

ADDED
COMMUNITY VALUES



Example of good practice

**New Theatre Institute
of Latvia**

Environmental Sustainability

SUMMARY

Name	New Theatre Institute of Latvia
Summary description of idea and activities	New Theatre Institute of Latvia (NTIL) is a non-governmental organization in Latvia, founded in 1998. The activity of the organization is based on the practices of contemporary theatre, dance and other performing art forms at the local and international level. Along with participation in international projects, the organization's focus is on issues of environmental sustainability.
Country observed	Latvia
Year observed	2023
Programme area (Social inclusion/Active Citizenship/Environmental sustainability)	Environmental sustainability
Specific topic	Contemporary theatre, dance and other performing art forms
Beneficiaries of the activities	Local and international artists; Young people, seniors.
Can these activities be applied to other beneficiaries: yes/no	Yes
What type of beneficiaries: ALL, or specific ones?	ALL
If specific ones, which?	Vulnerable groups of the society

Environmental sustainability with NTIL

New Theatre Institute of Latvia (NTIL) is a non-governmental organization in Latvia, founded in 1998. The activity of the organization is based on the practices of contemporary theatre, dance and other performing art forms at the local and international level. Along with participation in international projects, the organization's focus is on issues of environmental sustainability.

The New Theatre Institute of Latvia does various art and cultural activities, such as:

- Production of guest performances and shows.
- Festivals.
- Implementation of educational programs.
- Building international cooperation.
- Informing the public about Latvian and European processes through cultural and artistic forms.

As the representatives of the NTIL claim, it is precisely the cooperation with similar organizations from other countries, that have encouraged not to exclude the issue of environmental sustainability in the daily activities of the organization. It is noted that in Latvia, the identification of the problems of environmental sustainability is a completely new range of topics, which encourages the members of the organization to gain new knowledge themselves and pass it on to their audiences.

At the basis of their activities, it is important for the representatives of the NTIL to show the public how it is possible to think and discuss environmental and ecological issues through art. In this way, a platform is created where different artists can work and talk about issues that are important to them. Respectively, on the one hand, the organization creates an offer that covers the scope of the specific topic, but on the other hand, when creating works of art, thinking about their organization and their personal daily routines, it is also important for them to practice environmentally friendly practices. For example, when organizing festivals or producing performances, materials harmful to the environment are used as little as possible, remote online meetings are held with international partners, instead of spending fuel and other resources to meet in person, etc. The representatives of the organization mention that this type of process management is only possible if those involved in the organization personally are close with a topic of environmental sustainability and climate change. As far back as 2010, the organization has had to invite international artists as much as possible, which created interest and promoted conversations about the topic of environmental sustainability, while over time also local artists got interested in the topic.

The representatives of the organization note that when involved in the production of events related to long-term environmental issues, it is necessary to cooperate with knowledgeable professionals related to nature and environmental issues. Therefore, consultation with natural and environmental researchers and scientists should definitely not be ruled out.

As one of the positive examples of the organization's activity in the context of environmental sustainability, the project "ACT: art, climate, change" can be mentioned, within the framework of which discussions "Forest School" are held. As part of this project, local and international artists, scientists and environmental activists go on fieldwork to the forests of their countries and discuss the different ecosystems of the forest and their importance in the society of the respective countries. After the fieldwork, online discussions are held, where anyone interested is given the opportunity to listen to the lessons learned. In this way, interdisciplinarity and networking of people with specific interests in the field of environmental sustainability is ensured.

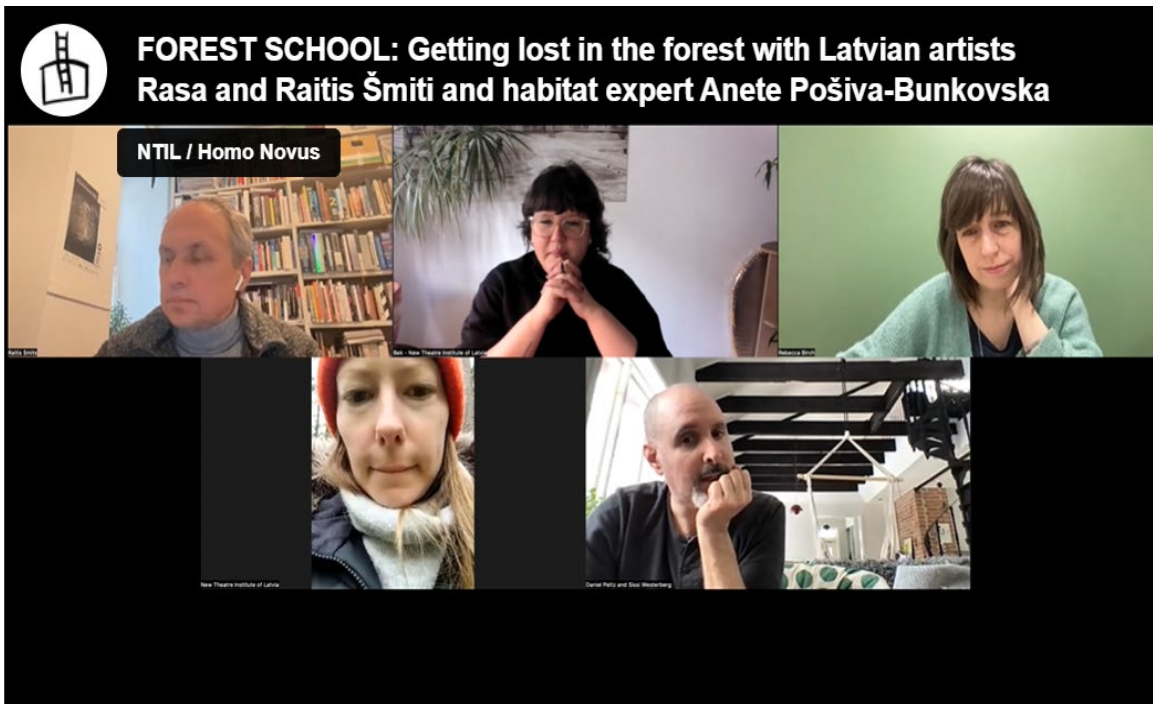


Photo: Screenshot from 6th "Forest school" recording

One of the most notable events of the NTIL is the annual theatre festival "Homo Novus". Each time, the festival is dedicated to some socio-politically relevant topic, through which performances, lectures and discussions are held. In 2020, within the framework of the festival, local director Krista Burāne's play "since then the trees don't speak anymore" won recognition. The show focused on the problem of cutting down trees in Riga, which is a problem also in other cities of the world. As part of it, a route was created, during which the viewer is asked to think about the problems of the modern environment, nature, and the impact on our own lives.

In general, it can be observed that the NTIL is one of the rare cultural organizations in Latvia, whose activities are particularly concerned about climate change and the idea of environmental sustainability is important. This organization, along with the interest and desire of the involved employees themselves to learn long-term environmental practices, successfully transfers this knowledge to society through art and culture processes, educating and speaking more broadly about climate change issues.



Photo: New Theatre Institute of Latvia, performance "since then the trees don't talk anymore"

To sum up, the three selected case study organizations in the cultural and artistic life of Latvia highlight important socio-political problem situations that allow the society to become more knowledgeable, more involved and more cooperative in the relevant activities. It is observed that in all three cases, the persons involved have a sense of mission, which works as a driver to inform and prevent the public from remaining indifferent. In these cases, it can be observed that it is possible to activate the society through artistic and cultural activities, promoting active and inclusive citizenship in Latvia.

Sarma Freiberga (Nāc līdzās dibinātāja, vadītāja)

LCCA - Ieva Astahovska (LCCA Pētniece un kuratore), Elza Medne (LCCA Projektu vadītāja)

LJTI - Sandra Lapkovska (Latvijas Jaunā teātra institūta producente / projektu vadītāja)

For more info, contact ilona@culturelab.com