



ONLINE LECTURES – PLAN

October 20 – 24

	20.10.	21.10.	22.10.	23.10.	24.10.
17:00	Do we still belong somewhere? Rethinking cities, communities and our place in them Mārtiņš Eņģelis	Behind the message – how creative ideas shape what we see and believe Una Rozenbauma	The real deal with zero waste – what we throw away and why it matters Maija Krastiņa	Can happiness be learned? A mindful look at life satisfaction – Ansis Stabingis	Inequality around us – what it really means and what we can do about it Dīana Kiščenko
18:00	How to care about the world when you are barely holding yourself together? – Ansis Stabingis	What kind of creature is resilience? Understanding how we recover, adapt and grow Jonas Büchel	Power, politics and the art of staying human Linda Curika	The obsessive eye – curiosity, observation and the art of seeing Pedro Ferreira	Ideas for self-care – why you matter most Māra Laizāne

Please note that the content and sequence of the online residency sessions may be subject to minor changes. However, the overall schedule and timing of the sessions will remain the same.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

17:00 - Will cities ever be perfect? Rethinking liveable urban spaces, communities, and our future

Mārtiņš Eņģelis

There is not a single city on Earth that's ideal. So, should we keep trying to smooth them out? Or is there a chance to find sense of home, community, future and hope even in odd places?

In this talk, urban researcher and strategic planner Mārtiņš Eņģelis explores how people, culture and space interact to create meaningful, yet not always perfect places. Drawing on examples from Riga and beyond, he looks at how cities can become more authentic, liveable, creative and inclusive when residents take part in shaping them. Participants will be invited to reflect on their own sense of belonging and how everyday actions can change the places we live in.

18:00 - How to care about the world when you are barely holding yourself together?

Ansis Stabingis

When the world feels overwhelming, it can be hard to stay open and engaged if you are struggling to find balance within yourself. This talk explores how awareness, grounded presence and self-understanding can help us care about what happens around us without losing stability. We will look at how authentic care for others begins with clarity and compassion for ourselves.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21

17:00 – Behind the message – how creative ideas shape what we see and believe

Una Rozenbauma

Every day we scroll through images, campaigns and stories that influence how we think, feel and act, but who creates these messages and why do they work? In this talk, director and creative strategist Una Rozenbauma reveals what happens behind the scenes of culture and communication. She shares how trends are born, how ideas are transformed into stories, and how creativity can both reflect and shape society. Through examples from film, media and advertising, Una invites participants to look critically and curiously at the world of messages that surrounds us.

18:00 - What kind of creature is resilience? Understanding how we recover, adapt and grow

Jonas Büchel

We keep hearing the word resilience – but what does it really mean? Is it strength, flexibility, survival, or something else? In this talk, Jonas Büchel helps unpack resilience as a personal, social and cultural capacity. Drawing on examples from communities, cities and everyday life, he explores how people and places manage to recover after change, crisis or loss. The session invites participants to reflect on what helps them stay grounded, how societies learn from challenges, and why resilience is not about perfection, but about connection and care.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

17:00: The real deal with zero waste – what we throw away and why it matters

Maija Krastiņa

Can we live sustainably without turning our lives upside down? In this practical and down-to-earth talk, Maija Krastiņa explores how small, realistic changes can make a big difference for our planet and our daily routines. From food waste and composting to smart consumption and circular economy ideas, she breaks the myths about sustainability being boring, expensive or extreme. Participants will discover how to build habits that are good for both the environment and personal well-being.

18:00: Power, politics and the art of staying human

Linda Curika

What does security mean in today's world, and where do we, as individuals, fit in it? Linda Curika takes a closer look at how global politics, defence strategies and information wars shape our everyday lives. From AI and hybrid threats to ethics and civic freedom, she explores how critical thinking and empathy can coexist with the hard realities of geopolitics. The session invites young people to reflect on their own role in shaping safer and more resilient societies.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

17.00: Can happiness be learned? A mindful look at life satisfaction

Ansis Stabingis

What does it really mean to be happy, and can we learn it? Drawing on existential psychotherapy and mindfulness, this session examines how our attitudes and choices shape fulfilment. Through practical insights and reflection, we will explore how to cultivate genuine contentment and resilience in everyday life.

18:00 The Obsessive Eye – curiosity and the art of seeing
Pedro Ferreira

What if curiosity wasn't just a trait, but a superpower? In this online talk, creative director and culture agent Pedro Ferreira dives into the art of truly seeing — noticing what others miss, finding beauty in chaos and visual trash and turning everyday details into ideas.

With stories from his life in advertising, art, fashion, and culture, Pedro shows how staying curious keeps your creativity alive (and your mind wide open).

Expect sharp visuals, honest thoughts, and inspiration for anyone living in the scroll age.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24

17:00 - Inequality around us – what it really means and what we can do about it
Diāna Kiščenko

Inequality shows itself in many ways, in how we live, work, form relationships and make decisions about our futures. In this talk, social anthropologist Diāna Kiščenko explores how gender, work, health and culture reflect deeper imbalances in society. Drawing on her research in Latvia, Montenegro and Brazil, she invites us to look closer at how these patterns connect across the world and what we can do to make everyday life fairer for everyone. Understanding these connections can help us see our own place in society more clearly, and remind us that every small act of awareness, empathy and courage can start to change the world around us.

18:00 - Ideas for self-care – why you matter most
Māra Laizāne

How do we actually take care of ourselves when life feels too full, too fast, or simply too much? In this talk, social anthropologist and mental health advocate Māra Laizāne shares one hundred real and relatable ways to support your own well-being. From small daily rituals to bigger mindset shifts, she reminds us that caring for ourselves is not selfish but essential. Expect honesty, humour and ideas you can try straight away, because you are the most important person in your own life.

YOUR EXPERTS

Moderator: Eva Johansone

Eva Johansone is a culture journalist, TV host and event moderator with many years of experience in media and public life. On Latvian Television, she presents Culture News and often moderates events where art, society and science meet. With a background in philosophy and cultural journalism, and ongoing studies in biology, Eva is curious about how people think, create and care for the world they live in. She is also part of the NGO Ascendum, where she helps develop projects that connect culture, sustainability and community.

Mārtiņš Eņģelis

Mārtiņš Eņģelis is an urban strategist and spatial planner currently serving as a city councillor at Riga Municipality. He has a vast experience in culture, tourism and urban development and has worked with the Icelandic Tourism Research Centre, the Danish Cultural Institute, the Latvian Investment and Development Agency and RIXC new media art centre. Mārtiņš holds master's degrees in spatial development planning and international tourism management and, as well as a bachelor's in new media art. He writes and speaks widely about cities, creativity and communities, and plans to become Latvia's youngest president by 2031.

Ansis Stabingis

Ansis Stabingis is a mindfulness and meditation trainer, psychotherapist and supervisor with more than 20 years of experience. He originally studied physics and psychology and has a background in existential psychotherapy, psycho-organic analysis and Jungian psychology. His work brings together psychotherapy and spiritual practice to help people strengthen self-awareness, relationships and inner balance.

Una Rozenbauma

Una Rozenbauma is a Latvian film and television director, screenwriter and creative strategist whose work spans topics such as identity, culture, social behaviour and communication. In her series, short films and creative projects she often explores human relationships, youth culture and socially relevant issues, combining sharp observation with empathy and humour. She is the creator of the award-winning campaign #iamintrovert, which represented Latvia at the London Design Biennale and won the Latvian Design Award. Una is also a mother of four and continues to explore how creativity can communicate ideas that challenge, connect and inspire.

Jonas Büchel

Jonas Büchel is a consultant in strategic urban and regional development, social and cultural planning. Originally from Germany and based in Riga for many years, he works across Europe helping cities and communities strengthen participation, dialogue and local identity. Jonas is the founder of the Urban Institute Riga and has led numerous projects on civic engagement, resilience and inclusive planning. His work brings together culture, education and community action to explore how people and places can become more connected, confident and caring.

Linda Curika

Linda Curika has worked across government, international organisations and civil society in the fields of communication, defence and public policy. She has served as Strategic Communications Advisor to the Minister of Interior of Latvia and contributed to strengthening NATO's public voice at the StratCom Centre of Excellence. As a Chairperson of the Board of the liberal political party Kustība "Par!", she has helped shape strategies and governance for progressive change. Alongside her professional work, she writes prose and public commentary, hosts podcasts, advocates for women's rights, and co-creates the "Women's Stand-up" initiative, combining civic engagement with creativity and humour.

Maija Krastiņa

Maija Krastiņa is a communication specialist, activist and board member of Zero Waste Latvija, where she educates the public about circular economy and waste reduction. She also represents Latvia on the board of Zero Waste Europe. Passionate about practical sustainability, she speaks on topics such as food waste, recycling, composting and waste policy. Maija is also

the founder of the civic initiative Naktsmieru Rīgai, created to improve dialogue between residents and the nightlife industry.

Pedro Ferreira

Creative director and art director based in Lisbon. Head of Art and Culture at VML and co-founder of CCP Creative Club of Portugal. His work across global brands and cultural projects has won major awards but his real obsession is curiosity itself, and how to drive your distracted eye to what he wants you to see.

Diāna Kiščenko

Diāna Kiščenko is a researcher, lecturer and PhD candidate at Rīga Stradiņš University. Her academic work focuses on gender, sexuality, reproduction and inequality, with field research carried out in Latvia, Montenegro and Brazil. She teaches in the Social Anthropology master's programme and contributes to international projects related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including gender equality, decent work, sustainable communities and reduced inequalities. Diāna believes that understanding human diversity is the first step toward creating fairer and more compassionate societies.

Māra Laizāne

Māra Laizāne is a social anthropologist, entrepreneur and co-founder of TIEK, a mental health magazine and centre that connects expert knowledge with people's everyday experiences. She lectures and writes about mental health, communication and social awareness, and is active in civic and feminist initiatives, including the centre MARTA and the liberal movement Kustība Par!. Māra believes that mental well-being starts with curiosity about ourselves and the courage to care.



IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR JUST WANT TO GET IN TOUCH, FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO ŽANETE EGLĪTE, Project Manager of Civic AF*