

Meet the Maker

Anu Raud

Author: Sue Malvern

Photography: © Sue Malvern

Anu Raud is a tapestry weaver, university professor and tireless researcher into Estonian folk traditions. Her tapestries combine motifs from Estonian folk art but they also tell stories about contemporary culture. So a traditional Estonian knitted sock becomes a bird in the colours of the national flag to assert the optimism of Estonian independence. In the forest, birds sing and women walk wearing the traditional scarves and skirts of Kihnu island. Anu Raud lives in her grandparents' farm near Heimtali Museum, which she restored, filled with her collection and gifted to the nation. She was a professor of the Viljandi Culture Academy and helped establish the department of Estonian Native Crafts there. But with her friend, the architect Anu Kotli, she also invented her delightful Kiri Kari (pattern puppets) as a way to interest children in folk patterns and to teach young people how to create them. Anu wrote in 2008 '...how does one remain Estonian, connect the centuries and skills of our forebears, their wisdom, to the developments of today, to this mutable life? Recently I gave my students the task of translating Mexican stylized designs into Estonian... The solutions were interesting - one eagle became one of our sparrows, wearing a striped skirt!'

A film about Anu Raud: <https://vimeo.com/403760470>

Kiri Kari or pattern puppets can be found here:

<https://www.ravelry.com/designers/anu-raud--anu-kotli>



Photos were taken at the Estonian National Museum. <https://www.erm.ee/en/content/anu-raud-landscapes-my-fatherland>
Works shown here are in the collections of the ERM or private collections.