



Information for mass media representatives
Riga, June 1, 2023

Finalists of the national Design Award of Latvia 2023 announced

On May 31, 2023, the finalists of the National Award of Latvia 2023 were announced. The international final jury evaluated the works of the nominees in the second round of the competition and determined the best representatives of the design field in the design categories of products, communication, environment, digital solutions and services. Out of 59 applications, 19 works entered the finals: two digital solutions, five communication design works, three services, four products and five environmental design works. The winner of each category, as well as the winner of the Grand Prix, will be announced at the award ceremony on June 2 at the Splendid Palace cinema.

A total of 159 works were submitted for the National Design Award of Latvia 2023, which is the highest number of entries submitted for the highest design award in Latvia to date. For participation in the second round of the competition, the selection jury nominated 59 works, which were evaluated by the members of the final jury in intense discussions during a face-to-face meeting at the premises of the Latvian Investment and Development Agency's Creative Industries Incubator on May 30 and 31. The final jury consisted of seven experienced design

professionals. In addition to representatives of Latvia, three foreign experts also evaluated the works:

- **Mike Bond** (London, United Kingdom) — chairman of the final jury, design strategist, co-founder and director of brand design consultancy agency «Bond and Coyne»
- **Audronė Drungilaitė** (Vilnius, Lithuania) — product designer, Director of the Design Innovation Centre at Vilnius Academy of Arts.
- **Brigita Bula** (Riga, Latvia) — head architect of «Brigita Bula architects» and board member of the Latvian Association of Architects
- **Emil Roman Frøge** (Kopenhagen, Denmark) — designer, creative director and partner of «Archival Studies» agency
- **Ingūna Elere** (Riga, Latvia) — head designer in design studio «H2E», professor in the Art Academy of Latvia, co-founder of SEG D Riga Chapter
- **Kristaps Šteimanis** (Riga, Latvia) — art director of digital design, production, and consulting company «Cube»
- **Liene Drāzniece** (Riga, Latvia) — graphic designer, co-founder, and head designer of organic skin care company «Madara Cosmetics».

The final jury evaluated all submitted works in accordance with the regulations, assigning one to ten points to each of following quality criteria:

- originality and novelty of the idea,
- setting of the problem and conformity of solutions to the work task,
- co-creation, stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the work process,
- functionality and technological solution,
- aesthetics and other dimensions of quality of experience,
- economic importance, sustainability and circularity,
- social relevance, inclusion, availability and accessibility.

Finalists in the communication design category:

1. **The visual identity of the youth organization «Young Folks».** Author - Rūta Jumīte.
Contractor - «Young Folks».
2. **Video message «Set the Record Straight».** Authors - «Overpriced», Roberts Rūrāns, Eduards Balodis, Jānis Vītoliņš. Contractor - NATO.
3. **Book «It's not for you! It's for the building».** Authors - Aleksejs Muraško, «NRJA», «Levelup/Copywriter», Ivars Veinbergs. Contractor - «NRJA», Ministry of Culture of Republic of Latvia.
4. **Riga patriots' month communication campaign.** Authors - Eva Abduļina, Jānis Klaučs, Dārta Apsīte. Contractor - Riga City Council.
5. **Celebratory campaign «Raise Latvia with work, song, language».** Author and Contractor— Riga City Council.

Finalists in the product design category:

6. **Design studio for children at the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design.** Authors - LNMM Department of Education and Accessibility - Kristīne Šica, Elīna Bērziņa, Kortnija Māra Gurtlava in collaboration with designer Lāsma Kondrate and illustrator Kristīne Martinova.
7. **«Aretai» speakers «Contra».** Authors - Jānis Irbe, Edgars Zvirgzdiņš. Contractor -«Aretai».
8. **Clothing collection «Vaguely Latvian».** Author and Contractor - «Skarule».
9. **Educational board game « Save the Handwriting ».** Authors - Līga Rīga Bērziņa, Agrita Rinkeviča, lectures from the Art Academy of Latvia. Contractor - Līga Rīga Bērziņa.
10. **Military vehicle «VR-1-FOX».** Author - Edijs Ļaksa. Contractor - «VR Cars».

Finalists in the digital solutions category:

11. **Video game «The Case of the Golden Idol».** Author and Contractor - «Color Gray».
12. **Mobile app «Emori».** Author and Contractor – Art Academy of Latvia — Ričards Znutiņš–Znutāns, Dārta Galiņa, Sandra Sugako, Džūlija Ekuse, Liene Jākobsone, Barbara Ābele, Matīss Zvaigzne, Markus Rožkalns. Riga Stradiņš University — Maruta Linuža,

Inga Iejava, Kristīne Mārtinsone, Inese Paiča, Ventspils University of Applied Sciences
— Jānis Vīksne, Karīna Šķirmante.

Finalists in the environmental design category:

13. **«Manufaktūra» brewery.** Author - «Sampling» (Manten Devriendt, Liene Jākobsone). Contractor - «Realto Manufaktūra».
14. **Interior for the drug preparation department of the pharmacy «Saules aptieka».** Author - «Muud» (Dins Vecāns, Jurijs Kostirko, Raitis Štobe). Contractor - «Saules aptieka».
15. **Exhibition « Sneakers: Eco x Ego ».** Exhibition design: “Sampling”, Ltd., Liene Jākobsone, Mantens Devrīnts, Luīza Stībe, graphic design: Kirils Kirasirovs, curator: Elīna Sproģe, curatorial support: Kristīne Liniņa, Kaspars Vanags, research support: Inga Vigdorčika, Mārtiņš Vesperis, Vineta Blitsone, educational program: Ieva Laube, project management: Gerda Čevere - Veinberga Contractor - Pauls Stradiņš Medicine History Museum.
16. **Exhibition «Room No. 13» at the ISSP Gallery.** Authors: Reinis Hofmanis, Alexey Beļeckis, Iveta Gaba. Contractor - ISSP Galerija.
17. **Exhibition «Weird Sensation Feels Good: The World of ASMR» at the Design Museum in London.** Authors: «Ēter»- Kārlis Bērziņš, Niklāvs Paegle, Dagnija Smilga, Mārtiņš Starks. Contractor — The London Design Museum, in collaboration with the Swedish Centre for Architecture and Design «ArkDes».

Finalists in the services design category:

18. **Self-service website «selfnamed.com».** Author and Contractor - «Cosmetics Nord»
19. **Experience – «Nature Gallery», Episode 4 of «Untamed Nights».** Author and Contractor - «Don't Panic» in collaboration with «Skudras metropole».

The National Design Award of Latvia is the highest award in the design field in Latvia, which is presented with the aim to identify, evaluate and promote the best achievements of Latvian designers and advance the development of the Latvian design industry.

1. Mobile app «Emori». “Emori is a prototype for a mobile self-help app for improving mental health. The app aims to help develop human emotion recognition and regulation skills. At the

same time, the app is a research platform that allows data collection and analysis of the emotion regulation skills of Latvian residents. The application is supplemented with illustrations, and it is interactive and intuitive, suitable for a broad audience of potential users. Healthcare professionals and designers are involved in the content creation, and the target audience is included in the development of each iteration of the app. The content of Emori is clinically approved and empirically based.

2. Video game «The Case of the Golden Idol». The Case of the Golden Idol is a digital detective game in which the player must find out the causes and interrelationships of twelve mysterious deaths over a period of forty years. The game's visual style features pixel art stylization with grotesque characters that evoke associations with 1990s adventure games. The game works even on low computer systems and does not require quick reactions or previous computer gaming skills to play it, thus is accessible and potentially enjoyable.

3. Book «It's not for you! It's for the building». At the 17th international architecture exhibition La Biennale di Venezia, a team of curators (under the leadership of the architectural office NRJA) examined peoples' resistance towards new technology as an acute problem in modern architecture. The book supplemented the exhibition in Venice and offers two opposing views on the role of technology in our everyday life. The book contains satirical short stories bordering on the absurd where inhabitants of buildings try and fail to use new technology, as well as balanced arguments laid out in essays by experts in the field who try to solve the problem. By using contrasting typefaces and colours in the design, the book highlights the polarized opinions while the many upside-down book markers reflect the absurd nature of the "techno-nonsense" discussed in the short stories.

4. The visual identity of the youth organization "Young Folks". Young Folks is a youth organization in Latvia which consists of more than twenty sub-organizations created and managed by young people. Its new visual identity helps to create individual recognition, as well as a common visual language for all Young Folks sub-organizations, including any that would be created in the future. The visual identity has a dynamic headline design and a simple applicative illustration design that anyone in an organization can use, derive, and bring to life, regardless of their graphic design skills, age group and access to digital tools. The new visual identity is a system of tools that is used and developed by the young people themselves and that evolves alongside the organization.

5. The Riga patriots' month communication campaign. In terms of content, the communication of the city of Riga during the month of national holidays combines stories about the national flag of Latvia from various private and historical sources and poems by Knuts Skujenieks about everyone's inner sense of freedom. Alongside the lines of poetry about freedom which state that freedom must be sustained individually and nurtured regardless of external circumstances, there are collected stories about the guardians of our flag – people who

during the occupation years hid, kept, dismantled and took the Latvian flag with them when they left, thereby becoming the guardians of a free Latvia. Complementing each other, these two concepts form a metaphorical braid of freedom.

6. Celebratory campaign «Raise Latvia with work, song, language». To encourage people not to give in to the sadness of autumn darkness, the Riga City Council created the celebratory campaign Raise Latvia with Work, Song, Language in honour of Latvia's birthday. The campaign highlighted the fact that freedom and state-hood are a process. The campaign featured artwork by Paulis Liepa, urban installations of Latvian folk songs with illuminated letters, an original soundtrack and an animated TV commercial that encouraged people to ask personal questions about what Latvia and being a Latvian mean to each of us.

7. Video message «Set the Record Straight». The idea was started even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The video Set the Record Straight talks about the need to understand the facts about NATO's expansion and debunks the myths spread about the NATO alliance by the Russian media and propaganda channels. The communication video was primarily intended for a Russian-speaking audience but later was translated into English. The hand-painted illustrations bring the video message to life, and the animation conveys key facts in a mature manner. The sound design makes it easier to understand both the nature of the video and the meaning of various characters and objects.

8. Experience – «Nature Gallery», Episode 4 of «Untamed Nights». Untamed Nights offers its visitors a new kind of experience that combines design, installation art, gastronomy, and culture. The Nature Gallery is the 4th episode of Untamed Nights – a place where nature becomes a work of art. The guests can spend the night in a cabin that mechanically rotates around its axis and surprises with a terrace that slides above the treetops. In the Nature Gallery, guests can enjoy the rain, fog, and shining moon, listen to the poetry of the trees, watch films on the lake and enjoy musical performances on the Hill of Sound. Using a GPS system and a special app, visitors can observe an augmented reality Earth, floating above the lake, which was created by artist Gints Gabrāns and speaks about climate change in the world.

9. Design studio for children at the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design. The Museum of Decorative Arts and Design has become an even more child-friendly and exciting place because of its new activity studio where children can explore design creatively. The design studio for children allows young museum visitors to try their hand at ceramics, kinetics, poster design, weaving, to feel the differences of various design materials and listen to stories told by the interactive speaker Babbit. The new design studio invites children to explore the topics covered in the museum in an engaging way and for families to build a closer connection with design in their everyday life.

10. «Aretai» speakers «Contra». The speaker collection Aretai Contra consists of three models: 350F, 200F and 100S. A specially designed sound waveguide delivers a wide, smooth sound stage with depth and focus while retaining a smooth and consistent bass response. The balance between direct and reflected sound waves creates a spatial listening experience. The speakers have a minimalistic black and white design, and the shape of the speakers exemplifies their technical characteristics.

11. The clothing collection «Vaguely Latvian». The clothing collection Vaguely Latvian is a continuation of the story that designer Sabīne Skarule began in her previous collection about “slow time”. The slow pace of everyday life during the pandemic inspired the author to study people's habits when it comes to doing nothing and the longing that accompanies this state of being. How could doing nothing – killing time – be more productive than doing anything? The clothing collection was created in Latvia, in collaboration with local craftspeople, and is the result of experimentation with new materials and their combinations.

12. The educational board game "Save the Handwriting". Save Handwriting is an educational board game for developing writing skills for children from the age of four. The aim of the game is to develop and interest in children to write by hand and to teach them the correct spelling of printed and written letters and letter combinations at an early age in an exciting way. The game is designed like a standard board game with a playing field and 185 task cards. Each task card has an embedded QR code that directs the user to instructional video animations. The animations explain in a simple way how to write each written or printed letter of the alphabet. The players must then reproduce the letters on a transparent board.

13. Military vehicle «VR-1-FOX». VR-1-FOX is a military vehicle with an open-top chassis designed and manufactured in Latvia and commissioned by the National Armed Forces of Latvia. This car is unique in its performance and combines the manoeuvrability of a light buggy and the durability of an off-road vehicle. Capable of taking on even the most challenging off-road missions, it is particularly suited for rapid transportation of personnel and cargo. The car's design speaks about the values of purposefulness, intransigence, and the ability to adapt. Since a military vehicle must blend in with its surroundings, the car's colour reflects the natural landscape of our area and observes NATO guidelines.

14. «Manufaktūra» brewery. Brūzis is located in a historic production building adapted to the needs of a brewery and bar. The concept of the project is based on the desire of the architects to highlight the long life of this humble building and the reconstructions it has experienced in different periods in time. The result aestheticises the different construction approaches and techniques, complementing them with a new, contemporary layering that once more reuses the building to fit a different function. The visual image of the building is conceived as a manifestation of sustainability and reuse. The interior design includes both previously used furniture, as well as furniture made from materials found on the building's territory.

15. Interior for the drug preparation department of the pharmacy «Saules aptieka». Five large shop windows in Riga, on Brīvības Street 68, allow a glimpse into the everyday life of a pharmacist to defy the stereotype that drugs are prepared in dark laboratories. The biggest conceptual challenge was to preserve and exhibit the magnificent interior of the historic building while providing a sterile working environment for the employees. The answer was using the "box within a box" principle. Without touching the plaster decorations, the room's shape was copied with a transparent protective membrane stretched between a square metal tube construction. Bright red accents in the furniture complement the graphic effect of the white plaster decorations and black lines.

16. Exhibition «Room No. 13» at the ISSP Gallery. The idea of the exhibition's scenography uses the archaeology of the gallery space — the peculiarities of the existing partition walls, adjacent external spaces and shop windows — to reinforce the concept of the artist's work. The transformation of the space stems from a series of works by the photographer Reinis Hofmanis, who has captured public interiors transformed by ordinary people. The scenographic solutions take over Hofmanis' visual observations of the relationship between humans and the environment — about how interiors' aesthetic and functional transformation and adaptation have created a strangely illogical yet heartfelt outcome.

17. Exhibition «Sneakers: Eco x Ego». For Pauls Stradiņš Medicine History Museum, this exhibition centred around sneakers is an experiment of venturing outside the familiar playing field. Peppered throughout with paradoxes of social history, the course of sports footwear development is a subject that helps make better sense of instances where society's idea of a healthy lifestyle is shaped by consumerist dependency on the commodity market. Sneakers are both a symbol of simplicity and comfort and an accessory of social prestige, elevated to the status of a global cult object by brand management. The selected items on view — from ethnographic 19th-century fetish objects to the 3D printer that continues producing new exhibits during the actual run of the show — comprise an interdisciplinary-approach-based message that aims to reflect the interaction between the sports and culture industries, the "mens-sana-in-corpore-sano" marketing, and manufacturing technologies."

18. Exhibition «Weird Sensation Feels Good: The World of ASMR» at the Design Museum in London. The exhibition's architecture attempts to synthesise the creative field of ASMR and its rich material world into a legible spatial language. Drawing influence from traditional spa cultures, flowing water is replaced by streams of contemporary media, aiming to create an atmosphere of safety and privacy in public, in which multiple people can be triggered to relax simultaneously. The design of the exhibition offers a new public space — an acoustically saturated environment, allowing the exhibit's visitors to immerse themselves in a multi-sensory experience of looking, listening, and feeling closely.

19. Self-service website «selfnamed.com». Selfnamed.com is an online self-service platform that allows anyone to create their own line of sustainable cosmetics. The platform allows one to order products with a personalized design and create marketing materials. The minimum order quantity is one unit. This avoids overproduction and makes the service more democratic. The platform promotes the availability of organic cosmetic products on the market and gives small and medium-sized companies the opportunity to develop in the cosmetics segment.

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