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DIVERSE UNIVERSE PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL 2026

# JOSEF KA

## ARTIST'S RIGHTS feat. ARTIST'S RITES

A site-specific performance series

Diverse Universe Performance Festival 2026

20–26 July 2026 | Pärnu & Tallinn, Estonia



## JOSEF KA

Josef Ka (Finland) is a performance artist, choreographer, curator and founder of Sauna Gallery, Helsinki. Her artistic practice explores performance as a space of transformation, participation and encounter, often combining personal narratives, social memory and collective actions.

Since 2021, Josef Ka has curated Sauna Gallery, an independent platform dedicated to performance art, moving image and experimental practices. Her projects have been presented internationally in Europe and beyond.

At Diverse Universe Performance Festival 2026 in Estonia, Josef Ka presented a programme of performances, led a performance art masterclass and participated in the festival's international live art programme.

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## DIVERSE UNIVERSE PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL 2026

20–26 July 2026

Pärnu & Tallinn, Estonia

Organizer: Extreme Culture NGO

Curator: Cai Qing (Singapore)

Edition #28

Theme: Rebirth Through Fire

The 2026 edition featured an international programme of performances, workshops and discussions, bringing together artists from different countries and backgrounds. The festival concluded with performances at KUMU Art Museum in Tallinn, as part of the museum's 20th-anniversary programme.



## FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

22 July — Masterclass and live performances, Pärnu

24 July — Live performances, Rütli Street, Pärnu

26 July — Tallinn Old Town & KUMU Art Museum

Full programme: <https://performance.ee>

## FESTIVAL BACKGROUND

Non Grata has run an annual performance festival since 1997, first under the names Big Alternation and Art Non Grata; in 2005 it was renamed Diverse Universe Performance Festival. Over the years it developed into a platform for international live art practices, bringing together artists from different countries and backgrounds.

I have been part of the Qing Cai project since 2022 — Documenta 15 in Kassel (2022), followed by presentations in the USA (2023), France (2025), and Estonia (2026).

## ARTIST'S RIGHTS feat. ARTIST'S RITES

### THE PROJECT

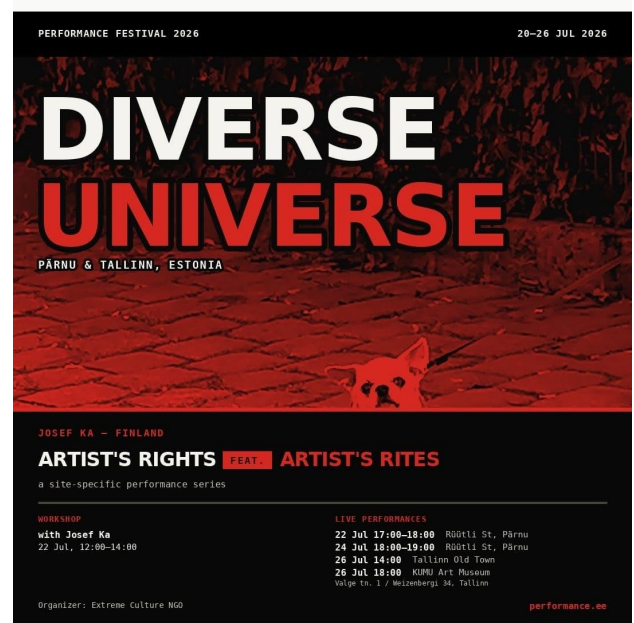
Started in 2025 as a series of short video works, Artist's Rights feat. Artist's Rites continued through site-specific performances staged across different locations and situations.

Each performance began from confrontation — between the artist and the place, between personal experience and collective reality.

The title held two meanings at once: the demand for the right to exist, speak, and create, and the rites — the repetitions, rituals, and personal practices that made continuing this work possible.

Each performance was a temporary act of presence: a moment when the private struggle of making art entered public space.

Within the festival, I presented the new series Artist's Rights feat. Artist's Rites — five performances, one masterclass, and one film.



22 JULY 2026

PÄRNU, ESTONIA

## 1. MASTERCLASS

Josef Ka | 12:00–14:00



As part of my Estonian programme, I ran a masterclass which I converted into a cinema production, playing with the main themes of my series as well as involving all the artists of the festival. It was a highly site-specific work, moving between chaos and cosmos, dictatorship and eternal youth.

My deepest gratitude to all the artists involved, and especially to Cheng Li.

The masterclass and the resulting cinema production constitute a separate artistic project within my festival programme.

## 2. INTERNATIONAL SILENCE

### SITE-SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE AND STREET PROCESSION

Part of INTERNATIONAL SILENCE, an ongoing artistic project initiated by Josef Ka during a residency in Leipzig in 2017.

In 1857, Johann Voldemar Jannsen published the first issue of Perno Postimees, marking a milestone in Estonian-language journalism. His words later became the lyrics of the Estonian national anthem.

I approach his monument in Pärnu with sausages stuffed into my mouth. A product of mass consumption takes the place of speech.

A silent monument. A silenced body. A society unable to articulate itself.

Together, we become monuments to international silence.

Date: 22 July 2026

Location: Johann Voldemar Jannsen Monument, Pärnu, Estonia

Format: Site-specific performance and street procession

Documentation: Photography and video



24 JULY 2026 · PÄRNU, ESTONIA

## FACE MARKET

Part of ARTIST'S RIGHTS feat. ARTIST'S RITES

Ongoing since 2021.

I stand in a public space for one hour wearing a striped cap.

Nothing begins until someone decides to approach.

We draw each other's portraits simultaneously using black markers. We share the same time, the same materials, and the same conditions.

No money is exchanged.

The only value produced is mutual attention.

Each participant leaves with my drawing and pins their portrait of me onto my jacket. Throughout the performance the jacket becomes a collective self-portrait authored by strangers.

Face Market suspends the conventional roles of artist, model, and spectator. Portraiture becomes an act of reciprocity rather than representation, while value emerges not through ownership or payment but through the voluntary exchange of time, attention, and trust between two people who may never meet again.







Date: 24 July 2026

Location: Pärnu, Estonia

25 JULY 2026 · PÄRNU, ESTONIA

# 1. ARTIST AT WORK

Durational performance / installation

By Josef Ka

Part of the series ARTIST'S RIGHTS feat. ARTIST'S RITES.

Diverse Universe Festival

Edition #28

Estonia 2026



The artist lies asleep on a pavement in picturesque surroundings. A hat is placed in front of her for money.

Is the artist working? Is sleep a performance? What is the value of an artist's work?

## 2. SEA LEGS

A BRAND-NEW OLD-SCHOOL MOVIE · 2026

Concept by Josef Ka

Invited artists: Liu Xue, Jaan Luulur Malin, Steve Vanoni.

A Sauna Gallery production, featuring Josef Ka, Diverse Universe Performance Festival, Al Paldrok, Live Art Tour, Qing Cai, and all the artists, creatures, bodies, objects and accidents involved.



### THE PROJECT

SEA LEGS is part of Josef Ka's ongoing programme ARTIST'S RIGHTS feat. ARTIST'S RITES — a series of performances exploring the rights, rituals, absurdities and physical realities of the artist through public action.

At the same time, SEA LEGS marks the starting point of a new fashion collection by Josef Ka. A collection created for broken bodies, fragmented bodies, missing pieces, reconstructed bodies and bodies that refuse to fit the standard shape of a body.

Clothing not designed to correct the body, but to follow it. The body becomes part of the garment. The missing piece becomes a new silhouette. The imperfection becomes a design principle.

### WORLD PREMIERE

25 July 2026

Pärnu Creative City, Estonia

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Al Paldrok and Taje Paldrok.

Photography: Xiaoping Yu.

And deepest gratitude to everyone who entered the frame.

With the participation of NON grata.

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## FESTIVAL RECOGNITION

# SEA LEGS — GRAND PRIX

## 28th International Pärnu Film and Video Festival · Fideofest

The festival's Grand Prix was awarded to SEA LEGS, a film by Josef Ka and Sauna Gallery.

In addition to Finnish artist Josef Ka, the internationally produced work credits Liu Xue from China, Jaan Luulur Malin from Estonia and Steve Vanoni from the United States.

The film had its world premiere on 25 July at Pärnu Creative City.

The festival was supported by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia.

## PUBLICATION

GOODNEWS / KULTUURIPEEGEL

<https://printmaking.ee/blog/2026/08/04/parnu-fideofest-uuris-kehakeskset-audiovisuaalset-loomingut/>

26 JULY 2026 · TALLINN, ESTONIA

## KA-LLIGRAPHY

KUMU Art Museum

An ongoing interdisciplinary practice in which the body becomes both instrument and material for drawing, painting and image-making.

At KUMU, ten metres of canvas unfold along the museum staircase, transforming the architectural space into a surface for bodily action, movement and mark-making.

Through gesture, movement, voice and physical action, the body produces marks and compositions directly on canvas. The work exists simultaneously as performance, choreography and visual art.

In KA-LLIGRAPHY, movement generates images, while images preserve traces of the body in motion.

*"It's such a strong statement about how fragile we are. It's such a courageous statement."*

— Paul Beaudoin

## Diverse Universe Performance Festival



Cheng Li (China) Gao Ya (Inner Mongolia) Du Yinghong (China)  
Eduardo Cardoso Amato (Brazil) Han Xiao (China) Anand Jaiswal  
(India) Yu Xiaoping 14 (China) Ilkka Pitkänen (Finland) Alan  
Schacher (Australia) Lady Gaby (Germany) Paul Regan (Ireland)  
Ursula Maria Probst (Austria) Yi Mei (China) Akie (Japan) Make  
Like A Tree (Ukraine) Rooluutend (Estonia) Josef Ka (Finland)  
Cai Qing (Singapore)

26.07.2026 @ 18:00

**KUMU ART MUSEUM**  
Valge 1 / Weisenbergi 34, Tallinn





Photos by Josef Ka, Ilkka Pitkanen, Alan Schacher, Arvo Säilev

## JOSEF KA

Finland

Instagram: [@josefkartist](https://www.instagram.com/josefkartist)

Sauna Gallery: [@saunagallery](https://www.instagram.com/saunagallery)

Festival: <https://performance.ee>