

Kaunas Biennale 11 and ETN Rewind into the Future Conference

And then it began. For ten days at the the end of September I was transported in to an all textile world, or so it seem, and i was not the only one.

The theme of the 16th ETN Conference was "Rewind into the Future" with a number of long time textile companions asked what they thought would be left to be done for the next generation of textile curators, lecturers and artist. For those answers... The reports from the 16th ETN Conference written by the attendees and presenters are starting to appear, some in organization newsletters available for members only, some in blogs, on websites and eventually in print. The influence of this event and the Kaunas Textile Biennale were the conference took place is all through this issue of fibreQUARTERLY so for my part here I will direct you to different sites where you can read what other people thought, see images and get the idea that by not attending you did miss something. I realize that seems a bit unfair but one of the important things that came out of this conference is the need for makers, writers, institutions, organizations, and publications need to participate and that means becoming paid members of the organizations that are fighting the odds to gather authoritative informed thinkers and observers who can insure textile history, traditional production methods remain an readily available resource for the next generation. Who are they you may ask. If you had been at the conference and seen the number of local student volunteers and students from through out the Baltic countries you would smile. The next Generation is the now Generation and here already and noticeable in "Craftism" (activism) showing brilliantly in exhibitions, organized differently through the internet and yet suffering from the neurosis of their instructors. The question of "Is it Art or is it Craft" is still a malignant shadow confusing strategies of placement. This conference triggered a satori for me that has cleared my vision of what the future generation may find of benefit and that is simply pride in their decision to work with fibre and textiles regardless of what direction they take or where they place their work in the convoluted and competitive worlds of object making and/or arranging (interventions, installation, animation). Where does this pride come from you might ask and the answer is in more published critical appraisal that comes from both an historic and technical knowledge and encouragement for makers to gain more then that which is currently available through the education system. Mentoring comes to mind, taking on students placements to share experience rather then take advantage of free labour. (I find it alarming dealing with public relation interns from museums and galleries that have never heard the current and limited number of publications magazines and journals that focus on textile history, industry, craft and art.) Spread the pride is all I can say and answer as many questions as you are asked and play it forward by asking what they think they are doing. Some participants of the 16th ETN Conference at the garden of the Iurionis Museum in Kaunas photo by Remis Scerbauskas ©2011

ETN CONFERENCE reports and daily activities from it that have shown up on line as of this posting date. Cathryn Amidei blogged almost live from the Conference on her Y Collective blog site Tuesday, October 4, 2011 http://ycollective.blogspot.com/2011_10_01_archive.html Networking Day was posted September 26 <http://ycollective.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2011-09-26T11:31:00-07:00&max-results=10> Andrea Milde's blog a-puesta posted October 1 with a report in Spanish and German <http://amilde.wordpress.com/kaunas-2011/> Multi-sensory Lithuania, October 17, 2011 <http://www.weareoca.com/uncategorized/multi-sensory-lithuania/> CIT Crawford College of Art and Design Textiles participating in Lithuanian Exhibition posted Monday October 31 <http://www.cit.ie/currentnews?id=281> ANNATETILES http://www.annatextiles.ch/sympos_10/kaunas_2011/kaunas_11.htm

Some artcapeants in the ETN coference went on post conference tours to the Rumšė Open Air Museum, on 25 September 2011 village square picture above, a trip to the Neringa Peninsula, on the Baltic coast 26 – 27 Sept. 2011 where I photographed this old boat. On our way back to Kaunus we stopped at Siauliai tp visit the Hill of the Crosses, a very special place for Lithuanians who place a cross on this hill at every important date of their lives (the communist regime removed all the crosses several times, but could not stop this phenomenon!)

Find more images of the sites and sounds of this enlighten trip to Lithuania, for the 16th ETN Conference and the Kaunas Biennial in four facebook albums THE KAUNAS BIENNIAL September 22, 2011 People and places <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150817076125311.743835.890860310&type=1&l=855ed8f97f> Exhibitions in Lithuania September 2011 <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150827902020311.746302.890860310&type=1&l=a1ca4fd661> Kaunas, 2011 more people and places <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150820775500311.744635.890860310&type=1&l=6eed4aaea9> Historic Lithuania <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150839519220311.749020.890860310&type=1&l=a5831b4b47> The 3 part catalog for the Kaunas Biennial: Play Rewind and Forward are available to read and download through "issue"; <http://issuu.com/mamaika/docs/biennial-forward>

