

About the exhibition

The exhibition *Shaping the Future: Environments by Aleksandra Kasuba* to be held at the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius—a branch of the Lithuanian National Museum of Art—from 27 November 2020 to 28 February 2021 and will present, for the first time, the creative heritage of the visionary Lithuanian American environmental artist Aleksandra Fledžinskaitė-Kašubienė (Kasuba, 1923–2019), a participant of the Space Age-inspired movement Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), and span seven decades of her work (1942–2019). The exhibition has been curated by Dr. Elona Lubytė, a researcher and promoter of Kasuba’s work, the exhibition’s architects are Rokas Kilčiauskas and Aleksandras Kavaliauskas, and the designer is Laura Grigaliūnaitė.

Due to a confluence of historical circumstances, in her art Kasuba blended the cultural traditions of Lithuanian manor owners of the late nineteenth century and the first independent Republic of Lithuania (1918–1940) with New York’s democratically rebellious energy of the second half of the twentieth century, open to innovation and experiments: “This city is so creatively unbridled and interesting that I don’t even know of any other place like that. [...] There’s no doubt that it has been the art center of the world for some time already.”¹

The core of the exhibition consists of works gifted by the artist to the Lithuanian National Museum of Art (textile, tile panels, plans for works for public spaces, drawings, paintings, watercolors, and collages as well as models for her architectural works and environments) and a collection of 8,000 digital images, which is supplemented by Kasuba’s works on paper held at the Archive of American Art of the Smithsonian Institution (USA), as well as documents and objects that belonged to the counts Zubov and Fledžinskas from the holdings of the Šiauliai Aušra Museum.

Constructed chronologically, the exhibition presents and juxtaposes Kasuba’s applied, experimental, and hybrid art, her design and architecture practices, and her theoretical insights—her consistently developed vision of sustainable architecture as a social instrument, shelters without right angles. To emphasize the tenacity and universality of these aims, the title of Kasuba’s first solo exhibition *Shaping the Future*, which took place at the Esther M. Klein Gallery of the University City Science Center in Philadelphia in 1989, has been adapted as the title of the current exhibition.

The exhibition in Vilnius will be accompanied by an exhibition catalogue compiled by its curator and published in cooperation with the Vilnius Academy of Arts, where the artist briefly studied in the years of World War II before finding refuge in the West. In addition to the artist’s biography compiled by Dr. Lubytė, her key texts, a catalogue of her works in the exhibition, and an archive of digital images, the publication includes texts analyzing Kasuba’s work written by American and Lithuanian researchers and practitioners of different generations: artist and curator Paul J. Smith (1931–2020), the severed as director of the New York Museum of Arts and Design (1963-1987);

¹ Vyt. Alseika, „A. Kašubienės naujoji kūryba - ‘erdvės buveinės’“, in *Draugas. Mokslas, menas, literatūra*, 1972 01 13, Nr. 113 (19), pp. 4-5.

art historian Dr. Giedrė Jankevičiūtė; art critic and curator Inesa Brašiškė; architect Dr. Julija Reklaitė; Jing Liu, architect and founder of the So – IL architecture and design firm; architect of stretch fabric structures Nic Goldsmith; design historian Dr. Viktorija Kašubaitė Matranga; architect Dr. Kazys Varnelis Jr.; and art critic and curator Dr. Sandra Skurvida.

For the purpose of engaging an audience of different ages through interactive communication, the exhibition will feature a computer game developed by Weekend Warriors Studio, a team of young Lithuanian architects and programmers, based on Kasuba's first book *Utility for the Soul* (1970–1975).

After its run at the National Gallery of Art, a part of the exhibition will be transferred to the artist's native city and will be displayed at the Aušra Museum in Šiauliai.

Exhibition partners:

Archive of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Šiauliai Aušra Museum

Vilnius Academy of Arts

Exhibition sponsors:

Lithuanian Council for Culture

VšĮ Meno fondas

