

RIBOCA LAB: contemporary art learning kit of the film “and suddenly it all blossoms”

The Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art (RIBOCA) offers study materials RIBOCA LAB for students, based on contemporary art practices and the film “and suddenly it all blossoms”.

In May 2020, the RIBOCA2 exhibition should have opened its doors to visitors, but as a result of the fast spread of COVID-19 in March 2020, preparation work was stopped literally a few weeks before the opening. RIBOCA2’s Chief Curator Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel decided to “freeze” the unfinished biennial and produce a full-length film. For the RIBOCA2 exhibition, Lamarche-Vadel had chosen the name “**and suddenly it all blossoms**”, and it was picked to generate alternative perspectives on humanity’s obsession with growth, expansion and consumption.

How do we form deliberate, inclusive relationships with our endangered world? Forty-six artists from around the world met in Andrejsala, Riga, to bring Lamarche-Vadel’s vision to life and present their view on how to solve this problem. The exhibition was both threatened and created by the pandemic. When the exhibition could be opened to the public, in August, a film was put together in just three weeks. Lamarche-Vadel invited internationally-recognised director Dāvis Sīmanis to join as Co-Director, and the team included Andrejs Rudzāts, the film’s Head Operator. The soundtrack was created by singer-songwriter LAFAWNDAH, whose voice leads the viewer in the story of the film.

The film with subtitles in Latvian, Russian, English and French is available to watch here:

https://bit.ly/RIBOCALAB_FILM

Password: blossoming2

How to use RIBOCA LAB learning kit?

The learning kit of the film “and suddenly it all blossoms” consists of materials on four current topics: ENVIRONMENT, INCLUSION, FUTURES, RELATIONS. Each kit includes:

- Student worksheet with fragments of the film;
- Methodical plan for teachers;

Target audience: 9th–12th grades

Inter-subject links: history, biology, social science, design and technology, visual art

Languages: Latvian, Russian, English

Lesson length: 40–60 min

What is contemporary art? Although there is no one-size-fits-all answer to this question, contemporary art is essentially an art that is being created today. Using art forms such as painting, sculpture, photography, installation, performance, video and digital media, contemporary artists often make references to issues that are relevant and important to society

and that shape the diverse, global and ever-changing world. Artists explore personal and cultural identities, evaluate and possibly even criticize social structures and institutions, and sometimes try to challenge the boundaries of art and what contemporary art is. In the creative process, artists often touch upon complex issues, but curiosity, open-mindedness and an invitation to conversation are often successful tools in creating an understanding of contemporary art.

In order to view and understand contemporary art, prior knowledge is not required; the desire to observe, ask questions and use your personal experience is enough. RIBOCA LAB materials offer ways to get acquainted with contemporary art through various tasks, sometimes using the artists' own practices. In conversations about contemporary art and during tasks we invite you to assess the students' desire to form associations, participate in discussions, make observations and develop a personal connection with the practices of contemporary art and their current topics: INCLUSION, FUTURES, ENVIRONMENT, RELATIONS.

INCLUSION – the kit is based on the work by Oliver Beer, “Simple Rights / Unattained Goals”, which calls for reflection on topics such as ethics, society, understanding and equality. The kit can be used to further study social sciences, English, philosophy or literature.

FUTURES – the kit is based on the work by Tomás Saraceno, “Arachnomancy”, on topics such as space, ecosystems, and spiders. The kit can be used to study biology, English or Russian.

ENVIRONMENT – the kit is dedicated to the territory of Andrejsala, where the film “and suddenly it all blossoms” was shot and talks about topics such as history, causality and existence. The kit can be used to learn history, philosophy or English.

RELATIONS – the kit is based on the work by Paweł Althamer, “Draftsmen’s Congress”, through the method used by the artist it invites to rethink the link between concepts of visual art and aesthetics, as well as to try out the collaborative artist's practice of creating works of art together with others. The kit can be used to study design and technology, visual art or philosophy.

What is RIBOCA?

RIBOCA, or the Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art, is a large-scale art event named after the location in which it takes place. The biennial gathers both local and international participants and visitors. The first RIBOCA took place in 2018, and the word biennial means that it happens every other year. Contemporary art is the art of today, and is created by artists living today, combining different art forms in their experiments. The exhibition takes place in specifically selected locations, including unusual places for art exhibitions such as the Andrejsala port territory, parks, abandoned buildings and others.

RIBOCA association was founded in 2016 with the aim of gathering artists from around the world in Riga. Artists come to Riga to gain inspiration for their works and share ideas before the exhibition opens, and create new works which are then displayed. RIBOCA unites artists, thinkers, writers and researchers from different fields, providing a platform for knowledge and exchange of ideas.

At its core, RIBOCA aims to expand people's thinking and create new ways of looking at the world. In the year between biennials, while the new exhibition is prepared, the association is active in other fields, organising various cultural and educational events, and releasing publications.

The concept for each exhibition is created by a different person – the chief curator – who invites artists and other practitioners from Latvia and the world to show their new or existing works. Normally 50 to 100 participants take part in RIBOCA's exhibition. RIBOCA's events are intended for anyone, from children to seniors. RIBOCA unites people with different viewpoints, perspectives and experiences. The first exhibition in 2018 was visited by around 55,000 people, and Riga was visited by people from around the world.

Watch a short **animation video**: “**What Is RIBOCA?**”

<https://www.rigabiennial.com/lv/about/what-is-riboca>

Share the work done by sending photos or videos to education@rigabiennial.com

RIBOCA LAB design: Krišs Salmanis.

The learning kit has been developed with the support of the Ministry of Culture or Republic of Latvia and the programme “The Latvian School Bag”.