be understood through its relational context-how it interacts with its surroundings, audience and cultural norms. It challenges ownership and authority while fostering public dialogue. Though it shares graffiti's spontaneity, street art focuses more on communication than rebellion, often using imagery to address social or political issues (Baldini, 2022).

Street art muralism has become an important tool for examining social, cultural and political attitudes, offering insights into the values and morals of a society. In the context of the Nordic countries and North America, muralism has been used for two main purposes: on one hand, to aesthetically revitalize urban environments and promote the creative economy (e.g., through mural festivals and art districts) and on the other hand, as a form of critical artistic practice that addresses social and global issues and gives a voice to marginalized groups (Murray, 2021).

I really liked how Sirje Joala (Sirla) discusses street art, graffiti and muralism in her thesis and builds a model based on that. She demonstrated the fundamental differences between street art and muralism and argued why they should be treated as distinct practices. While muralism has appropriated the social capital and rebellious image of street art, it often lacks the critical and subversive intent that defines street art's origins. Street art emerged as a response to the exclusivity of the art world, promoting open dialogue, artistic freedom and democratic access to public space. In contrast, muralism is often regulated, curated and constrained by institutional frameworks, limiting the artist's autonomy. The confusion between these two movements has led to the rise of mural festivals under the label of street art, sidelining grassroots street art practices

and diluting their original intent (*Sirje Joala, 2017*)

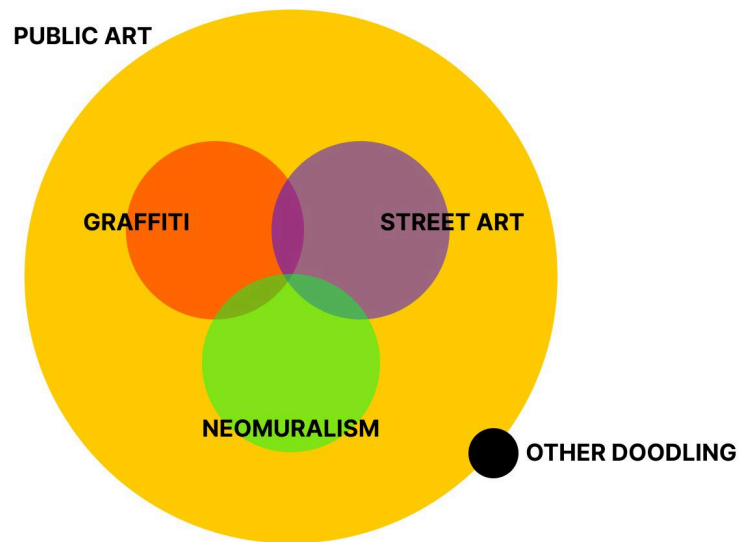


Figure 1. Sirja's street art model, in graphic form by Danil Taro (2025)

It is often difficult to distinguish between graffiti, street art and muralism - only a trained eye familiar with the field can clearly see the differences. A simpler solution might be to refer to all of it as public art in urban space. As Sirje's model illustrates, the concepts of graffiti, street art and muralism frequently overlap and intersect.

A clear example of this convergence is a mixed-media piece that incorporates elements from all three: stencil techniques, graffiti-style wildstyle lettering created with spray paint and a painted brushwork background depicting a natural landscape - a nod to the roots of muralism. Such a work does not fit neatly into any single category. It is neither graffiti, nor street art, nor muralism in the traditional sense - but rather a hybrid of all three. This highlights how difficult it is to strictly define public art today and how important it is to understand the connections and shared elements between these practices.

1.2 Community muralism

Community muralism is a participatory form of public art in which local residents are actively involved in the design and creation of murals, ensuring that the final artwork reflects the community's collective identity, experiences and values. Unlike murals produced solely by professional artists or commissioned institutions, community murals emphasize shared authorship and democratic access to visual storytelling. According to Goldbard (2006), community mural projects are “collective efforts that build relationships, articulate community concerns and affirm shared visions,” making them both artistic and social interventions. These projects promote cultural visibility, empowerment and public dialogue, often becoming a form of grassroots placemaking (Goldbard, A. (2006). *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development*. New Village Press).

Community mural projects typically involve workshops, planning meetings and painting sessions where community members contribute ideas, stories and labor. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and strengthens community bonds (Gude, n.d.).

Engaging in the mural-making process empowers participants by validating their experiences and providing a platform for expression. It also serves educational purposes by highlighting historical events or social issues pertinent to the community. By bringing art into public spaces and involving non-professional artists, community muralism democratizes art-making and challenges traditional art world hierarchies.

Community muralism has become increasingly popular in recent years due to its strong focus on social inclusion, visual activism and public participation. It offers an alternative to the commercialized art world by bringing creative expression directly into neighborhoods and involving local people—often non-professionals—in the artistic process. Cities around the world now support community murals as tools for cultural dialogue, urban revitalization and education.

Next, I will present some interesting projects that have been carried out. For example Mural Arts Philadelphia: This program has facilitated numerous community mural projects that address social issues and celebrate local histories, engaging residents throughout the creative process (Mural Arts Philadelphia, n.d.). Colectivo Morivivi in Puerto Rico: An all-women art

collective that creates murals highlighting themes such as gender-based violence and colonialism, involving community members in both the conceptualization and painting stages. Bear Lake Community Mural Wall: In Michigan, local artists and residents collaborated to create murals that reflect the area's cultural and historical narratives, strengthening community identity and pride. (Fraley, 2025)

Community muralism plays a vital role in urban development by transforming public spaces into canvases that reflect the community's voice. It fosters civic engagement, enhances the aesthetic appeal of neighborhoods and can even contribute to social cohesion and economic revitalization.

In recent years, murals have emerged as a significant alternative tourism resource in Kyiv, Ukraine. As Olishevskaya (2020) notes, murals contribute not only to the aesthetic transformation of urban spaces but also to the development of new cultural symbols and tourist routes. Since 2010 and especially between 2015–2017, Kyiv experienced a rapid increase in mural production, driven by social demand and international art festivals such as Muralissimo and Art United Us. With over 160 murals created by artists from more than 35 countries, murals now appear across all city districts, turning gray residential areas into vibrant public spaces. These artworks often address themes like national identity, social justice, environmental issues and historical memory, making them powerful tools for community expression and urban storytelling (Olishevskaya, 2020).

A study conducted at the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj (UShAF) demonstrates the transformative power of murals in educational spaces. Through collaboration with Mural Fest Kosova, students and staff created indoor and outdoor murals that enhanced the university's visual environment, improved teamwork and fostered a greater sense of community. Survey results showed that 72.6% of students experienced improved collaboration and 88.8% felt encouraged to express themselves artistically. Murals were also the most preferred form of artistic expression among students (59.2%). The initiative highlights how mural art can strengthen student engagement, campus identity and emotional well-being in higher education contexts (Shabani et al., n.d).

Community muralism is a collaborative form of public art that empowers local residents to co-create murals that reflect their identities, values and social concerns. As Goldbard (2006) states, it builds relationships and articulates shared visions, making it both an artistic and social intervention. From Philadelphia to Puerto Rico and Kosovo, community murals have demonstrated their capacity to strengthen civic engagement, support education and revitalize neglected urban spaces. Projects like Coney Island Rising Up or Murals for Communities show how muralism fosters belonging, resilience and dialogue, especially when paired with participatory processes. These murals not only enhance the aesthetics of cities but also serve as platforms for youth empowerment, cultural preservation and sustainable tourism

2. Creation of street art in collaboration with community

I was deeply inspired by the trend that emphasizes promoting intergenerational interaction as an essential part of a healthy and inclusive society. *Intergenerational Solidarity to Achieve the 2030 Agenda* is a blog post by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in which young leaders from Generation17 discuss the role of intergenerational solidarity in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Intergenerational solidarity has proven crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic, as younger generations faced significant challenges while protecting older ones. Despite the difficulties, solidarity between age groups has remained strong. Recognizing its importance, young leaders from Generation17 emphasize that achieving the Global Goals is impossible without meaningful collaboration across generations (UNDP, 2022).

An important part of my master's thesis is conducting workshops where people of different ages and backgrounds have the opportunity to actively participate in the creative process. In these workshops, participants learn new skills - whether it's mural techniques, creating designs, developing a sense of color, or simply becoming more confident in communicating through visual language. Thus, the artistic process and educational growth take place simultaneously: people not only contribute to the creation of the artwork but also gain something themselves - knowledge, skills, confidence and experience in collaboration.

Art has the potential to create environments where people feel heard and included - not merely as observers, but as active participants. In my master's project, this process plays a central role: how inclusion takes place, what meanings people create and how these interpretations can come together into a unified visual whole. As a result, the artwork becomes not only an aesthetic object but also the outcome of dialogue and collaboration - a mirror in which the community can recognize itself.

This approach is important to me both personally and professionally. On one hand, I wish to grow as an artist who understands and values the social dimension of creative work; on the other hand, I aim to contribute to the enrichment of the living environment in a way that highlights people's stories and the diversity of local culture. I believe that it is through collaboration, listening and co-creation that art can have a deeper, more lasting and meaningful impact - and through the sharing of skills, each participant can benefit in their own personal development as well.

The central research focus of this master's thesis is the impact of inclusive artistic activity on the community and the effectiveness of art education within a diverse target group. The following research questions are posed within the framework of this study:

Does the learning system I previously developed function effectively in the context of workshops that include participants from different generations? Through this question, I aim to analyze how flexible and adaptable my teaching methodology is in situations where participants vary significantly in background, age and experience. The objective is to evaluate whether such a diverse group can participate in a shared artistic process and benefit from it.

Do street art workshops help to strengthen the sense of community? With this question, I examine whether a collaborative creative process-based on street art and community involvement-affects participants sense of belonging, connection to the community and interpersonal communication. I investigate whether art can serve as a tool for fostering social cohesion and supporting dialogue among community members.

In the first part of this master's thesis, I explain the difference between street art and muralism and introduce community muralism as an inclusive and socially engaged form of art that combines creative processes with social interaction.

In the second part, I describe how I implement the project in collaboration with the community. I use the Lewin's Change Theory which I have adapted to suit the specific target group and the goals of the project. I present the structure of the project - its background, target audience, partners, potential risks and action plan.

At the heart of the thesis is a pilot project in the town of Kallaste, where I conducted workshops for participants of different ages. The workshop gave people the opportunity to take part in the creation of a mural and the gathering of ideas. At the same time, we taught participants new skills - knowledge about graffiti and street art, visual thinking, mural techniques and collaboration through group work and art.

In the final section, I analyze and reflect on the course and results of the project. I explore whether the learning system I previously developed is effective in an intergenerational co-creation setting and whether street art workshops truly help to strengthen the sense of community and shared responsibility for public space.

2.1 Methodology

Kurt Lewin's Change Theory, developed in the 1940s, presents a foundational model for understanding organizational change through a three-stage process: Unfreeze, Change and Refreeze. In the Unfreeze stage, organizations prepare for change by recognizing the need for transformation and dismantling existing mindsets or behaviors. The Change stage involves transitioning to new methods or processes, where individuals begin to resolve uncertainty and look for new ways to do things. Finally, the Refreeze stage solidifies the new state after the change, establishing stability once the changes have been made. This model emphasizes the importance of preparing for change, implementing new approaches and ensuring that changes are maintained over time (Hussain et al., 2018).

SWOT analysis is a widely used strategic planning tool that helps organizations evaluate their internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external opportunities and threats. As explained by Gürel and Tat (2017), this four-part framework enables organizations to better align their resources with their environment and make more informed decisions. Strengths and weaknesses are internal attributes—such as skills, finances, or brand image—while opportunities and threats arise from external factors, including market trends, competition and social change. Although SWOT is a simple model, it provides valuable insights for identifying strategic priorities and initiating action. It is especially effective when used as a foundation for deeper, more dynamic forms of analysis (Gürel & Akkoc, n.d.).

2.2 How did I apply the method

My first experience facilitating a graffiti workshop dates back to 2006, when Merit Süving, an art teacher at Parksepa School, invited me to speak to a group of middle school students about graffiti and to lead a short practical session. I am sincerely grateful for this opportunity, as it proved to be a highly inspirational experience that shaped my future engagement with workshop-based education. At that time, the session was rather chaotic and lacked a clear pedagogical structure. Over the past decade, I have gradually developed a systematic method for conducting both short (two-hour) and extended (week-long) workshops focused on graffiti and street art.

A particularly consistent collaboration has been with Võru Gymnasium, where I have conducted annual week-long workshops as part of their elective study week. In 2025, a similar project was implemented at Jaan Poska Gymnasium in Tartu. In addition to these national projects, I regularly lecture on street art at the Pallas University of Applied Sciences and teach youth at the Tartu Art School, applying the same methodological approach. I have also carried out numerous workshops in youth centers across Estonia, with a primary target group of young people aged 15–25, although I have occasionally worked with older participants as well.

Importantly, I have also implemented this workshop model internationally, conducting sessions in France, Sweden, Norway, Belarus and Luxembourg. These projects have taken place within the framework of Erasmus+ programs. In these settings, I have participated both as a workshop facilitator and as a coordinator responsible for organizing and managing the projects. The international context has provided valuable insights into intercultural learning and adaptation of my teaching methods to diverse groups of participants.

A key element in the ongoing development of my workshop system has been participant feedback. At the conclusion of each session, I collect reflections to understand what aspects were successful, what could be improved and how the overall learning experience could be enhanced. This iterative process has enabled me to refine and evolve a flexible, experience-based pedagogical model that supports both technical skill development and personal creative growth.

The course *Graffiti and Street Art* is a one-week educational program aimed at young people aged 15–25, with instruction provided in both Estonian and English. The program offers up to five hours of activities per day and is designed to increase youth awareness of graffiti and street art by integrating both theoretical knowledge and hands-on practice. The curriculum addresses a growing need for creative self-expression among young people, while also developing their artistic competencies and visual literacy. Students are introduced to the cultural and historical background of graffiti and street art, along with key concepts such as tags, throwies, wildstyle, murals and the distinction between graffiti, street art and muralism. The course includes practical training in freehand techniques, stencil making, aerosol spray use and digital collage creation using Adobe Photoshop or comparable tools. Additional focus is placed on typography, color theory, composition and the development of a personal tag or symbol, which can be applied across different surfaces. Learning is further supported through group work, presentations and city-based field trips that encourage critical observation of the urban environment and real-life street artworks. Assessment is formative and process-oriented, based on step-by-step assignments and individual presentations. Feedback is provided continuously throughout the course, aiming to support both technical skills and creative growth. By combining theoretical instruction with immersive practice, the course empowers participants to better understand and contribute to contemporary street art culture.

I adapted the week-long workshop structure into a condensed five-hour format to make it more compact and in order to make it suitable for older participants. As a result, the age range of my target group now spans from 15 to 85 years. This adjustment was informed by Kurt Lewin's Change Theory, which provided a conceptual framework for understanding how to introduce, implement and stabilize pedagogical changes across diverse age groups. This new structure I used in the pilot project Kallaste.

2.3 The Project, overview

This project is a community-driven mural initiative that connects people across generations through the co-creation of public art in Estonian towns and villages. The main mission is to unite people through street art. Can You imagine a neighborhood where children and grandparents paint side by side transforming forgotten walls into living, colorful stories. The project's core values are: collaboration, inclusion, respect for culture and heritage, creativity and innovation and empowerment. Collaboration – we as a team believe that working together across generations and backgrounds creates the richest outcomes, strengthening community bonds and sharing knowledge.

Inclusion – every voice matters. we welcome people of all ages, cultures and abilities to contribute their ideas and talents to the mural-making process. Respect for culture and heritage – we honor local traditions and stories. Creativity and innovation – we encourage new ideas, experimentation and the open exchange of skills, always seeking fresh ways to engage the community. Empowerment – we aim to foster confidence in participants, recognizing that each person's input and effort has real value and impact.

2.3.1 The project rationale

This project aims to strengthen intergenerational connections and foster a sense of community by creating collaborative street art murals in Estonian towns and villages. The

significance of the project lies in its ability to combine artistic expression with social engagement-bringing together people of different ages to co-create public artworks that enhance the visual environment and increase the perceived safety of shared spaces.

The desired outcomes include:

- Improved social cohesion through meaningful interaction between younger and older community members;
- Aesthetic enhancement of neglected or underused public spaces;
- Empowerment through participation, especially for youth and elderly who may feel isolated or underrepresented;
- Documentation and dissemination of the project as a model for future community art initiatives.

The project addresses local residents of small towns and villages, with particular focus on youth centers, schools and elderly associations. It also engages local municipalities and cultural institutions as strategic partners. The potential impact includes long-term improvements in community identity, inclusivity and civic pride, while also serving as a preventive tool against vandalism by cultivating a shared sense of ownership over public space.

2.3.2 Project plan

Timeline

- Preparation phase: January–March
 - Community outreach, partner meetings, workshop planning
- Workshop and co-creation phase: April - August
 - Design-thinking based workshops with youth and elderly groups
 - Joint sketching and concept development
- Mural production phase: April - September
 - Wall preparation and mural painting in 2–3 Estonian towns

- Reflection & documentation phase: April - September
 - Feedback collection, visual documentation, dissemination
- Final presentation and evaluation: October - November
 - Project exhibition or event, project report, impact evaluation

Project timeline overview for 2025

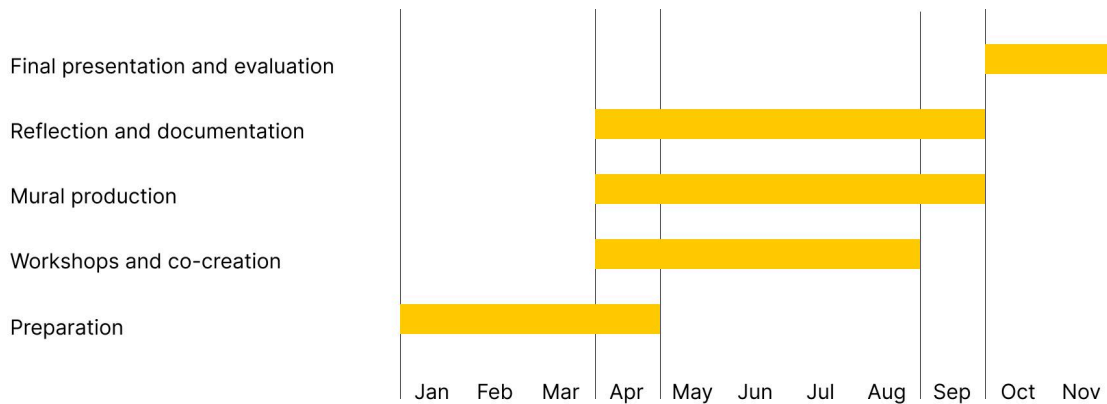


Figure 2. Project timeline overview graphic by Danil Taro (2025)

Scope

- Implementation in 2–3 rural towns or villages in Estonia
- Involvement of multi-generational groups (youth centers, schools, elderly homes)
- Creation of large-scale public murals on previously underused or neglected walls
- Conducting creative workshops
- Producing visual and video documentation for dissemination and inspiration

Cost (estimated budget categories) for one community project, depends on size of the mural

- Art materials and equipment – €2,000
- Workshop facilitation fees – €800
- Travel and accommodation – €1,000
- Wall preparation and technical support – €1,000

- Photography & video documentation – €1,000
- Marketing and exhibition – €1,000
- Contingency – €500
- Total: €7,300

Goals

1. Strengthen intergenerational relationships through collaborative mural-making
2. Improve the aesthetic quality and safety perception of public space
3. Empower participants by engaging them in meaningful creative processes
4. Create a model for future community-based art initiatives

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), to be finished by the end of 2025.

- Number of participants: min. 30 (across all towns), at least 3 age groups
- Number of murals completed: 2–3 large-scale pieces
- Participant satisfaction: 85%+ positive feedback via post-project surveys
- Media reach: At least 5 articles/posts in local media or social media features
- Workshop attendance rate: 80%+ of registered participants
- Volunteer involvement: At least 10 active local volunteers engaged

Objectives and Key Results

The following objectives are planned to be finished by the end of 2027.

Objective 1: Secure strong financial support to scale the impact of our public art project.

Key Results:

Raise €50,000 through grants, sponsorships and crowdfunding.

Submit applications to at least 5 major funding bodies.

Gain 3 new long-term partners or sponsors (Montana Colors, Sadolin, Terminal)

Objective 2: Build a vibrant online presence that amplifies our mission and inspires community involvement.

Key Results:

Grow social media following to 10,000+ engaged followers across platforms.

Reach at least 50,000 people through content shares, tags and media features.

Launch and maintain a project website with blog updates and artist stories.

Objective 3: Transform public spaces by creating 12 large-scale murals that reflect local voices and stories.

Key Results:

Complete 12 murals in diverse locations by 2027

Collaborate with at least 10 local artists and community members from all age groups.

Organize public unveiling events for each mural with 100+ attendees.

The team includes:

- Lead Artist / Project Coordinator (myself) – oversees artistic vision, coordinates logistics and liaises with partners.
- Youth Facilitator – connects with young participants and helps guide creative sessions.
- Culture wise – bring cultural memory and intergenerational insight.
- Local Artists / Volunteers – assist in mural creation, workshop facilitation and community outreach.
- Documentarian / Media Person – captures process and outputs for spreading in social media and evaluation.

2.3.3 Audience

Target Audience Profile and Rationale

The primary target group of the project is local residents, particularly youth, elderly people and families living in the mural locations. Their active participation ensures that the murals reflect the real-life experiences, cultural memory and values of the communities they

inhabit. Involving them directly fosters a sense of ownership and strengthens the social relevance of the artworks.

A second key audience includes municipal institutions and cultural sector stakeholders. Their involvement is important for strategic support, potential funding and for anchoring the project within local development plans. The cooperation of schools, youth centers and cultural organizations enables deeper community outreach and long-term impact.

Educators and youth workers are also a vital group. They play a bridging role between the project and younger participants and can help integrate artistic collaboration into existing educational and social frameworks. Lastly, cultural tourists and mural enthusiasts represent an indirect but valuable audience, contributing to visibility and appreciation of the murals beyond the immediate community.

An additional target group includes local businesses and private sponsors. These companies often have a vested interest in the well-being and visual appeal of their neighborhoods. By supporting mural projects-financially or through in-kind contributions-they can enhance their community profile, build goodwill and associate their brand with cultural and social responsibility. Engaging local businesses also helps ensure the project's sustainability and relevance within the local economy.

Planned Marketing and Communications Activities

The communication strategy will be carried out across multiple channels to reach different segments of the audience effectively.

Social media platforms, primarily Instagram, Tik-Tok and Facebook, will be used to engage younger audiences and the creative sector. Weekly updates will include behind-the-scenes photos, participant interviews and short videos of the creation process. Using local hashtags and geotagging will help boost visibility and community engagement.

For offline outreach, printed materials such as posters and flyers will be distributed to local bulletin boards, libraries and cafes. Short articles will be submitted to local newspapers to

reach elderly residents and others who may not be active online. These channels will also be used to invite people to public events.

The project will also collaborate with schools and community partners to disseminate information through newsletters, mailing lists and internal platforms. This will help engage families and ensure that youth are informed and motivated to participate.

To reach broader audiences and stakeholders, a press release will be sent to national and regional cultural media outlets. Stories and reflections from the project may also be pitched to art and community publications such as *Müürileht* or *Sirp*.

Finally, the project will conclude with a public event or exhibition to present the murals and share the process. The event will include a small exhibition or printed documentation and will be open to residents, media and policy-makers, serving as both a celebration and evaluation of the project's outcomes.

2.3.4 Strategic Partnership

In community-based mural projects, strategic partnerships play a critical role in ensuring long-term impact, sustainability and shared ownership. These partnerships are not only logistical but also value-driven collaborations that align different stakeholders around common social, cultural and educational goals.

1. Municipalities and Local Governments

Value Proposition: Municipal partners can provide access to public walls, technical support (permits, infrastructure) and often co-funding opportunities. In return, the project contributes to urban beautification, community engagement and cultural visibility-all of which align with local development and inclusion strategies.

2. Educational Institutions (Schools, Universities, Youth Centers)

Value Proposition: These institutions benefit from project-based learning, creative skills development and student engagement in real-world collaboration. The project offers educational partners tools for arts education, intergenerational learning and civic participation.

3. NGOs and Community Organizations

Value Proposition: These partners can mobilize community members and bring in experience related to specific social groups (e.g., youth at risk, elderly, minority communities). The project supports their mission by offering a visible, collaborative and empowering public platform.

4. Local Businesses and Sponsors

Value Proposition: Businesses gain community goodwill, positive publicity and association with cultural innovation and social responsibility. They may also benefit from increased foot traffic, improved surroundings and stronger relationships with local residents. In return, they can support the project through financial sponsorships, materials, or in-kind donations.

5. Professional Artists and Art Institutions

Value Proposition: Artists benefit from access to new audiences, collaborative experiences and visibility for their work in public space. Art institutions can fulfill their outreach goals, diversify their programming and strengthen community ties through involvement in socially engaged practice.

6. Media and Cultural Platforms

Value Proposition: These partners gain unique and authentic content that connects with audiences through stories of community, art and social change. Their involvement increases the project's reach, helping to build a broader cultural narrative.

2.3.5 Risk analysis

A SWOT analysis of the project reveals both its strong potential and key challenges. Among its main strengths are its participatory approach, active community involvement and the multigenerational dialogue it fosters through collaborative workshops. The project not only visually revitalizes public space but also contributes to creative education, civic pride and local identity building. However, the initiative faces several internal limitations, such as dependence on external funding, time-consuming coordination and risks related to low participation or weather-related delays. At the same time, the growing public interest in socially engaged art and the availability of support from schools, local businesses and EU cultural funding offer valuable opportunities for scaling and sustainability. Nevertheless, potential threats-such as gentrification, bureaucratic barriers, or the fading distinction between street art and muralism-could impact public perception or the project's long-term relevance. This analysis underscores the importance of proactive communication, stakeholder collaboration and strategic planning to maximize the project's positive impact.

SWOT analysis by Danil Taro for CREATION OF STREET ART IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY project 15.05.2025

Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
Strong community involvement and participatory approach (e.g. workshops with youth and elderly)	Limited financial resources and dependency on external funding
Multigenerational engagement creates meaningful dialogue and visibility	Time-consuming planning and coordination with multiple stakeholders

Visually transforms public spaces and improves local identity	Risk of low participation if outreach is not effective
Educational impact: promotes creative learning, teamwork and civic pride	Weather-dependent (especially for outdoor murals) and may face logistical delays
Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
Increasing public interest in community-driven art and urban beautification	Gentrification risk – murals may attract external interest and raise local costs
Possibility to scale the project to other towns or regions in Estonia	Bureaucratic obstacles (e.g. permit issues or municipal changes)
Collaboration with schools, cultural centers and local businesses for support	Misunderstandings about street art vs muralism may affect public perception
National and EU-level funding opportunities for art, youth and inclusion projects	Short-term visibility if long-term documentation or maintenance is lacking

Solutions to weaknesses.

Weakness	Solution / Strategy
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<p>Limited financial resources and dependency on external funding</p>	<p>Diversify funding sources by combining public grants, municipal support, private sponsors and in-kind donations. Develop sponsorship packages that offer visibility (logos on materials, public thanks, etc.). Consider small-scale crowdfunding campaigns to cover specific costs.</p>
<p>Time-consuming planning and coordination with multiple stakeholders</p>	<p>Use project management tools to streamline communication and task division. Assign a dedicated coordinator or divide responsibilities clearly between partners. Set realistic timelines with buffer periods.</p>
<p>Risk of low participation if outreach is not effective</p>	<p>Collaborate with trusted local partners (schools, youth centers, senior clubs) to build trust and expand reach. Use multiple communication channels (social media, posters, personal invitations). Offer small incentives or refreshments during workshops and highlight participant visibility (e.g., name on mural board or exhibition).</p>
<p>Weather-dependent and may face logistical delays (especially for outdoor murals)</p>	<p>Develop flexible schedules with backup dates. Identify sheltered or indoor walls as alternatives. Prepare portable mural panels that can be painted indoors and installed</p>

	outdoors. Rent tents or cover areas in advance if painting must occur outdoors.
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Solutions to Threats

Threat	Solution / Mitigation Strategy
Gentrification risk – murals may attract external interest and raise local costs	<p>Prioritize community ownership throughout the process: involve local residents in planning, design and decision-making. Highlight the mural’s role as a community-driven narrative, not commercial branding. Pair mural projects with social messages or historical storytelling that resist commodification. Document and communicate intentions clearly to media and partners.</p>
Bureaucratic obstacles (e.g. permit issues or municipal changes)	<p>Establish early contact with municipal departments and agree on roles/responsibilities in writing. Prepare a letter of support or memorandum of understanding with city officials. Build relationships with local cultural officers and allow for time flexibility in case of permit delays or administrative shifts.</p>

<p>Misunderstandings about street art vs muralism may affect public perception</p>	<p>Create clear communication materials (e.g., social media posts, flyers, short videos) that explain the project’s goals and differentiate between muralism and unsanctioned graffiti. Use informational signage at mural sites to describe the community’s involvement and the values behind the work. Include this explanation in presentations and press releases.</p>
<p>Short-term visibility if long-term documentation or maintenance is lacking</p>	<p>Plan a documentation strategy from the beginning: photo/video archives, printed brochures, social media albums and potentially a project website. Engage a visual documentarian or task team members with this role. Partner with schools or libraries to archive materials locally. Seek municipal or private support for mural maintenance plans if needed.</p>

3. The Pilot in Kallaste

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning system I had developed, I conducted a pilot project with the aim of testing its real-world applicability and adaptability across different contexts. Specifically, I sought to examine whether the five-hour version of my original week-long workshop structure would function effectively in a multigenerational setting, bringing together both younger and older participants. The broader goal was to assess whether street art

workshops could contribute to community cohesion. These inquiries were directly tied to the two central research questions of this thesis: (1) *Does the learning system I developed function effectively in the context of workshops that include participants from different generations?* and (2) *Do street art workshops help to strengthen the sense of community?*

The pilot was designed using my previous experience in workshop facilitation and informed by Kurt Lewin's Change Theory (Hussain et al., 2018), which provided a framework for modifying the structure in response to the needs of a wider age group. The participants of the pilot workshop were a diverse group of 10 individuals aged between 12 and 80 years (Annex 1). The workshop took place on March 30th in Kallaste and lasted for five hours, including breaks. The structure of the day followed a carefully planned sequence: a theoretical introduction, two group discussions and two hands-on creative exercises, followed by a brainstorming session and written feedback collection.

The session began with a short introduction and group familiarization. Another artist, Silver Rannak, participated as a co-facilitator, offering assistance throughout the workshop. Participants engaged in group activities focused on exploring the history of graffiti and street art, as well as clarifying terminology and concepts based on their own questions (Annex 2). These theoretical elements were followed by two practical exercises. In the first, participants practiced freehand drawing techniques (Annex 3); in the second, they designed personal symbols that represented themselves (Annex 4). These symbols were then used to create stencils, which were applied onto fabric tote bags using spray paint (Annex 5)(Annex 6). To close the session, participants were invited to take part in a collaborative brainstorming activity focused on gathering local stories and ideas for a future mural project on the wall of the building at Keskväljak 4 in Kallaste. At the end of the workshop, participants filled in a feedback questionnaire and informal verbal feedback was also collected.

During the workshop, participants shared stories from local life, which revealed a variety of keywords and symbols that later informed the mural design. Among the most meaningful elements for the community were the boat, the fisherman, the onion, swallows, water and fish. These symbolic references formed the basis for a narrative that reflected the collective worldview of the local residents.

This is not just a mural - it is a story.

The onion represents the layered nature of life - complex, like culture itself, full of strata and depth. The man rowing a boat moves calmly through time and space, as if traveling across his own memories, dreams, or perhaps longings. He is in no hurry - he understands that the journey is just as meaningful as the destination.

Above him, swallows fly - they may symbolize thoughts that accompany us each day. The weathered wall, with its peeling plaster, speaks of time, transitions and life itself.

(Annex 7) (Annex 8)

The overall response to the workshop was positive. Participants expressed enthusiasm about both the theoretical and practical components, particularly appreciating the opportunity to learn new techniques and reflect on the cultural dimensions of graffiti and street art. The group work and brainstorming activities were especially effective in encouraging interaction across generations. Older participants reported a strong interest in the historical and conceptual aspects, while younger attendees enjoyed the hands-on creative tasks. Nonetheless, some constructive feedback emerged: a few participants felt that the session was slightly too long and some expressed difficulties in following due to language barriers, as not all participants were fluent in Estonian. Additionally, while the target age range was set at 15 and above, a few younger participants joined, which posed certain pedagogical challenges.

A significant contributor to the successful realization of the pilot project in Kallaste was Jekaterina Tolnikova, with whom I had previously established contact during the *Tartumaa Loov Vald* community accelerator programme. Her involvement was instrumental at several stages of the project. Notably, she prepared and submitted a successful funding application to the Local Initiative Programme (KOP), which became the main financial foundation of the project. The project was also supported by the Peipsiääre Municipality's Culture and Leisure Centre, which provided a lift for the execution of the mural. Additionally, the local youth organization *Kallaste Noored* contributed to the initiative.

Jekaterina also arranged access to suitable facilities for the workshops free of charge and played a key role in mobilizing participants, drawing on her strong local connections. Thanks to her initiative, we were able to involve a local café, *Rannatuule*, in catering the event. It can be stated with confidence that the Kallaste pilot would not have been possible without her dedication and I am deeply grateful for her contribution.

To promote the project, a set of visual materials was designed both for social media and print (Annex 9). Posters were placed in public areas across Kallaste and an introductory article about the project and mural was submitted to the local newspaper. In addition, the project received national coverage through *Maaleht*, further increasing its visibility (Annex 10).

At the end of the project, participants received souvenirs in addition to the fabric bags they had printed themselves. These included custom-made magnets and postcards that reflected the project's visual identity—a small but meaningful gesture that was received with appreciation.

Another important collaborator was Silver Rannak, known artistically as *Condrad*, who assisted in facilitating the workshops and supported the initial stages of the mural execution. His artistic input and technical guidance were valuable assets to the implementation phase.

Based on the feedback and my own reflections, I identified several areas for improvement. For future iterations, I plan to shorten the format from five to three hours to better accommodate the attention span and energy levels of mixed-age groups. I also recognized that the brainstorming session might be more effective if placed earlier in the workshop and supported by advance notice, allowing participants to prepare and collect stories ahead of time. This restructuring will be guided by Lewin's framework, particularly the "refreezing" phase, to consolidate improvements into the revised model.

Following the pilot, I plan to implement the modified version of the workshop in upcoming projects in Varstu and potentially in Keila. The pilot has provided valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and has contributed significantly to deepening my understanding of the research topic. It affirmed the potential of community-based street art workshops to foster intergenerational dialogue, enhance local engagement and promote creative self-expression across diverse audiences.

Reflection

The implementation of the pilot project provided valuable insights into both the strengths and challenges of facilitating intergenerational community-based art initiatives. The core steps included developing a workshop format suitable for diverse age groups, conducting the sessions and collaboratively designing and executing the mural based on participants' ideas. The process benefited significantly from the support of partners, such as artist Silver Rannak and community leader Jekaterina Tolnikova, who were instrumental in organizing logistics and securing funding.

One of the unexpected challenges was the diversity of the participants in terms of language and age-some were younger than initially planned and not all were fluent in Estonian. This created some communication barriers during group tasks. However, the mixed-age setting turned out to be a strength: older participants showed patience and care toward the younger ones, while younger participants inspired the older generation through their energy and creative enthusiasm. Collaboration across age groups worked remarkably well-while elders offered contextual knowledge and motivation, youth contributed energy and practical skill.

Lewin's Change Theory served as a conceptual framework to adapt the workshop structure to the group's needs. This helped me identify moments where flexibility and reassessment were necessary to keep the process inclusive and dynamic.

The project had a clear emotional and social impact. Feedback revealed that participants valued both the creative process and the opportunity for intergenerational exchange. Many reported feeling inspired, artistically motivated and connected to their local community. The workshop format encouraged both learning and expression and many participants continued to apply the techniques they learned (e.g., using stencil methods to create signs for a local café). The mural itself became a source of local pride and was positively received by residents and visitors alike.

The project also had a strong personal significance. As an artist, this was my first community mural initiative. I learned the importance of early preparation-especially when working across seasons, partners and institutions. I also realized the need to expand the project team to include people with media and community outreach expertise. This experience

strengthened my leadership skills, increased my confidence and reaffirmed my belief in art as a social tool.

Looking ahead, I have already implemented adjustments based on feedback: for example, shortening the workshop from five to three hours and informing participants in advance about the brainstorming themes to ensure better preparation. I plan to continue developing this model, including the potential integration of augmented reality and digital documentation. Creating a dedicated website or mobile platform is also under consideration to enhance accessibility and visibility.

Ultimately, this project was not only about creating a mural - it was about creating a story with and for the community. My role was not to impose, but to guide and amplify the ideas of local people. This experience has encouraged me to move from individual practice toward more collaborative, socially engaged work that holds deeper and more lasting meaning.

The research questions I posed - (1) *Does the learning system I developed function effectively in the context of workshops that include participants from different generations?* and (2) *Do street art workshops help to strengthen the sense of community?* - received a positive answer during the course of the pilot project. This conclusion is supported by feedback gathered through questionnaires and informal conversations with participants, both during the workshops and in the weeks that followed when we met again near the mural site. The results indicate that the method is suitable for use with diverse age groups and that the workshops contribute to building and reinforcing a sense of community.

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Annexes

Annex 1. A photo by Jekaterina Tolnikova. 2025



Annex 2. A photo by Silver Rannak. 2025



Annex 3. A photo by Silver Rannak. 2025



Annex 4. A photo by Danil Taro. 2025



Annex 5. A photo by Jekaterina Tolnikova. 2025



Annex 6. A photo by Jekaterina Tolnikova. 2025



Annex 7. A photo by Silver Rannak. 2025



Annex 8. A photo by Danil Taro. 2025



Annex 9. A poster design by Danil Taro. 2025



Kogukonna ühendamine tänavakunsti kaudu.

Oled oodatud tänavakunsti töötubadesse 30.03.2025 algusega kell 12:00, lõpetame 17:00
Vanus 15 - 200 eluaastat
Kallaste Keskväljak 4, suur saal.

Kohtade arv on piiratud!
Registreerimine:
+372 5837 7809 - Katja
Jekaterina.tolnikova@gmail.com

Juhendajateks on tänavakunstnikud Condrad ja Sänk



KOHALIKU
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PROGRAMM





Täiskasvanud algajad saavad tasuta arvutiõpet

Haridus- ja teadusministeerium tellis arvutiõppimisele ligi 1200 täiskasvanule, kes on arvuti ja interneti mittekasutajad või vähese kasutuskogemusega. Ministeeriumi täiskasvanuhariduse valdkonna programmi spetsialist Ingrid Kera selgitas, et Eesti inimeste digitaalse rase on ebaühtlane. Arvuti ja interneti mittekasutajaid on rohkem vanemates vanuserühmades, kuid on ka tööalaste seas. Digitaalse puudumise takistab nende tööalast arengut, aga vähendab ka üldist heaolu, kuivõrd üha lihtsamalt levida ühiskonnas e-teenused. Seetõttu pakumegi soovijatele võimalust õppida arvuti ja nutiseadmeid kasutama tasuta ja kodus lähedal.

Arvestades nutiseadmete kasutamise laenu laadsemat levikut ja e-teenuste liikumist nutiseadmetesse, pakutakse lisaks arvutikasutuse baaskoolitusele ka eraldi algtaime koolitust nutiseadmete kasutamisele. Mõlemad koolitused – „Nutiseadme kasutamine algajale“ ja „Arvutikasutuse baaskoolitus“ – toimuvad kuni 2025. aasta lõpuni kõigis Eesti maakondades.

Läbiviidud hanke kohaselt hakkab Tartu- ja Võrumaal, Valgamaal, Viljandimaal, Võrumaal, Järvemaal ja Põlvamaal arvutiõpet pakutama Tallinna ettevõtte Nordic Koolitus, samas kui Valga Arvutikeskus hakkab inimesi koolitama hoopis Ida- ja Lääne-Virumaal.

Täpsem info koolituste ja nendele registreerimise kohta on leitav haridusportaalil ja koolitajate kodulehel.

Aparatüürkoolitustele kulub eeldatavalt 300 000 eurot Euroopa Sotsiaalfondi meetme raha ja kättesaadav koolitused on lisaks varem välja kuulutatud 1500 usun töötajatele arvutiõppimisele.

Hiigelsibul kalapaadis – tänavakunst sünnib Kallaste keskväljakul

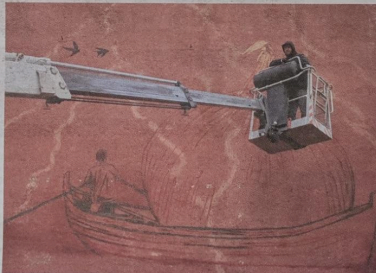
♦ Räpina vallas elav tänavakunstnik Sänk tahab selle neljapäevaga lõpetada Kallaste Keskväljak 4 majale kohalike inimeste räägitud fantaasialoo ainelise seinamaali.

URMAS GLASE
 urnalas@post.ee

Projekti algatajaks ja eesvedajaks on Kallaste aktiivne kogukonnaliige Jekaterina Tolnikova, kes soovis kohalikele tutvustada tänavakunsti kui loovat enes väljenduse vormi ning pakuda võimalust milligi ühise loomiseks. Kunstniku koolitusele ajad said elanikud proovida spreivärvidega joonistamist, valmistada oma šabloonid ja nendega kaunistada kändekotte.

Kogu tegevus kulmineerus ühise loomisega – sellise, mis sobiks just Kallastele lühemajale. Nüüd on loomise viimane etapp – viimane nädal maalitud seinale kandma.

„Eile tahtis külm ära võtta, temperatuur läks miinusesse. Täna on jälle tuuline!“ hüüdis mitme meetri kõrguselt tööstükorvist Kallaste linnaruumi uut värviküllast kunstiteost maaliv tänavakunstnik Sänk.



korvist Kallaste linnaruumi uut värviküllast kunstiteost maaliv kunstnik.

Tema soov on kohalike inimeste harida tänavakunsti kohta, nii lapsi kui ka täiskasvanuid.

Kohalikud andsid ka ideed, mida lõundina kasutatavale telliseinale kanda: paar, kalur, ja kuna asutakse Peipsi-äärsele Sibulale, siis hiigelsuur sibul.

„Maal on sürrealistlik. Sibul on kihiline nagu sinise kandi kultuur, mis aerutab rahulikult läbi aja ja ruumi, nagu oleks teel oma mälestuste ja unistuste vahel. Teekond on sama ohtuline. Kulunud krohviga seingi näib aja puremist ja läbi elu kulgemist.“ on tööstükorvist hõigatud sõnad, mida lõikav tuul lauseb kuulajani kanda.

„Kui ilm lubab ja vihma ega lund ei tule, siis neljapäevaks tahaks valmis saada. Ei ole lihtne. Pluss viis kraadi võiks vähemalt olla.“ loodab Sänk.

Ta jätkab, et kogukonna liitmine läbi tänavakunsti ei lõpe Kallastel, vaid järgmisena tahab ta sama teha Varstu rahvamaja seinale.

„Olen ka Peipsi ääres vaadanud mõnda kohta, kus seinad silma jäävad. Võta kanti tahaks ka midagi teha. Mul on silme ees ikka väikesemad kohad, väikelinnad ja aulad, mida püüda paremaks teha.“ avas kunstnik oma plaane.

Tema selgitusel on väikestes sõnades palju räämas hooned, mida kunstnikul on lihtne ja odav oma loominguuga esteetilisemaks teha.

Tema selgitusel on väikestes sõnades palju räämas hooned, mida kunstnikul on lihtne ja odav oma loominguuga esteetilisemaks teha.

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