

RE-IMAGINING LINNAHALL IN TALLINN, ESTONIA: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF A POST-SOVIET RELIC THROUGH ETHNIC INTEGRATION, ADAPTIVE REUSE, CONTEMPORARY ARTS, AND ECOLOGICAL RECLAMATION

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1. **ABSTRACT**

A relic of Estonia's Soviet occupation built for the 1980 Olympics, Linnahall is a contested urban site infused with complex narratives. Linnahall's imposing Brutalist architecture prominently occupies central Tallinn's central waterfront on the Gulf of Finland. Originally dubbed the Lenin Palace of Culture and Sports, Linnahall was renamed after the restoration of Estonian independence in 1991, after which its continued use was embraced as a concert hall, ice-skating rink, and large event space. The building rapidly deteriorated, however many complex social, economic, environmental, and regulatory obstacles prevented redevelopment during the post-Soviet transitional period. Programmed use of Linnahall's interior was abandoned in 2010; only the exterior remains in use today. Storm surges and sea level rise will likely affect portions of the structure by 2100. In 2017, the Port of Tallinn released Masterplan 2030 with initial concepts for the area surrounding Linnahall. The City of Tallinn also unveiled plans to renovate Linnahall as a conference center and concert hall. While strongly focused on development, connectivity, and economic revitalization, these plans are less clear about engaging Linnahall's important historic, cultural, and environmental conditions. This paper provides a detailed history of Linnahall for the first time in English. It also identifies a set of objectives for reactivating Linnahall in response to contextual conditions and plans released in 2017. The paper culminates in a three-phase conceptual framework emphasizing cultural identity, sea level rise, and heritage. Shifting through periods of temporary markets and art installations, the proposal ultimately envisions Linnahall as a seaside heritage park.

1.1 **Keywords**

Ethnic Integration, Post-Soviet Urbanism, Post-Industrial, Waterfront, Baltic