

"It's the gift that counts in art, not the geography – talent and what it produces are stronger than the political walls that separate us, and outlast narrow-mindedness and iniquity," said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves as he opened the 'Estonian Art in Exile' exhibition at the Art Museum of Estonia today.

"This exhibition helps us fill in the gaps in our knowledge, and thus expand the horizons of our understanding," he said. "It gives us the chance to get to know Estonian art created far from its homeland; to look at our cultural history from an angle of which very few are aware. In the broader context it doesn't do to label things 'foreign Estonian literature' or 'foreign Estonian art' – there is only Estonian literature and Estonian art."

The exhibition, which opened today in the main hall at the Kumu art museum, showcases Estonian art produced in exile. The exhibition was designed by the Art Museum of Estonia and Tartu Art Museum as part of the research project into Estonian art in exile launched by Kumu in 2007. The richly illustrated catalogue accompanying the exhibition, which includes both Estonian and English text, was also presented at the opening.

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