

**BLACKMARKET FOR USEFUL KNOWLEDGE AND  
NON KNOWLEDGE  
Riga, 5th of April 2014, Sapņu Fabrikā**

**ABSENCE // ACCELERATION // ANIMALS // BURIALS // COMMODITIES  
// CORPSE // CREATURES// CYBORG // DRUGS // ETERNITY // ETHICS  
// FORENSICS // HEALTH // INTELLIGENCE // LAW// MACHINES //  
METAL // METAMORPHOSIS // METAPHORS // MIND/BODY // MUSIC  
//PHILOSOPHY // PROSTHETICS // REGENERATION // RETELLING //  
ROBOT // SENSES // SPORTS// THE OTHER SIDE // TRANSITION  
// VITAL ORGANS - - -PRACTICAL EXERCISE**

**LIVE COMMENTARY**

**Juris Šteinbergs** received a PhD in Molecular Biology from the University of Latvia and has worked as a researcher at the Latvian Biomedical Research and Study Centre. Today he is the CEO at SIA GenEra, a private genetic testing laboratory in Riga. For over 20 years Juris has also worked as a DJ for several radio stations and is currently one of the moderators of Bez **Tabu** – a popular evening program on TV3 Latvia.

-----**ABSENCE**

**Katrīna Puriņa** is a practicing doula, who assists women before, during and after birth. She also works as a birth educator and strongly supports natural and non-medicated approaches to child rearing. Katrīna is currently studying medicine at the Riga Stradiņš University and believes it is necessary to be fully acquainted with medical approaches to child delivery in order to implement changes in the current system.

**Birthing death: the unseen deceased**

**Pēteris Krilovs** is a professor for Theatre & Film Direction at the Latvian Academy of Culture and the head of the Audiovisual Art BA and MA programs. He is one of the most appreciated professors in acting and has taught the majority of middle and younger generation actors in Latvian theatres. In the 1970s and 1980s Pēteris directed several well received feature films and later turned to documentaries. His most well-known and awarded documentaries are Between Heaven and Earth – Augšdaugava (1994) and Klucis – The Deconstruction of an Artist (2008).

**Secrecy and misinformation: KGB policies regarding those executed for opposing the Soviet regime**

-----**ACCELERATION**

**Ilmārs Bite** is a certified architect, and graduated from Riga Polytechnic Institute. He has worked in several companies specializing in project design and is currently working at the architecture company SIA Nams. Outside work Ilmārs is a passionate fan of science fiction, both in literature and film, and has near-encyclopedic knowledge of the subject. He is an active member of the Latvian Society of Fiction and Fantasy.

**Science ahead of fantasy: medical realities outrun some of our wildest dreams**

**Krists Pudzēns** is a new media artist, who for the past ten years has explored the field of interactive and electronic art. His study is directed towards sculpture and the conceptual language of three-dimensional forms, mixing electronics, programming and a set of artistic and industrial techniques.

**Waiting in line in multiprocessor systems: how new technologies affect the bodily perception of time and space**

**Regīna Kleina** is a professor in the Department of Pathology at the Riga Stradiņš University and also a chief pathologist at the Riga Eastern Clinical University Hospital. Her research interests include the morphology of oncology and chronic gastric pathology in children, and she has authored 145 scientific articles. Regīna is also head of the Certification Commission of the Latvian Association of Pathologists.

**Cell proliferation during different stages of cancer: the point of view of a pathologist**

-----**ANIMALS**

- **BUGS**

**Dmitrijs Telnovs** holds a PhD in Entomology and has previously worked at a number of the world's most reputable institutions for natural history including the Natural History Museums in London, Berlin and Paris. He specializes mainly in Anthicidae – the tiny Ant-like Flower Beetles and focuses on issues related to their taxonomy, biogeography and evolution. Dmitrijs has led a number of expeditions to the remote and barely explored Moluccan Islands and New Guinea.

**Bug rivalry or teamwork: the dead body as a feast**

- **PARASITES**

Ivars Drulle's artistic work embraces controversial topics from the recent past and themes that are rarely discussed in public. Most of his projects are either large scale and site-specific or tiny miniatures and maquettes. He received his MFA from the University of Montana, USA in 2003 and since then has been the head of the Department of Form and Design at the Riga School of Arts and Design.

**What parasitic forces can enhance us?**

- **RODENTS**

**Ilga Reizniece** is a folk musician, fiddler, music teacher, and founder of the post-folk band Ilgi. She has been teaching folklore since 1983 at schools and kindergartens. Ilga has run various summer camp courses, seminars and classes for children and adults in Latvia and abroad and now teaches lullabies to expectant mothers.

**The mouse as a messenger between life and death in Latvian funeral culture**

-----**BURIALS**

**Armands Purniņš** is a gravedigger and has been one for over 20 years. He entered this line of work as a teenager, helping his father who was also a gravedigger, and since then has worked in Ulbrokas, Jaunciema and Ivana cemeteries. He now works in both Bolderājas and Pleskodāles cemeteries and knows all too well the spectrum of emotions of those who are mourning the dead.

**A gravedigger's conversations with the living**

**Dainis Bērziņš** is an architect and co-owner of the architectural bureau SIA Arhitektu birojs Vecumnieks & Bērziņi, which specializes in designing and restoring memorial buildings, monuments, cemeteries and more. He graduated from and later taught Architectural Design in the Faculty of Architecture at Riga Technical University for over 10 years. Dainis believes that giving each soldier a final resting place demonstrates the moral standing

of a society.

### **Finding place and giving space: building memorials for fallen soldiers**

**Ilze Verpakovska** is the director of the Riga Cremation Centre, the only crematory in Latvia, and has worked there for over 10 years. She studied to become a social worker and acquired her degree in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Latvia. Ilze has also been involved in politics and has worked in various municipal institutions, such as the Riga City Council.

### **Historical, religious, legal and economic reasons why one chooses to cremate their loved one**

**Māra Pilmane** is a morphologist and the director of the Institute of Anatomy and Anthropology at Riga Stradiņš University. She works as a professor and has extensive knowledge in donation laws. An event called Service of Gratitude was organized by Māra as a means to pay respect to the deceased who have dedicated their bodies to science. It is her belief that donating one's body to scientific research is the highest form of charity and cannot be overestimated.

### **Service of Gratitude: the past and present of the donated cadaver in Latvia**

## -----COMMODITIES

**Kārlis Vītols aka Kloijhi** is a recognized provocateur among the young generation of Latvian artists. His art is defined by its fascination with formal and content-related effects (i.e., sex, death, religion), often employed in large-scale paintings. He has been awarded many times for his achievements in animation, uses the pseudonym Kloijhi and signs his works with the inscription KVK.

### **Improving fragments: projections and deceptions**

**Solvita Olsena** is an assistant professor of Law at the University of Latvia and director of the SIA Medical Law Institute. She became a medical doctor in 1996 and obtained a Law degree in 2010. Solvita is the leading health lawyer in Latvia with more than 13 years' experience in both academia and in legal practice. Her academic interests include patients' rights, protection of the human body, and the right for health in global and local perspectives.

### **The commercialization of the human body**

## -----CORPSE

**Ilze Jansone** is a theologian, a fiction writer and holds a position as a senior researcher in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Latvia. Her ongoing research interests are Theology of Death and Psychology of Religion. She believes that in the presence of the dead body a human being is forced to ask essential questions about life and its meaning.

### **The corpse as a portal: linking the death of a human and the death of God**

**Lauren Monsein Rhodes** is a guest docent in the Cultural and Social Anthropology program at the University of Latvia. She has worked at a variety of museums and arts institutions including The Studio Museum of Harlem (New York, NY), The Kitchen (New York, NY) and Weeksville Heritage Center (Brooklyn, NY). As an applied anthropologist, Lauren's research interests include museum/art institution – community relationships, the discourse of difference, and human-centered design.

### **Death and the diorama: dead bodies on display**

**Solvita Olsena** is an assistant professor of Law at the University of Latvia and director of the SIA Medical Law Institute. She became a medical doctor in 1996 and obtained a Law degree in 2010. Solvita is the leading health lawyer in Latvia with more than 13 years' experience in both academia and in legal practice. Her academic interests include patients' rights, protection of the human body, and the right for health in global and local perspectives.

### **On the protection of the deceased body**

**Valdis Zatlers** is the former President of Latvia. Previously a well-known orthopedist and knee-joint surgeon, he is highly experienced in the transplantation of bone tissue. Valdis was also the long-term head of the Hospital of Traumatology and Orthopedics and the president of the Latvian Association of Knee Joint Surgery, Arthroscopy and Sports Orthopedics. At present he is a member of the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, elected from the Reform Party, which he founded in 2011.

### **The right of the body to disappear and the right to be remembered**

**Zanda Bērziņa-Radzīņa** is volunteering as the administrator of the website Nekropole.lv – the online version of Wikipedia for the dead. She is a journalist and works as an editor for the Europe bureau of Free Liberty Radio USA. Zanda is also working in the largest animal shelter of Latvia – Ulubele. She believes that death is most significant as it symbolizes the circle of life, but also finds it very important to keep the memory of the deceased alive.

### **How to commemorate those who have gone: archiving the Latvian dead**

## -----CREATURES

**Kristians Brekte** is one of the most expressive and controversially perceived visual artists in Latvia. He often plays with themes of death, religion and sexuality. He has had eight solo exhibitions and has participated in various group shows in Europe and the USA. He is also a set designer and a lecturer at the Scenography Department of the Art Academy of Latvia.

### ***The Chimera: what type of a creature will we become?***

**Toms Treibergs** is a reporter on the Culture News Program at LTV1 and a theatre and film critic. In 2012 he obtained his bachelor's degree in Theology at the University of Latvia and also published his first collection of poems Light Conditions. His hobbies include performing sketches at the independent theatre company Nerten and watching TV series.

### ***Different stages of the decomposed, undead and transformed body in TV***

## -----CYBORG

**Karin Harrasser** has been studying cultural history and the history of prosthetics technology over the last years. She thinks that although we are already living in close cooperation with machines of all sorts, we still have only a limited repertoire of images, stories, and concepts to conceive of our living (and dying) together with them. Classical questions Karin is interested in concern definitions of a good life, the right to imperfection, and the justice of resources.

### ***Deflective agency: parahuman imaginaries of the technobody***

**Sergejs Timonins** is the managing director at the digital agency SIA Reactiv. His main interest is cinema and film-making, both as an art form and entertainment business. His dream is to combine his two passions: digital media and film, and in the meantime he is the author of the film blog Kinokults.lv.

### ***The league of cyborgs in movies***

## -----DRUGS

**Edgars Mednis** is a pediatrician and a homeopath. He holds a degree from the Latvian Academy of Medicine and is a member of the international Liga Medicorum Homeopathica Internationalis. Edgars believes the widespread overuse of antibiotics is to blame for the weakening of our immune systems, and is also one of the rare medics who spends over 1.5 hours with each of his patients.

### ***Antibiotics and vaccines: less is more***

**Ilze Aizsilniece** holds degrees in Health Science and Health Systems Management from the University of London, School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She is a family doctor and an expert working for international organisations, e.g., the World Health Organization. She has supported and taken an active part in several NGOs and is interested in studying the impact of ecology on people's health as well as the role of traditional and modern healthcare in the 21st century. Ilze is also one of the initiators of Big Clean-Up (Lielā talka) in Latvia.

***More drugs, more harm?***

**Vadims Bičiks** is a pharmacist who specializes in doping-related issues. He works for the Anti-Doping Department at the Sports Medicine State Agency and also at a pharmacy. He acquired a degree in Pharmacy at the Riga Stradiņš University and a coincidence led him to his current interest - sports medicine. Vadims actively participates in the education of the sports' community by lecturing pupils, coaches and representatives from sport federations on doping.

***Doping: from side-effects to long-term defects***

## -----ETERNITY

**Arets Paeglis** has kick-started the transhumanist movement in Latvia and is the founder and leader of the Latvian Transhumanist Association. He studied Theoretical Physics at Imperial College London, and was initially taken down the transhumanism path by the science fiction novels of Clarke, Gibson and Winge. Arets believes that human existence can be transformed and enhanced via genetic modification and technology until even whole brain simulation and Artificial Intelligence become physically possible.

***How we will live forever: some examples of life extension technologies***

**Klāvs Sedlenieks** is one of the founders of the Latvian Society of Anthropologists and a lecturer in social anthropology at the Riga Stradiņš University. Vernacular everyday images of what happens when people die and what the afterlife looks like (if it is believed to exist) are among Klavs' ongoing research interests. He is skeptical about transhumanism and believes the dream of immortality shows ignorance about long-term biological processes – he believes that death is necessary because only if we die as individuals can we survive collectively.

***Afterlife: the Latvian opinion***

## -----ETHICS

**Ronalds Rožkalns** is a lawyer and head of the Medical Law Office, Attorneys-at-Law. Having acquired both a medical degree and lawyer's diploma, he has extensive experience in the sphere of patients' rights within NGO and governmental sectors. Ronalds has also worked as a lecturer in various universities in Latvia and is the author of a number of publications regarding questions of medical law on both local and international levels.

***Who decides? When capabilities to make medical decisions are in question***

**Signe Mežinska** is a lecturer in Bioethics at the University of Latvia and a faculty member for the Advanced Certificate Program E-Education in Research Ethics, Central & Eastern Europe. Her scientific interests include biomedical research ethics, the ethics of new biotechnologies, the rational use of medicines and the ethics of patient-physician relationships.

***Enhancement and treatment – where should we draw the line?***

## -----FORENSICS

**Areta Sabule** is head of the Laboratory of Forensic Medicine, Genetics and Serology in the Department of Examination and Research at the Latvia State Centre for Forensic Medicine Examination. She has over 30 years

experience in her field and is the author of several scientific publications.

***The dead do tell tales: identifying unknown bodies***

**Dmitrijs Telnovs** holds a PhD in Entomology and has previously worked at a number of the world's most reputable institutions for natural history including the Natural History Museums in London, Berlin and Paris. He specializes mainly in Anthicidae – the tiny Ant-like Flower Beetles and focuses on issues related to their taxonomy, biogeography and evolution. Dmitrijs has led a number of expeditions to the remote and barely explored Moluccan Islands and New Guinea.

***The terrifying uninvited or helpful trackers? Invertebrates in therapy and criminology***

**Ojārs Teteris** is the current associate professor and the chair of Pathology at Riga Stradiņš University, as well as the head of the Scientific Methodological Council at the State Centre for Forensic Medical Examination. He also is the governor of the Eurasian Academy of Forensic Medicine and Sciences and a member of the World Medical Tennis Society since 1995.

**On physical, morphological and stomatological investigations of the corpse**

## \_\_\_\_\_HEALTH

**Ilze Aizsilniece** holds degrees in Health Science and Health Systems Management from the University of London, School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She is a family doctor and an expert working for international organisations, e.g., the World Health Organization. She has supported and taken an active part in several NGOs and is interested in studying the impact of ecology on people's health as well as the role of traditional and modern healthcare in the 21st century. Ilze is also one of the initiators of Big Clean-Up (Liela talka) in Latvia.

***Seeing illness as a friend or enemy***

**Edgars Mednis** is a pediatrician and a homeopath. He holds a degree from the Latvian Academy of Medicine and is a member of the international Liga Medicorum Homeopathica Internationalis. Edgars believes the widespread overuse of antibiotics is to blame for the weakening of our immune systems, and is also one of the rare medics who spends over 1.5 hours with each of his patients.

***In kindergartens: What's behind that runny nose? An investigation***

## \_\_\_\_\_INTELLIGENCE

**Agris Ņikitenko** is a researcher at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology at Riga Technical University. Within his research he focuses on robotics, autonomous systems and Artificial Intelligence. Currently he is working on several projects dedicated to autonomous robotic systems and multi-robot systems and is responsible for study affairs in his faculty.

***Why machines are stupid and always will be***

**Jānis Grundspenķis** is a professor of Systems Theory at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology at Riga Technical University. His most important scientific achievement is the development of a knowledge-based approach to structural modelling for complex technical systems. He is currently one of the leading Latvian researchers in the field of Artificial Intelligence, in particular in intelligent agents and multi-agent systems.

***Intelligence vs Artificial Intelligence: what's the difference?***

## \_\_\_\_\_LAW

**Ronalds Rožkalns** is a lawyer and head of the Medical Law Office, Attorneys-at-Law. Having acquired both a medical degree and lawyer's diploma, he has extensive experience in the sphere of patients' rights within NGO and governmental sectors. Ronalds has also worked as a lecturer in various universities in Latvia and is the author of a number of publications regarding questions of medical law on both local and international levels.

***Is it legal? New medical technologies and the law***

## -----MACHINES

**Agris Nikitenko** is a researcher at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology at Riga Technical University. Within his research he focuses on robotics, autonomous systems and Artificial Intelligence. Currently he is working on several projects dedicated to autonomous robotic systems and multi-robot systems and is responsible for study affairs in his faculty.

***Interfaces: brief history of early encounters between humans and machines***

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***Research directions in Artificial Intelligence: steps towards true intelligence in machines***

## -----METAL

**Jānis Joņevs** was born in 1980 in Jelgava, moved to Riga to study at the Latvian Academy of Culture, received a Master's degree, did several literary translations and later got stuck in advertising. In 2013 he made his debut in literature with his novel Jelgava 94 that deals with the subculture of heavy metal in the 1990s.

***Death as a way to survive: experiencing Heavy Metal***

**Pēteris Studers** is a pioneer in the joint-replacement medical field in Latvia. He is the head of the Scientific Research Laboratory of Traumatology and Orthopedics at Riga Stradiņš University and works at the Hospital of Traumatology and Orthopedics, which he co-founded in 2011.

***The metallic body: the interface of prosthesis and human flesh***

## -----METAMORPHOSIS

**Ilze Verpakovska** is the director of the Riga Cremation Centre, the only crematory in Latvia, and has worked there for over 10 years. She studied to become a social worker and acquired her degree in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Latvia. Ilze has also been involved in politics and has worked in various municipal institutions, such as the Riga City Council.

***The way of ashes: from bodies to jewels***

**Māra Ķimele** is one of the most successful Latvian theatre directors and an educator of aspiring directors and actors. Her technique merges psychological and physical theatre, the latter of which is inspired by structures and styles of traditional rites, songs and dances (examples are such works as Medea, The Book of Ruth, Othello). When working with actors Māra emphasizes their individuality and unique characteristics. She demands them to simultaneously use and "lose" these traits to fully identify with the role.

***Searching for the perfect body: the psycho-physical transformations before the eyes of a director***

**Ieva Raubiško** is assistant professor in Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Latvia. She is interested in the anthropology of morality, the anthropology of state, violence and power, as well as different

conceptualisations of (and within) neoliberalism and post-Soviet space.

***The socially accepted body: how we are taught to be 'normal'***

## \_\_\_\_\_METAPHORS

**Didier Calin** is a specialist in Indo-European linguistics, religion/mythology and ancient poetics. He taught ancient languages at the University of Latvia in the 1990s and has since been working as a translator. He has been publishing articles about Indo-European poetics for the last eight years on Academia.edu and in the upcoming journal of Indo-European linguistics *Wékwos*; two books are in the process of being published.

***The world as a body in Indo-European religion***

**Ilze Mileiko** holds a Masters degree in Sociology and is currently working on her PhD thesis. She teaches the courses Sexuality and Gender in Anthropology and the Anthropological Perspective on Fertility at the University of Latvia. Ilze's main research interests include biotechnologies, sexuality, fertility and infertility, gender, art and totalitarian regimes.

*Where language meets technology: the creation of the future child through metaphors*

**Signe Mežinska** is a lecturer in Bioethics at the University of Latvia and a faculty member for the Advanced Certificate Program E-Education in Research Ethics, Central & Eastern Europe. Her scientific interests include biomedical research ethics, the ethics of new biotechnologies, the rational use of medicines and the ethics of patient-physician relationships.

***Metaphors of bodies in transition: the example of assisted reproduction***

## \_\_\_\_\_MIND/BODY

**Arnis Rītups** holds a PhD in Philosophy and specializes in Aristotle and his Greek commentators. He is a lecturer at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga and the Art Academy of Latvia. Arnis also is a long-time regular contributor and, since 2010, publisher of the cultural magazine *Rigas Laiks*.

***Mind is not the body***

**Ilze Dzenovska** holds a Masters degree in Peace and Justice from the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego, as well as degrees in Political Science and Law. She is also an internationally certified mediator, yoga instructor and co-founder of *Saules joga* (Sun Yoga). For ten years Ilze has done restorative justice and peace-building work locally and internationally. She is interested in fostering a culture of peace on individual and social levels by means of nonviolent conflict resolution and practices of *mettā* and mindfulness.

***Craving and tension: enhancing awareness of the mind/body connection***

## \_\_\_\_\_MUSIC

### - HEAVY METAL

**Edmunds Vizla** is the primary songwriter and lyricist of *Frailty*, one of the few successful metal bands to have emerged from the post-Soviet Baltic States. Formed in 2003, the band fought its way up the ranks of the Latvian metal underground scene, eventually becoming one of its most recognizable musical entities. Edmunds also holds a masters degree in Theology.

***The majesty of death***

### - SINGING



**Mārtiņš Boiko** is a professor of Ethnomusicology and Anthropology of Music at the Latvian Academy of Music and Riga Stradiņš University. His scientific publications cover: Baltic traditional music, vocal polyphony, the oral tradition of the Catholic psalmody, recitation, Latvian Old Believers music, the sound landscape and sound environment, bio-communication and acoustic music, identity and music, silence and stillness, music and death.

***What to sing when the dead appear in your dreams: a practical musical consultation***

## -----PHILOSOPHY

**Ainārs Kamoliņš** is a philosopher who is interested in questions raised by early modern philosophers and the correlation between philosophical theories and biology. Most recently he has published *Diaries: Spinoza's Poetics* – a fictional account of Spinoza's philosophy understood as the theory of art.

***The analogies between humans and plants: a case study***

**Vents Sīlis** is a philosopher, sociologist, and bioethicist, who works as assistant professor at Riga Stradiņš University and serves as Executive Secretary of the Central Medical Ethics Committee of Latvia. He is the author of a number of peer-reviewed publications on bioethics and also enjoys writing pieces and participating in public discussions on topical issues. Vents believes that social evolution can only be achieved through the evolution of the individual.

***Freedom and death***

## -----PROSTHETICS

**Pēteris Studers** is a pioneer in the joint-replacement medical field in Latvia. He is the head of the scientific research laboratory of traumatology and orthopedics at Riga Stradiņš University and works at the Hospital of Traumatology and Orthopedics, which he co-founded in 2011.

***The metallic body: the interface of prosthesis and human flesh***

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***Deflective agency: parahuman imaginaries of the technobody***

## -----REGENERATION

**Aris Lācis** is a cardiac surgeon and has been head of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery Clinic at the Riga Children's University Hospital since 1994. Aris acquired his degrees as an MD and PhD at the Riga Medical Institute. He is also President of both the Latvian Association for Pediatric Cardiologists and the Latvian Society for Cardiovascular Surgery. In May 2009 Aris was the first surgeon to perform a successful stem cell treatment for idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy in a terminally ill three months old patient.

The last resort: the story of the first bone marrow stem cell *transplantation in a terminally ill child*

**Inese Čakstiņa** is a bio-technologist and researcher at the Cell Transplantation Centre at Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital as well as the Faculty of Biology at the University of Latvia. She is involved in clinical trials

for cell therapies and the development of new procedures for healing skin wounds. Her main scientific interests are related to the molecular processes, which take place at the cellular level after myocardial infarction, and improvement of the next generation of medical techniques.

***How to help the body regenerate itself***

## \_\_\_\_\_RETELLING

**Iliana Veinberga** is an art historian and curator. She is currently a collection curator at the Riga Porcelain Museum and apart from her academic and curatorial career she engages in various cross-disciplinary collaborations, especially those focusing on issues of history writing, memory, and entropy.

***Telling the story "In the Penal Colony" by F.K.***

**Pēteris Krilovs** is a professor for Theatre & Film Direction at the Latvian Academy of Culture and the head of the Audiovisual Art BA and MA programs. He is one of the most appreciated professors in acting and has taught the majority of middle and younger generation actors in Latvian theatres. In the 1970s and 1980s Pēteris directed several well received feature films and later turned to documentaries. His most well-known and awarded documentaries are *Between Heaven and Earth – Augšdaugava* (1994) and *Klucis – The Deconstruction of an Artist* (2008).

***Short stories of death: a comparison of Tolstoy, Faulkner, Bunin***

## \_\_\_\_\_ROBOT

**Guntis Arnicāns** is a professor for the Faculty of Computing at the University of Latvia and also a director of the BA program Computer Science. Besides working at the university, Guntis has also participated in various commercial IT projects as a developer and project manager. Guntis' main research interests include software engineering and testing and Artificial Intelligence, with a focus on developing a concept map and ontology for software testing domains.

***The unpredictable and complex: what one should consider before building an intelligent robot***

## \_\_\_\_\_SENSES

**Artūrs Riņķis** is a designer and artist, whose work primarily falls under the category of kinetic art. He is the creator of the project/art-garden *In the Middle of Nowhere*, where visitors have the opportunity to experience the world of his kinetic art. Artūrs is also a steam-punk enthusiast and over the last few years has used elements of this style in various art projects. The artist has synesthetic abilities and he uses his synesthesia-inspired visions in his creative expression.

***Expressions of synesthesia: 'In the Middle of Nowhere'***

**Uģis Rotbergs** holds a degree in Forestry from the Latvian Agricultural University and an executive MBA from Riga Business School. He joined the World Wide Fund for Nature in 1991 as a project leader and over the years became its CEO. He has been awarded the Royal Dutch Order of the Golden Ark for his effort in promoting sustainable forestry. He currently works at the Institute of Environmental Solutions and has also been elected to Riga City Council.

***Listening to the Earth's story: expanding our sensory perceptions***

## - NUMBNESS

**Vents Sīlis** is a philosopher, sociologist, and bioethicist, who works as assistant professor at Riga Stradiņš University and serves as Executive Secretary of the Central Medical Ethics Committee of Latvia. He is the author of a number of peer-reviewed publications on bioethics and also enjoys writing pieces and participating in public discussions on topical issues. Vents believes that social evolution can only be achieved through the evolution of the individual.

***Banality of death***

## -----SPORTS

**Laila Pakalniņa** acquired her degree at the Department of Film Direction of the Moscow Film Institute (VGIK). She has directed no less than 23 documentaries, 5 shorts, 4 fiction features - 32 films in total. She has 2 children, 1 husband, 1 dog, 1 bicycle, and many ideas for new films. Laila's films have been screened in the official programmes of international film festivals such as Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Locarno and Rome and have received several awards.

***What I film about when I film about running***

**Raimonds Bergmanis**, formerly a weightlifter and strongman, is now the vice president of the Latvian Olympic Committee and president of the Latvia Olympic Club. He is also a specialist at the Recruitment and Youth Guard Centre. Raimonds acquired a degree in Chemical Engineering from Riga Technical University and graduated from the Latvian Academy of Sports Education as a coach in weightlifting. He has been a presenter on various TV shows.

***Where does it go from here? The professionally trained body after the last game***

## -----THE OTHER SIDE

**Ivars Neiders** teaches Bioethics and Research Ethics at Riga Stradiņš University. He focuses on problems concerning patient-informing practices and the history of their development. In addition he deals with themes related to human enhancement and issues raised by the advances in genetic technology and neuroscience.

***Who will we be after we will have died?***

**Klāvs Sedlenieks** is one of the founders of the Latvian Society of Anthropologists and a lecturer in social anthropology at the Riga Stradiņš University. Vernacular everyday images of what happens when people die and what the afterlife looks like (if it is believed to exist) are among Klavs' ongoing research interests. He is skeptical about transhumanism and believes the dream of immortality shows ignorance about long-term biological processes – he believes that death is necessary because only if we die as individuals can we survive collectively.

***What is to be done with a person after their bodily death?***

## -----TRANSITION

**Arets Paeglīs** has kick-started the transhumanist movement in Latvia and is the founder and leader of the Latvian Transhumanist Association. He studied Theoretical Physics at Imperial College London, and was initially taken down the transhumanism path by the science fiction novels of Clarke, Gibson and Winge. Arets believes that human existence can be transformed and enhanced via genetic modification and technology until even whole brain simulation and Artificial Intelligence become physically possible.

***Mind uploading or, in other words, the era of humans will soon be over***

**Ilmārs Bite** is a certified architect, and graduated from Riga Polytechnic Institute. He has worked in several companies specializing in project design and is currently working at the architecture company SIA Nams. Outside work Ilmārs is a passionate fan of science fiction, both in literature and film, and has near-encyclopedic

knowledge of the subject. He is an active member of the Latvian Society of Fiction and Fantasy.

***Can we move to outer space? Bodily transformations suggested in science fiction***

**Mārtiņš Boiko** is a professor of Ethnomusicology and Anthropology of Music at the Latvian Academy of Music and Riga Stradiņš University. His scientific publications cover: Baltic traditional music, vocal polyphony, the oral tradition of the Catholic psalmody, recitation, Latvian Old Believers music, the sound landscape and sound environment, bio-communication and acoustic music, identity and music, silence and stillness, music and death.

***One more cup of coffee for the road - how to help the dead on their journey***

## -----VITAL ORGANS

**Aivita Putniņa** holds a PhD degree in Anthropology from the University of Cambridge. She is the director of the Centre for Bioethics and Biosafety at the University of Latvia and manages study programs in Cultural and Social Anthropology. Aivita has worked and published on issues related to gender, family, body, childbirth, medical biotechnologies and bioethics. She has also authored World Health Organisation reports on reproductive health and also on health and violence in Latvia.

***Exchanging body parts: a heart to heart***

**Rafails Rozentāls** has been head of the Latvian Centre of Transplantation for over 40 years. He is both a transplant surgeon and nephrologist and runs the Laboratory of Transplantation at Riga Stradiņš University. He supervises scientific research at the Latvian Academy of Science.

***The life of organs outside our bodies: treatment, transport, trafficking and migration***

### - BRAIN

**Igors Aksiks** has been working for over 30 years as a neurosurgeon and was the director at Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital for 10 years. He specializes in brain and spinal cord tumours, vertebrology and pain and movement neurosurgery. Having come into contact with comatose patients with severe head trauma he has become more and more concerned with death and life criteria.

***When is dead, really dead?***

### - HEART

**Andrejs Ērglis** is head of the Centre of Cardiology at Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital and director of the Research Institute of Cardiology at the University of Latvia. In 1990 Andrejs performed the first angioplasty in Latvia together with Andis Dombrovskis. He later received the Order of the Three Stars for his contribution in the field of cardiology.

***The use of biomaterials and multidisciplinary developments in cardiology***

**Romāns Lācis** is a heart surgeon and has been head of the Centre for Heart Surgery since 1988. He has received the Order of the Three Stars for outstanding work in his field and though a die-hard scientist, Romāns believes that the heart is the seat of our soul.

***The history of heart transplantation (1968-2002): from Stanford and Cape Town to Leningrad and Riga***

### - LIVER

**Jānis Gardovskis** is head of the Stradiņš University Hospital Surgical Clinic as well as Rector of Riga Stradiņš University. Jānis has implemented many new surgical techniques and was the first to conduct a liver transplant in Latvia in 2011. He has been working at the university for over 23 years and has led many international scientific projects.

***A thirty-minute story about an eight-hour liver transplant***

## -----PRACTICAL EXERCISE

**Artūrs Riņķis** is a designer and artist, whose work primarily falls under the category of kinetic art. He is the creator of the project/art-garden *In the Middle of Nowhere*, where visitors have the opportunity to experience the world of his kinetic art. Artūrs is also a steam-punk enthusiast and over the last few years has used elements of this style in various art projects. The artist has synesthetic abilities and he uses his synesthesia-inspired visions in his creative expression.

***Can you see the sound? A 30-minute meditation with a synesthetic artist***

**Ieva Melgalve** published her first experimental short story and stage play collection *The Point of No Losses* in 1999. Since then, she has gravitated towards science fiction and fantasy. Her latest fantasy novel *The Dead Don't Forgive* and the sci-fi play *Inhumanity* were published in Latvian in 2013, and her next book *Arrow, Star and Laee* is in the works. Her hobbies include child-making, robot-crocheting and Tarot-reading.

***Me being a cyborg: a Tarot consultation on personal future transformations***

**Iļga Reizniece** is a folk musician, fiddler, music teacher, and founder of the post-folk band *Iļģi*. She has been teaching folklore since 1983 at schools and kindergartens. Iļga has run various summer camp courses, seminars and classes for children and adults in Latvia and abroad and now teaches lullabies to expectant mothers.

***How to help the soul levitate? A practical exercise in singing funeral songs***

**Jānis Balodis** is a playwright and dramaturge at the *Dirty Deal Teatro* in Riga. Together with theatre director *Valters Sīlis* he has devised several performances on socially and politically urgent questions, e.g., *All My Presidents* (2011), *Mārupīte* (2012) and *The National Development Plan* (2012). His last performance *Testing Transition* (2013) explores the imaginary situation of the financial apocalypse.

***Exercising death: pros and cons***