

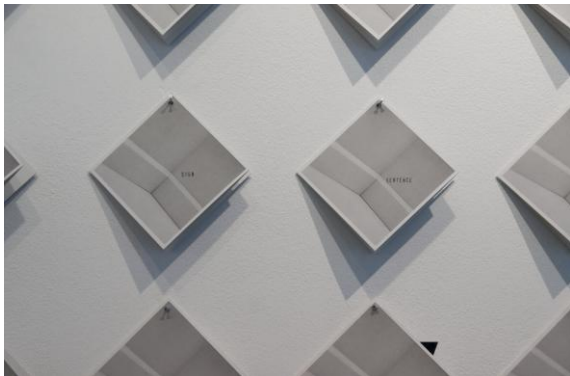
DÉNES FARKAS

Dénes Farkas was born in 1974 in Budapest, but lives and works in Tallinn and exhibits as an Estonian artist. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts, Department of Media Arts and Photography in 2003 and received the Annual Prize of The Cultural Endowment of Estonia in 2010. He has also received the Guido Carbone Prize for the best new booth at Artissima in 2012, and the Annual Prize of The Cultural Endowment of Estonia again in 2014. He is exhibiting not only at ARCOmadrid, but also at the Armory Show, New York in 2014 and at the 16th Tallinn Print Triennial, entitled "Literacy/Illiteracy". Farkas is most recognizable for his minimalist, yet sensitive and poetic works, mostly questioning geometry, function and dysfunction, doubt and melancholy. He has participated in a large number of group and solo exhibitions. His first solo exhibition was held in 1998 in Budapest, Hungary. Dénes Farkas is a founding member of the Union of Photographic Artists of Estonia, which was established in 2009.

Regarding his work experiences, he is a multitalented artist who works in numerous fields: in addition to being a printmaker, a lecturer, a photographer and graphic designer, he was also the program manager at the Hungarian Institute in Tallinn between 2009 and 2011. His curatorial projects included "Hungarian Utopia" in 2010 and "Insanity" in 2008.

In 2013 Dénes Farkas represented Estonia at the 55th La Biennale di Venezia with his project "Evident In Advance" (curated by Adam Budak), which was inspired by the American writer, Bruce Duffy's novel, "The World As I Found It". Like the storyline of the book, Farkas's work focuses on fiction and reality, and the thin line between truth and false. The concept of the exhibition relies on communication, especially in various kinds of artistic surroundings, public and private spaces. Human errors, mistakes, including weakness and inabilities constitute major topics in his art.

Recent Works by Dénes Farkas



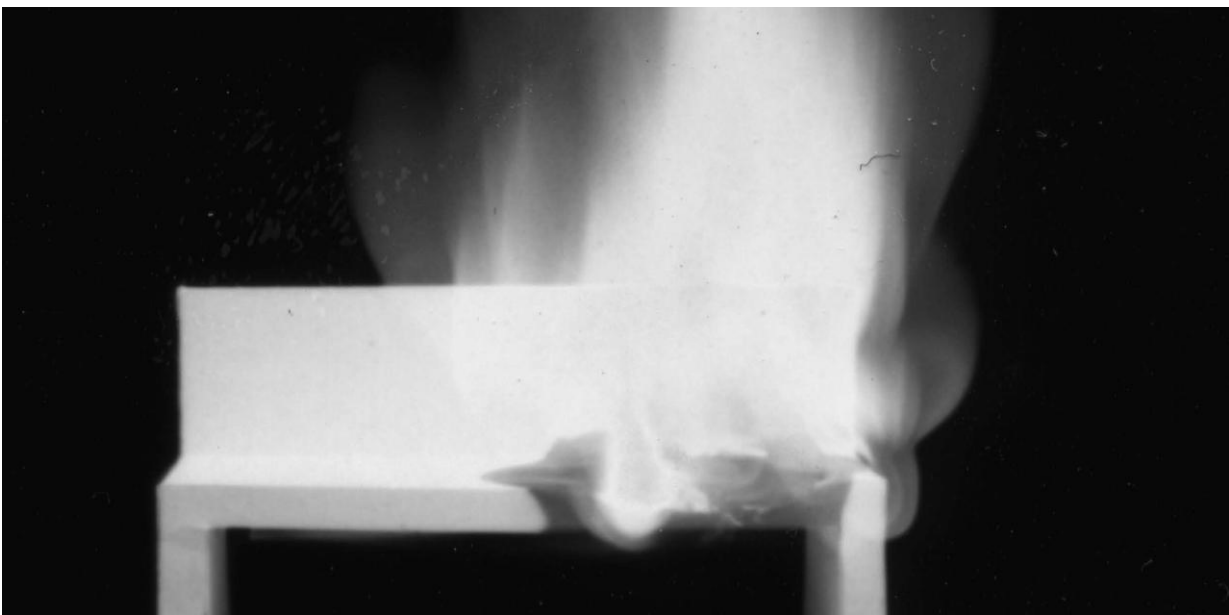
A day that does not exist (2012, Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn) Exhibition interior

Dénes Farkas creates minimalist-like cardboard models of furniture, rooms, stairs, etc and then takes black-and-white photographs of them. His spaces evoke a sense of dysfunction, doubt and melancholy.



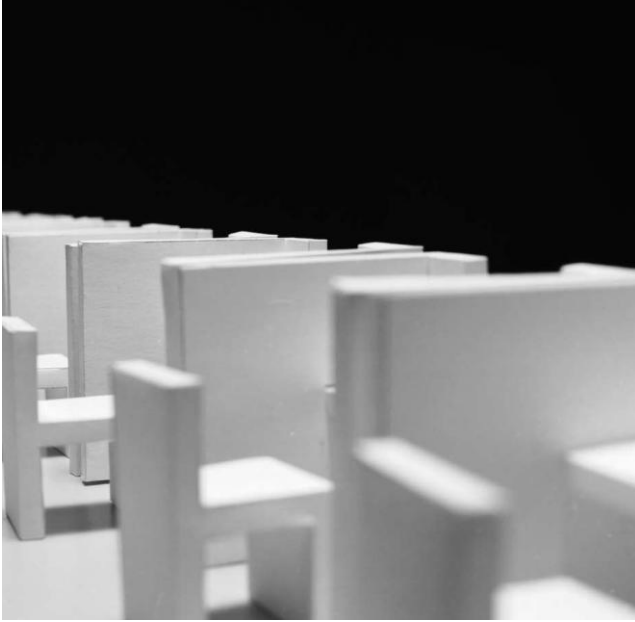
Life sentence (2010), photograph of paper model

Using simple geometric shapes Dénes Farkas creates empty spaces from paper models of walls and various pieces of furniture. These spaces appeal to the beholder's sense of emptiness and allow our imagination to fill these scenes with people and events. The strong contrast of black and white shapes, the sharpness of edges, together with the consciously created light and shade effects create a visual image which radiates a sense of melancholy. His carefully selected titles add to the morose atmospheres.

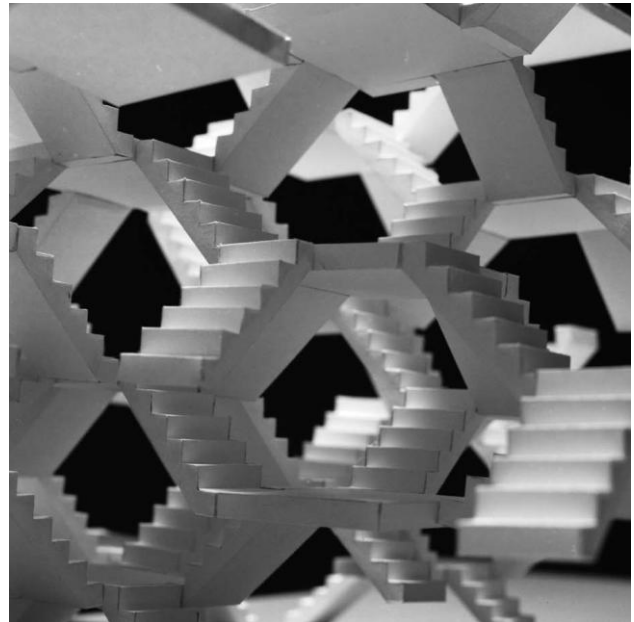


Romance (2010), photograph of paper model

A sense of emptiness, a peculiarly current theme in both contemporary literature and the visual art, is one of the basic pillars of Dénes Farkas's art. His photographic series often have their own timeline which documents a narrative the characters of which only exist in the imagination of the beholder.



Equal opportunity (2010), photograph of paper model



Le system liberal #0001 (2010), photograph of paper model

In addition to his interest in the boundary that lies between reality and fiction, the works of Dénes Farkas often evoke current social critiques.

Estonian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennial in 2013

In his project for the pavilion EVIDENT IN ADVANCE, curated by Adam Budak, Farkas's cinematic spaces of contemplation are joined with fragments from Bruce Duffy's novel *The World as I Found It* (1987), a fictionalized account of the lives of three philosophers, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russell, and G. E. Moore. Here, on the pages of this fascinating book, contemplation, free thinking and magnetic philosophy construct an architecture of thought, precise and logic, but unstable too, challenged by a polymorphousness of sense and meaning. The installation addresses a vast diapason of issues, grouped around the elusiveness of language, the (im)possibilities of translation and the logic of infinite re-translations.

Farkas creates cinematic spaces of contemplation using paper models which he links to textual phrases, in this case to extracts from Duffy's novel. Farkas's spaces which often have an eerie quality of dysfunction and melancholy provide us with an opportunity where we, the viewer fill in the plot and the characters – characters who have either left the scene or have not yet arrived. His works question the artificial boundaries erected between fiction and reality, between truth and false.



Books enclosed in frames mounted on the wall



Index cards with word entries



Small lightboxes showing pages from the book which accompanied the exhibition at the Venice Biennial

The installation in the Estonian Pavilion is orchestrated as a composition based upon a slightly varying sets of a (as if musical) score: the articulations of the same story created from the carefully

deconstructed novel and from other related sources (the texts of the above mentioned philosophers, texts of the authors and co-authors of the project) are spatialized within a give physical space and a mental space of the viewer's perceptive field. Here, we are at the threshold of a meaning's construction as an on-going study of a repetition and silence.

The very act of working with the original text – taking apart, dismantling, editing and appropriating – is conducted under a supervision and a control of the author of the novel himself – a mastermind – and assisted by a linguist, an expert of sorts, a passionate of words, letters, and their troublesome relationships and by a scholar, an expert in echoes and resonances, shadow-meanings and their secret influence.

The rigid interior architecture of Estonian Pavilion with a vast entrance-hallway and adjacent living-rooms writes a potential scenario of a master-narrative and chapter-like episodes. The rooms are chamber-minds – rough references to situations, positions and spaces that surround a more complex, almost questionably standard-like exhibition space. A close collaboration with an architect should help to deal with such a complex construction site by turning it into a realm of criticality where language is perceived as a mathematical issue in a truly Wittgensteinian way.

The project's concept relies upon elements that come from various fields of culture and knowledge production. A variety of direct references in a spatial concept of related rooms but also the articulation of the main thought are fueled by the ideas of collections, archives, museums, libraries, but also of dictionaries, indices and cataloguing. They deal with the systems of order and classification and correspond with the usage of and relationality between public and private spaces. How do we understand the same word or sentence in dissimilar surroundings? How do we communicate in different situations? How do we *write* space? How can we achieve a real communication with a medium of an exhibition?

Challenged by Bruce Duffy's act of a narrative forgery, the project explored a doubt and suspension of belief by a further reconsideration of the thoughts of the author's protagonists in a reasonably critical way. Breaking up the imaginary story and creating a whole new dizzy polylogue produces an intriguing but also heavily coded play. The narrative is not eventual – the visitor, drawn in a textual net, is supposed to *become* a part of a unique story. Various fragments of the main text and elements of a stage paired in different forms, mostly not visibly at first sight, contribute to a new geometry of a site, both physical and mental. A relatively silent play on a very simple and restrained stage – an artificial setting, very likely just a model, existing only as reproductions on photographs, puzzles of a generic cartography. Here, we are in a realm of palimpsest, overlap of texts, an ivory towers of memory, history and contemporary desire to replay the times past.

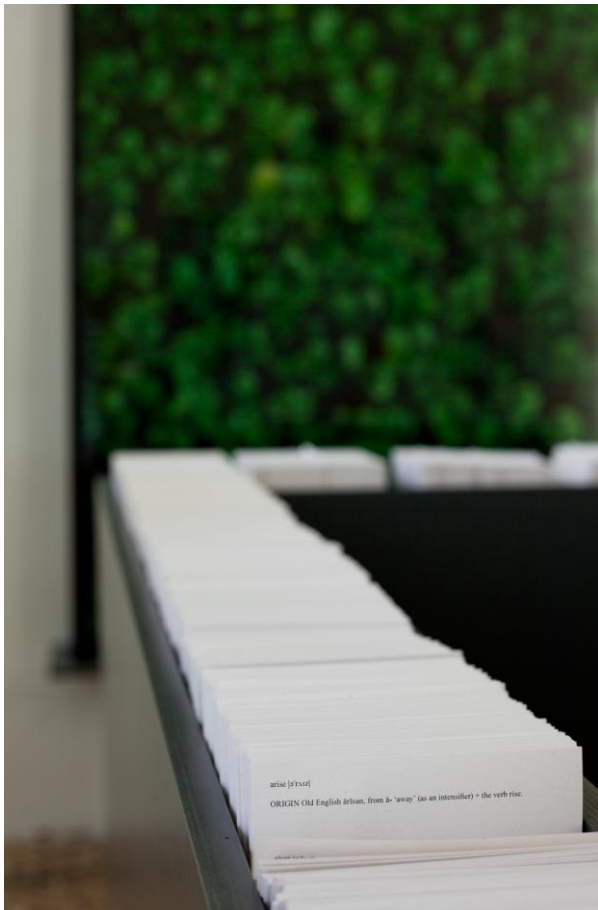
However EVIDENT IN ADVANCE rejects a hyper-narrative which would emphasize the fabricated mastery and perfection of a human mind. Instead, it focuses on errors and logical mistakes, moments of weakness and inability. From the very beginning, being haunted by its predictability, the narrative is condemned to a delicious failure and collapse. Aware of such a fate, the project in a Beckettian way exercises its own inabilities in a ritualistic act of repetition and seriality.



Large lightboxes showing photographs



Lightbox and bookcase holding the books that accompanied the exhibition at the Venice Biennial



Index cards with dictionary entries



Bookcase holding the books

Here, there is a maze of almost identical rooms, acting like words in a lost sentence before its articulation. What are we saying? Why are we saying (it)? The content and its pronunciation are seemingly blurred. How do we understand (it)? How are we trying to put bits of information together in order to construct a useful and meaningful story? The process of production and the act of reception concentrate on such questions. The despair conducts the deconstruction of a text and the assemblage of installations. Using the same words and the same sentences and even the same logical constructions, we are still in a danger of maneuvering through misled areas of meaning and common sense.

Proustian paraphrase „à la recherche de la recit perdu“ (mis)guides the authors of this project. In order to receive instructions how to navigate in the exhibition's real and imaginary space, it is necessary to open and study the specially created books, while walking around and examining the potential connections between images, objects and words, sentences and episodes. It is not the authors' intention to create a well recognizable exhibition-like setting as a whole. Eventually the aim is to generate a bit dysfunctional interactive installation within such familiar although uncanny spaces.

Playing with the fragments and resetting the acknowledged codes of a play but also desperately trying to decipher the borders – the end and the beginning – and, last but not least, the center, a guarantee of the meaning of the story; a story which might not be *constructible*; or the one which does not exist at all; a phantasmagoria.



Books enclosed in frames mounted on the wall

Biography

Born in Budapest, 1974, lives and works in Tallinn

Studies

2001 Estonian Academy of Arts, Bachelor of Arts (printmaking)

2003 Estonian Academy of Arts, Master of Arts (media arts – photography)

Prizes, scholarships

2014 Annual Prize of The Cultural Endowment of Estonia

2012 Guido Carbone Prize for the best new booth at Artissima

2010 The Annual Prize of The Cultural Endowment of Estonia

2011 Köler Prize (Nomination)

Membership in art organizations

2009 Union of Photographic Artists, Estonia (founding member)

2007 - 2009 Member of the Estonian Academy of Arts Council

2006 The Estonian Artists' Association

Solo Exhibitions

- 2014 Evident in Advance, KUMU Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia
- 2013 CREDO, Ani Molnár Gallery, Budapest
Evident in Advance 55th Venice Art Biennale (la Biennale di Venezia), Estonian Pavilion, Venice, Italy, curator: Adam Budak
- 2012 In Immobility, Fuga, Budapest, Hungary
A Day That Does Not Exist, Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn
- 2011 Footnotes 2 - (with Taavi Talve) Draakoni Gallery, Tallinn
Joonealused - (with Taavi Talve) Tartu Kunstimaja Monumentaal Galerii, Tartu, Estonia
- 3 Seas - (with Neeme Külm) Labor, Budapest, Hungary
- 2010 Lets play, the game is over - Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn
- 2009 Light Retrospective - Bank of Estonia, Tallinn
How the fuck are you tonight, ehk kuidas sul siis täna läinud on? - City Gallery, Tallinn
- 2007 ideal.total - (with Neeme Külm) City Gallery, Tallinn
- 2006 Green Diagonal - Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn
Green Diagonal - Fletch-Bizzel Theater, Dortmund, Germany
Shortcut - Endla Theater Gallery, Pärnu, Estonia
- 2005 Self-portrait - Draakoni Gallery, Tallinn
14 Portraits - Jazz Café, Pärnu, Estonia
- 2004 15 Portraits - Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn
Trans-air - (with Eemil Karila) Viinistu Art Museum Gallery, Viinistu, Estonia
- 2003 Ritual - (with Eveli Varik) Center of Culture, Valga, Estonia
- 2002 Jesus and Angel - (with Eemil Karila) Jazz Café, Pärnu, Estonia
Transformers - (with Eemil Karila) Gallery of the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn
- 2001 Loneliness. Cleanness. Love - (with Eveli Varik and Riina Uisk) The Castle of Kuressaare, Kuressaare, Estonia
Loneliness. Cleanness. Love - (with Eveli Varik and Riina Uisk) Gallery of the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn
- 1998 Graphics -13,75 - (with Jukka Pylväs and Juha Ahola) Pallasz Páholy, Budapest, Hungary

Group Exhibitions

- 2014 ARCOMadrid, Spain
The 16th Tallinn Print Triennial, entitled "Literacy/Illiteracy", Estonia
- 2013 Art Market Budapest
Artissima, Turin, Italy
"Art from Estonia - Dénes Farkas, Soho Fond, Neeme Külm, Jüri Ojaver, Tõnis Saadoja, Jaan Toomik", Artists Union of Republic of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia
- 2012 Intimate Immensity, Musterzimmer, Berlin, curator: Jon Irigoyen
The Exotic, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, curator: Kirke Kangro
Aesthetics vs Information Vol. 2, Klaipeda, Lithuania, curator: Ignas Kazakevicius
- 2011 BEYOND, Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, curator: Adam Budak

- Aesthetics vs Information Vol. 2, Zurab Tsereteli Gallery, Moscow, Russia, curator: Ignas Kazakevicius
- Mutantmateeria, (with Neeme Külm) Raja str gallery, Tallinn, curator: Kirke Kangro
- Neverneverland, Künstlervereinigung MAERZ, Linz, Austria, curator: Beate Rathmayr
- Silent wishes, Oksasenkatu 11, Helsinki, Finland
- Köler Prize 2011 - Exhibition of Nominees, Contemporary Art Museum, Estonia, Tallinn
- If it's part broke, half fix it, (with Neeme Külm) Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania, curator: Margit Säde
- 2010 Next to nothing, Contemporary Art Museum, Estonia, Tallinn, curator: Anders Härm
- 2009 Blue-Collar Blues, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, curator: Anders Härm
- TDK (with Eemil Karila) - Museum of Contemporary Arts, Tallinn
- 2008 Plaisirs de l'imagination, Castle of Tours, France, curator: Eha Komissarov
- I see you looking at me, Eevald Okas Museum, Haapsalu, Estonia, curator: Marge Monko
- 2007 New Wave, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, curators: Anders Härm and Hanno Soans
- 2006 Permission to grow up (with Eemil Karila, Kristi Paap, Kaire Rannik, Ketli Tiitsar, Maria Valdma) - Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn
- 2005 Permission to grow up (with Eemil Karila, Kristi Paap, Kaire Rannik, Ketli Tiitsar, Maria Valdma) - Artists House, Szombathely, Hungary
- 2004 Home, Sweet Home, Rottermann Salt Storage, Tallinn, curator: Eha Komissarov
- Kaunas Photo Days - International Photo Festival - Kaunas, Lithuania, curator: Mindaugas Kavaliauskas
- Intiimsed vaated - Narva Museum, Narva, Estonia, curator: Anneli Porri
- Similar Spaces - The Palace of Westminster, London, UK, curator: Liina Siib
- 2003 MA - MA, MA - MA - M.A. exhibition - Art Hall Gallery, Tallinn
- [Living]room - 008 Gallery, Tallinn
- 2002 VABA VOLI / FREEPLAY - Hansapank Gallery, Tallinn, curator: Liina Siib
- Objectum - Gallery of the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn
- Autoportree - Endla Theater Gallery, Pärnu, Estonia, curator: Margaret Tali
- Drawing 2002 - (with Eemil Karila) Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, curator: Loit Jõekalda, Jüri Hain, Tea Tammelaan
- 2001 Photo shop - (with the artists group "NAGI"), Finnish Institute, Tallinn
- Altar - Museum of Energetics, Tallinn, curator: Marko Mäetamm
- Mäetamm old rag - Gallery of the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn
- B.A. exhibition - Rottermann Salt Storage, Tallinn

Works in collections

Art Museum Of Estonia

Private collections in Estonia, Hungary, Finland

Bibliography (selected)

Andreas Trossek writes about the solo exhibition Let's Play, the game is over by Dénes Farkas. April, 2010. <http://ajakirikunst.ee/?c=magazine&l=en&t=symphony-of-incapacity-or-the-time-of-small-people&id=302>

Dénes Farkas on the Dark Side of Alvar Aalto. April, 2012.
<http://ajakirikunst.ee/?c=magazine&l=en&t=images-to-words&id=642>

On the Estonian Pavilion of Dénes Farkas, March, 2013.
<http://www.echogonewrong.lt/component/k2/item/295-thumbs-up-for-the-“it”-project-interview-with-estonian-pavilion-team-at-55th-venice-biennale.html>

On the Estonian Pavilion of Dénes Farkas, May, 2013.
<http://www.e-flux.com/announcements/denes-farkas-2/>

Interview with Dénes Farkas, December, 2012. <http://artycok.tv/lang/en-us/artist/farkas-denes>

The Game of Communication. An interview with artist Dénes Farkas, who will represent Estonia at the 55th Venice Biennale – Interviewed by Elīna Zuzāne April, 2013
<http://www.arterritory.com/en/texts/interviews/2169-the-game-of-communication/>

On Dénes Farkas's exhibition in the Estonian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale. November, 2012, <http://galleristny.com/2012/11/estonia-will-show-denes-farkas-at-2013-venice-biennale/>

For further information: please contact the Ani Molnár Gallery
Address: 1088 Budapest, Bródy S. u. 22. Hungary
Tel: +36 30 212 8080
E-mail: info@molnaranigaleria.hu • www.molnaranigaleria.hu