

Vytautas Kumža

b. 1992, Klaipėda, Lithuania.

Lives and works in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Just as the surrealists highlighted in their paintings, when we think about our dreams we are sensitive to the objects that appeared in those scenes as we try to read them. Kumža applies the same hypersensitivity to objects, their state and their placement in the waking world. Born into a precarious situation and a turbulent home life where emotions could change at the tip of a bottle, the artist's childhood experiences taught him to read objects and the minutia of each scene; a gas hob left burning, a scared dog, a door left open and unlocked. In adult life he now couples this honed skill with studies in composition and psychology, to place objects in highly aestheticised relationships that are often instantly alluring but hold intense tension. While still, these inanimate protagonists are often bodily in their rendering, fragile, tense. At once potentially sexual, potentially violent, potentially seductive, potentially abusive — emotions waiting for release.

Kumža graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in 2017. His work has since been exhibited at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Netherlands); Museum of Photography Seoul (MoPS) (South Korea); CODA Museum (Netherlands); Museum Villa Mondriaan (Netherlands); (nelly&) theo van doesburg foundation, Amsterdam (Netherlands); NEST, The Hague (Netherlands); National Gallery, Prague (Czech Republic); Geste, Paris (France); Kunsthuis SYB. Beetsterzwaag (Netherlands); and MaMA, Rotterdam (Netherlands). He is currently in residency at LaunchPad, La Boissière, France.

Kumža's works are held in the collections of Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Netherlands); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Netherlands); MO Museum Vilnius (Lithuania); GCA Collection, Montélimar (France); Parkseobo Foundation (South Korea); Zuzeum (Latvia); CODA Museum Apeldoorn (Netherlands); LAM Museum Lisse (Netherlands); Noewe Foundation (Lithuania); Mondriaan Fonds (Netherlands); NN Art Collection (Netherlands); AkzoNobel Art Foundation (Netherlands); KPMG Art Collection (Netherlands), SEB Bank Art Collection (Lithuania); Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands; and private collections internationally. Kumža received the NN Art Award in 2022 and the Sybren Hellinga Art Prize in 2019.

Solo exhibitions

2026

Liste Basel (upcoming)

Where Light Leans, with GuNA at ThisWeekendRoom, Seoul, South Korea

Condo Mexico City: When Things Begin To Act, with Mariana Ledesma hosted by Third Born, Mexico City

2025

OFFSCREEN Paris: Copperfield and Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam

2023

ECHO at CODA Museum Apeldoorn. Apeldoorn, The Netherlands.

OBJECTS IN THE MIRROR ARE CLOSER, THEN THEY APPEAR at Galerie Martin van Zomeren. Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

2022

AFTER THE DAY, The Rooster Gallery., Lithuania.

2021

SHIFTING PRESENCE, Prospekto Gallery. Vilnius, Lithuania.

2019

HALF EMPTY, HALF FULL, Museum Villa Mondriaan. Winterswijk, The Netherlands.

Group exhibitions**2025**

Fragile, CODA, Apeldoorn, The Netherlands.

2024

CIRCULATE - PROPOSALS FOR THE MUSEUM COLLECTION 2024 at Stedelijk Museum. Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

FRAGILE at CODA Museum Apeldoorn. Apeldoorn, The Netherlands.

2023

NEWS FROM NOWHERE at (nelly&) theo van doesburg foundation. Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

2022

HYPERNUIT at Galerie Martin van Zomeren. Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

2021

UNCOVERINGS at MoPS The Museum of Photography. Seoul, South Korea.

THE FOUNTAIN SHOW II at SUNDY Gallery. London, United Kingdom.

2020

LOST TIME at Mala Gallery, Mystetskyi Arsenal. Kyiv, Ukraine.

2019

SYBREN HELLINGA ART PRIZE 2019 at Kunsthuis SYB. Beetsterzwaag, The Netherlands

EYES ON ROBERT at Melkweg Expo. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

SMEARED STATES at MaMA. Rotterdam, The Netherlands

MATERIAL WORLD at Show Off. Rotterdam, The Netherlands

2018

RABOBANK DUTCH PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT TALENT at Rabobank HQ. Utrecht, The Netherlands

BINARY / NON-BINARY at Geste. Paris, France

3DVS2D at Prospekto gallery. Vilnius, Lithuania

STARTPOINT PRIZE 2017 SELECTION at Arti et Amicitiae. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2017

YOUNG & PROMISING at Villa Mondriaan. Winterswijk, The Netherlands

PARTY OF RUIN at NEST. The Hague, The Netherlands

NIEUWE OOGST at Galerie Bart. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

STARTPOINT PRIZE at National Gallery. Prague, Czech Republic

OUTSIDE THE WALL at Nida Art Colony. Nida, Lithuania

BEST OF GRADUATES at Ron Mandos Gallery. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

GRADUATION SHOW at Gerrit Rietveld Academie. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Residencies

2026

NOW AT LaunchPad LaB, La Boissière, France (current)

Awards and scholarships

2025

Mondriaan Fonds Basis Grant

2024

Mondriaan Fonds Artist Project Grant

Lithuanian Council for Culture Stipendium

2023

Mondriaan Fonds Publication Grant

Mondriaan Fonds Artist Project Grant

2022

Winner of NN Art Award

2021

Mondriaan Fonds Grant

2020

Stokroos Grant

Lithuanian Council for Culture Stipendium

2019

Winner of Sybren Hellinga Kunstprijs

Mondriaan Fonds Emerging Artist Stipendium

Lithuanian Council for Culture Stipendium

2018

Nominee for Rabobank Dutch National Photographic prize

Nominee for Riga Photography Biennial award

2017

Nominee for StartPoint Prize

Winner of Ron Mandos Photo Talent Award

Winner of HvA photographer in Residence award

2016

Nominee for European Photography Prize

Collections

CODA Museum (NL)

LAM Museum (NL)

Parkseobo Foundation (KR)

Zuzeum (LV)

MO Museum Vilnius (LT)

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (NL)

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (NL)

Mondriaan Fonds (NL)

Noewe Foundation (LT)

NN Art Collection (NL)
KPMG Art Collection (NL)
SEB Bank Art Collection (LT)
GCA Collection, Montélimar (FR)
AkzoNobel Art Foundation (NL)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (NL)

Education

2014 – 2017

Gerrit Rietveld Academy. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2014

Royal Academy of Arts (KABK). The Hague, The Netherlands

2011 – 2014

Vilnius College of Design. Vilnius, Lithuania

Publications

2026

And Then It Fades (Away), a bilingual publication on contemporary Lithuanian photography, published by Six Chairs Books

2024

HOLLOW, published by Free Pony Press

Selected Press

2025

Interview / Pellicola magazine (EN):

<https://www.pellicolamag.com/blog/vytautas-kumza/>

2023

Article / MetropolisM (NL):

https://metropolism.com/nl/feature/51158_het_leven_van_objecten_in_gesprek_met_vytautas_kum_a/

Article / UNSEEN (EN):

<https://unseenphoto.com/article/breaking-the-logic-%E2%80%93-vytautas-kum%C5%BEa%E2%80%99s-playful-yet-sinister-optical-illusions->

2022

Feature / ArtNews.com (EN):

<https://www.artnews.com/list/art-news/news/june-art-fair-2022-best-booths-1234631792/www.artnews.com/list/art-news/news/june-art-fair-2022-best-booths-1234631792/>

2021

Feature / Artforum (EN):

<https://sundy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Critics-Picks-%E2%80%93-Artforum-International-1.pdf>

2020

Article / Bird in Flight (RU):

<https://birdinflight.com/ru/vdohnovenie/fotoproect/vitutas-kumza.html>

Feature / EEP Berlin (EN):

<https://eepberlin.org/blogs/editorials/vytautas-kumza-how-much-space-can-a-photograph-take>

Interview / 370 (LT):

<https://370.diena.lt/2020/05/11/kokios-yra-fotografijos-ribos/>

Review / Literatura ir menas (LT):

<https://literaturairmenas.lt/daile/katazyna-jankovska-iliuzijos-ne-appauna>

Interview / LRT (LT):

<https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/kultura/12/1150860/menininkas-leidzia-spresti-patie9ms-fotomeno-ir-technologiju-stiklines-puspilnes-ar-pustustes>

2018

Interview / Echo Gone Wrong (EN):

<https://echogonewrong.com/dont-fall-love-prop-conversation-photographer-vytautas-kumza/>

Interview / Artnews.lt (LT):

<https://artnews.lt/dont-fall-love-prop-pokalbis-su-fotografu-vytautu-kumza-49982>

2017

Review / Hard//hoofd (NL):

<https://hardhoofd.com/katoen-beeldruis-en-white-walkers/>

Review / NRC (NL):

<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/07/06/examenexpositie-rietveld-zweven-aan-een-strak-gespannen-touw-a1565804>