

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

**The Nordic Textile Art Association is a non-profit organization. The purpose of the association is to be a forum for making contacts and contributing to the establishment of new networks and conducting meetings for Nordic textile art. We aim to enable both physical and virtual meetings and create networks for Nordic textile art. To expand the network in the different countries, it is important that Nordic artists engage in conversations and meet, as well as connect to already established networks.**

To strengthen the network, the annual meeting is held alternately in the Nordic countries. What is happening in textile art today, and what has happened historically? What similarities and differences exist? At our annual meetings, participants have the opportunity to meet and participate in interesting programs, such as exhibitions, workshops, lectures, visits to studios, factories, and other specialized producers. We call it the Nordic Textile Meeting because the meeting is the most important aspect. In 2024, it was time for Iceland to host the event, and the program was organized in close collaboration with The Icelandic Textile Association.



### **NTA's Board 2024**

Chairperson: Vibeke Lindhardt (DK)

Vice Chairperson: Lily Erla Adamsdottir (ISL)

Treasurer: Josabet Werkmäster (S)

Secretary: Kari Merete Paulsen (N)

Ordinary Member: Maija Esko (FI)

Ordinary Member: Elisabeth Brenner Remberg (S)

Ordinary Member: Maria Johansson (S)

Alternate: Berthe Forchhammer (DK)

Alternate: Paivi Vaarula (FI)

Alternate: Arntbrudur Ösp Karlsdottir (ISL)

Alternate: Åse Eriksen (N)

Auditor: Anna Segelman.

Election Committee 2024: Margareta Heijkenskjöld Holmgren and TEXO board

Since 2017, the board has had representatives from all five Nordic countries. Despite the distance, it works well. In 2024, the board held 9 recorded meetings and several unrecorded working meetings. The board's meetings are mainly held via Zoom.

## Nordic Textile Meeting in the north of Iceland – Materials and Methods, June 5 – 8, 2024



HEKLAR LÆKNINGAJURTIR - RÓSA SIGRÚN JÓNSDÓTTIR

The meeting was held in northern Iceland at Leifshús in Eyjafjörður and in Blöndós. The theme of the conference was materials and methods. The artistic idea is to illuminate themes from different aspects through lectures, workshops, exhibitions, and educational visits. *Read the full report on our website.*

Project leaders for the Nordic Textile Meeting in Iceland were Arntbrudur Ösp Karlsdóttir and Lily Erla Adamsdóttir in collaboration with The Icelandic Textile Association.

<https://www.honnunarmidstod.is/en/fagfelog/textilfelagid>

In total, 50 members from Iceland, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Scotland, Germany, and the Orkney Islands attended from June 4-8, 2024. Most members arrived in Reykjavik on Tuesday, June 4, the day before the annual meeting began.



### Wednesday, June 5: Textile Adventure and Nature

Already on Tuesday afternoon, Ösp was repeatedly asked if she was sure we would be able to drive to northern Iceland the next morning, June 5. There had been a snowstorm in Iceland, and the three passes we needed to go through to get to Blönduós had been closed. But in the evening, we were reassured that the bus company had put winter tires on the bus and that we would be able to go. With a few stops, we drove directly to the women's school, the Icelandic Textile Center <https://www.textilmidstod.is/en> and the museum in Blönduós. At the textile center, we were welcomed by Johanna Palmadóttir, who leads the work on the long embroidery in discontinued sewing: Vatnsdælarefilinn. We were given a tour of the center by weaver Ragnheidur Thorsdóttir and saw both the old cozy weaving room with old analog looms and the new workshops with, among other things, TC2 looms and a felting machine that could felt fabrics/threads and textile waste. We were told about a dyeing project where they experimented with dyeing with bacteria.



Next to the school is the small museum <https://www.textile.is/english-2> where we were welcomed and given a tour by the museum's director Elin Antonsdottir. The museum has a fine collection of old textiles, hand-spun, plant-dyed knitted and woven textiles. Bones neatly wound with the thinnest hand-spun yarn. A tradition that makes sense in a country where wood is not wasted. From the museum, we were driven to Hotel Natur where we were accommodated and had dinner together.

<https://hotelnatur.com/?lang=en>



### Thursday, June 6: Cultural Exploration and Art

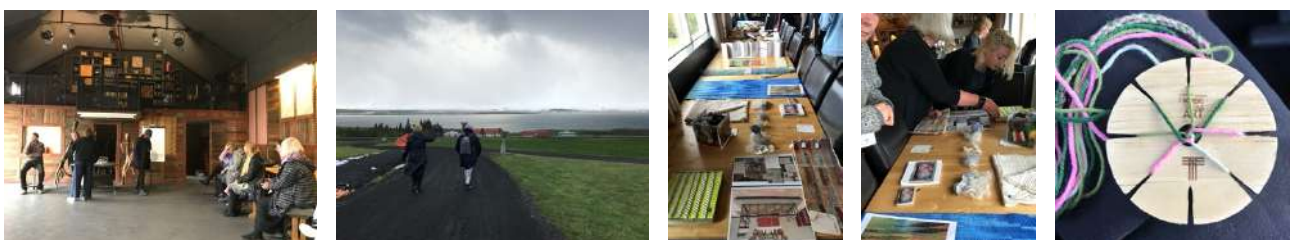
The drive through a landscape with high snow went first to Laufás farm, a folklore/open-air museum, a department under the Icelandic National Museum. <https://www.minjasafnid.is/is/laufas> The buildings we visited were a chieftain's farm and a church. The farm, built into the hill and with turf on the roof, was well-preserved, furnished, and equipped with tools and looms. We received a very fine introduction from a young enthusiastic museum employee.

From there, the trip went to the Icelandic Folk and Outsider Museum Safnasafnið. <https://safnasafnid.is>. The museum, located near Svalbarðseyri, was founded by Niels Hafstein and Magnhildur Sigurðardóttir in 1995. For 30 years, the museum's founders have passionately collected art and crafts, especially from so-called naive or outsider artists. After that, we drove to Dyngja Gallery where we visited the textile artist Hadda's beautiful studio, located in the middle of nature where sculptures were exhibited. Hadda's textile works, which involve spinning, dyeing, and weaving, are always related to art and nature with materials from the local environment.

<https://sites.google.com/view/dyngjan-listhus/>



The evening ended with drinks and conversation at Leifshús, a cultural house run by the founder of Hotel Natur, who now organizes concerts, cultural events, and artist-residence stays at the neighboring farm up the hill. The festive dinner was held at Hotel Natur, where there were intense TEXTILE TALKS. Many members had brought a textile work or piece of their own produced textile and briefly talked about it.



### Friday, June 7: Artistic Ventures and Local Culture

Friday began with a visit to Verksmiðjan á Hjalteyri, a disused fish factory in Hjalteyri which now houses some raw exhibition spaces with changing exhibitions such as installations and video works, as well as various artist studios and workshops. <https://verksmidjanhjalteyri.com> The cultural site was established in 2007. Originally, the site was an old herring factory that operated from 1937 to 1966.

The highlight of the day was the visit to the artist Lene Zachariassen, who works with the conservation of animals, always with great sensitivity and respect. She creates works or objects that almost feel animated. Lene told us how she only tans and conserves animals such as fish, lambs, sheep, and, for example, a small horse, only animals she finds dead or that people bring to her. It was a great experience to hear Lene Zachariassen talk about her work and to see all the very beautiful objects in what in some ways felt like a cabinet of curiosities.



Lunch was at Lilý Erla Adamsdóttir's aunt's farm, Dís's farm. A fantastic house she and her husband built. We were offered a wonderful lunch and told about their project and were really generously received.

The next visit was to a small gallery where the textile artist Íris Ólöf, one of our Icelandic members, exhibited very fine sculptures – the materials were rough stones and textile wrappings. Very fine and raw, but at the same time poetic sculptures. The day's program ended with a visit to the Akureyri Art Museum. <https://www.listak.is/en/exhibitions/next-exhibitions/is-this-north>

### Saturday, June 8: From North to South

Saturday was the day for NTA's general assembly, which was held at Hotel Natur, followed by *Textile Talks* by Icelandic artists and designers who talked about projects and their work with textile art. There was also a presentation of the Icelandic textile organization, which was co-responsible for the meeting in Iceland. <https://www.honnunarmidstod.is/en/fagfelag/textilfelagid>

After lunch, the bus took us to Blöndós, where we just managed to sniff around a knitting festival market where everything was about yarn and knitting. From there, we drove through the beautiful landscape, still with snow, the long way back to Reykjavik where our paths parted to various places in the Nordic countries and Europe.





## **Nordic cooperation and Nordic textile art are the core of Nordic Textile Art.**

**NTA wants to create a forum for conversation about textile art.** To expand the network in the different countries, it is important that Nordic artists engage in conversations and meet, as well as connect to already established networks. To strengthen the network, the annual meeting is held alternately in the Nordic countries. The fact that the meetings circulate between the countries and that the textile conference is held in a new place each year is important for getting to know each other's countries and ways of working. The textile conferences have changing themes, and these inspiration days are important for the conversation between the association's members. Some years the focus is on lectures, other years on workshops and materials, sometimes all of it.

**The 2025 annual meeting with the theme Exploring Fiber Heritage** will take place in Silkeborg, Denmark from April 10-13. The upcoming annual meeting is planned throughout the year.

**The 2026 annual meeting will take place in Sweden.**

### **The members are the voice of the network**

Together we contribute to the development of Nordic textile art. The number of members in 2024 was 250. The association is working to increase the number of members. Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, and Sweden are all represented in the association. In addition, we are fortunate to have members from Estonia, Latvia, Germany, Scotland, England, Ireland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the USA. The information brochure and hand-printed nets have been distributed widely in various contexts. Communication on social media, where news about textile events, both Nordic and international, is shared, is becoming increasingly important.

### **Activities for NTA's members**

Many of NTA's members are artists who have a great interest in showing their textile art to each other – and also sharing knowledge and experience, and therefore the annual meeting programs are designed to make this possible, so that new contacts and networks can emerge. Through textile events in the Nordic countries, we all contribute to spreading and participating in new meetings and activities within the textile world.

### **Long-term Network funding from Nordic Culture Point**

NORDIC TEXTILE ART - ADVANCED DIALOGUE granted for the project period May 17, 2022 - December 31, 2024. *Read the full report on our website.*

Eesti Tekstiilikunstnike liit, The Finnish Association of Textile Artists TEXO, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Kaunas Faculty, Textile Art Media program, Textile Artists Guild of Lithuania, Textile Museum in Borås. Project leaders: Josabet Werkmäster, Elisabeth Brenner Remberg, and Maria Johansson.

The Baltic countries and the Nordic countries have long shown interest in each other's textile art, crafts, traditions, and forms of expression. Meeting in real life and being creative together has a great impact on future relationships and collaborations. The board's task is to strengthen Nordic and Baltic cohesion to promote cooperation and lasting contacts. Digital meetings are excellent, but physical meetings are far preferable when contacts are to be made, and new ideas developed. It is a much more elevating way to exchange experiences and culture.

Nordic and Baltic textile artists have met twice before in the project in the workshop Textile Talk/Talk Textile. It was a clear experience for all of them that the meeting is of great importance. In 2024, it was time for part 3. Sharing time, culture, thoughts, and impressions together is rich and meaningful. Especially now in times of fear and a war so close.

### **Textile Talk/Talk Textile – exhibition, textile tour, and meeting in Lithuania August 5 – 11, 2024**

The program for the workshop days from August 5-11, 2024, consisted of a pop-up exhibition at Gallery Balta in Kaunas, studio visits, and a textile tour in the Lithuanian landscape. There were also workshops and artist meetings. We were allowed to experience the current local culture, which really gave us participants the opportunity to experience specific environments and traditions. A lively way to exchange experiences, new skills, inspiration, knowledge, and culture. The goal was to meet and, through artistic practice, come together to gain insight and increased knowledge of other countries' work and network building. Network and development work with an artistic workshop is a good and rewarding form. The project team in Lithuania was Monika Žaltauskaitė Grašienė and Jolanta Smidtiene.



Participants in Textile Talk/Talk Textile in Lithuania, August 2024: Textile artists from Nordic Textile Art, Textile artists from The Finnish Association of Textile Artists TEXO, Estonian Textile Artists Association EteK, and Textile Artists Guild of Lithuania: Monika Žaltauskaitė Grašienė LT, Jolanta Smitiene LT, Renata Laurinavičiūtė LT, Emilei Šmidtaitei LT, Aet Ollisaar EE, Heleri Alexandra Sits EE, Vibeke Lindhardt DK, Lily Erla Adamsdóttir IS, Josabet Werkmäster SE, Åse Eriksen NO, Reika Vesala FI, Paivi Vaarula FI, Elisabeth Brenner SE, Maria Johansson SE, Åse Eriksen, NO, Kari Merete Paulsen NO, Arnþrúður Ösp Karlsdóttir IS, Lily Erla Adamsdóttir IS.

### Exhibition Textile Talk/Talk Textile at Gallery Balta in Kaunas August 5 – 9, 2024

All participants brought their art, and the exhibition was jointly curated and hung on site during the day on August 5 with the opening in the evening. In the exhibition also following artists from Lithuania: Greta Kardi, Lina Jonikė, Ineta Ignatavičiūtė, Emilei Šmitienė. INIT-TV made a report that was broadcast on August 6. <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/ognUyQtKvbwM8gQ/>  
<https://galerijabalta.lt/en/exhibitions-events/nordic-textile-art-exhibition-opening/>

### Workshop “Talk with Textile -Talk with Nature”. Greta Kardi <https://greta.pb.gallery/>

Greta Kardi organized a Landart workshop on finding a relationship with nature, talking to nature through textiles, and talking to nature through textiles. Makniūnai village, Alytus district, Lithuania.

### Collaboration with ETN, European Textile Network

Since 2015, Elisabeth Brenner Remberg has been a member of ETN's board, and she was elected to the new board in 2022. Nordic Textile Art is a member of the European Textile Network. ETN's annual meeting in 2025 was originally scheduled to take place in Georgia, but due to the unstable situation, it was canceled. Therefore, ETN's next meeting will be held in Haslach, Austria from June 18-20, 2025. This year's meeting is titled: Summer jumble – meet friends – join workshops – share textile passion.

<https://etn-net.org/general-information.html>

### Collaboration with the Textile Museum in Borås

NTA has close contact with the Textile Museum. The Textile Museum in Borås is an obvious partner for NTA, offering generous collaborations and access to premises and archives. The Textile Museum is a member of NTA.

### Website.

During the year, a new website has been developed and launched. The website is our virtual meeting place. Our news is exposed on the website. All members of NTA can present themselves under Textile Network on the website. On our Instagram page and Facebook page, the number of likes has increased throughout the year. <https://nordictextileart.net/>

### Economy

The basis for the economy this year was membership fees and funds. The membership fee for 2024 was €30 for individuals and €60 for organizations. Nordic Culture Contact and the Nordic Culture Fund, which were previously the main sources of funding, no longer provide grants for our Nordic Textile Meeting events. The two funds believe that it is part of our regular activities and that they only provide grants for projects. The application for operating grants to the Swedish Arts Council was rejected on the grounds that the grant is given to activities that are mainly of national interest. The Nordic Textile Meeting in Iceland was carried out in collaboration with The Icelandic Textile Association, which had the main responsibility for the economy with funding from project support and participant fees. NTA was granted SEK 30,000 from the Estrid Ericson Foundation and SEK 40,000 from the Längmanska Cultural Foundation. NTA has long-term network support from Nordic Culture Contact for the project Nordic Textile Art - Advanced Dialogue for the period 2022-2024.

*Texts and photos by Vibeke Lindhardt and Josabet Werkmäster,*

### On behalf of NTA's board

*Chairperson Vibeke Lindhardt*

With support from the *Längmanska kulturfonden, Estrid Ericsons stiftelse,*

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