



Impressed by the brilliant modern ballet performance of “Romeo and Juliet” by Vienna Ballet Show, my childhood days spent in the theater were brought to mind. Oh, how I loved to be on the stage and to act, yet true magic was not only in those 60 mins or so of the play itself - it was in all the work before that: the rehearsals, the dive into your character’s psyche and working alongside your colleagues. Today I realize, creating and coordinating any kind of social event or gathering is similar – you have the message you want to send, followed by an idea how it should be done, and then you have to consider how to achieve it and do the daily grind of preparations.

January was all about setting up concrete, long-term plans of my work in Loodusmaja, actualizing previously set ideas and starting real collaboration of all the centers involved in my ESC project.



There is always a new and interesting exhibition on nature various topics that alternate in the hall and the lobby of Loodusmaja and in the first half of June, art students from Tartu Kunstikool will have an exhibition of their artworks. With the assistance of my fellow volunteer Ania, I have given the tours around our House, and we are planning how to set up the exhibition.

Remember my rush to the train station from previous journal? I have visited Tallinn twice this month. I have completed a training course “Argumentation and Communication Skills in Model United Nations” lectured by Lauri Kriisa from SpeakSmart with youngsters from the EstMUN team. I learned to be an assertive speaker, ways to overcome obstacles in communication and how to guide others toward clear and credible communication.

Secondly, I did a media coverage of seminar “Conflicts in Media, Women in conflicts” organized by NGO Mondo and EstMUN youth. I feel honored and lucky to be alongside such an amazing team and to participate in their events. The seminar had quite an interesting theme, and despite my unfamiliarity with those subjects, it was refreshing to hear something new.



One of the panelists, Lauri Tankler who is leading analyst at the Republic of Estonia Information System Authority, presented us with research about '90 popular series "X-files" and certain "Scully effect" – a phenomenon of an influx of women pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers thanks to the positive representation of Agent Scully. I used to watch that series regularly, I loved the mysteries, the plot, and well, I am studying biology now. Funny coincidence or valid outcome?



On the 25th of January an Estonian-Latvian cross-border cooperation project "Energy Advice" and Family Day of Loodusmaja were held in the AHHA Science Center. The main aim of the project was to increase environmental awareness and introduce a variety of smarter choices that help save energy. My job was to take photos, and believe it or not, one photo ended up in the local newspaper! Despite still being dissatisfied with my photography work, I do see some progress and I am improving in the composition and my editing skills in post processing. Oh yes, and I fully enjoy this! Moreover, thanks to this event I had the opportunity to visit interactive, supercool, nerd's heaven –



AHHAA Science Center! It is such an exciting and fun place to be and learn about science.



Days in TYPA were spent in the printing area and in proofreading of "The Little Prince". TYPA is currently in the process of composing and printing a unique English version of "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Using their historic presses and old bookbinding techniques they are creating collectors editions. I forgot how marvelous this book is! I had to read, look for mistakes and typos, but I simply couldn't resist losing myself in the world of golden hair boy. The conversation between fox and little prince was exactly what I needed to read. I might dedicate one of the posts entirely to explain why this is so important to me...



Working with Gedy is always amazing! She has such positive energy, her educational skills are inspiring and I feel happy around her. I helped her with closing the [BSP WebQuiz](#) and writing a letter of appreciation for participants and winners. This time there were over 1250 participants from 8 different Baltic countries and Gedy prepared thoughtful gift for the winners – bamboo toothbrush, Miswaki twig dental cleanser and organic chewing gum. This is a great example of how with small changes in our daily routine, we could improve our lives and create huge impact on sustainability.

An Estonian riddle says: *“there’s water but no ship can ever sail there; there’s land but no house can ever be built there. What is it?”* The answer is *a bog*.



At the very end of the month, I went hiking in Endla Nature Reserve with Gedy and her hiking class. This experience is unforgettable and I will carry it as something to be forever proud of. First day we had a lovely night walk with lanterns and meditating moment in silence, in the middle of the bog. It felt so good to appreciate nature, to free our minds, simply to be present. Truly powerful feeling.



Second day was rough. I am not in the best physical condition, it was cold, it was raining, at some point even started to snow, my backpack and snowshoes were heavy to carry on, so the trip was not easy at all and I was in a bad mood. However, I was surrounded with incredible people - their team spirit and strong mindsets were admirable. They were singing, sharing Estonian folk tales with me and what surprised me the most is their understanding of my tantrum. I would never want to offend them, but they helped me realize that it was okay to feel bad, that they are not mad at me. I was accepted, and I changed for the better. Yes, I could say now that I love hiking, but the truth is, I love the people I was with.



Allow me to close up January journal with one of my favorite quotes by Draško Sikimić:

*"Some disappointments
physically hurt,
but you have nowhere to put on ice,
you have no real wound to wrap;
the air hurts you.*

- How do you heal the air?

By breathing.

- How do you breathe to heal?

By walking.

- How do you walk to heal?

Not stopping."

