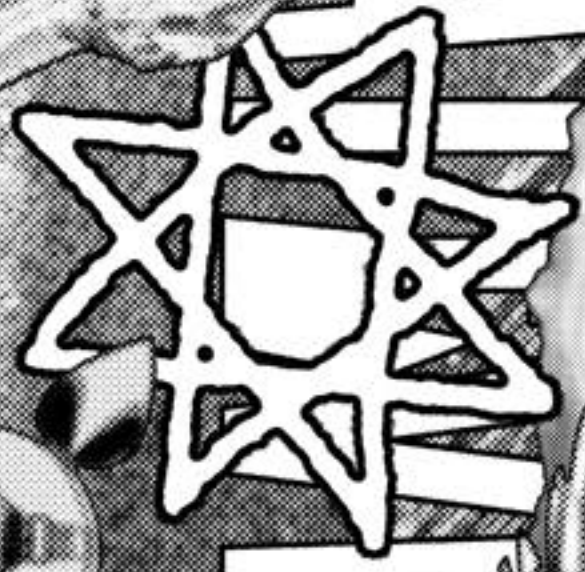
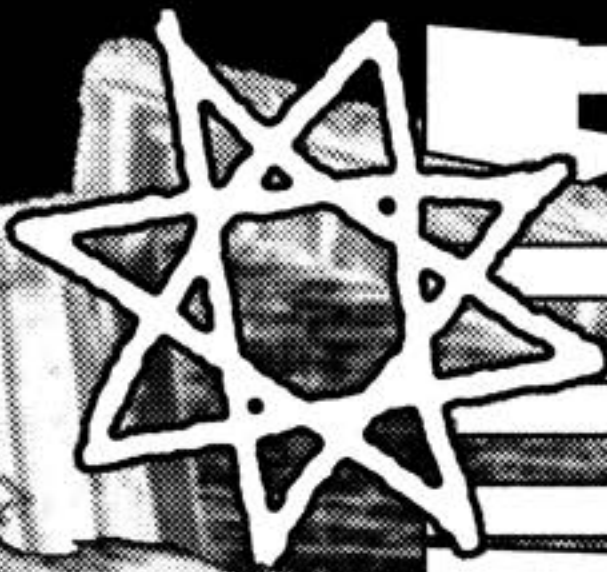


FLUX TRIBALISM



COME DANCE
ON THE GRAVE
OF THE
ETHNOSTATE

Traditional
transgression
Folkloric
depravity
Ancestral
bondage
Inherited
obscenity
Orthodox
deviation
Historic
corruption



WASH YOUR HANDS

COVID-19

TOUCH

TACT

GUIDELINES

DEAR FRIEND,

I recommend washing your hands after reading this. It sounds like I am sharing a filthy story. Perhaps I am? I tried to avoid writing about the COVID-19 pandemic, but here I am talking about it—like you, your friends and friends of friends and the whole world. There seem to be guidelines coming in on how to be and behave from family members to government officials. We now live by rules that have been in place for little more than a month.

It is fascinating how quickly change happens and manifests. Do you remember the time when you did not notice people on the streets walking past you? These days I cannot walk down the street without distancing myself from every single human being, jumping to the lawn or behind my partner. 9/11 made us change the rules at airports and in the air. Now we change the order on ground level. We distance, wear masks, gloves and place sanitisers at the entrance of public buildings.

Speaking of being in the air, in the beginning of March I was on my way home, transferring through Frankfurt airport. There were no hand sanitisers in the airport, nor did we see anyone selling masks. This did not keep people from covering their faces. People walked the corridors while sanitising their hands, and so did we. Some hid in toilet cabins to cough or sneeze like criminals. Change in behaviour was happening all around us. After the trip, I did not know how to react or continue other than actively read the Health Board news. I also wonder how to make or take any guidelines when even doctors say that they are not entirely sure what we are dealing with.

Although we do not know what we are dealing with yet, at home we might have time for theoretical observations. In a conference call on Zoom, an interview we conducted with curator Corina Apostol and graphic designer Maryam Fanni, along with Kulla Laas and Madis Luik at the Estonian Academy of Arts, we discussed art and design education, distance learning and exhibiting in the time of pandemic. Even though everyone is amazed by what the cultural institutions are putting out now, e.g. Tallinn Art Hall's virtual exhibitions, we also agreed that the internet, contrary to popular opinion, is not democratic nor accessible to all. While we seem to have entered a new global internet era, there is also talk about a moment of restart, change and "a blank page for a new beginning". In another discussion that I listened to via Zoom between architect, curator and editor Joseph Grima and design curator Jan Boelen, organised by Dirty Furniture magazine, they raised questions about how we should approach a time like this when governments have a lot of power, what kind of democracies we can build, as well as what we can leave behind.

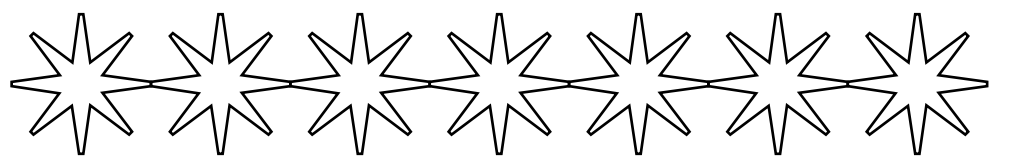
Daily we catch the press conference dedicated to the pandemic, and weekly we receive news on the local far-right party making gross decisions for the prime minister. One more essential event that takes place weekly now is grocery shopping. Our reasoning is that we are healthy, need to walk, and we do not have a car for grander shopping. Making

someone else do our shopping at this point would mean putting someone else in danger. Entering the grocery store, however, has become a painful and stressful experience because there is always someone who cannot wait behind you. These enigmatic characters jump around to quickly grab a bag of sour cream or take a carton of juice just when you are reaching for it.

Indeed, it is time for reflection and for criticism as the ruling entities all over the world take advantage. I am happy to see that in some industrial cities the air quality has improved, or so I have read. But I am progressively more anxious of being led by the ill-informed. And I am nervous in my very comfortable position where I am at home still with a job writing this letter in my warm living room turned office space. One moment it feels like I am grabbing that carton of juice in my regular supermarket in solitude, and the next moment I hear that someone other than the Prime Minister has laid off the third Minister of Foreign Trade and Information Technology in the timeframe of a year. My presumed solitude at the store is disturbed by a stranger diffidently touching my freaking arm. The juice spills on the floor.

Do you remember Poland closing its borders a few weeks ago? The trucks waited for days in line close to the Polish border, then after crossing and driving, they were taken off the roads by police. Fines were written out to drivers for exceeding their working hours, the hours that this one state had irresponsibly created within the union. Here, we receive unsettling news about sending home foreign workers with soon expiring visas. Again, I get a shudder of fright similar to when a person is standing way too close in the fruits and vegetables section. If there is anything we really need to act on, it is a reform of communication. Perhaps only a revolution can set the proper stage for a change in governing and manners? It is painful to think of the organisations in which people are made to work in unsafe conditions when it is unnecessary or to watch higher education institutions and museums lay off or furlough their workforce. The top keeps harming the most vulnerable and lowest paid demographics in the system. Nothing changes, only fragilities and insensitivities are brought to the surface.

What are the communal and political guidelines for this time? How often do we miss a decision that should be protested? Very conveniently we cannot raise our voices, or if someone does then there is the lack of personal contact that seems to be relevant for any truly uncomfortable confrontation (and that also might provide one with the novel coronavirus).



STAY SAFE & ALERT, SANDRA