

## GUNDEGA STRAUBERGA

Gundega's work addresses absence not by restoring what is lost, but by converting it into possibility.

Gundega Strauberga (1996) is a Latvian artist and visual researcher based in The Hague, Netherlands. Her practice engages the absence of personal archives and the complexities of memory, identity and photographic representation. Owing to her dual background in design (BA Design Academy Eindhoven, 2020) as well as photography (MA "Photography & Society", KABK, 2025), Gundega's work often manifests as a hybrid of the two. She has always been interested in how the appropriating and recontextualizing can offer new perspectives on what we think we already know. She works with themes such as artifice, mythologies (both personal and collective), and critical nostalgia.

### WEBSITES

online portfolio

[www.gundegastrauberga.com](http://www.gundegastrauberga.com)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

[www.instagram.com/gundegastrauberga/](https://www.instagram.com/gundegastrauberga/)

### EDUCATION

- 2025 - Film essay workshop TRACTS
- 2025 - Audiovisual Remix
- 2023 - HBO Master of Arts in Fine Art and
- 2025 - Design Den Haag, Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten diploma
- 2018 - Design Summer School International
- 2018 - Summer School of Design (MAD)
- 2016 - HBO Bachelor Design Eindhoven,
- 2020 - Design Academy diploma
- 2012 - High school with art and design
- 2016 - specialty Riga School of Art and Design diploma

### EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 - KABK graduation show 2025 Royal Academy of Art, KABK The Hague, Netherlands "As Water Softens Stones": MA Photography & Society graduation show 2025. "Collectively, we reflect on what it means to mend. We do not, however, intend to fix or transform in the usual sense. Just as water softens stones - slowly but assuredly - our works break things down, not to fundamentally transform them, but, rather, to afford alternative glimpses at what is or could be. Individually, our projects are quite diverse. We talk about ecology and technology, memory and imagination, home and belonging, family and identity, migration and displacement. We tell stories about what happened a long time ago and about what is happening right now. And to do so, we certainly use still and moving images, but we also bring in postcards and calendars, sisters' diaries and whatsapp conversations, soil and bioplastics, board games and furniture, and East Asian pine trees. We bring in shopping malls as collaborators too."  
[www.kabk.nl/en/events/graduation-show-2025](http://www.kabk.nl/en/events/graduation-show-2025)  
Group
- 2024 - 00:05:59 West x Paradise The Hague, Netherlands Group exhibition of projects made in partnership with Doggerland Foundation: "When it is already 5 minutes past midnight to restore the damage done by dysfunctional ecological politics, we dedicate a pause to the art of listening and rethinking our course of action. By listening, sensing, and observing the marine ecosystem from the different angles of

our situatedness, we glimpse the fragility of its existence and harness both informative and speculative ways of storytelling to express a shared concern. In this collective exhibition, the Doggerbank holds our individual researches together and is the starting point for our personal interactions with the more-than-human entities that inhabit or coexist within the North Sea."

[www.westdenhaag.nl/exhibitions/24\\_04\\_Paradise/rGroup](http://www.westdenhaag.nl/exhibitions/24_04_Paradise/rGroup)

2024 Cheap Destinations Kim? Contemporary Art Centre Riga, Latvia "Cheap Destinations (Mazcenās Rīga) looks at the identity of Riga as a tourist destination from two contrasting perspectives: through the prisms of both foreign low-budget airlines and local branding techniques. The project highlights the differences between marketing approaches taken by those with an outside perspective, and others linked to Latvian cultural heritage. For example, Ryanair's sales strategy for Riga goes no further than offering low fares and a guide to its nightlife. This prism contrasts with what the city actually has to offer, its traditional culture, and high-quality craft products in the souvenir shops, but also the inflation within Latvia. That's why Cheap Destinations looks at the role and influence of crafts and culture in the contemporary tourism industry. Through manipulated traditional Latvian souvenir products, the project provides an insight into the complexity of cultural representation. It questions the conversion of heritage into products, inviting reflection on the authenticity of cultural artefacts and traditions. The interplay between the use of various symbols in commercial crafts and the preservation of cultural roots invites visitors to evaluate the commercial appeal of traditions. The designer duo wants to play on the meaning of the word "cheap" and to present it as a notion that reflects more than just prices. It is a way of looking at the world, whether at international borders or marketing strategies."  
[echogonewrong.com/photo-reportage-from-the-exhibition-cheap-destinations-by-gundega-strauberga-and-ieva-jakusa-at-kim-contemporary-art-centre/](http://echogonewrong.com/photo-reportage-from-the-exhibition-cheap-destinations-by-gundega-strauberga-and-ieva-jakusa-at-kim-contemporary-art-centre/)  
Duo

2023 Plastic Crush: Roses Are Blue, Violets Are Red: An Anthropocentric Arcadia Wereldmuseum Amsterdam Amsterdam, Netherlands "A number of artificial flowers from the collection of Wereldmuseum was chosen as a starting point to create this joint artificial garden and shop. The human obsession to imitate or define nature is linked with the desire to create a material that will last for eternity. Here plastic is

used as a material for fake flowers, plants and stones. This garden celebrates our creative attempts to recreate natural beauty while at the same time exposing the absurdity of this ambition. It introduces with peculiar organisms, environments and technologies that have been shaped by human activity, and, in turn, shape human activity. Commissioned by Wereldmuseum, all museum artefacts are a courtesy of Wereldmuseum.”

[amsterdam.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/plastic-crush](https://amsterdam.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/plastic-crush)

Group

2022 Sweet Water (Dulce Agua) CentroCentro Madrid, Spain “Dulce Agua (“Sweet Water”) is a design exhibition taking place at the cultural centre CentroCentro in Madrid. Curated by Ana Domínguez Siemens, the show brings together a selection of design and art projects that draw attention to environmental water issues.”

[www.centrocentro.org/exposicion/dulce-agua](http://www.centrocentro.org/exposicion/dulce-agua)

Group

2021 Budget Airlines: Cheap Destinations Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Netherlands “Riga International Airport has been recognized as the Third Fastest Growing European Airport, annually since 2019. Although Air Baltic currently operates the majority of flights, Ryanair is the sole carrier to Riga from several locations and announced 16 new routes as of October 2021. Ryanair’s content marketing strategy is to portray its destinations as cheap as its flights. The promotional travel guide for Riga stops at low-priced drinks and nightlife, and Riga is also included in its ‘11 Cities as Low Cost as Our Flights’ listicle. What is not included is the rich heritage of the city and Latvian culture. For instance, the souvenirs in Riga are still largely handmade by local craftspeople, unlike most other European destinations. Although these objects characterise the country’s folklore and history, they do not resonate with Ryanair’s brand essence of immediate consumption. Between Ryanair being Europe’s biggest airline by passenger numbers and the nature of search engine optimisation, its depiction of Riga impacts perceptions of the city and country. The artists have manipulated a collection of traditional Latvian craft objects to demonstrate Ryanair’s branding of Riga. Cheap materials and production techniques present a distant, impersonal attitude. A map of Ryanair’s Riga flights and excerpts from interviews with tourism experts further emphasise the contradictions between Ryanair’s appropriated view and the real legacy of Riga.”

[geodesign.online/archive/projects/cheap-destinations](https://geodesign.online/archive/projects/cheap-destinations)

## Group

- 2021 Art & New Materials: Design for a Better Future Museum The New Domain Sittard, Netherlands “Plastic is sometimes used as a symbol for everything that is wrong with our society built on (hyper-)consumption. But artists are also increasingly showing us that plastic should not be discarded as useless trash. They show us plastic is something to treasure, to re-use, and from which to build object of great beauty. At the same time, creative designers are researching sustainable alternatives to plastic, like materials based on organic matter such as plants or micro-organisms. The exhibition Art and New Materials invites us to see plastic— which runs in the veins of Zuid Limburg in general, and Sittard-Geleen specifically—anew. On view in Museum voor Hedendaagse Kunst De Domijnen in Sittard.”  
[dutchdesigndaily.com/stories/art-new-materials/](https://dutchdesigndaily.com/stories/art-new-materials/)  
Group
- 2018 A Glimpse of Riga Quartair The Hague, Netherlands “During Hoogtij #55, QUARTAIR hosts a special evening with Latvian artists. An event that lets people have a glimpse of what the city of Riga and its citizens are. During this evening The Hague’s public will meet their art, drink the traditional Black Balsam, listen to Rigan band The Bad Tones and watch the 16 mm short film ‘Sound we see: Riga’ featuring 25 artists of the capital of Latvia.”  
[www.quartair.nl/a-glimpse-of-riga/](http://www.quartair.nl/a-glimpse-of-riga/)  
Group
- 2018 Manifestations Festival Het Veem Eindhoven, Netherlands Manifestations exhibition during Dutch Design Week 2018: “Eindhoven is the most significant tech area of the Netherlands. It is the place where smart technologies are born. Technological innovation has a growing impact on our daily lives, our societies and our humanity. But who or what is all this technology ultimately serving? Is everyone still able to participate? Are these developments good and healthy for all of us? What role do we actually want technology to play in our lives?”  
[site.ddw.nl/en/community-publications/48/manifestations-2018-will-the-future-design-us](https://site.ddw.nl/en/community-publications/48/manifestations-2018-will-the-future-design-us)  
Group
- 2018 Frankenstein, I Think Therefore I Am De Museumfabriek Enschede, Netherlands “The Museum Factory, formerly Museum TwentseWelle, is all about the future and full of artificial intelligence, augmented reality and virtual reality. Scientists predict that technology will control humans in all domains in

2060. What will it be like to be human in that world? You can experience that in 'Frankenstein'." [www.demuseumfabriek.nl/content/2187/nl/frankenik-denk-dus-ik-ben](http://www.demuseumfabriek.nl/content/2187/nl/frankenik-denk-dus-ik-ben)  
Group

## PROJECTS

2025 Paper Pictures KABK MA Photography & Society The Hague, Netherlands [www.gundegastrauberga.com/portfolio-collections/my-portfolio/paper-pictures](http://www.gundegastrauberga.com/portfolio-collections/my-portfolio/paper-pictures)  
"Paper Pictures" emerges from a deeply personal absence: the lack of photographs from my own childhood due to ideological reasons of my parents. Rather than approaching this absence as a deficit, I saw it as an opportunity to build an archive of my choice, and turned it into a methodology. Through borrowing, weaving, glitching, and reframing, I construct a speculative family album, one composed of found images, mass-produced calendar photography, and a small selection of my own pictures. This act of reconstruction moves beyond nostalgia, asking what memory can become when it is actively made, rather than merely recalled. A film essay developed alongside the visual work deepens this inquiry, exploring memory as a layered, affective process. The work symbolizes a response to my father's reasoning behind his choice to exclude photographs from our lives, as well as his appreciation for sublime nature imagery; Although no photographs were taken within my family, I was surrounded by images of nature, cut out from calendars, adorning the walls of my childhood apartment. I explore these images again, by zooming in on the scanned landscapes, screenshotting parts of them which I would photograph myself, had I a camera in hand. Resulting from this process are new abstract landscapes where the scale and subjects get blurred, being transformed from pictures to look at, into places to visit. These images are contrasting to the black & white pictures I took while revisiting the neighborhood, almost like two worlds opposing one another. The role I take on as curator of my own memories invites questions about

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES/RESIDENCIES

2026 VTRY Lahti, Finland Utopias Lahti is an artist-run visual arts festival organised in Lahti, Finland. The third edition of the festival will take place in May 2026. Utopias Lahti centres on artistic practices that activate speculation, conjecture, and imagination as catalysts for systemic change. The curation and development of the festival are guided by principles of sustainability and approachability. While our background as organisers is rooted in photography, the festival expands into other artistic fields as well, with an emphasis on lens-based media. Utopias Lahti critically examines the material streams associated with exhibiting lens-based art. Over the years, we have built a local circular economy network that allows us to build the festival primarily using recycled materials. In 2026, the festival will focus on the role of site-specific practices in lens-based art. [utopiaslahti.com](http://utopiaslahti.com)

2025 TRACTS Audiovisual Remix Porto, Portugal Drawing on discussions and debates central to the pedagogical mission of the Centre for Visual Anthropology and the TRACTS Network, this three-day workshop considers how juxtaposing, activating, and remixing image and sound is an experiment with trace, whereby new forms of knowledge are produced through audiovisual experimentation. Approaching the essay film as a contribution to the cinema of ideas, the workshop approaches this genre as an opportunity for reconsidering text-centered forms of making, thinking, and doing. It will equip participants with the theoretical, methodological, and practice-based skills needed to situate this genre as a legitimate research practice. [tractsnetwork.online/cfp-audiovisual-remix-the-film-essay-as-experiment-in-trace/](http://tractsnetwork.online/cfp-audiovisual-remix-the-film-essay-as-experiment-in-trace/)

authorship, editing, and the social codes embedded in visual archives. From calendars to rental listings, the ephemeral and time-bound image sources can all be used as archives to be mined in building personal narratives. I've begun to question the need for photographs themselves, and their role in constructing the recollections of one's past. To what extent, I now ask, does the originality of evidence matter in the act of remembering? What if photographic absence, usually linked to trauma, coercion or erasure, could be rephrased as a form of freedom?

2024 Cheap Destinations Het Oog, Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands Eindhoven, Riga, Netherlands  
[www.gundegastrauberga.com/portfolio-collections/my-portfolio/cheap-destinations](http://www.gundegastrauberga.com/portfolio-collections/my-portfolio/cheap-destinations) Cheap Destinations (Mazcenās Rīga) looks at the identity of Riga as a tourist destination from two contrasting perspectives: through the prisms of both foreign low-budget airlines and local branding techniques. The project highlights the differences between marketing approaches taken by those with an outside perspective, and others linked to Latvian cultural heritage. For example, Ryanair's sales strategy for Riga goes no further than offering low fares and a guide to its nightlife. This prism contrasts with what the city actually has to offer, its traditional culture, and high-quality craft products in the souvenir shops, but also the inflation within Latvia. That's why Cheap Destinations looks at the role and influence of crafts and culture in the contemporary tourism industry. Through manipulated traditional Latvian souvenir products, the project provides an insight into the complexity of cultural representation. It questions the conversion of heritage into products, inviting reflection on the authenticity of cultural artefacts and traditions. The interplay between the use of various symbols in commercial crafts and the preservation of cultural roots invites visitors to evaluate the commercial appeal of traditions. The designer duo wants to play on the meaning of the word "cheap" and to present it as a notion that reflects more than just prices. It is a way of looking at the world, whether at international

borders or marketing strategies. The project idea was developed in collaboration with the Van Abbemuseum, and the Geo-Design exhibition platform, which explores the social, economic, territorial, and geopolitical forces shaping design today.

2022 "Plastic Crush" commission  
Wereldmuseum Amsterdam  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
[amsterdam.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/plastic-crush](https://amsterdam.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/plastic-crush) In the new exhibition, Plastic Crush, four young designers reflect on the relationship between humans and plastic. Each designer was inspired by self-selected collection pieces from the period before the invention of plastic, held in our depots. From this inspiration, they develop new work for the exhibition. Meet the four designers: Daria Biryukova, Jie Chen, Gundega Strauberga, and Lena Winterink.

2022 The New Coastline Stimuleringsfonds  
Creatieve Industrie Rotterdam,  
Netherlands  
[www.stimuleringsfonds.nl/projecten/de-nieuwe-kustlijn](https://www.stimuleringsfonds.nl/projecten/de-nieuwe-kustlijn) Rotterdam-based photographer Rubén Dario Kleimeer captures the landscape, the edges of the city and the buildings within it. His tranquil observations question the world we live in. In the work of Latvian designer Gundega Strauberga, who graduated last year from the Design Academy Eindhoven, the dialogue between people and their surroundings plays a central role. The Creative Industries Fund NL's Building for Talent programme has brought a senior and start-up talent together in their drive to focus attention on a topical theme: the threat of flooding from climate change. In De Nieuwe Kustlijn (The New Coastline), the duo examines how the Netherlands is prepared for this.

## COMMISSIONS

2022 New work for "Plastic Crush" exhibition  
Wereldmuseum Amsterdam  
Amsterdam, Netherlands In the new exhibition, Plastic Crush, four young designers reflect on the relationship between humans and plastic. Each

## SALES/WORKS IN COLLECTIONS

2025 Pictures From Home Calendar Landscape series Amsterdam, The Hague, Nederland  
Fine art prints prints and framed prints.  
Sold in art markets (Buy My Darlings, Art Mart at Sis Josip Gallery) and for private clients.

designer was inspired by self-selected collection pieces from the period before the invention of plastic, held in our depots. From this inspiration, they develop new work for the exhibition.

Meet the four designers: Daria Biryukova, Jie Chen, Gundega Strauberga, and Lena Winterink.

[amsterdam.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/plastic-crush](https://amsterdam.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/plastic-crush) finished

## REVIEWS

2024 Exhibition review: God, sex and discounts Website Jana Kukaine Riga, Latvia  
[arterritory.com/lv/vizuala\\_maksla/recenzijas/27047-dievs-sekss-un-atlaides?](https://arterritory.com/lv/vizuala_maksla/recenzijas/27047-dievs-sekss-un-atlaides?) Kim? This year, there are three laureates in the Contemporary Art Center's Open Call 2023 competition, whose submitted ideas have been realized and offered to the audience. The three-part exhibition reveals different curatorial strategies, approaches to the use of art tools and materials, and thematic focuses, but the works are permeated by an interest in the characteristics of Latvian culture, fitting into a broader tradition of studying the state of post-socialism. The artists and curators highlight both various aspects of the Soviet legacy and neoliberal capitalism as a factor that influences the course of society's life and the processes of artistic creation.

2024 Radio interview about the exhibition "Cheap Destinations" Radio Anete Enikova Riga, Latvia  
[latvijasradio.lsm.lv/lv/embed/?size=16x9&theme=white&id=186782&analytics=1](https://latvijasradio.lsm.lv/lv/embed/?size=16x9&theme=white&id=186782&analytics=1)  
Interview with the artists Gundega Strauberga and Ieva Jakusa.

2024 Radio interview about the exhibition at Kim? Radio Gustavs Terzens Riga, Latvia  
[lr1.lsm.lv/lv/raksts/kulturas-rondo/tris-open-call-2023-laureatu-izstades-kim-laikmetigas-makslas-ce.a186784/](https://lr1.lsm.lv/lv/raksts/kulturas-rondo/tris-open-call-2023-laureatu-izstades-kim-laikmetigas-makslas-ce.a186784/) Joint interview with the artists Gundega Strauberga, Ieva Jakusa, Karlina Mezecka and Annemarija Gulbe.

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

2025 Scholarship Latvian State Culture Capital Foundation (SCCF) The Hague, Latvia  
Scholarship to complete the master studies at KABK.

2023 "Culture Moves Europe" grant EU and Goethe Insititut The Hague, Riga, Netherlands  
Culture Moves Europe is a mobility scheme that supports individual mobility and residency projects across Creative Europe countries, territories and regions. It gives grants for artists and cultural professionals to travel and carry out a project in another Creative Europe country.

2023 Scholarship Latvian State Culture Capital Foundation (SCCF) The Hague, Latvia  
Scholarship to begin the master studies at KABK.

2022 "Building Talent" grant Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie Rotterdam  
The "Building Talent" initiative is an open call that stimulates the exchange of knowledge and ideas within the creative industry by funding collaborations between established and starting designers.

## SECONDARY ART-RELATED ACTIVITIES

- 2025 - 2025 KABK Open Day coordinator.
- 2025 - -- "Sofa Talks" with Aline Papenheim: a platform for emerging and established creatives to network, share insights and pose questions about navigating today's creative economy. On-going
- 2025 - -- Custom frame-making as an artistic practice. On-going
- 2024 - 2024 KABK BA Photography student mentor.
- 2021 - 2021 MBO Koning Willem 1 College student coach.
- 2021 - 2021 Talk for the Creascope workshop "How to start your sustainable business in the creative field"
- 2020 - 2020 WDE Talks at Pakhuis de Zwijger.



Paper Pictures, 2025  
Found family pictures, 90s calendar images, rental listings, personal archive, styrofoam, plaster, artificial wood print, digital print on carpet.



Paper Pictures, 2025  
Mixed media sculpture



Paper Pictures, 2025  
Found photography, collage



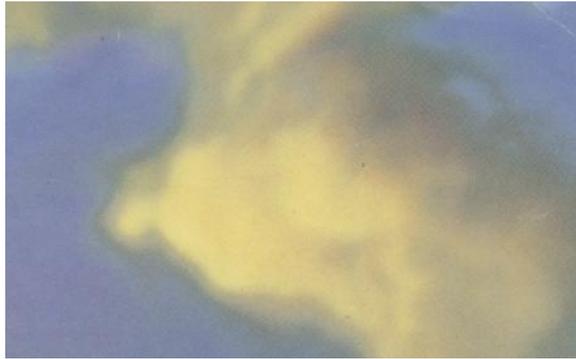
Paper Pictures, 2025  
Mixed media sculpture



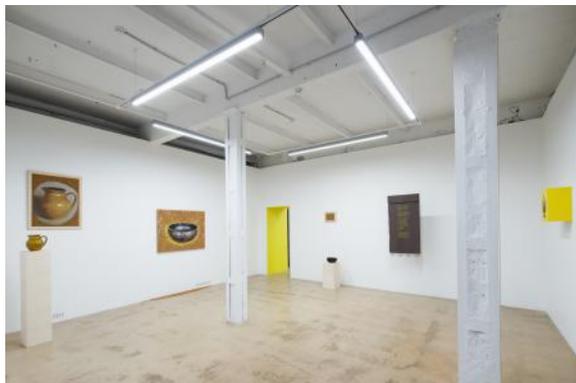
Paper Pictures, 2025  
Sculpture, digital print on carpet



Paper Pictures, 2025  
Publication



Paper Pictures, 2025  
Screenshot photography



Cheap Destinations, 2024  
Mixed media installation



Cheap Destinations, 2024  
Mixed media installation



Cheap Destinations, 2024  
Mixed media installation