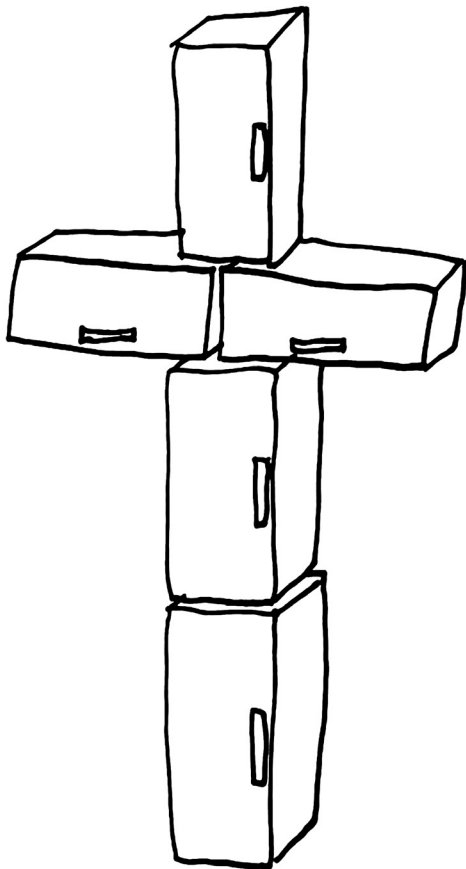


Flo Kasearu

22.03-03.08.2025



EN

**BANANA—Build Absolutely Nothing
Anywhere Near Anyone**

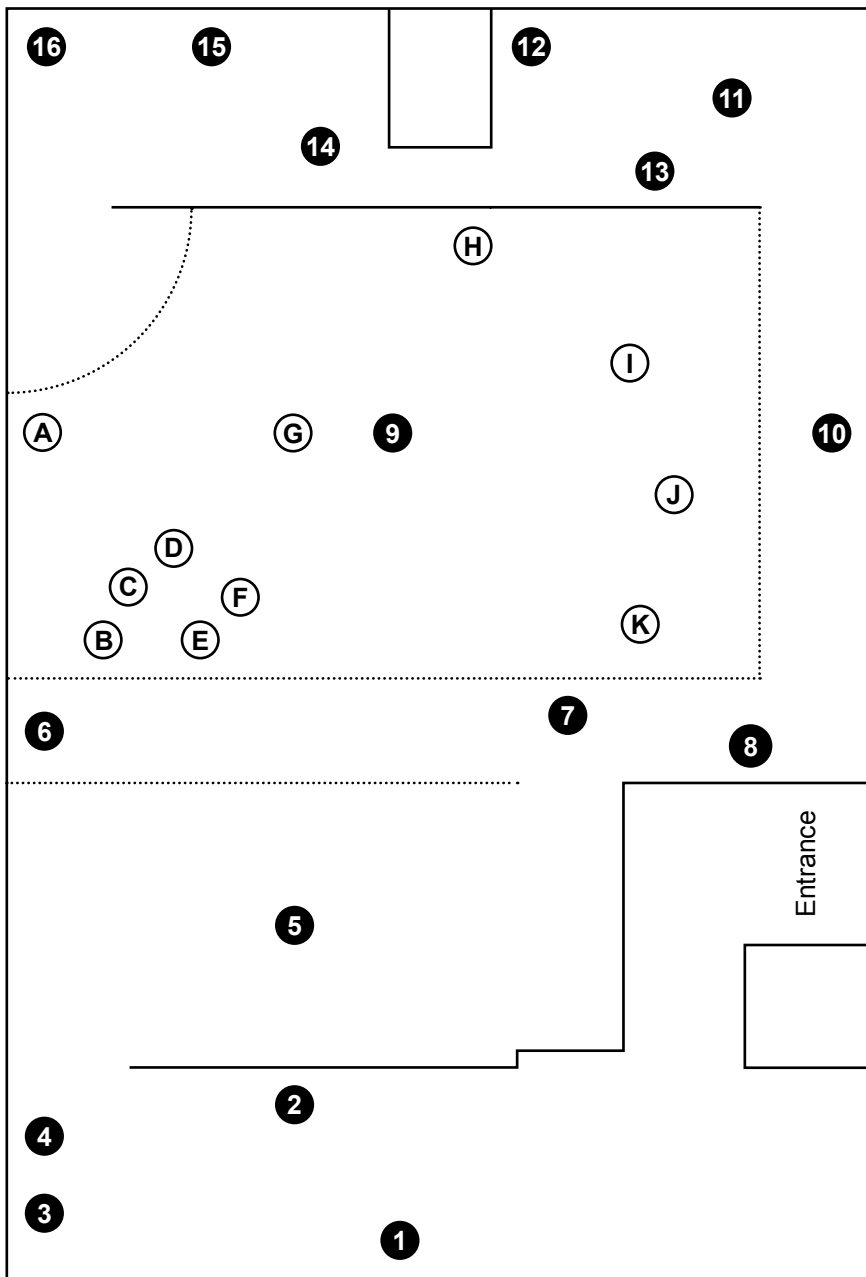
Flo Kasearu's solo exhibition **BANANA—Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anyone** explores the dynamics of public and private space through the lens of the NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) phenomenon. **BANANA** invites visitors to engage in discussions about urban and rural development, public participation, local values, and property rights. Offering visual, auditory, and tactile experiences, **BANANA** combines installations, paintings, video, photography, and sculpture to create narratives about the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion that define contemporary development and the complexities of land use.

In **BANANA**, Kasearu asks: What is a community's responsibility to the greater good when development reaches its doorstep? At community boards and meetings around the world, neighbors debate what, where, and who can build—whether it's housing, renewable energy, transportation projects, or other forms of infrastructure. Regarding specific proposals, some individuals align with NIMBY views, while others back YIMBY (Yes In My Backyard). Typically, NIMBY perspectives regard development as negative or harmful—regardless of whether this perception is justified—while YIMBY supporters see it as beneficial for society as a whole, although this is not always the case.

Over 50 newly-commissioned and recent works exploring these timely ideological and political disagreements are on display at Kai. Visitors will arrive at an imagined—though possibly real—community where notices are publicly posted, energy flows, surveillance intensifies, power lines are severed, views are obstructed, towering structures loom excessively, and neighbors contend with each other and their rapidly reshaped communities.

All texts by Kari Conte

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**BANANA (Build Absolutely Nothing
Anywhere Near Anything), 2025**

Electric cables, lights and 400 cable clips
200 × 660 × 1 cm

Kasearu's text work, **BANANA**, playfully reveals the hidden networks of power—both literal and political—that shape the built environment. Electric cables are no longer hidden behind drywall but sprawled across its surface in a whimsical, oversized script—too bent and exaggerated to serve any practical purpose. The acronym BANANA represents an extreme form of NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard), where communities or individuals oppose nearly all new development, regardless of its purpose or location, usually to protect ecosystems or the character of places. While NIMBYism typically targets specific projects—such as housing construction, infrastructure, or industrial facilities—BANANA extends this resistance to almost any form of construction, even when it could provide social or economic benefits. Kasearu doesn't choose a side—areas dominated by BANANA often experience housing shortages; however, proponents of BANANA can raise legitimate concerns, often connected to the preservation of ecologies.

Neighborhood News, 2025

Wood
450 × 305 × 60 cm

Sense of Place, 2022

Twelve drawings, marker on cardboard
70 × 50 cm each

Thaw, 2020

Framed clay and wood objects
37,5 × 52 cm each

Solar, 2025

Solar panel
105 × 176 cm

Standby, 2020

Readymade firefighter boots and pants

Dimensions variable

Neighborhood News welcomes visitors to the exhibition, inviting them into an imagined community where neighbors continually post notices on a public board. A bulletin board serves as a dynamic hub for local news, missed connections, and calls for help, capturing the pulse of a community in real time. Here, however, the postings consist of several of Kasearu's works, installed together to represent the neighborhood's news. Among these, the **Sense of Place** black-and-white drawings portray groups of people and individuals holding welcome signs reminiscent of airport reunions. By embedding these drawings within the everyday language of public notices, **Sense of Place** conveys feelings of longing and waiting to return home, alongside the familiar gestures that define community. **Thaw**, a series of brightly colored melting popsicle sculptures, recalls summer and children gathering in their neighborhood to enjoy them in the heat. However, the popsicles are now melting faster than ever before due to climate change. **Solar** counters the somewhat sentimental perspectives of the welcome signs and popsicles; it is a vandalized and crushed solar panel graffitied with messages of opposition to development. Nearby, awaiting mobilization, is the readymade sculpture **Standby**, which features firefighter gear positioned at the heart of a community, prepared to be worn and ready to respond.

3

Police Asks for Help, 2018

Inkjet transparency in lightbox

57 × 120 cm

A group of women dressed in police uniforms stands in the woods; their arrangement is simultaneously a performance, documentary, and staged intervention. The title subverts expectations—police typically offer assistance, not seek it. This reversal destabilizes traditional power dynamics, raising questions about authority, protection, and the limits of institutional control. The uniforms convey order, yet the unpredictability of the forest suggests a realm beyond governance, where structures of power no longer prevail.

Our House is on Fire, 2022

Inkjet transparency in lightbox

57 × 120 cm

In **Our House is on Fire**, a group of children dressed in firefighter uniforms stand in the forest, their presence both urgent and eerie. The image glows like a warning sign, and the title—borrowed from activist Greta Thunberg’s rallying cry—highlights the dire ecological crisis we face collectively. The children’s uniforms imply preparedness and duty, yet their small bodies and uncertain stances reveal vulnerability. Ultimately, it is their generation that will bear the burden of the climate crisis, and they will exist on the brink of being too late to reverse it.

Disorder Patrol, 2022

Installation with bench, video, mirrors, costumes and lockers

Dimensions variable

Seven absurdist security guards roam the streets of Recklinghausen, Germany, in **Disorder Patrol**, their exaggerated uniforms blurring the line between authority and parody. The installation situates the video within a mirrored environment reminiscent of a worker’s locker room. A bench invites viewers to sit, watch, open the lockers, and briefly enter the scene.

The patrolling figures wear hats that hinder their physical actions, even though they suggest power and authority. Dressed in mismatched uniforms adorned with twirling gymnastic ribbons, they embody the contradictions of power. When not idling, they oscillate between mechanical and theatrical movements, enforcing order where none is needed and responding to invisible threats. By situating authority figures in a context of futility, **Disorder Patrol** reveals the often-arbitrary nature of surveillance and control. The mirrored surfaces distort perception, implicating the viewer—who is watching whom? The installation focuses on the performative aspects of power, where rules are enacted even when their purpose is unclear, and order and chaos coexist.

6

Cash Balance, 2020

Diasac photo (Photo credit: Epp Kubu)

76,7 × 115 cm

This photograph captures the remnants of dirt and dust accumulated over decades on the gridded tiles beneath Kasearu's mother's shop register, an object that had remained unmoved for years. The imprint left behind is a record of time's passage, revealing a ghostly absence where the register once stood, a mark of community history left behind.

7

Statue of Woolen Sock (Keep Warm), 2025

Copper sculpture

260 × 325 × 180 cm

A towering and creeping copper sock looms over a community, transforming from a humble keeper of warmth into a watchful presence—part nosy neighbor, part guardian, part silent overseer, part neighboring country, part Lady Liberty. Unlike traditional monuments of power and heroism, this one is vulnerable. A sock needs warmth; it consumes energy to fulfill its function. Corrugated in copper—a material used for wiring, heat conduction, and public monuments—it possesses an anthropomorphic quality. Is it providing warmth as a new type of sustainable energy, keeping watch, offering protection, or simply observing its neighbors?

8

Fears of the House Owner (Bomb), 2013

Pen on paper

21 × 29 cm

This drawing, illustrating a gaping hole in Kasearu's own backyard, conveys the anxiety of homeownership—the looming fear of collapse and the relentless cycle of maintenance it demands.

NIMBY—Not in My Backyard, 2025

Installation with fence, stage, carpet, sound,
and 11 double-sided paintings

Dimensions and elements variable

- (A) They Have to Go Somewhere, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
180 × 130 cm each
- (B) Energy Security, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
300 × 200 cm each
- (C) What Is the Price, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
150 × 150 cm
- (D) New Energy Landscapes, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
130 × 180 cm
- (E) You Can Hear Them, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
200 × 150 cm
- (F) Somewhere Else, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
150 × 160 cm
- (G) Renewable Energy, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
200 × 250 cm each
- (H) When Energy Was Expensive, I Painted, I and II, 2025**
Oil on canvas
150 × 200 cm each

I It Will Be Here All My Life, I and II, 2025

Oil on canvas
200 × 300 cm

J What Are They Hiding, I and II, 2025

Oil on canvas
165 × 195 cm

K Industrial Civilization, I and II, 2025

Oil on canvas
185 × 140 cm

This installation's periphery is a rickety wooden fence carved in the style of a decorative banister and sourced from Kasearu's own house museum, where she resides—an artifact imbued with personal and historical significance. Kasearu's backyard has long been a source of inspiration for her work; this fence was the subject of a previous video piece, and she also molded her metal roof into monumental sculptures. Once a marker of private space, the fence is now recontextualized as a public boundary, obscuring the view of a garden where large-scale figurative paintings sprout from the ground, like new buildings. These double-sided paintings—the artist's first in two decades—depict community members interacting with a wind turbine. One side captures moments in time just before the other side, as the poses of the figures shift while remaining in the same space. The rotund group of neighbors circles and sometimes embraces the turbine, their wide and alarmed eyes firmly fixed on their surroundings, waiting for something to happen. The energy of the turbine transforms them, impacting every facet of their being, from how they act alone to their group dynamics.

A stage offers a secondary perspective of this garden, where the paintings are fully revealed to visitors, though now the viewers are implicated in these messy community relationships. It encourages reflection on how neighborhoods establish their identity when confronted with real estate and infrastructure expansion—who is welcomed, who is seen, and who is left on the other side of the fence. According to the artist, "The backyard is always smaller than the number of projects—or the ambitions of those pushing to develop it. Wind farms, nuclear power plants, solar farms, high-voltage lines, Rail Baltic, military training areas, real estate developments—Not in my backyard, please. Yet, these projects must go somewhere."

Hedges Having a Row, 2025

Multi-panel painting, oil on canvas

Dimensions variable

Figures graft with bushes in **Hedges Having a Row**, twisting in the heat of an argument. Across the panels, neighbor disagreements are tangled in the very borders meant to separate them. Territorial disputes are conveyed through the paintings like a film storyboard and are loosely based on **Dance Macabre**, a fifteenth-century painting by Bernt Notke that reflects on death, conflict, and the human condition.

Soap for a Lifetime, 2023

Four soap houses, water, and faucet

34 × 51 × 29 cm each

In **Soap for a Lifetime**, Kasearu recreates houses from fragile soap, installing four identical models, one beneath a dripping faucet where visitors can wash their hands. These are replicas of the artist's own century-old home, located in Pelgulinn, which experienced significant real estate expansion. Slowly dissolving with each drop of water, the houses erode over time—what appears solid and permanent is, in fact, fleeting. Through the use of soap, a material linked to care and cleanliness, Kasearu contemplates the notion of home, the instability of domestic space, and how the faucet turns maintenance into an act of alteration and erasure.

To Live in the Shadows, 2025

Light and sound installation

Dimensions variable

A shifting shadow moves across the gallery, shaped like the rotating silhouette of a wind turbine. This work reflects on the unseen impacts of large-scale infrastructure—wind power symbolizes progress, yet for those living in its shadow, it can also bring disruption and harm

to the birds flying near its blades. **To Live in the Shadows** engages with visibility and power, raising the question of who benefits and who must bear the possible consequences of new energy transition projects.

13

Hairy Towels, 2022

Thirteen silkscreens on textiles

Dimensions variable

This work consists of a series of textiles covered in hair, transforming an object of cleanliness into something potentially uninviting.

Hairy Towels hang from the gallery's walls like bats, cloaked in silkscreened fuzz. While the soap houses still clean, these towels—typically associated with drying and warmth—partially lose their purpose.

14

Fridays for the Future, 2025

Sculpture and sound

612 × 368 × 60 cm

Fridays for the Future intersects form, function, rising energy demands, and corporate promises. The sculpture comprises five stainless steel refrigerators stacked in a cruciform formation—three positioned vertically and two extending horizontally—mimicking a wind turbine and casting a long shadow. It also resembles the towering cross of **The War of Independence Victory Column** in Tallinn Square, and as such, Estonia's efforts to achieve energy independence by disconnecting from Russian energy grids. Furthermore, it directly references common statements made by wind energy companies to residents in towns where they wish to install wind turbines, assuring them that the sounds of the incoming turbines would be no louder than the hum of a refrigerator. Kasearu also encountered this phrase during her fieldwork for the exhibition, addressed to a village in Central Estonia.

By translating this corporate claim into a literal sculptural form, Kasearu exposes the dissonance between the narratives of the renewable energy sector and lived experiences—and the placement of challenging infrastructures, sometimes under the cover of night before communities

have a chance to mobilize. The work humorously questions the impact of renewable energy on the tranquility of rural communities and the balance sought between technological advancement and local concerns.

15

Power Cut, 2020

Drawing

21 × 29,7 cm

A snake snaps a power cable, its body tense as it bites down and severs the line. **Power Cut** captures a moment of disruption—when governments and companies shut down the power grid, freeing societies from energy dependence. It is part of a larger series of “fear” works that Kasearu has created, with many of these fears—actually prophecies—coming to fruition, such as the recent mysterious power line cuts in the Baltic Sea.

16

Catch of the Day, 2025

Sliced land cables and platter

Dimensions variable

In this work, industrial remnants—sliced energy cables with copper and aluminum cores—are reimagined as sushi rolls served to communities, referencing the invisible networks and forms of extraction that power contemporary society—electricity, data, and industry. Instead of fresh fish, Kasearu’s sushi is crafted from discarded human-made technology.

17

Landscape Painting, 2013-2025

Vinyl and metal

224 × 368 cm

Visitors to the exhibition can glimpse **Landscape Painting** from Kai’s south windows, which are opened to the public for the first time. A tsunami surges across the parking lot, its force suspended mid-crash. In the context of the exhibition, it’s a wave of unstoppable development,

sweeping over a neighborhood, sending its inhabitants fleeing, and redefining borders. It's a harbinger, a change too large to stop.

COVER

Fridays for the Future, 2025

Preparatory drawing

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