

## Spotlight on Estonian Artist Mark Raidpere



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### **Mark Raidpere “Damage” Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn Until September 8, 2013**

Up until the first days of autumn, the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia will be showing works created between 2007 and 2013 by Estonia's most internationally renowned artist – Mark Raidpere (1975). One part of the museum has been specially tailored to show completely new video-installation created in Tallinn quite short time before exhibition opening.

Society's outcasts, urban violence, street life, the human soul, loneliness and tragic fates – these are the themes that the artist tends to cover in his photographs and video-works. In reflecting these themes, Raidpere's special signature is expressed by showing them through the prism of family and self-image. After having represented Estonia in its national pavilion at the 2005 Venice Art Biennale, Raidpere immediately padded his creative account with the Baltic region's largest award at the time – the *Hansabank Art Prize* – for his honorable and humane portrayals of the relationship between individuals and society.

Since 2005, Raidpere's solo shows have traveled from Naples to Paris, from Istanbul to Glasgow; in addition, his works have been included in numerous group shows on both sides of the Atlantic. 2008 saw a new wave of recognition for his artistic career, and his list of awards grew with the addition of the *Loop'08 Award*, the *Gilles Dusein Prize* and the *Ars Fennica Award*.

After this show in Tallinn – which, after a five-year break, has finally allowed for Raidpere's name to grace the marquee of an exhibition in Estonia – the artist, along with twenty other internationally recognized artists, will head to Mechelen, Belgium from 24 August to 3 November to take part in *Contour 2013: 6th Biennial of the Moving Image*; Raidpere's works will be on view in the biennale's exhibition “Leisure, Discipline and Punishment”.

While Raidpere was busy with setting up his show in the halls of the Contemporary Art Museum of

Estonia, Arterritory.com attempted to find out a bit more about the chronology of his creativity – the how's and why's of his turning away from socially relevant themes and his return towards the search for identity.



“Alone” from “Damage” series

**As it is stated in the press release - the exhibition focuses on your work in the post-**



**Venice period by assembling mostly the works created between 2007 and 2013. Do you use to separate your creative periods for yourself? And how do they differ?**

After executing my Venice Biennial exhibition “Isolator” in 2005 I made conscious decision to “broaden my horizon” by trying to find themes from outside my family circle or self-image. I felt that I had wrapped up the main tensions of intimacy of that time, showing the works “Io”, “Father”, “Voiceover” and “Shifting Focus”, among others in the Venice display, and felt that it was needed to put these aside and find new paths and topics in order to develop my work. Also, the Biennial helped me to gain much experience, knowledge and in the end – confidence, which is of much use when you want to touch upon the themes that are not that obviously close to your immediate family or routine life experience. So starting from the very first video that I executed after the Biennial show (“Work In Progress” 2005), I depict characters, events, etc. other than my family. For instance, the two videos I completed in the framework of Hansabank Art Award 2006 – “5 Guards” and “Andrey/Andris” – exemplify it very well.



“Vicoletto 1 S. Paolo (gia Vicoletto S. Paolo)” from “Napoli 2012” series



“Via dei Tribunali” from “Napoli 2012” series

**What was the creative baseline which characterized period after?**

With the video and photographic installations - “MajestosoMystico. Stockholm-Tallinn 26.04.07”,



“Vekovka” (2008) “1:1:1” (2008) (all also shown in “Damage” now) I continued the same, more socially inspired line of work, also the “Napoli 2012” cityscapes maybe. But in parallel I have returned to the intimate topics in the videos “Dedication” (2008), “09/12/07 – 05/04/09” (the video shown in “Damage”), and more strongly last two years with returning to photographic medium with the series of self-portraits “Damage” (2012) and the newest piece on display, the video “Pae St. Playlist” (2013). So, the persons whom I know the best – myself and my parents – never seem to cease haunting me.



Frames from videowork “Pae St. Playlist”

**“Pae St. Playlist” is a totally new video installation completed for this exhibition. Please, tell us more about it.**

“Pae St. Playlist” is a video, where I depict the street where I grew up and lived until I turned 25, in two different houses. I attached the camera to my chest and revisited the street, repeating the jogging circle, which used to be my everyday routine when I was 15-16-17 years old. In the accompanying voice over the viewer can hear my mother and my father reminiscing the times

when I was born, the house where we first lived, the way we were... Bits of memories, some of which we can all share universally, some more specific, some traumatic. A childhood summed up in 18 minutes. With this work I try to find connections with the person I am today. How and why I turned out to be the way I am.



“Nobody Knows My Name” from “Damage” series





“One By One” from “Damage” series

**Please, tell us more about that person beyond self-portraits titled *Damage*.**

Compared to the guy in the well-known series “Io” (1997), this person is older, of course, and much more self-ironic. The series is accompanied by the video “Workout In Progress” (2012), also shot

during the residency time in Naples, when I made the photographs.

**How these self-portraits were created? Spontaneously or intentionally?**

There is much more intention in them than there was, again, in “Io”. I use different settings and some requisites, but they are all shot in the apartment in Naples where I lived for one and a half months. All the pictures bare titles, which in fact complete the images and give you a way how to “read” them (for example, “Alone” and “Together” form a diptych). In the pictures I try to depict some aspects of my self-image, the way I see it now that I have reached middle age.

**The exhibition will emphasize the photographic series and videos that were completed during your residency at the *Fondazione Morra Greco* in Naples in 2012. Please tell us more about experience and creative energy in Naples.**

Hot !



“Together” from “Damage” series





“Wardrobe” from “Damage” series

**What kind of expression on people’s faces you expect as they leave the exhibition?**

Elevated.

**Mark Raidpere’s “Damage” and Louis Malle “Damage”. What do they have in common?**

The mood and the message of the epilogue of Louis Malle’s “Damage” is perfect to describe the way I felt at the time of leaving Tallinn for the residency in Naples, the end of spring 2012.







Frames from videowork "MajestosoMystico. Stockholm - Tallinn 26.04.07"

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