



#### ARNA Art & Nature, Sweden



# Art & Place Identity - experiences from around the Baltic Sea

The photo on the cover of this publication comes from Iceland. It shows a very modest little concrete building for a farm's hot water well. But the way it is painted it sparks the imagination of the people passing by to give the building another story. To me, this describe the interesting jumps, like mutations, inspiration starts in us. You never know what these mutations in the evolution of thinking will lead to. When I visited Iceland 2008, I couldn't imagine that a visit up in the this very end of northwest of Europe, would inspire me to propose a start up of an artist in residence in my home area in Sweden. This very mutation of ideas led to ARNA, meaning art & nature. It also led to the naming of our home area, now called Fågelriket/The Avian Kingdom. Since 2011 ARNA i Fågelriket is a NGO, working to promote a sustainable development in our home area The Avian Kingdom through with art projects as working method. Our work has arisen a great interest, not the least among artists around the world. 2016 ARNA got 671 applications to 11 spots for working stays in 4 projects.

Meetings, as the one I had the opportunity to get on Iceland, where you meet creative people in a way that make yourself a bit surprised, that is the very foundation for new ideas. During the project 'Art & Place Identity' ARNA has with support from the Swedish Institute got the opportunity to develop a partnership together with great organizations around The Baltic Sea. Through a series of meetings we have shared knowledge about work for a sustainable development out in rural areas within the field of culture. All three partners have strong connections to a small town and its surroundings but are also respected internationally within their different fields of art. SERDE is situated in Aizpute in Latvia, work with a heritage orientation and runs an artist in residency. MAFF, Matsalu

Nature Film Festival, is named by the nearby National Park and is situated in Lihula, Estonia. In the end of the project the head organization ARNA also made a study visit to the tiny village of Krasnolesye in the eastern forests of Kaliningrad.

During the project we have together learned more about the Culture Dimension of Sustainability. The fact that we as partner organizations have differences has been good. The openness between the partner organization has given the foundation that spark that good type of ideas that can mutate into new fields of work. As partners we want to continue cooperate through sharing our different expertize. We have found a common ground. We all support a sustainable development through culture in small places in ways that strengthen identities and attract visitors. It has the potential to inspire many other around the world.

Kerstin Jakobsson ARNA

www.arna.nu

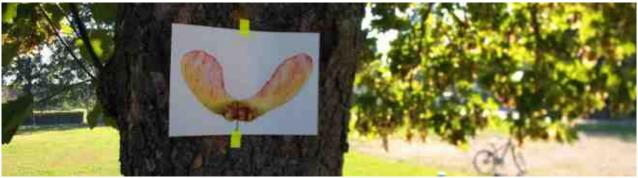












Art by Birgit Petri

# Art in the right place

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything."

The Duke (Act II), As You Like it by W. Shakespeare (1599)

I had the honor of facilitating the "Art, Place & Identity" seminar, hosted by ARNA in Harlösa late may 2016. In the short text below I'll try to get a little deeper into the possible exchange between place (as a space of meaning), ecology and artistic/cultural work.

Let's look at the primary synergy of work in art combined with work on place. During the seminar Johanna McTaggart (of the UNESCO Biosphere programme), gave us an image in her keynote, the wellknown photo of earth from space. Even if we seen it before, in its simplicity, the picture presents a strong sense of earth as a shared space, a common place. The zoomed out perspective gives us holistic empathy of sorts – there are no national borders, no demographic conflict, no parliaments in the picture. Only a green and blue ball that we all, and I mean it in the ultimate sense of the word, ALL live on. The image presents an alternate narrative on what earth is or might be. And it is in this idea of the alternate narrative that artistic production comes in.

Art can, and should, present new stories from the same reality, new forms from the same matter, new ideas from the same thoughts. The creation of new perspectives and immersed experiences of place - allowing the audience to build relationships and emotionally invest in topics makes art an ideal companion to ecology. From another perspective, ecology gives artistic practice footing and

thematic direction, interesting problems and issues of importance – the foundation for good artists to create great art.

An interesting exemple of this is the Danish performance group hello!earth's scientifically grounded piece "LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE- a gathering for animals people and minerals", where the audience become nature. All individual on a microscopic scale, but collective, even communal, in their interdependence on each other.

The philosopher Richard Shusterman argues that the body as an artifact of the natural should be considered the foundation of all experience social, artistic, political. Taking this into account we find yet another argument why inclusion, new perspectives and artistic practice in nature will create greater overall engagement for the subject at hand – and at the same time provide aesthetic experiences, which in itself has massive social, cultural and democratic value.

Ludvig Duregård



Sharing experiences of work with art, nature and a sustainable development during the seminar in Harlösa.

Johanna MacTaggart, MAB, Sweden



Photo Andrew Sawyer

# UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVES - Local solutions to global challenges

Launched in 1971, UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) is an Intergovernmental Scientific Programme that aims to improve relationships between people and their environments. MAB combines the natural, social, and cultural dimensions, economics and education to improve human livelihoods and the equitable sharing of benefits, promoting innovative approaches to economic development that are socially and culturally appropriate, and environmentally sustainable. Its World Network of Biosphere Reserves currently (2016) counts 669 sites in 120 countries all over the world that are designated model regions for sustainable development.

Biosphere reserves show concrete examples of how to generate sustainable futures for coming generations and they demonstrate good practices of how to develop local solutions to global challenges by exploring "What does sustainable development mean for us?" The activities are owned by local communities along with those who have the ability to directly affect local development. The biosphere reserve organizations are process oriented, with the purpose to increase governance and community learning. In practice, they inspire and connect people and stakeholders by developing and communicating good examples.

A biosphere reserve adds a unifying role and they are regions that show good examples of how land use and conservation can go hand in hand with thriving communities. These areas are pilot areas where new approaches and new knowledge is tested in order to achieve sustainable societies. Biosphere reserves also have a role of awareness rising, to create better links between local communities, culture and local resources and/or ecosystem services, as well as taking joint actions for a more resilient social-ecological system.

This may be achieved by increasing regional identity, perhaps by using the concept of Terrior. A biosphere reserve may use the concept of Terroir to inspire people and communities to work towards a common goal, building trust within the group, and enhancing social capital. In this way, we adopt a UNESCO mission to explore and develop our local role for global sustainability, to find a common golden thread in order to achieve sustainable effects.

Johanna MacTaggart National Coordinator for UNESCOs Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)

#### www.biosfaromrade.se

Background: Involved in the Man and the Biosphere
Programme since 2005 with initial assignment to Biosphere
Reserve Lake Vänern Archipelago, successfully designated
in 2010. Swedish representative in global board for MAB
Programme 2009 and 2013-2017.

Interest to subject: Exploring ways to create a sustainable,





#### Charles Tracy, US National Park Service



Dos Duets

# Art programs in U.S National Parks

During our 2016 Centennial celebration, the National Park Service (NPS) has been reflecting on the important historic contributions of artists and photographers, such Albert Bierstadt and Carleton Watkins, in the creation of the National Park System itself. The work of these early artists helped convince the U.S. Congress of the need to protect these places forever. We are also looking to future and embracing new expressions of the national park experience from contemporary artists. The resurgence of interest in art in National Parks is part of a larger trend within the American land conservation movement and is becoming more prominent on the agenda of national art conferences and conferences about landscape and ecology.

There are currently over fifty artist-in-residence programs in the U.S. National Parks —each is uniquely designed to respond to the landscape context, visitor use patterns and interpretive themes of the park—and more programs are

currently being developed. We also have a large number of youth-based art programs at national parks that are designed to encourage young people to express their park experience through music, dance, photography, painting, sculpture and spoken word poetry.

Although each program is different, our experience is that the best structure for a successful art program is a partnership between a park and an arts organization. We find that park managers and staff, although interested and enthusiastic, do not have the requisite experience or time to manage a program themselves. Last year, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, we supported a national grants program, "Imagine Your Parks," to fund new art through partnerships between parks and art organizations.

Charles Tracy,
Arts Partnership Specialist, U.S National Park Service

Why Art? Art in Parks is at the intersection of six strategic NPS goals

- Art attracts and engages a much wider demographic of new visitors
- Art inspires deep connections—spiritual and emotional between visitors and parks
- Art activates and draws attention to new and less visited national park areas
- Art challenges both visitors and staff to experience parks with fresh eyes
- Art offers new interpretive lenses for telling old stories as well as surfacing untold stories
- Art encourages dialogue on contemporary issues such as climate change and civil rights





www.nps.gov
See the film "100 years
of Arts in the Parks"
www.nps.gov/sublejcts/ar
ts/100-years-of-art.htm



Eva Grip & Lisa Tegmar



#### act art for Tourism

'act art' guiding generates from the Bauhaus school in Germany 1919 -1933, using dynamic methods of education formed by leaders like Klee, Kandinsky, Itten and others." Living Workshops" developed in that tradition were held at the Modern Museum in Stockholm from 1954 via Adelyn Cross Eriksson who had direct connection with the Bauhaus. The 'act art' method makes participants use all senses actively and they are challenged to interact with others. Together and alone they express results from investigating nature and places using playful creative tools, new perspectives and insights.

As an young artist Lisa Tegmar took part in 'Living Workshops' at the Modern Museum in Stockholm and was later educated as a Living Workshop pedagog. She has worked in the field for many years conducting groups in both private and public sectors, grown-ups as well as children.

Eva Grip, a leader in a rural development project thought that the method would be useful with groups of tourists. The idea was that artists who live in rural areas and are interested in working with groups and landscapes should get education from Lisa and her collegues. For the artist it could be a supplementary way of financing themselves, and for the area where the artist live a new attraction, an 'act art' Guide who can guide tourists to explore any destination in an interesting way.

The 'act art' Guide Experience creates presence in interacting with others, and it contrasts modern computerised workday.

To fully test 'act art' as a method, Eva and Lisa invited artists and tourism developers from four different

countries to participate in a three day workshop in Hörby area, Sweden 2014. The participants were very positive and could see possibilities of development in their own countries. Other workshops have been held in Germany, Estonia, for safari developers in Namibia visiting Sweden as well as in the region of Skåne. The outcome from the discussions within the differerent workshops was the understanding of the need of an 'act art' Guide education.

This is today our goal, to find the support to establish an 'act art' Guide education in Skåne. We see that it would attract both Swedish and international students in methods with the aim to give tourists new, and deeper, forms of experiences in nature. The start-up of an education will need support, but lead to a self financed education through the course fees.

Eva Grip & Lisa Tegmar



See film, articles and pictures from the project on www.hotspotkollerod.se/actart



# The city of Malmö's work with culture - and sustainable urban development

Already in 2009 the city of Malmö began to discuss the role culture can play in sustainable urban development. About the same time on a global level discussions started - whether culture would be a fourth dimension of sustainable development.

2010 The Municipal allotted one million crowns to ISU - Institute for sustainable urban development - in order to examine the role of culture for sustainable urban development in Malmö. It was a one-year mission where ISUS identified two cases where the examination would happen. One was Malmo Museums and the second Norra Sorgenfri. In one year we involved a large number of players, both within the City of Malmö's organization and external, to see what role culture can play.

In 2012 it was decided to transform the mission, from temporary to permanent. ISU chose to work with the mission in close collaboration with the Culture Department and K3 at Malmö University. Over the years a large number of seminars, workshops, essay collaborations etc was implemented and Cultural perspectives became an integral part of Malmö's various urban development projects.

2015 conducted the Culture Department and ISU an application to the UCLG (United Nations) to become the Leading City in the Agenda 21 for Culture. This, after encouragement from UCLG. In the fierce competition, Malmö has now been chosen to be a Global Leading City in the area of culture and sustainable development, 2016-2017. Thus, we have received confirmation that the journey we started in 2009 have paid off. The tentative and questioning approach of 2010 has been passed to the implementing and continuing curiosity exploration in 2016.

# Culture as a driving force for sustainable urban development

Cities are becoming more and more like businesses on the global market. Where can we break / intersection between top-down and grassroots organization? I believe that with culture as the driving force and method, we can find the tangent point of where we can come together and jointly be barrier-breaking, cross-border.

In order to focus on having the citizens in the center when planning the city, we need to invite all the residents in the dialogue. How do we share, spread and manage knowledge? Where are we a broker of knowledge, experience and contacts? When do we take intercultural competence in the claims on a larger scale? People want to be involved - include them - people are often involved - let them participate - People want to feel ownership - let them get the responsibility. I believe that with the help of culture, we can do the above. Through culture, we can create change.

I strongly mean that culture and physical planning — whether it's urban or rural — goes hand in hand. To channel culture where the planning of the landscape have failed/forgot to make space for culture is difficult as much as landscape planning without culture as a part of the planning process will never be an attractive area.

Clara Norell
Institutet för hållbar stadsutveckling

www.isumalmo.se



MAFF - Matsalu Nature Film Festival, Estonia







# The story of Matsalu Nature Film Festival

Matsalu National Park is a picturesque nature reserve in Estonia. Situated on the coast of the Baltic Sea it is part of a big Eastern route of bird migration in spring and autumn. The area is sparsely inhabited by humans and thus gives a lot of opportunities for adventures to nature lovers. The local culture is closely connected to nature: the animal pastures and haymaking have been main activities of local people; local handicraft is mostly inspired by natural flowers and birds. In recent times the area has attracted many nature film and photo people and thus it was connecting the dots that in 2003 nature conservation and local community organized jointly a nature film festival. In the first year there was no idea to start a long tradition but the success of the festival has inspired to bring the nature film makers from all over the world together year after year.

The yearly festival has given an opportunity to see how a cultural event works for people and nature. The event is at the same time global and local: there are films and filmmakers and photographers coming from all continents and at the same time smallest local schools have possibility to be part of the event. Festival enables to show to locals and visitors the best and newest nature films and also disseminate the translated films to other parts of Estonia. But it also gives opportunity for local people to see their usual local environment with eyes of

visitors who come to photography and film workshops and show how extraordinary can nature seem from outsiders view.

The festival has a special program for local kids where they will see some films and meet nature scientist and afterwards use their emotions in art workshops either for drawing, photographing or making music. As a tradition also other side events happen during the festival: seminars of some specific topic from conservation films (how to protect large carnivores, birds of prey or amphibians), photo and art exhibitions, technology workshops and musical evening events. This all gives perspective and helps to interpret issues seen in nature films.

Sustaining our environment is something so overwhelmingly important and at the same time so intangible that is very difficult for a person to translate the need of conservation to everyday life. Yes, we can learn how to recycle or that driving a car is bad but the cultural dimension helps us to really experience the diversity and value of natural environment.

Silvia Lotman Coordinator of the Matsalu Nature Film Festival CEO of Estonian Fund for Nature



www.matsalufilm.ee/en





The culture house in Lihula where the film festival exhibits

#### MAFF and local economies

Very big part of Lihula municipality is covered by Matsalu National Park and as a result it plays important role in the local economics. The park gives possibilities for tourism and related services. Nevertheless visitors cannot spend money in local community if there are no services developed for them. In turn local people might not be sure if the investment in local service providing is sustainable how many tourists are there and are they really ready to stay and consume? This kind of incompatabilities can be overcome with the help of creating for example cultural events.

Matsalu Nature Film Festival draws every year some hundreds of people from abroad and other parts of Estonia to Lihula. Those people need accommodation, food, transport. In years it has been a problem that there are not enough accommodation places for festival visitors and this had led to some creative solutions. Some local people have opened their homes for B&B service during the festival, also a local kindergarden is offering accommodation for bakcpackers. This activity is hoped to become more active with the help of AirB&B type of

networks. And we already have some good examples of local people who have gotten a kick from festivals visitors and have extended their service to whole summer. Of course one festival a year is not enough to give job for local service providers but it is one of many drivers in local economy. Festival gives possibilities for local people to try their enterpreneur skills also as ad hoc taxi trivers or running pop-up restaurants.

One more added value to Lihula from the festival is that when last year Estonian government was sponsoring cinemas for better film showing technics then Lihula was considered too small town for the support but as the organiser of a international nature film festival Lihula was still given the support. Now, with some additional financing from the local government, Lihula has one of the most modernly equipped film showing culture houses in Estonia.

Silvia Lotman
Coordinator of the Matsalu Nature Film Festival
CEO of Estonian Fund for Nature



Lihula celebrates its 805 years as a town 2016



# Cultural Heritage as Resourse - SERDE's case

The Interdisciplinary Art Group SERDE is a non-governmental organization (NGO), which seeks to develop the regional and international collaboration between different cultural fields, organizations and professionals. SERDE's activities create dialogue between arts, science and education, which includes organizing residencies, workshops, expeditions and publishing thematic notebooks, among other things.

SERDE artist residencies centre is located on the main street in the historical centre of Aizpute – one of the oldest towns of Kurzeme. The centre occupies and has preserved a unique house complex (1500 m2) built in the 18th century in wood and red-brick architectural style.

In 2005 SERDE began to collaborate with researchers of folklore and traditional culture in response to the perceived loss of important living practices and memories. This activity included fieldwork/expeditions to rural areas of Latvia to investigate traditions—maintained from generation to generation—and to collect stories about recent history still preserved in living memory. The gathered materials were published by SERDE in a Notebook of Traditions book series (currently 17 books although the process is ongoing).

SERDE's fieldworks and expeditions was organized in various places in Latvia focuses on local knowledge and traditions. The principal method employed by SERDE is fieldwork/expeditions, inviting specialists of folklore/living culture, artists and students to the chosen rural areas. The folklore specialists compile questions and organise interviews whilst artists document the environment, processes and people. The gathered audio interviews are later transcribed and together with colour photo documentation are designed and printed in book form. Public events are held to celebrate the book publication

including a presentation of the book and additional handson workshops with reconstruction of old recipes or storytelling events in which the local community are invited to publicly recount their personal stories.

SERDE together with artists and cultural workers offers public educational introductions and workshops (on how to boil soap, make candles, brew beer, forage the medical plants etc.) to reinvigorate local knowledge and traditional skills. Internationally SERDE's projects and performances that are strongly connected with Latvian traditions were shown in various art and culture festivals in Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Ireland, Lithuania and Estonia.

Activities of SERDE within the field of intangible cultural heritage have also been acknowledged in 2015 receiving a positive evaluation by the UNESCO Secretariat on its possible accreditation to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Signe Pucena SERDE

www.serde.lv www.facebook.com/smgSERDE https://issuu.com/smg.serde https://vimeo.com/smgserde http://serde.lv/?q=node/23





# Trans-border projects for regional development through art and community work

Rominta Forest and Lake of Vistynets (Vištytis) are situated at the crossroads of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia (Kaliningrad region). Since 1422, one of the oldest European borders has run through this area. However, our purpose is to make true that there are no borders to nature and mutual understanding. We would like to show things that unite us all - love, work, sincerity, honesty, and friendship.

Since 2013, we run in the area interdisciplinary projects which involve both artistic and community work and include expeditions, mutual gatherings and festivities, workshops, photodocumentary projects (see http://lessosedi.ru/happystories-en/) . The methods work through introducing people to each other, making friends, building trust, sharing knowledge, and spreading information about the area to the outside world. The cooperation network is based in three centers - in Krasnolesye (Kaliningrad region, RUS), Dubeninki county (PL) and Vistytis (LT). In Krasnolesye, the main partner is Vistynets Museum for History and Ecology. It is an NGO located in the former village school building. The museum (director Alexey Sokolov) develops programs which introduce travelers to history and nature of the area. One of the programs is devoted to geology and represents the treasure of stones which formed the landscape long time ago along with movement of Scandinavian Glacier.

One of the most important events is an annual festival Neighbours (Sosedi) which has been organized in August for three times since 2014. It is grass-roots festival which is not a showcase event but rather a big gathering involving many local dwellers and same-minded guests who share their joy of being together. The festival's special friendly atmosphere attracts more guests every

year, in 2016 there were more than 800 people there. The festival and general project documentation is available at http://les-sosedi.ru/.

In 2016, the project "Forest Village" won in all-Russia museum competition for museums and community development programme "Changing Museum in the Changing World" organized by Potanin Charity Fund. Through art and community work, it would contribute to place identity shaping through creating new routes and exposition devoted to contemporary life of the area.

Anna Karpenko coordinator and curator of interdisciplinary trans-border projects in the area

a\_karpenko@yahoo.com https://www.facebook.com/anna.karpenko The museum project diary is available at http://museum.fondpotanin.ru/projects/9456301/diary.



Cross border meeting, ARNA visit Krasnolesye

Ludvig Duregård, Crease



Meeting project partners and friends

# Culture of mutuality

I had the honor of observing, and in part facilitating, the process of the Art and Place identity project where ARNA, Matsalu Film Festival and Serde shared and deepened their knowledge on the role of culture when approaching the identity of place.

In this short text I'll try to provide you with some of my own experiences, I won't be making any attempt at catching the whole process and its essence in writing. I'd rather present you with some of the insights and ideas that caught my eye during the preparations, the seminar in Harlösa (SE) in may (hosted by ARNA) as well as in the August meeting in Aizpute, LV (hosted by SERDE).

"Culture is an inclusive and democratic engine"

Maria Ward, Chair of regional culture board

(from the seminar in Harlösa)

When you look at participative practices on a European scale there's, at least at the moment, heavy focus on engaging individuals in the actual creative process. Which of course has its benefits depending on the target, the process can be a tad exclusive (despite its ambition) since the demands on the participants are quite high. The work of ARNA, MAFF and SERDE on the other hand does not, in that respect, demand creative output from their community ie. bringing the people out of their comfort zone and into a creative domain. These three organizations are rather rather looking to meet their neighbours where they are.

In the case of MAFF in Estonia it is in the form of working with local volunteers during the festival, creating added

value for the participants experiencing the festivals content as well as the production from "the inside". ARNA has an approach that is in many ways pragmatic - and I would argue inherent to rural areas. The artist in residence needs a place to stay - someone has a house, the artists needs to go to the airport - someone has a car and so on. This method, which I'll simply call "Asking for help" feels very natural in rural areas, whereas in cosmopolitan culture that kind of neighbor help neighbormentality is not as easily found.

SERDE has been active for 14 years and have by now, deep roots in the community. One of the core approaches of SERDE is the use of artistic practice to connect to local traditions. This is presenting itself very concretely in the Arts and Crafts market, where local craftsmen sell and present their goods side by side with international artists. The effect on audience might seem obvious but I call, Columbo egg, this is rarely seen: the village and the community comes en masse to see the local craftsmen's work at the same time they experience fine (and sometimes provocative) arts.

These methodologies, while they might not seem groundbreaking, are highly interesting because they are approaching the local culture and people with respect. Rather than forcing/elevating the communities into the unknown, these three organizations try to find the shared values of the place - engage in conversation and work from there. I've seen numerous cases where one cultural idea is trying to land in an unknown cultural landscape. The classic case being projects by white middle aged artists trying to "help" their (funding) target group of



'Walk and talk in the park' - an example of an ARNA-event

In the political end of the spectrum, primarily looking at the different bureaucratic challenges facing these organizations there are some interesting, at least from a Swedish perspective, findings that should be mentioned. In Lihula there seems to be a deep integration and mutuality between Matsalu Nature Film Festival, the Municipality of Lihula as well as their neighboring Biosphere reserve HEPP. To give you an indication -during the seminar in Sweden and the meetings in SERDE there where always representatives of Lihula and HEPP present.

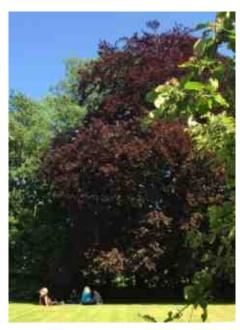
SERDE's cultural position and network nationally and their political position locally has shown to attract new creators and talent to, their home municipality, Aizpute establishing an artistic scene where there usually is none (ie. small rural towns 150km+ from metropolitan areas). Because of SERDE's long relationship with the community and city council it's much easier for new artistic collectives and artists to permanently establish in Aizpute. SERDE has already proven, in a way, the value of artists in the town and can, because of their history in the town, act as a translator between artists will and officials wishes.

Europe is multidimensional network, cities connect with cities, countries with countries, even ministers of agriculture connect with ministers of agriculture. It's refreshing to see that these connections between peers can happen on any scale, be it the council of ministers or conversations between three small culture organizations. Projects like this, has great value in terms of knowledge transfer and internationalization for culture organizations.

In this case specifically interesting because of the shared rural condition of these three organizations. Projects like these, be it mobility or shared ventures, have huge effect on participating organizations and in the larger scope this kind of trans-local relationships are the foundation of a naturally connected Europe.

On a personal note, it has been a great pleasure watching the relationships and the trust between the three organizations grow exponentially over the last couple of months. I haven't, to be honest, seen that kind of instinctive alignment between people or organizations in international projects before.

Ludvig Duregård Crease



Sharing European experiences of art and nature



ARNA i Fågelriket www.arna.nu

The project Art & Place Identity was developed during 2016 as a partnership between ARNA i Fågelriket in Sweden, SERDE in Latvia and Matsalu Nature Film Festival in Estonia. The project was supported by The Swedish Institute and Eslövs kommun.







