



Kaunas

WALLOGRAPHER'S
NOTES



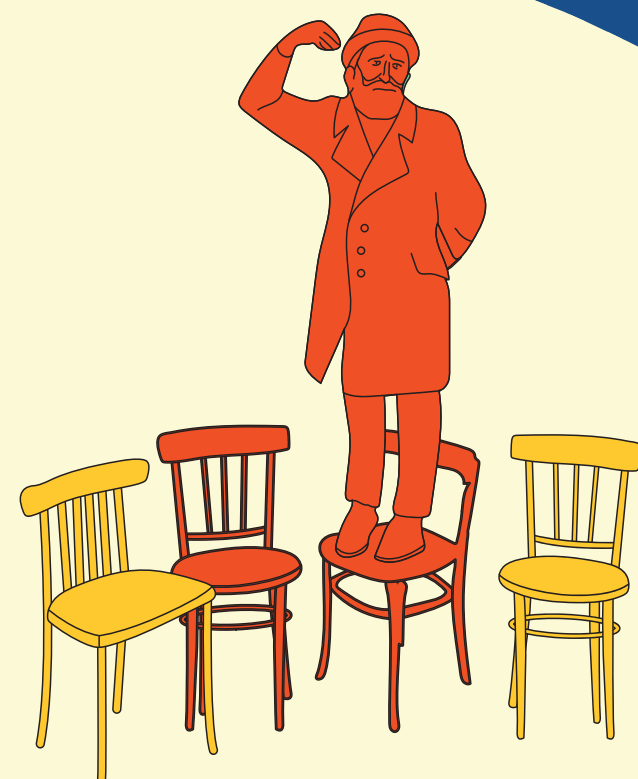
SOURCE

It's hard to say what year precisely the first word was illegally written on the walls of Kaunas, but during the years of Soviet occupation, some bold anonymous statements had appeared. After the restoration of independence, the sales of spray paint seriously shot up and neither the police nor local government was able to curb the artifice of graffiti artists. Currently, we find only traces of that untamed freedom – mostly in the form of unobtrusive gang tags (KWTM, O41, etc.). After losing its rebellious nature, street art has become a universally recognised value which is not only visually attractive but adds value to Kaunas as a design city.

GYVOS SIENOS ALIVE WALLS

GYVOSIENOS.KAUNAS.LT

Some people have ideas. Others have walls. To enhance the local street art scene, the Kaunas City Municipality created a tool to connect artists and property owners. We hope the "street art tinder" will contribute to a city more vibrant and colourful. Contact gyvosienos@kaunas.lt if you're an artist or an owner. We hope your artwork becomes alive soon!



TOURISM INFORMATION

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HI!

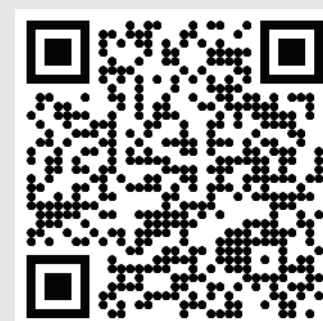
There's no such word as "wallographer" you say? True, but how else should we call the observer of street art, graffiti, neo-frescoes, *site-specific* artwork and other traces of art that can be found outside museum or gallery walls? We invite you to become the wallographers of Kaunas and to embark on a never-ending tour – by the time you reach the final point of your walk, new detail will have emerged, and you will definitely want to snap a picture. It is also likely that one of the artworks included in the guide will have run its course. That's why the walls and streets of Kaunas (in addition to drawings, the guide contains a few sculptures and other objects that are integral to the city) are remarkable – they never sleep, they don't complain, demand or declare. They simply live.

More of the "Wallographers notes" and other kaunastic routes you can find in the digital version on www.kaunastika.lt.

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WEAR THE STREETS OF KAUNAS

You can't take the whole city home, but there are some Kaunas streets and walls you can fit in hand luggage. When thinking about what contemporary souvenirs to offer guests of Kaunas, we felt that street art interpretations would be an exciting choice. We were not wrong - T-shirts, leggings, leggings, badges, postcards with icons of Kaunas graffiti and street art are extremely popular not only among tourists but also among the residents. Everyone's proud to wear the streets of Kaunas!



KAUNAS HIGHLIGHTS

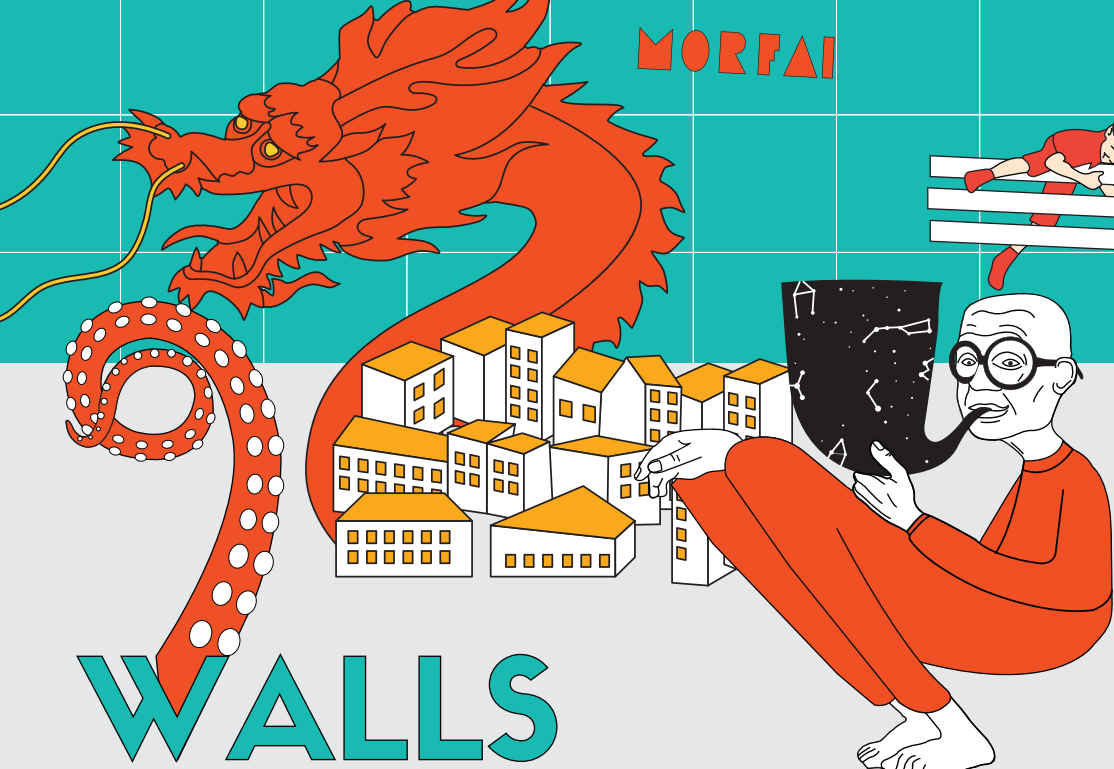
HIGHLIGHTS.KAUNAS.LT

The competition initiated by Kaunas City Municipality is taking place since 2017. Everyone with artistic ideas for public spaces in Kaunas is periodically invited to provide sketches on a wide range of topics and in doing so give sense to the history of the city, revive abandoned spaces or provide good vibes. Almost every month a new highlight appears in the city – a sculpture, a drawing an object. All you need to do is keep track!

YARD GALLERY

E. OŽEŠKIENĖS G. 21

It's the only gallery open 24/7 – and always under construction! Vytenis Jakas, an artist who moved into a house in this courtyard more than a decade ago, noticed that neighbours are alienated – they had forgotten the collective past of the yard. Jakas received great support when he started transferring photographs of the Jewish families – who had previously lived here – on the walls. One after another, new objects continue to appear in the yard. New artists leave their traces here, neighbours' festivities take place in the yard which is also habitually visited by tourists. Just don't forget that people live there and they have their right to peace and quiet.



MORFAI



OBJECTS

FOR LEISURE

1 THE PAINTER / BENEDIKTINIŲ G. 7

Linus Kazilionis, 2022

The residents of Owls Hill often see students of the nearby art school drawing outside. Exactly that inspired the mural by Linus Kazilionis - it depicts a painter capturing the confluence of Nemunas and Neris rivers, surrounded by the well-known motifs of Kaunas.

2 THREAD / MIŠKO G. 27

Gyva Grafika, 2022

The style of the black-and-white mural reminds ancient graves and fits nicely on the facade of the historical house where hundreds, even thousands of Kaunasians were born. The baby held in hands represents the joy of the new life brought into this world and the connection between the child and his parents.

3 FAREWELL, HENRY DARLAND, ALL SOULS' DAY 1956 / RAMYBĖS PARK

"Gyva Grafika", 2019

A bohemian Finnish-Swedish writer that lived in Kaunas before WW2. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956. The ancient Lithuanian art of cutting patterns. What's common between these things? The answer hides in the Kaunas Old Cemetery where created the Ramybės park. Gyva Grafika collective created three new murals here during the first-ever CityTelling festival, initiated by Kaunas 2022.

4 THE WISE OLD MAN / JONAVOS G. 3

"Gyva Grafika", 2013

Formerly a footwear factory. For a few years, it functioned as a creative space called Ministry of Fluxus. Now the factory's - and Kaunas' - central point of attraction is the 440 m2 drawing: a dedication to the father of Fluxus Jurgis Mačiūnas.

5 UNTITLED / ŠV. GERTRŪDOS G. 58

Ernest Zacharevič, 2016

At the invitation of Nykoka Festival, the most well-known Lithuanian street artist in the world left his only (for now) mark in Kaunas, which, by the way delicately covered the previous graffiti.

6 WINDOWS / VEIVERIŲ G. 50A

Linus Kazilionis, 2015

Sometimes all you need is an attentive look and some colours for an inconspicuous house - on the way to Aleksotas - to become a point of attraction for photographers, camera operators and music video creators.

7 UNICORN / BALTŲ PR. 125

Vytenis Jakas, 2018

Artist's idea, which lightens up the grey setting of the largest neighbourhood in Kaunas - Šilainiai - was implemented by his regular companions Goda Skėrytė and leva Voroneckaitė.

8 YARD / VARNIŲ G. 51

Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas, 2017

Vilijampolė neighbourhood is perfect for implementing concepts that don't fit into traditional art galleries. One of such ideas, nurtured in the artist's head for several years, was unanimously favoured by all the residents of the apartment building.

9 PRINCESS ON A HORSE / NEMUNO G. 30

Gabija Menkevičiūtė, 2015

Back then, Gabija was only seven years old, but her drawing was so cool that it won the special Nykoka Festival competition. The Princess was transferred onto the 14 meters high wall by Tadas Šimkus.

10 THE SQUARE / SMALININKŲ G.

Morfaï, 2015

The subtle and minimalist work reveals yet another part of the universal and imaginative artist Morfaï. This symbolic touch can be interpreted in a couple of words - I came, I gave a turn, I left.

11 STAR SEEDER / K. DONELAIČIO G. 64

Morfaï, 2008-2017

In 2008 Morfaï illegally added a site-specific artistic detail to the sculpture of Bernardas Bučas, and because of that illegality aspect, the stars were soon painted over. But the artwork that gains meaning after dark was so loved by the locals and visitors that after winning the Kaunas Highlights competition it was revived.

12 TOWARDS THE GOAL / PERKŪNO AL. 3A

Marius Skrupskis, 2015

Located near the S. Darius and S. Girėnas stadium and Kaunas sports hall, the cosmic athlete is also an inspiration for the students of Lithuanian Sports University. The only way is up!

13 THE PINK ELEPHANT / E. OŽEŠKIEŲS G. 18A

Vytenis Jakas, 2014

The birth of this elephant was inspired by the writing on the wall - Deima + Arūnas. Love conquers all - even the attitude towards wall "pollution" or tags - right?

14 SQUARE NEXT TO THE KAUNAS ARTISTS' HOUSE / V. PUTVINSKIO G. 56 - 60

Various authors

The sculptures of two important Kaunas sculptors - father and son Antinis - have been a delight for V. Putvinskis street residents and visitors for several decades. The drawing Happy Children by brothers Algirdas and Algimantas Gataveckas brings the attention to kids growing up in the children's home.

15 A HUG / LAISVĖS AL. 95

Tadas Šimkus (kartu su „Gyva grafika“), 2024 m.

Did you know that, when hugging, your body produces endorphins, neurotransmitters responsible for happiness and other fantastic feelings? No wonder every meeting of the emotional support hotline Jaunimo Linija starts with a hug. The hug we all need is shown in the mural. It invites citizens to pay more attention to young people's mental health.

16 VICTORY / KESTUČIO G. 60

Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas, 2022

March, 2022. The war in Ukraine continues, artists from Lithuania support the Ukrainian people. The "Victory" is a symbol of resistance to evil and aggression, painted by the street artist Tadas Vincaitis.

17 P. S. / DROBĖS G. 62

"Gyva grafika", 2020

A former textile factory in Žemiejį Šančiai microdistrict has recently been converted into a creative business hub. Its red-brick facade received a major facelift, too - as of 2020, it's one of the largest murals in Kaunas, covering an area of 1100 sq. m. Its authors Žygimantas Amelynus and Tadas Šimkus interpret their work as a dialogue between two people; the past and the current intertwining and creating a paradoxical atmosphere that was never felt before.

18 CULTURISTS / SAVANORIŲ PR. 41

Linus Kazilionis, 2022 m.

Not only events and traditions remind Kaunasians that their city was the European Capital of Culture in 2022. The culturists, too! The network of cultural volunteers is very dense in Kaunas. Thanks to these people, every event becomes a small (or very big) celebration for visitors and organisers. Volunteers are an essential muscle of cultural events, and this mural celebrates this fact.

19 LITUANICA / V. KRĖVĖS PR. 19

Paparazzi, 2018

Invited by Morfaï, a street artist called Paparazzi travelled all the way from Cyprus to leave his trace in Kaunas. "Lituanica" is dedicated to the legendary pilots Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas that, after taking off in the US, didn't make it to Kaunas in 1933.

20 ŽEMAITĖ, THE WORD WEAVER / ŽEMAITĖS G. 8

Kristina Ancutaitė, 2022 m.

Born in the middle of the 19th century, Žemaitė was one of the most famous writers in Lithuanian history, an iconic woman who started writing at a mature age. The artist Kristina Ancutaitė thinks she was a true weaver of words; the mural on Žemaitės street delicately combines Lithuanian traditions of literature and textiles.

21 THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE / SAVANORIŲ PR.

"Gyva Grafika", 2020

Errors can be fixed with a brush and some paint! Dedicated city servants cleaned the legally painted walls of an underground passage by mistake, but instead of a reprehension, the team received copies of Kaunas street art guides. Later in 2020, the Gyva Grafika artist team got back to business and redecored the walls with even more passion.

22 NATION FRIENDSHIP TREE / TOTORIŲ G. 3

Žygimantas Amelynus, 2023 m.

A total of two colourful murals decorate the facade of the Lithuanian Education Museum, which is now in its second hundredth year; both reveal Kaunas' rich history and present-day life. This particular ornament tells about the culture and values of the Tatars, who have lived in Kaunas for hundreds of years.

23 DADAIST MONA LISA IN THE 21ST CENTURY / STUDENTŲ G. 71

Linus Kazilionis, Tomas Stasiukaitis, 2017

500 hours of drawing, 40 colours and 1000 LEDs were necessary to transfer the mystery of Leonardo da Vinci to the 21st century and to make her communicate with the environment. Yes - the drawing is interactive.

24 OUR STORIES / VYTAUTO PR. 52

Žygimantas Amelynus, 2023 m.

If you think the facade of Vytauto pr. 52 is moving, you are not alone. When we first saw this mural, we rubbed our eyes! All those cartoon characters playing sports, having fun, chilling out and spending time in various other ways look as if they are very much alive! With this work, Žygimantas Amelynus proved he is one of the leading muralists in Kaunas.

25 ART FOR THE CENTENARY / COURT-YARD OF THE NATIONAL DRAMA THEATRE

Various authors, 2020

The courtyard of the National Kaunas Drama Theatre - or rather, the labyrinth of courtyards between Laisvės Avenue and Kėstučio Street - is buzzing with art by various authors, including Vytenis Jakas and Dainius Ščiukas. Here, you will find a mural by Karolis Grubis-Dėžutė, dedicated to the Nemunas magazine, which is very important in the world of theatre. A sculpture by Tadas Vosylius is sure to be noticed at the parade entrance to the theatre. And can you see the faces of theatre people deep in the courtyards on the wall? This is a work of nature and street art that will, in fact, never be finished, but was started by Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas.

26 NEOFRESCO FOR THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LITHUANIAN NATIONAL RADIO / S. DAUKANTO G. 28A

Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas, 2016

When celebrating its anniversary, Lithuanian National Radio was not afraid of contemporary highlights. It entrusted one of the currently most productive street artists of Kaunas with their development, based on the archival shots. The effect was successful!

27 TIRES IN THE SKY / VAIDOTO G. 36

Žygimantas Amelynus ("Gyva Grafika"), 2018

The author of the swing that decorates a wall in Panemunė says that he wanted to remind everyone that we don't need much to achieve complete happiness.

28 CONTEMPORARY LADIES / A. MICKEVIČIAUS G. 37

Linus Kazilionis, 2015

Kaunas University of Technology community is very fond of colourful walls. Two characters from Leonardo da Vinci's paintings - Lady with an Ermine and The Beauty of ferrionnère - met on this wall and decided to listen to some music.

29 MURAL OF KAUNAS PICTURE GALLERY / K. DONELAIČIO G. 16

"Os Gemeas", 2007

We can view the arrival of internationally well-known Brazilian brothers (who have Lithuanian origins) to Kaunas Biennial as the beginning of the new era in Kaunas street art. Their mural gives meaning to the impressions they gained while travelling around Lithuania and nicely contrasts with the grey facade.

30 KEKTO / K. DONELAIČIO G. 16

Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas, 2017

The artist living in Petrašiūnai was dreaming about a drawing of an aquatic animal near the lagoon, but the constellation of acquaintances brought him to the first tentacle at the very heart of Kaunas. Keko animal is the part of Kaunas 2022 project.

31 CULTURAL PERKUNAS / K. DONELAIČIO G. 16

Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas, Tomas Dėžutė, 2016

The idea implemented under the Nykoka Festival flag, like the thunder had woken up a completely uninteresting transformer station and enriched the Kaunas Picture Gallery environment with a new highlight.

32 NEBEPRIKIKIŠKIAKOPŪSTELIAU-JANTIESIEMS MEETS DAVID / KESTUČIO G. 26

Morfaï, 2015-2016

The longest Lithuanian word (meaning something like "particularly for those who never pick up enough shamrocks for themselves") can be found on the eeriest building in Kaunas - hotel-ghost Britanika which is still waiting for a decision on its future. In May 2018, a naughty David appeared on another ghost building nearby, and he's aiming at Britanika!

33 CARRIER OF LIGHT / KESTUČIO G. 53

Vytenis Jakas, 2019

Vytenis Jakas, the founder of the renowned Yard Gallery, incrusts the figure constructed of painting and mirror pieces into an empty niche of a building in central Kaunas - usually, such slots are inhabited by sculptures, right? The character by Jakas holds a palette and a brush and looks its best on a sunny day.

34 A BICYCLIST WITH A ROSE / M. K. ČIURLIONIO G. 17

Tadas Šimkus, 2016

The legend says that the cyclist in a rush bought the rose just around the corner, at the Station Market famous for its flower supply.

35 WALL / NEMUNAS QUAY NEAR THE M. K. ČIURLIONIS BRIDGE

Many Kaunas, Lithuanian and international street artists have left their mark here, for example, a giant bear or a number of smaller symbols. At the moment, it is no longer possible to draw legally in the quay.

36 HE AND SHE / A. JUOZAPAVIČIAUS PR. 62

Gražvyda Andrijauskaitė, 2016

It's impressive that the 10 x 10 cm graphic artwork was transferred to the wall and became a fresco. Two pigeons perched in the heart of Šančiai neighbourhood symbolise friendship and community.

37 VILNIUS-KAUNAS-KLAIPĖDA-NIDA / ISLANDIJOS PL. 217

Tadas Vincaitis-Pilūgas, 2018-2019

The carochs statue from Ažuolynas, the Žaliakalnis Funicular, the lion from Vytautas the Great War Museum and many more symbols of Kaunas and Lithuania easily fit on the gigantic facade of business centre A1, easily observed by those passing by Kaunas. The mural is currently the largest in Kaunas and occupies a total of 1650 sq. m.

38 SMILING SUNDIAL / MUITINĖS G. 8

Antanas Balkė, Ričardas Kristapavičius, 1986

The recently renovated Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty sundial smiles for the passersby day and night. The artists who created the sundial during the years of Russian occupation made sure that it shows the precise time of Kaunas. Could this be an actual heart of Kaunas?!

39 DOT / STUDENT SQUARE

Tadas Vosylius, 2024 m.

The only Lithuanian letter in the world wouldn't exist without a dot. The dot that adorns the letter Ė has become a sculpture that reminds every Lithuanian that we are unique and exciting. Ė is our identity, which (like the dot on E) we must not lose, even in the speedy modern world.

40 IN MEMORY OF CHIUNE SUGIHARA / KURPIŲ G. 29

Martynas Gaubas, 2020

Chiune Sugihara was a Japanese diplomat that resided in Kaunas from 1939 to 1940 as a vice-consul of the Japanese Empire. During World War II, he helped thousands of Jews to escape Holocaust by issuing them transit Japanese visas. The 4-meter-high sculpture "In Memory of Chiune Sugihara" by sculptor Martynas Gaubas was made from origami-shaped winches made of platinum bronze spinning into the sky in a circle. The base of the sculpture depicts the seal of Sugihara and words "Whoever saves a life, saves an entire world" engraved in Lithuanian, Japanese, English and Yiddish.

41 LINDEN / LAISVĖS AL. 18

Kotryna Čalkaitė, 2023 m.

Laisvės Alėja would not be the city's and its citizens' main artery without its linden trees. It was not yet called Laisvės (freedom), but the lindens were already growing there! Kotryna Čalkaitė, an artist who loves experimenting with light, has interpreted this green accent on the facade of a new apartment block near Saboras. The best time to observe this mural is after dark.

42 THE BEAST OF KAUNAS / NEMUNAS ISLAND

For some, this sunset-glowing news reminds of the already legendary Bayraktar, for which the whole of Lithuania raised money, but this is the real Beast of Kaunas! The sculpture of the mythical Kaunas Beast by the Žalgiris Arena was revealed in May 2022 to crown the second act of the European Capital of Culture trilogy. The best place to say hello to the Beast is from a distance, from the waterfront walkway or from the bridge by the Carmelite Church. The Beast's body was created by designer Darius Petreikis and realised by Stasys Beišys.

43 INSECTS OF VLADISLAVAS STAREVIČIUS / ROTUŠĖS A. 15

Zenonas Baranaukas, 2014

Stag-beetle, ant and a grasshopper behind the Kaunas Town Hall are Vladislavas Starevičius characters - the pioneer of puppet animation who began his career here. The insects are the symbols to remember him by.

44 OWLS / PELĖDŲ KALNAS (OWL HILL)

Vincas Grybas, 1924

Kaunas Art School was opened in Žaliakalnis in 1922. The owls were made and put on the fence a bit later by sculptor Vincas Grybas. In doing so, he became the godfather of the mountain. In a hundred years the number of owls has diminished, but the surviving ones were recently restored.

45 JAN ZWARTENDIJK MONUMENT / LAISVĖS AL. 36

Giny Vos, 2018

Jan Zwartendijk, a Dutchman who used to run a Philips radio store on Laisvės Alėja just before WW2, had no idea that his life would change. Soon, the man who became the Dutch Honorary Consul started issuing visas to Curaçao for Jews fleeing the war. In 2018, a remarkable monument was unveiled in front of Jan Zwartendijk's former office. The light installation by Dutch artist Giny Vos consists of many LED strips of different lengths, representing the thousands of lives saved by the man who was given the title of Righteous among the Nations.

46 SUNDIAL / STUDENTŲ G. 48A

Collective work, 2006

The largest vertical sundial in Lithuania - where history meets modern technology. The maximum length of its gnomon - the bar that casts a shadow - is 8.597 m. The total radius of the sundial is 81 m².

Incidentally, a sundial in the shape of a human shadow - dedicated to commemoration of the millennium of the name of Lithuania - can be found in the KTU student campus.

47 SCULPTURE MAN / NEPRIKLAUSOMYBĖS A. 12

Petras Mazūras, 1986

This guide was not intended to overview the landscape of Kaunas sculptures and monuments, but this nude put on then newly-built M. Žilinskas Gallery has become one of the most prominent and boldest symbols of Kaunas; therefore, we simply must recommend you get acquainted with it.

48 SCULPTURE DREAM / NEPRIKLAUSOMYBĖS A.

Leonas Strioga, 1987

The sculpture - which seems to be levitating - next to the Man, receives less attention than its stark-naked neighbour, but it is definitely as interesting.

49 BUSINESS CENTER 1000 / TAIKOS PR. 88A

"RA studija", 2008

Architektūrinė prasmė netikėčiausias 2008 m. Kauno statinys didžiulioji didžiausio Lietuvos vitražu. Pastato fasadas atkartoja susuktą 1926-1941 m. ppyvartoje buvusio 1000 litų banknoto piešinį, kurio autorius - Adomas Galdikas.

50 BURNING STONES / LINKUVOS G. / A. KRIŠČIUKAIČIO G. CORNER

Vytenis Jakas, 2018

With an artistic intervention called "Burning Stones", Jakas aims to enhance the ghetto gate memorial and to add some positive emotional connotations, as well as emphasise the meaning of the Lithuanian point of view to the importance of Jewish cultural and historical legacy.

51 KULTŪRA / K. DONELAIČIO G. 16

The cafe located in the Kaunas Picture Gallery is not only surrounded by street art but is itself characterised by the artistic interior. Posters from historical exhibitions and unexpected interior details will nourish your brain and the fantastic kitchen - your stomach.

52 HOTEL MOXY / MAIRONIO G. 19

Being part of a hotel chain does not mean copying standard interior decisions - certainly not in Moxxy Kaunas. The interior of the hotel features lively, fun interior solutions for young souls. Spacious common areas decorated with graffiti, drawings and photos, modern minimalist furniture, unique lighting and other interior details create the impression of a modern, lively, fashionable space. Very, very instagrammable!

53 PELĖDINĖ / ŠV. GERTRŪDOS G. 22

While stuffing yourself with these special burgers, you can observe Kaunas rushing by and the eatery's interior design which symbolises experience and modernity.

54 CAIF CAFÉ / K. DONELAIČIO G. 22

One of the most charming intersections in central Kaunas is that of Gedimino and K. Donelaičio streets. We recommend starting your busy day in the city with a nice cup of joe, watching cars and people rushing through the enormous glass windows of Caif Café. The historical building was designed by Arnas Funkas, one of the most prominent architects of interwar Kaunas - his portrait and architectural drawings of the house have been used to decorate the interior. Smart!

55 KUHNE / ŽEMAIČIŲ G. 29

Jonas Jablonskis is winking at you from the walls of the hunger killers' abode, and his bust can be seen through the eatery's window. The funicular of Žaliakalnis is also nearby!

