



ILONA NÉMETH

BIOGRAPHY

Ilona Németh (1963, SK), visual artist, activist, curator and professor.

She exhibited widely both locally and internationally. She led the Studio IN, and in the years 2014-2019 also the international educational program Open Studio at the Department of Intermedia of the University of Bratislava in Bratislava.

Since 2021, she has been a professor at the STU in Bratislava at the Faculty of Architecture and Design. In the years 2018-2021, she was the artistic director of the international exhibition and research project Eastern Sugar with the support of the Creative Europe program (following the solo exhibition of the same name, which was held in the Kunsthalle in Bratislava in 2018) in cooperation with Slovak National Gallery. In 2022, she presented her work at the Documenta fifteen in Kassel and held a solo exhibition at the Trafo Gallery in Budapest. Her permanent installation Grandstand was opened in a public space in Hohenau, Austria in September 2022.

In 2023, she exhibited at the 35th Ljubljana Biennale of Graphic Arts, the Survival Kit 14 exhibition in Riga and the Jogja Biennale Yogyakarta in Indonesia. Her site-specific work "When we arrived here..." in cooperation with the Cite Internationale des Arts was inaugurated in Paris 2024.

Lives and works in Bratislava and Dunajská Streda.



Thuja project (2025)

Site-specific installation, variable dimensions

3 videos (Tree Alley, 3'59" / Tree Felling, 3'58" / Tree Sawing, 2'55"), photo, thuja

Collaboration on videos, camera: Csaba Czibula, Máté Bíró, Denis Kozerański

Editing: Denis Kozerański and Katarína Karafová

Photography: András Á. Cséfalvay

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery

Thuja L. – Thuja

“Lower to tall evergreen trees with a narrow conical crown, flattened branches and scaly leaves. The leading shoot is upright. The trees are monoecious with both male and female flowers. The small, oblong cones are composed of 3-5 pairs of scales. The seeds are small and have a wing. Thujas are hardy trees with higher demands on the humidity of the habitat. They are not demanding on the quality of the soil. They grow in the sun as well as in partial shade. Thuja is one of the most resistant conifers, it can even tolerate polluted air.”

(VREŠTIÁK, Pavol and Zdeněk OSVALD. All about conifers. Bratislava, 1994. p. 86)

Thuja is a genus of evergreen coniferous tree belonging to the cypress family (*Cupressaceae*) with several species in the genus (e.g. *T. Plicata*, *T. occidentalis*, *T. standishii*), of which Thuja Occidentalis is the most common in our region. In its native conditions, it can live for about 150-200 years and reach a height of 60 meters.

Western Thuja (lat. *Thuja occidentalis*)

“The most common North American conifer in European parks, gardens and cemeteries. Its spread is due to its early introduction. It was one of the first trees brought to Europe from the New World, probably introduced to France in 1536. Its wood is valuable, does not dry out, and is suitable for building boats and water structures.”

(VĚTVIČKA, Václav, Trees and Shrubs: Bratislava: Nature, 1992, p. 95)

Thuja, also called the “tree of life” in various languages and dialects (lat. *Arborvitae*, germ. *Lebensbaum*), is a symbol of eternity and the immortality of the soul. In many cultures, it symbolizes the connection between the world of the living and the world of the dead. For this reason, it is often planted in cemeteries and monastery gardens. Nowadays, it is very popular for creating hedges around newly built family houses.

Thuja, as a moisture-loving plant introduced to our region, is currently threatened with extinction due to climate change. Climate change, increasingly hot summers, drought, and the spread of various pests such as the thuja mining moth (*Argyresthia thuiella*) or the cypress jewel beetle (*Lamprodila festiva*) are causing widespread drying out and destruction of thuja plants.

Ilona Németh selected a row of 35 trees in Dunajská Streda, which she had observed and documented over the past years. In 2024, the condition of the trees deteriorated to such an extent that they had to be cut down in November. She requested the cut down trees from the city's gardening company and preserved them in the form of joinery material. After drying, she plans to create an object for the interior or exterior, which she plans to place in the original location of the trees.



Thuja project (2025)

Site-specific installation, variable dimensions

3 videos (Tree Alley, 3'59" / Tree Felling, 3'58" / Tree Sawing, 2'55"), photo, thuja

Collaboration on videos, camera: Csaba Czibula, Máté Bíró, Denis Kozerański

Editing: Denis Kozerański and Katarína Karaťová

Photography: András Á. Cséfalvay

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery



Thuja project (2025)

Site-specific installation, variable dimensions

3 videos (Tree Alley, 3'59" / Tree Felling, 3'58" / Tree Sawing, 2'55"), photo, thuja

Collaboration on videos, camera: Csaba Czibula, Máté Bíró, Denis Kozerański

Editing: Denis Kozerański and Katarína Karafová

Photography: András Á. Cséfalvay

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery



Thuja project (2025)

Site-specific installation, variable dimensions

3 videos (Tree Alley, 3'59" / Tree Felling, 3'58" / Tree Sawing, 2'55"), photo, thuja

Collaboration on videos, camera: Csaba Czibula, Máté Bíró, Denis Kozerański

Editing: Denis Kozerański and Katarína Karaťová

Photography: András Á. Cséfalvay

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery



When we arrive... 2. (2025)

Site-specific installation, Ed. 1/2

Ceramics, steel construction

Cooperation: Marián Ravasz, architect; Ľubica Segečová, graphic designer

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery

When we arrive here, garden is already here. This sentence is an adaptation of a quote by Eline De Clercq: “When we arrive to the garden, the garden is already there...”, which I reinterpreted as an eco-feminist statement about gardens. The text is imprinted in the material of the object and appears as a relief, just like the impact of humanity on nature and gardens. The installation made of ceramics and the story of the thujas symbolize the vulnerability of our ecosystem from the perspective of both nature and humans, our overall intergenerational sense of threat to the present and future of humanity. The site-specific installation presented at the Gandy Gallery is an indoor version of the outdoor installation created in Paris in 2024 at the invitation of the Cité Internationale des Arts. The installation is a continuation of the artist’s recent projects *Floating Gardens* and *Healing Garden*, which she realized at the *documenta fifteen* in Kassel, and her site-specific installation *When we arrive...*, which she realized in June 2024 in the garden of the Cité Internationale des Arts at Montmartre, Paris.

Partners: Cité internationale des arts, Paris, France

The Jan Evangelista Purkyně University (UJEP) and House of Arts in Ústí nad Labem



When we arrive... 2. (2025)

Site-specific installation, Ed. 1/2

Ceramics, steel construction

Cooperation: Marián Ravasz, architect; Ľubica Segečová, graphic designer

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery



When we arrive... 2. (2025)

Site-specific installation, Ed. 1/2

Ceramics, steel construction

Cooperation: Marián Ravasz, architect; Ľubica Segečová, graphic designer

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery



When we arrive... 2. (2025)

Site-specific installation, Ed. 1/2

Ceramics, steel construction

Cooperation: Marián Ravasz, architect; Ľubica Segečová, graphic designer

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery



When we arrive... (2024)

Site-specific installation, Ed. 1/2

Location: Cité internationale des arts, Paris, France

Ceramics with porcelain engobe, steel construction

Cooperation: Marián Ravasz, architect; Lúbia Segečová, graphic designer

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery

height: 95 cm

left part: 201x27,2 cm

middle part: 248x27,2 cm,

right part: 162x27,2 cm



When we arrive... (2024)

Site-specific installation, Ed. 1/2

Location: Cité internationale des arts, Paris, France

Ceramics with porcelain engobe, steel construction

Cooperation: Marián Ravasz, architect; Ľubica Segečová, graphic designer

Courtesy of the artist and Gandy Gallery

height: 95 cm

left part: 201x27,2 cm

middle part: 248x27,2 cm,

right part: 162x27,2 cm

GANDY GALLERY

Gandy Gallery's programme was developed in the context of the early 90s, when Europe was determining itself by confronting different histories, ideologies and hopes, and the opening of the gallery in 1992 in Prague, marked the beginning of this history...

address: Gandy Gallery
Sienkiewiczova 4
Bratislava 81109
Slovakia

websites: www.gandy-gallery.com
www.zoomeuropa.com

email: info@gandy-gallery.com