

Seminar *Üle mere – yli meren. Building Artistic Contacts Between Estonia and Finland in the Long Middle Ages*

Friday 14.10.2022 10.30 AM–5.30 PM

Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura / Finnish Literature Society, Hallituskatu 1, Helsinki

Speakers:

Tuuli Heinonen, Merike Kurisoo, Saira Leskinen, Anu Mänd, Jan Friedrich Richter, Tapio Salminen, Panu Savolainen, Katri Vuola

Panel:

Elina Räsänen, Krista Kodres, Greta Koppel, Anu Lahtinen

The seminar *Üle mere – yli mere. Building Artistic Contacts Between Estonia and Finland in the Long Middle Ages* examines the creation and development of a “cultural bridge” connecting the two shores of the Gulf of Finland in the Medieval and Early Modern periods. The event has been organised in cooperation with the Art Museum of Estonia’s research and exhibition project *Michel Sittow in the North? Altarpieces in Dialogue* and the University of Helsinki research project *Iconoclash/Kuvakalske. Fragmentation and Iconoclash in Medieval and Early Modern Objects*. For the first time, the seminar will bring together Estonian and Finnish art historians and historians to look at the creation and development of these artistic and cultural relations in the Long Middle Ages, and the people and networks behind them.

The cultural bridge between Estonia and Finland is based on geographical and linguistic closeness, and contacts between people with deep roots in the Middle Ages. Tallinn’s significance for the art and architecture of Medieval and Early Modern Finland is witnessed by surviving buildings, sculptures, altarpieces and archival sources. Michel Sittow, who was born in Tallinn and worked as an artist in his home town in the early 16th century, was linked to Finland through family ties and was commissioned to create works of art for the northern shores of the Gulf. To this day, artworks from the workshops of Arent Passer and Tobias Heintze, who were active in Tallinn in the Early Modern period, can still be seen in churches. The presence of Tallinn masters in Finland is attested to by the architectural details and monumental funerary monuments of Estonian limestone.

The seminar will look at the questions: What was the significance of Tallinn as an art centre in Medieval Finland and the Baltic Sea region in general? How did these contacts continue in the 16th and 17th centuries? How much of Finnish church art may have been created in Tallinn or transmitted through the Hanseatic city? Does this surviving material tell us anything about the now lost works that once decorated the churches in Estonia? How can these questions and hypotheses be explored when most of the older art was created by anonymous masters?

The seminar is organised in cooperation between research projects *Michel Sittow in the North? Altarpieces in Dialogue* and *Iconoclash/Kuvakalske. Fragmentation and Iconoclash in Medieval and Early Modern Objects*.

Seminar homepage:

<https://kunstimuuseum.ekm.ee/en/syndmus/seminar-ule-mere-yli-meren-building-artistic-contacts-between-estonia-and-finland-in-the-long-middle-ages/>

Facebook event:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2761232320720053?ref=newsfeed>

The seminar will take place in the Finnish Literary Society (Hallituskatu 1, Helsinki) on 14 October from 10.30 to 17.30.

Organisers:

Dr. Merike Kurisoo (Art Museum of Estonia) and Doc. Dr. Elina Räsänen (University of Helsinki)

Supporters:

Nordisk Kulturfond, Finnish Literature Society, Koneen Säätiö

Additional information:

Merike Kurisoo

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Exhibition and research project *Michel Sittow in the North? Altarpieces in Dialogue*

<https://kunstimuuseum.ekm.ee/en/activities/projects/michel-sittow-in-the-north-altarpieces-in-dialogue/>

Elina Räsänen

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Research project *Iconoclash/Kuvakalske. Fragmentation and Iconoclash in Medieval and Early Modern Objects*

<https://blogs.helsinki.fi/kuvakalske/>

Merike Kurisoo, PhD

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