

**Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible
Heritage of Humanity**

NATIONAL CANDIDATURE FILE OF ESTONIA

KIHNU CULTURAL SPACE

VOLUME 1





1.IDENTIFICATION

Member State

Estonia

Name of the form of cultural space

Kihnu Cultural Space

Name of the community

**Kihnu community,
including the settlers on Manija Island**

Geographic location of the Kihnu Cultural Space

Kihnu is a small island near the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea and by the western coast of mainland Estonia. The Kihnu Archipelago is composed of Kihnu and Manija Islands together with a dozen other isles, which are inhabited only in summer period. The territory of Kihnu Island is 16.9 km², its length 7 km and width 3.3 km. The population of about 530 resident islanders lives in four villages. Manija (1.9 km²) is one of the smallest inhabited islands of Estonia. With a population of 40 islanders, it belongs to the Kihnu Cultural Space.





Forests of Kihnu Island protect about 600 islanders from strong winds and safeguard the landscape from erosion.



Manija Island is a cosy home for 40 islanders.



The old church and the new school share a neighbourhood in Kihnu.



The main road of Kihnu winds between farmsteads and their fields.



Lighthouse of Kihnu has helped navigators from the middle of the 19th century.



Sorgu is so tiny that it could support only one family and one cow.

Frequency of this form of cultural expression

The Kihnu Cultural Space is a complex permanent cultural phenomena that consist of the communal lifestyle, variety of cultural expressions and the natural environment of the distinct communities of Kihnu and Manija Islands. Identity expressions through livelihood practices and traditional dress are daily phenomena, particular calendar festivities and the Kihnu wedding traditions are either regular annual or less frequent recurrent cultural expressions.



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2. DESCRIPTION

Description of the Kihnu Cultural Space as a unique depository of traditional culture

The Kihnu Cultural Space denotes a genuine symbiosis of a living community of people with unique cultural expression, an insular place with distinct nature defined by the surrounding seascape, and the livelihood activities of the local community that in the course of history has imminently adjusted to and depended on the natural environment. Due to its relative isolation and capacity to maintain their traditional communal lifestyle while adapting to socio-historical transformations, the Kihnu Island and its community (including their settlers on Manija) present a cultural space that is unparalleled in the geographic proximity of the Baltic Sea and elsewhere. However, its tiny community, their rich cultural heritage and picturesque nature are highly vulnerable to the increasing and levelling impact of the standardisation of modernity, especially in the most recent period of the general socio-economic transition affecting Estonia. Therefore, in order to gain international recognition to the Kihnu Cultural Space that would assist in sustaining and safeguarding this singular cultural expression in modern society, this application seeks expert international support to the Kihnu Cultural Space through its proclamation as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

The coastline of Kihnu is 36.2 km long, and since the sea surrounding Kihnu is shallow and full of reefs and rocks, there are about 56 uninhabited islets and shoals around the island. The closest point on Estonian mainland is 10.2 km from Kihnu, the nearest town Pärnu is 41 km. The closest inhabited area is Manija Island in the distance of 7.5 km. The next larger island Ruhnu is in 50 km and Riga (the capital of Latvia and an important historical trading town for the islanders) is 123 km from Kihnu.

Kihnu is a fairly low-lying and level island, its maximum height reaches up to 8.5 m above sea level. Its shores are an area of meadows or meadows with scattered broadleaf trees. The shore of the island is lined with pastures, which are often covered with junipers and lined with dunes and shifting sand fields. The ridge running in the central part of the island and the sandy area west from it is covered with pine groves. Its climate is milder and more marine than the average in Estonia, though still harsh with

its 5.5°C annual median (with seasonal average temperature in summer over 17°C and permanent snow cover in winter). Due to its small surface area and dense population there are no big wild animals on Kihnu. Hare, fox and hedgehog are among the few species that consider the island a suitable habitat. Kihnu as well as the sea and islets surrounding it are an vital and especially suitable nesting area for numerous birds. The waters provide a habitat for fish like Baltic herring, perch, pike perch, eel, and flounder, as well as to currently protected marine mammals, grey and marbled seals.

The unique Kihnu culture evolved on Kihnu Island (and expanded later to the small Manija) over centuries in relative geographical isolation, with nevertheless fertile communication with outside world, especially through seafaring. Kihnu



lifestyle and livelihoods have always depended on the surrounding waters of the Baltic Sea that has played a significant role in creating the Kihnu community and configuring their expressive culture. Since times immemorial, most of the men have been en-



Fishing on drifting ice is the favourite job for men in wintertime.

gaged in seafaring, seal hunting, or fishing at sea outside Kihnu while the women usually remained on the islands taking care of the farmstead household. However, all innovations and influences brought back by the men from overseas were adopted and synthesised into an original, self-sustaining insular culture according to the beliefs and customs of the islanders themselves. Due to such carefully protective conservatism the Kihnu community created a strong identity that they have managed to maintain through several socio-economic transformations till the most recent decades, but showing alarming increase of negative susceptibility to present pressures and constraints.

The cultural expression of the Kihnu community is a remarkable amalgam of past and present. The islanders of today use modern techniques and repertoire side by side with ancient knowledge, tools and traditions. Isolation from the Estonian mainland, tough daily circumstances and the local "social control" system has created a close-knit community that still continues to observe many ancient customs and cultural traditions that have long disappeared from neighbouring areas. While men's activities and costumes have been more exposed to modern transformations, which nevertheless depend on the surrounding sea, even today most women wear authentic, homespun Kihnu skirts daily and elderly people still speak the genuine Kihnu dialect that is quite distinct from the standard Estonian. The norms that regulate the life of modern islanders have changed with time and people, yet in many ways the old traditions continue to be followed. The oldest and most lasting traditions are connected with Kihnu wedding parties and with the celebration of certain dates of seasonal calendar and church holidays. Still, the preservation of the Kihnu wedding traditions has formed unique circumstances for various elements of cultural heritage to persist through the course of time, including ancient customs, poetic and musical expression, and traditional crafts. Therefore also in the current Candidature File, the Kihnu wedding appears as the focal cultural expression.



Women have to care for various aspects of daily life on the islands.



In summertime old and young fishermen dream to catch big eels.

History, development and social, symbolic and cultural functions

Kihnu was first mentioned in historical documents in 1386. Archaeological excavations show short-term seasonal settlements dating back to considerably earlier times, reaching even to 3000 years. Since the Middle Ages, Kihnu has administratively belonged to various rulers, which parallels the turbulent changes in mainland Estonia. During the Livonian War that took place in the second half of the sixteenth century, Kihnu had several rulers: 1562–1565 Denmark, 1565–1575 and 1582–1600 Poland, 1575–1582 Russia. In 1600–1710 it was – as many other Estonian regions – under the rule of the Kingdom of Sweden, at the time Lutheranism reached the island and replaced the Catholic bishopric. New rulers came with the Great Northern War (1700–1721), which resulted in Kihnu together with other Estonian regions being joined with the Russian Empire. If by the early eighteenth century there were 60 households with 400 inhabitants on Kihnu, then the plague that broke out after the war left only 50–60 inhabitants on the island. The population was restored by the end of the century, though, with only few additions from outside.

These foreign landlords, however, did not leave any deep impact on indigenous worldview, which is indicated by the fact that in 1846–1847 most of the islanders converted to Orthodox religion with the hope of receiving arable land from the Russian tsar (that promise was never fulfilled).



The women were on one, the men on other side in Kihnu church.

There were seldom resident priests on the island, and the previous Lutheran church was reconstructed with Orthodox regalia. Consequently, the Kihnu community retained a syncretism with their indigenous beliefs, which linked them to ancient Finno-Ugric and Scandinavian pre-Christian roots. Thus the basis was established for the evolvement of a unique seafaring, seal-hunting, fishing and farming community and their cultural expression. The islanders based their way of thinking on the common use of land and collective seafaring. They created an amalgam of the cultural expression they had brought along from neighbouring regions and combined it with local features, contrasting themselves to the rest of Estonia, and creating consequently their own distinct culture and identity.

As Kihnu natural resources were scarce, they had to trade fish for grain, while firewood and building material had to be brought to the island from coastal mainland, salt, iron and grindstones from the island Gotland in Sweden.



*Kihnu seamen return from Gotland with salt and grindstones.
Painting by Jaan Oad.*

The second half of the 19th century saw a rise in shipping traffic as well as trade. The islanders usually traded in Pärnu in Estonia and Riga in Latvia with the grease and skins of seals, live pigs and geese, but now transporting rocks and stones as building material was added, which at the same time assisted transformations in boat-building skills. The sailboats were both bought and built

on the island, so that by the beginning of World War I there were 60 ships in Kihnu (besides smaller rowing boats). But in all those ventures, Kihnu islanders maintained communal sharing in all their livelihood practices, which appeared a major factor in maintaining their identity and developing a close community. Although men from Kihnu worked on both local and foreign ships, travelling in the Estonian waters as well as in the wide world, they always returned home to find a bride and start a family. Women traditionally took care of household chores and small-scale farming, which also was practiced in communal ownership on divisional strips of land. Communal lifestyle, growth and maintenance prevailed over private ownership or rapid intrusion of modernisation. At the same time the Kihnu community gradually grew, so that from about 600 in mid-1800 the population of Kihnu exceeded over 1100 by the 1920s.



*The women managed everything on Kihnu Island.
Painting by Jaan Oad.*

The twentieth century brought various periods of strife to Kihnu Island as well as to Estonia in general, which the resourceful Kihnu community managed to survive by retaining their communal practices which likewise provided means for survival. Kihnu men lost two thirds of their ships during World War I, but could nearly restore the numbers in the next decade. After the establishment of an independent Republic of Estonia in 1918, the major changes involved a stronger emphasis on introducing private ownership, the twenties and thirties launched reforms when every family got their own plot of land, which dictated new relationships between

individuals. Severe hardships on Kihnu were brought about by the general economic crisis of 1929–30. Ships were sold, seamen were out of work. Farming could hardly sustain a household under the condition of overpopulation: an average farm had 6 ha of land with lack of animal feed, while half of the grain and hay had to be transported from the mainland, and younger people had to find also seasonal work there. Dense population, unemployment and economic depression made the islanders to look for a place to live outside the island, so that in the 1933 the Island of Manija was divided into plots and 26 families moved there, decreasing the population of Kihnu by 100 inhabitants. However, the collective mentality that had evolved over the centuries, traditional crafts and customary practices were retained, and thus the communal identity of Kihnu islanders continued to define their existence through traditional cultural expression in relatively harmonious cohesion with their unique nature and living space.



In autumn 1944 many islanders refuged to the west, among others painter Jaan Oad.

During World War II, actual warfare did not reach Kihnu but the island still suffered great losses. The fleet was destroyed, almost one third of the population fled from the advancing Soviet power in 1944: mainly to the west (378 persons), but some families left also to the Island of Ruhnu (22 persons). There were only 600 inhabitants left. But luckily for Kihnu, their geographical isolation – drifting ice, storms at sea – protected the islanders against the destruction of their community in crucial moments of history. After

the war the situation started to improve gradually on Kihnu. Fishing became the main activity, fishermen started to use pound nets and motor boats. A collective farm called *Nõukogude Partisan* (The Soviet Guerilla) was established on the island, fish was caught with trawlers in the Baltic Sea and part of the catch was processed in the local smoking plant. In a paradox of history, the collective fishing and farming system introduced by the Soviets was welcomed and well accepted on Kihnu and Manija Islands as a familiar lifestyle from the past. The



*A typical Kihnu couple.
A photo from 1950.*

collective fishery soon made many families quite wealthy. Despite the ideological and political constraints of the Soviet regime, Kihnu culture managed to preserve its relative isolation and communal identity, whereas material growth sustained the preservation of age-old traditions in an ambiguous way. The 1950s and 1960s was a period in the history of Kihnu culture when the time-honoured wedding customs flourished due to the economic boom, which provided means for arranging massive and expensive festivities were traditions and customs followed archaic rules and aesthetic creativity.

The seventies brought about another period of hardships. In 1973 the collective farm was abolished and Kihnu became a department of another bigger collective farm called *Pärnu Kalur* (The Fisherman of Pärnu), which was administratively located on the mainland. The islanders lost the opportunity to make their own decisions concerning Kihnu. The extensive fishing and careless industrial developments became gradually destructive towards the fragile balance on the island and in nature at the surrounding sea,

gravely affecting the natural habitat and population of fish in the Baltic Sea. All the organisations and enterprises were managed from the mainland urban centre and imposed restrictions on the unprofitable activities, hindering the self-sustaining developments of the island and the continuity of communal life and traditions. The Kihnu dialect and original craft traditions were seriously endangered by outside influences in the early 1970s when Soviet educational policy banned the use of their native tongue and folk dress in school. The younger generation started to move to the Estonian mainland and the demographic situation gradually declined.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, restoration of independence in Estonia and the consequent break-up of the collective farm in 1991, Kihnu became an independent local government unit. The rural municipality was restored, while general privatisation meant a new transformation in the economic system of the island, bringing about reforms and transition to market economy with its constraints and pending commercialisation. However, the previous decades have had a grave destructive impact on the previously persistent communal lifestyle and survival skills of the islanders of Kihnu, and therefore this community needs serious assistance in restoring communal initiative and re-affirming the identity of the Kihnu community, in order to re-create a viable economic community and protect the indigenous cultural expression against the levelling standardisation of modernity and safeguard this unique Kihnu Cultural Space from decay and dissolving into mainstream.

The major factor in preserving the cultural space of Kihnu has been persistent stamina of particularly Kihnu women, who have maintained the poetic and crafting skills of their former generations, which at the same time have preserved ancient communal practices to date, albeit some of them only in memory. However, especially women adjusted their cultural expression to transforming everyday practices by combining inherited traditions with innovation so that the essence of the former endured. The practitioners of Kihnu culture adhered to their insular lifestyle and recognised the symbolic value of maintaining their identity through traditional cultural expression that had upheld their community through centuries. Women continued to knit and weave woollen handicrafts at home, and arrange traditional weddings.

The islanders of Kihnu continued to be proud of their culture and when the former president of Estonia Mr. Lennart Meri decided in 1995 to make a gift in the name of the Estonian people to the United Nations, the women of Kihnu and Manija donated their skirts for an installation by the well-known Estonian artist Anu Raud. Today all visitors to the UN Headquarters in New York can enjoy this masterpiece which expresses the hope that Kihnu culture will survive forever.



Anu Raud installing her artwork in UN HQ where the Secretary General Mr. Butros Butros Ghali received it in October 1995.

Technical description, authenticity, style, genre, influential schools

The Kihnu Cultural Space evolved in the course of centuries as a result of the interaction of the human community and the natural environment on a tiny island. The surrounding sea, harsh climate and insular circumstances created the Kihnu community whose survival was dependant on harmonious existence with nature, and the endurance of traditional knowledge and process of transmission of cultural expression and skills of a persistent communal lifestyle. At the same time the continuous interaction with neighbouring communities on the Estonian mainland and the island Saaremaa to the west, as well as neighbouring cultures in further distance through seafaring and trade, provided their impact, which the islanders transformed into their own unique complex of cultural expression based on ancient heritage. The island of Kihnu emerged in the course of time as a place where a relatively isolated community has maintained their traditional culture to date in folklore, customs, and crafting skills that continue to define their community. In spite of rapid developments and changes throughout Europe, many archaic features are still alive today on Kihnu and Manija.

There are four villages on the island: Lemsis, Linaküla, Rootsiküla and Sääreküla. In the eastern village Lemsis is located a cold storage plant and the harbour that provides the primary passenger boat and ferry connection with the mainland. Sääreküla village is situated in the northern and central part of the island and it has developed into the administrative centre of Kihnu where the airport, the rural municipality centre, post office and main shops are located. In Linaküla are the hospital, 9-year basic school, the local museum, the library, the church and the new community centre. (The old community centre, which was built in 1947–1959 with the help of communal activity by all the islanders, burnt down in 1999.



*The new community centre in Kihnu.
Architects L.Lapin and T.Rein, 2000.*

The public library which had operated since 1887 was destroyed together with the community centre.) In Rootsiküla, in the southern part of Kihnu stands the memorial stone to the legendary seafaring captain Kihnu Jõnn, the weather station and the lighthouse. Today the islanders find employment at the mentioned institutions (about fifty people), in fishing, maritime transport, catering and tourism. Contemporary farming on Kihnu is carried out with the help of small tractors, there are 38.2 km of commonly used roads which islanders travel preferably by motorcycles but also by cars, in the harbour stand about 50 motor boats and the same amount of fishing boats. The number of resident islanders is about 530, while the registered population shows 602 (with the inclusion of those seeking traffic benefits). The ferry navigates the whole ice-free



period, but the passenger boat runs just in summer, in winter time communication with mainland functions only by plane and by cars across ice. However, the recent socio-economic transformations have seriously damaged the traditional Kihnu communal initiative and their traditional livelihood practices. The onset of capitalist market economy has left many islanders unemployed, or forced the younger generation to settle on mainland Estonia, while the small-scale farming can no longer provide sufficient subsistence in changed circumstances. All those factors are creating grave social problems, starting with alcoholism and ending with the negative effects of tourism on the commercialisation of expressive culture. Although this draws attention to the negative aspects of the vulnerability of the Kihnu Cultural Space, the following description

focuses on the traditional cultural heritage, that nevertheless has preserved till the present thanks to a complex interplay of socio-historical factors.

Today's Kihnu culture is a unique mixture of past and present, while the deeply original Kihnu culture has integrated different elements from its neighbours and from international circulation. These elements were not adopted automatically but translated and creatively absorbed into the context of Kihnu culture. New phenomena and different historical strata have often lived side by side without ousting the old. It has changed while retaining its substance over the centuries. Due to the island's long history of isolation from the mainland, the traditional culture and the traditional way of life have been preserved here over the centuries.

The people of Kihnu used to live in small farms. The Kihnu family primarily made its living from fishing, seal hunting and seafaring. The men spent plenty of time away from home to do these jobs. The women were mainly responsible for the household, cattle breeding and land-tillage in Kihnu.

The farm wife also has a significant role in rearing children and grandchildren, and in the process of transmitting traditional values of the community. The main bearers of verbal, ritual and belief traditions have



been women. Men have been seafarers since times immemorial, bringing back home innovations and visions from overseas and distant lands.

To this date some elements of traditional culture such as traditional costumes and handicrafts have been preserved in their original form and function (women wear traditional Kihnu striped skirts and colourful aprons in everyday life). Others – songs, dances, music – survive partly in their original form, and partly in a new situation and function. The cultural and particularly music expression of Kihnu can be described by different cultural layers that exist side by side here:

- 1) archaic, pre-Christian traditions (wedding ceremony), alliterative songs in Kalevala-metre (runo-songs) together with ancient musical style and round-dances;
- 2) traditional song style (rhymed songs in strophic form of the 19th century) with newer musical style, couple and other historical village dances;
- 3) songs from the Orthodox and other Christian traditions;
- 4) popular songs of literary origin and social dances of the late 19th and early 20th century that continue to form a part of ritual and entertainment repertoire.

Here should be included a survey of the major factor of Kihnu cultural heritage that has provided the essential scenery for original rites and customs and repertoire to preserve in a most archaic environment, that is the ritual cycle of the Kihnu wedding celebration. The Kihnu wedding tradition is the biggest and most important ritual in the Kihnu Cultural Space. In connection with wedding traditions, a rich repertoire of poetic and ritual folklore, ancient worldview and handicraft traditions have preserved in a unique communal cultural expression. It functions as an event that brings the community together, and at the same time it provides the arena for the affirmation of communal values and Kihnu identity. It is both spectacular and entertaining, yet at the same time solemn and highly ritual practice that expresses Kihnu cultural heritage in a complex way, drawing from all aspects of culture. It serves as a major symbolic manifestation of Kihnu identity.

[Wedding in Kihnu](#)

Kihnu folk culture and traditions find their most complex and bright expression through the very special Kihnu wedding ceremony where most Kihnu customs, dances and songs are demonstrated along with young women's handicraft skills. It involves different genres and forms of traditional culture and has helped preserve them up to the present.

Kosjad (wooing). First, the groom needs to ask the hand of his bride-to-be. The groom and the groomsman together with his closest relatives go to the house of the bride; the groom brings the drinks and the bride takes care of the food. As the date has been previously agreed upon, the bride has invited girls from the village to her house. The bride with the girls hide themselves under large woollen shawls and the groom has to pick out the right girl.

After the groom has succeeded in finding his bride, there follows a party with traditional food and dancing. In case the groom receives a woven belt at the end of the party, his proposal has been accepted. The actual wedding ceremony is usually held the summer after the proposal was made.

After the ceremony of proposing the bride prepares her dowry. During the wedding party she has to give a present to all relatives of the groom and to the functional figures of the ceremony (incl. singers and musicians). If she has not managed to make enough knitting or needlework to be distributed, the bride asks other girls for help and every Thursday they gather to work. The girls accompany their knitting with singing, later in the evening young men come to visit for a dancing party.

*Weddings in
1954.
The bride's head is
covered with an
uig.*



Pulmad (wedding party). The wedding party of Kihnu unites oral tradition (ancient *runo* songs, sayings, wishes), ritual practices and handicraft (the dowry); traditionally the celebration is held in two houses: the bride and the groom will have a separate party in their own homes with their own guests and members of their kin. The wedding lasts for three days that are full of old rituals often accompanied by ancient songs: the parting of the bride from her home, the welcoming of the bride in the home of the groom, the opening of the dowry and the distributing of the items of the dowry, the attiring of the bride and the first dances of the bride, the wedding sauna etc. The third day is usually more or less meant for cleaning up and finishing the party. In the first day at the bride's house her head must be covered with an *uig*, a long, white headdress decorated with a red snake-like pattern.

The *uig* covers the bride's head until she arrives at the groom's home where it is removed with a particular ritual.



Weddings in 1989. Bride moves to the groom's house by car.



Weddings in 2002. Re-enacted for research purposes.

All relatives, neighbours and friends are invited to the wedding. Several of the relatives and closer friends are appointed to fulfil certain obligations: young girls take care of feeding the guests, distributing the items of the dowry (and yet have enough time to fill the dance floor); the closest married male relative is given the duty of taking care of the safety of the bride and the groom and is called *raudkäs*i (The Iron Hand); groomsman is the closest unmarried relative of the groom and he is the supporter and the advisor of the groom in everything.

Although some wedding customs and songs have lost their original significance and others have preserved as forms of amusement, it is most significant that their symbolic meaning has been passed down. Faith in the power of the word and in the effect of ritual, even if subconscious, may preserve longer than the underlying beliefs. They assist the bride in getting accustomed to her new status and family, preparing her for life in a new social role and for the difficulties that she may encounter. The rituals help to find a balance within the individuals involved as well as to arrange relations within the larger community.

The wedding rite of Kihnu is a prolonged and complex cultural phenomenon that should be entitled to a detailed analysis with profound background information. For thorough scholarly analysis, please find research articles by Ingrid Rüütel attached in full format as an Appendix to this Candidature File.

Juõdud (the baptismal ceremony). The size of the congregation of the Apostolic Orthodox Church of Kihnu is practically equal to that of the population of the island as the tradition of baptising children has survived even during the times of official atheism of the Soviet occupation. The baptising ceremony is held either at home or in the church with the participation of several godparents and two main godparents. Godparents give the child money to guarantee his happiness, the mother of the child pours the baptismal water on a young growing apple tree. The ceremony is followed by a plentiful meal.

Rites of the annual cycle

Kadripäe. St. Catherine's Day on November 25th is an ancient mumming ritual when young women and men wear masks and make rounds from farm to farm, singing ancient fertility songs. Every village celebrates this day separately, but it is a communal



event where all the participants plan and prepare for it, from food and costumes to musical entertainment. Two girls act as bride and groom and the message they distribute is happiness to everyone's home. Everybody who wears a mask on this night is called Kadri (Catherine). The Kadris are given gifts and in return they wish the household good health and luck with its herd. Later the same night they gather for a play wedding to eat the donated food, to sing and to dance. The ritual once had a magical background, and has been transformed into a joyful social event. Many young

people studying on the mainland come home especially for this occasion. Please find an attached CD with documentation of this celebration.

Juanipäe. St. John's Day on June 23rd is one of the most romantic rituals as it concerns the shortest night of the year in Estonia when the sun dips below the horizon for only a few hours. On Kihnu and Manija islands, houses are decorated with young birch trees and the community gathers around huge bonfires of old boats, creating powerful symbols of eternal light. The islanders dance, sing and leap over the fire until sunrise.



Jõulud. Christmas, like many other traditions, is celebrated on the island in a somewhat different manner than in the rest of Estonia. If other Estonians use spruce for Christmas tree, the people of Kihnu bring a pine tree to their homes. A sauna is heated in the afternoon of the Christmas Eve and after that people go to the cemetery to light candles on the graves of their relatives. After the following church service they spend the evening with the family. In every household home made beer is offered to men who go on the first and second day of Christmas from house to house to greet the landlord and landlady.



*In Kihnu women
act often as Santa
Claus*



*Christmas pine instead of spruce from
the coast of Kihnu!*

Traditional singing

Tungi Riet was a talented singer. Photo from 1973, Kihnu.



Singing continues to have ritual significance on Kihnu, but functions also as a favourite pastime, especially for women. The main wedding tune has a multi-functional character and serves as a “common tune” for most older women’s songs, e.g. lyrical and narrative songs. However, a lot of that more ancient common Balto-Finnic repertoire (characteristic to the traditions of the Finnic peoples in the eastern Baltic Sea area) has receded from the active memory of people, but are successfully revived by the current singing communities who use archived materials and publications also for revitalization purposes, while these active practitioners also serve as experts in ritual singing.

Traditional lullabies and songs for amusing children still preserve in daily use. They have special melodies and are sung not only by mothers and grandmothers but also by grandfathers. Old work songs with their special function and recitative manner of singing have lost their context of implementation in the modern working process, but they have been documented as archive recordings.

While older folk songs have preserved mainly in women’s repertoire, rhymed songs, which came into use at the end of the 19th century, were often composed and performed by men. Still, some old alliterative men’s songs are recorded as well. Their melodies differ from the wedding tune and represent an intermediate stage between the old and new style melodies. The newer sailors’ songs have more elaborate melodies, are characterised by strophic form, extended ambit, double meter and a more dynamic performance style.

Singing has carried certain ritual function, but it has also provided means for communal communication as well as an arena

for aesthetic entertainment, which has retained its characteristic qualities through the course of time, while absorbing innovative impulses and changes in music style into a particular manifestation of Kihnu identity.

Instrumental music and dancing

Musicians have traditionally been men in Kihnu. They played homemade fiddles and harmonicas; also Jew's harps and probably bagpipes in old times, as many fiddle tunes have been borrowed from the bagpipe repertoire. Today, often women play the accordion, which

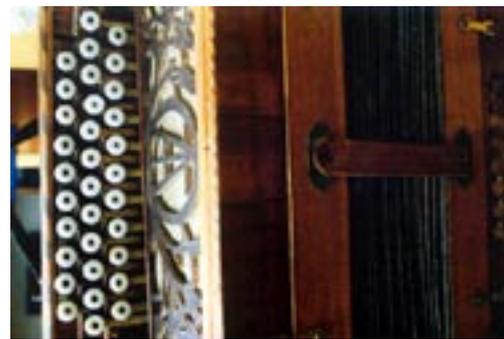


is presently the most popular folk music instrument in Kihnu. The music played is mostly connected to recreational entertainment and consists largely of the late 19th–early 20th century dance tunes adopted from adjacent Northern European regions, but elaborated into recognizably local variants that continue to be popular to date.

Traditional dances are still practised on the island, thanks mostly to the wedding celebrations and folk music groups. This category includes old round dances, newer group dances and couple dances. Special songs accompany many dances. The repertoire of Kihnu traditional dances is rich and varied.



*Women and girls dancing together
as men are away at sea.
Photo 1935.*



*Hand-made harmonica
from 19th century.*

Games

Kihnu children continue to entertain themselves with various traditional children's games that they have inherited from previous generations. There are kinetic games that involve hopping, jumping or chasing, as well as games with different objects that compete in and advance dexterity. One of the favourite games is *nipski* where the best players who can handle five small stones in the air could be compared to jugglers in the circus. While knives as cutting utensils form an important part for acquiring handicraft skills in a fishing culture, boys enjoy competing in tricks with knives. Knife throwing is very popular among boys and young men also elsewhere, but the rules they use in Kihnu were developed there.



*Girls playing nipski in front of school.
Photo from 1947, Kihnu.*



Elderly women training children to play nipski. Photo from 1986, Manija.

Singing games that intertwine music and poetry in syncretism with choreographic movement are preserved in the repertoire of the folklore performance group Kihnumua, where young boys and girls can feel the spirit of the childhood of their ancestors. Their interactive performances enhance the practice that would otherwise be lost.

Handicraft and traditional costumes

In the cultural space of Kihnu and Manija, the skills of women in handicrafts have always been very highly valued. Handicraft skills were especially important among girls who started preparing their dowry-chest. Mothers and grandmothers have passed down the necessary techniques, patterns and cuts to their daughters from their earliest childhood.

Ülaljõstmisõd, gatherings of girls to knit together through the long winter and spring evenings also played a significant role as a

communal working practice that involved traditional crafts as well as active use of various verbal repertoire, particularly singing. The role of women in preserving the culture of Kihnu is especially important since women, unlike men who changed their traditional costumes for more fashionable clothes at the beginning of the 20th century, wear their traditional skirts, jackets, stockings and mittens in their everyday life. Since the clothes of women have a very practical purpose, new clothes are constantly made, changed and improved – they develop together with the people who wear them.

The primary material used in women's handicrafts is wool. To produce very high quality yarn, every house breeds its own sheep. The women themselves do all the work from shaving the sheep to twining and dyeing the



yarn. Wool is the ideal material, especially in harsh winters when heavy snowstorms make life on the islands very hard. Over time, the colours and patterns have undergone slight changes, but the costumes have preserved the general style and original purpose.

The striped skirt came into use in the second half of the nineteenth century, replacing earlier single colour white, grey, black or blue ones, and turned gradually more colourful with the introduction of industrially produced dyestuff. The wealth of the woman has been estimated on the basis of the number of skirts in her possession, which could exceed to twenty home-made skirts. The pattern of stripes and the colours vary according to the age and status of the woman, or depend on the occasion. Children, young girls and women wear skirts where bright red colour prevails. Elderly women generally wear a more modest blue skirt and middle-aged women wear partially red skirts (with one or two wide blue stripes). Black skirt indicates mourning and it is worn after the death of a very close relative: husband, mother, child. The woman mourns her husband longer than her mother or her child. When the husband dies, the woman wears the black skirt at least one year, in case of the death of mother, the mourning period is six months. The skirt, that has only black (dark blue), white, green

etc. stripes without the red ones, is also considered to be a mourning skirt, worn in case of the passing of a more distant relative. Such skirt is worn after the period of black skirt, while returning back to normal life after the mourning of one's mother or child. The stripes indicate that sorrow has gone further. The widow wears this skirt through the rest of her life. In many years some red or pink stripes may be added, but the general impression remains dark. In case of funerals all the women wear black (dark blue) striped skirts with the exception of the closest relative who is dressed in black. Regardless of the colour of their vertical stripes, the skirts always have one red horizontal band at the bottom hem. Even fully dark black skirts



have this stripe, the red line is connected with protective magic against diseases. This Kihnu skirt hierarchy is adhered to even nowadays, although the partially red skirt is now used more widely by elderly women, especially on festive occasions.

Married women wear an apron. Until the first half of the nineteenth century these aprons were made of white linen, on festive occasions cotton print was taken into use which nowadays prevails. After giving birth, the mother is allowed to remove the apron until the child is brought to church. When a woman is divorced, she no longer wears an apron on her skirt. Another important element in a woman's costume is the woven belt. In

the past it wasn't removed even at night as women believed that it propped the body physically as well as in a magical sense. A cotton-print shawl covering the shoulders is also a part of the festive costume. The doublet was made at the beginning of white, later of grey woollen material. Fur coats were made of white sheep and decorated with red straps.



In ornaments and embroidery as well as in the whole array of the bride, red is the prevailing colour, as it is considered the colour of youth and mirth in Kihnu culture. Brighter manufactured colours have replaced natural colours over time. Embroidery is the most essential element in women's blouses and coifs.

Until the end of the nineteenth century married women wore a coif every day. Starting from the twentieth century it has been used mainly on festive occasions. In everyday life the coif was replaced by a kerchief which earlier had been used on top of the coif. The kerchief has been the traditional headdress for unmarried women. The loose-end blouse with richly embroidered cuffs, hem at the back and around the collar belong to particularly festive dress, the more common daily attire includes a cotton print blouse instead.

Historically, Kihnu women always carried a craft-bag along wherever they went. They often knitted while riding or driving horses. They knitted the whole way when sailing by boat to Pärnu, the nearest town. Usually they made mittens, gloves, stockings and socks. Their fingers traced the patterns and worked automatically even in total darkness, they worked skilfully without any assistance from the eyes. This tradition continues today. The hands of many Kihnu and Manija women are busy with knitting when they wait for a boat, an airplane or



follow sheep to pasture. The variety of patterns knitted is rich and varied, while every family has its own system of patterns on their socks and mittens that are easily recognized.



Every woman likes her own patterns for mittens.

In earlier times Kihnu men wore a white shirt made of linen or tow cloth and long grey trousers or white trousers of medium length. The overcoat was either light grey or white. On the doublet the men wore a wide leather belt that had a knife attached to it. The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the introduction of woollen pullovers, which were most practical for their work in the harsh climate while seal-hunting, fishing or seafaring. Despite men's general transition to standard modern dress, Kihnu men still like to wear the woollen *troi* – a hand-knitted and fully patterned pullover.

The earlier major crafting skills of men revolved around boat-building, but involved also fishing and hunting gear as well as common domestic articles. Making and repairing fishing nets were likewise time consuming tasks. The men's primary handicraft was woodworking and carving. Hollowed dishes, sinks, bathing barrels and different kinds of furniture were made at home. The



*A chair for milking cows and compass from
Härma farm, summer 2002.*

more proficient master craftsmen made violins and even wooden bicycles. Kihnu shipbuilders invented a special boat for seal hunting. It had sledges attached to its bottom for moving in water and on ice.



The huge Kokakivi boulder on Manija Island.

Naïve art

One interesting aspect of Kihnu cultural expression is represented in paintings in the style of naïve art, a phenomenon that thrived with more extensive seafaring from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These Kihnu painters did not aim consciously creating art, they simply recorded the history and seafaring of the islanders. Occasionally ship owners commissioned such colourful paintings as they wanted their sailboats recorded in colour instead of black and white photographs. On these paintings natural scenery appears relatively realistic while human figures acquire different proportions that are dictated more by the narrative context than visual parameters. This phase of cultural expression was influenced by technological advancements in image reproduction, which caused popular aspirations to vivid representation of their common surroundings, as well as developments in visual narrative technique and accessibility for the means of such popular documentation, with an additional impact of nostalgia derived from spatial or temporal distance from the imagery recorded. These artists had no special instruction in painting techniques but were regular seamen.



Sailing boat LIBLIK (Butterfly). Oil painting by Mihkel Sutt, 1935.

Food

The Kihnu style of cooking is relatively modest, as common to the older peasant diet in this geographic area in general. Cooked potatoes with steamed little Baltic herrings on them is a typical daily dish. Black bread is a common and basic food in all Baltic countries, Finland and Sweden. Nowadays most food products are transported from the mainland to Kihnu, different sorts of bread among other food.

However, Kihnu people still prefer to eat their home-baked dark bread. For this purpose, every family cultivates their own plot, sows rye, grows it, harvests and dries the grain, grinds it into flour and finally women bake very tasty bread. To keep it fresh for a long time, they add some potatoes, sometimes little pieces of fat pork or little Baltic herrings. Women often leave bread in the oven overnight. It turns into a slightly smoked product that has become sweet. Such a simple thing as home-made bread is also a part of the Kihnu lifestyle and helps to support the identity of the islanders.



The making of Kihnu bread takes three days.



Every Wednesday and Saturday the islanders eat porridge, Sunday afternoon they enjoy meat soup.



The daily diet includes cooked potatoes, steamed baltic herrings and dark home-made bread.



Home-made bread and raw fat pork is main food of seal hunters.

In spring when mergansers (half-domesticated water birds) nest, the islanders set up barrels on sticks for them. Merganser eggs with dark-yellow yolks are a favourite food of the islanders of Kihnu and Manija. Very delicious cake is made from those eggs.

One particular ritual food is cooked by men only. In midsummer when the eel-fishing season begins, the men gather for eel soup. One of the men is appointed to be the cook and he makes a big cauldron of fat soup consisting only of onions, plenty of eels, water and salt.



Collecting mergansers eggs.

The best cooks of the island were invited to be the general cook for weddings. They had to take care of feeding wedding guests whose numbers could reach hundreds (finding helpers, however, and consequently bearers of tradition among girls officially attending to the wedding). One obligatory at weddings has been sweet milk soup, which was the last in the menu (traditionally on the third day) and was a sign to finish a continuous celebration. After completing the work, the cook was presented with gifts and a special dance.

Recognized practitioners of the tradition

Music

In Kihnu, there has been an active tradition of composing songs on topical themes about village life, the adventures of fishermen, seafaring etc. in the newer style usually men. Today, this tradition of creativity is successfully carried on also by women. Virve Köster (born in 1928), an elderly Kihnu woman is at present the most famous and esteemed song maker of Kihnu. She creates the melody and words simultaneously, and later writes the words into her songbook. She is illiterate as far as reading or writing music is concerned. Occasionally



Virve Köster

visiting professionals help her to write down melodies. She composes rhymed and strophic songs in a newer lyrical style with narratives about her own life and experience. Her family primarily uses her songs: she sings them with her daughters and grandchildren, sometimes accompanied by a guitar. Many of Virve's songs are popular among other islanders. Some of her songs, especially *Merepidu* (The Feast of the Sea) are well-known throughout Estonia through the repertoire of popular folk music groups and radio programs. Another song, *Väike tüdruk* (A Little Girl) was commissioned from Virve for a particular wedding as a farewell song to send off the bride. Later it has been included in the repertoire at other weddings and parties as well.

While the function and role of traditional song repertoire has lost in its significance along with the disappearance of old authentic milieu and traditional lifestyle, different folklore groups have become important mediators of traditional art to contemporary culture in Kihnu. The most active is *Kihnumua*, led by professional musician and expert on Kihnu culture, Katrin Kumpan. There



Katrin Kumpan

exist also children's groups of young girls. Their membership is open-ended, being neither fixed nor constant, while practitioners of various age intermingle and communicate freely. The latest group established is a music band consisting of youngsters. Youth and children have become very fond of the local music groups as they build bridges to the cultural heritage of their ancestors. They perform at local events and are often invited to different kinds of festivities to mainland towns and abroad.



Folklore group KIHNUMUA in Helsinki, autumn 1989.

Naïve art

Jaan Oad (1898 – 1984) created over 150 paintings depicting the history of Kihnu. His oil paintings on canvas record daily life on Kihnu, shipbuilding, fishing, seal hunting and the adventures of islanders on the mainland. The World Encyclopaedia of Naïve Art has published his painting The



Jaan Oad

Trial of Kadaka Mari. The story is about Kadaka Mari, a woman who threatened to bewitch her landlord's cattle. In a precise and a well-balanced composition, the judge and members of the court are on one side and the people of Kihnu on the other side of the painting. A dominant red table divides the two groups. Kadaka Mari has put her hand on the Bible and her face reflects no regret. She is the same proud Kihnu woman as all the others behind



The Trial of Kadaka Mari by Jaan Oad.

her. Jaan Oad left Estonia with other Kihnu naïve painters during W.W.II and settled in Canada. Their school of painting recording scenes from everyday Kihnu life was continued by Endel Tehvand, a welder who moved to Kihnu from the mainland in the 1950s. His poetic paintings are based on red and brown colours. His

beautiful and touching art records landscapes, wedding traditions and other island customs. Historically, art was for Kihnu naïvists not simply a hobby, but an additional job or a mission.

Today there are no more active naïve artists in Kihnu as the glorious Jaan Oad, Georg Vidrik, Endel Tehvand and others have passed away. Their masterpieces are on display in the Kihnu Museum. A group of enthusiasts has started renovating the home of Jaan Oad, which has been vacant since 1944. A museum and art centre dedicated to his memory will soon be established at the Karjamaa farm where Jaan Oad spent his childhood and the years of his youth. Art teachers at Kihnu School have also attempted to revitalise naïve art. The students are asked to describe different works and festivities in images, as children naturally provide visual expression to their surroundings and experience.

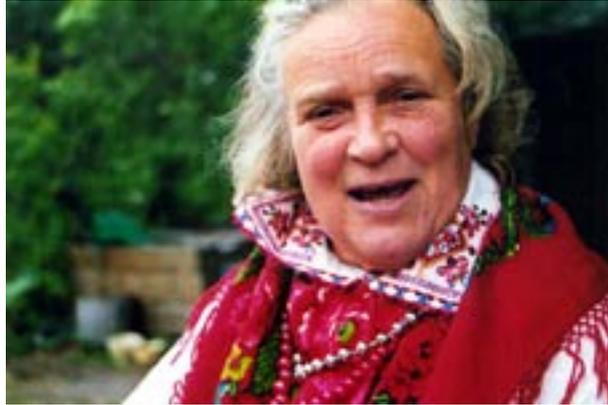


Art lesson in Kihnu school, spring 2002.

Handicraft

A regular Kihnu woman must weave, knit and embroider well. Although everyone knows the techniques, some are more talented and show better creativity and expressive qualities than others. Their wool is finer, patterns look elaborate, colours magically harmonious and extremely bright.

Rosalie Karjam is one of the best craftswoman, whose knitted mittens, gloves, stockings and embroidered blouses and coifs are very highly valued by islanders and tourists. Some years ago she established a handicraft farm named Mõnu.



Rosalie Karjam

Leida Tapp is one of the best at weaving striped skirts and blankets. She made a very beautiful striped woollen curtain for the stage of the Kihnu community centre that was lost in a tragic fire in September of 1999.



Leida Tapp

Helve Vahkel creates and makes wonderful Kihnu dolls in traditional dress. All these master craftswomen willingly pass their skills and knowledge on to others.

The list of master craftsmen whose names have gone down in the history of Kihnu culture could also be a long one. Mihkel Mäes, who passed away in 1973, was a great master of violins and an excellent boat-builder.



Mihkel Mäes and Theodor Saar

Peeter Roosleid (1889–1976), who moved from the neighbouring island of Ruhnu to Kihnu in the 1960s, was an internationally recognised silversmith. His brooches and compasses became rare talismans. Peeter Roosleid invented an original compass that employed a round plate with the points of the compass instead of the usual needle. This compass was most convenient for seamen especially in extremely stormy conditions as the direction the ship was sailing in was always in front of the helmsman.



Peeter Roosleid...



...and his compasses.

The most celebrated master builder of Kihnu-type ships was Enn Vahkel (1870–1953), who constructed 69 huge sailboats, most of them for sailing the ocean. His followers and bearers of the tradition have made smaller wooden boats for coastal fishing for their own needs as well as for sale. At present the best boat-builders are Valdo Umb and August Vesik. However, hand-crafted articles have become an expensive commodity, and with the onset of modern appliances and materials, nowadays many fishermen seek cheaper plastic boats.

Sustainability and possible risks of disappearance

Today, Kihnu culture, and especially the local distinct Kihnu dialect, is in danger of extinction due to rapid, sweeping changes in Estonia like everywhere else in Eastern Europe. The self-regulation mechanisms that preserved this unique culture do not function anymore. The rapid development of consumer society is pushing the Kihnu community towards globalisation. Continuously decreasing number of elements of cultural heritage are being passed down from generation to generation. The process of decay expands through the standardized commercial influence, as TV, radio and all other forms of mass media connect the isolated islands with the rest of the world and conquer the territories of original unique cultures step by step. Passive listening has replaced active participation. On the other hand, unorganised tourism in large numbers is destroying the natural balance of lifestyle and culture on Kihnu and Manija Islands. Survival of the cultural space of Kihnu and Manija islands depends on many aspects.

One of the primary cornerstones of the Kihnu Cultural Space continues to be nature. Manija and its surrounding uninhabited islands are protected by Estonian national law as nature reserves. On Kihnu Island,



The huge boulders in Manija Island

just a few boulders and giant old trees associated with legends and ancient beliefs are under national protection. Real estate companies intensely seek to sell property on Kihnu – the attractive seaside and amazingly beautiful natural setting promise tangible profit, creating a market where local islanders have little or no skills to operate or resist it. This represents another danger for the Kihnu community, where land has historically not been an object of trade at all.

The second cornerstone for the continuous existence of Kihnu culture is the traditional family unit and the division of responsibilities in it, meaning that men have to work at sea while women take care of the life at home and on the island. This traditional balance and the acquisition of sustenance through traditional jobs has been greatly endangered by the most recent

developments, where both men and women appear vulnerable. However, it seems particularly difficult for men to find sufficient employment on the island, which consequently brings about grave results in the general shattering of that particular communal lifestyle. Obviously, if that lifestyle changes completely, Kihnu culture will disappear as the local community has reached the state where inward revitalization appears questionable without focused external assistance. Demographic processes on Kihnu and Manija islands are increasing the average age of the population as the younger generation moves to the mainland in search of jobs. The death rate is higher than the birth rate, while knowledgeable connoisseurs of native traditions and songs is diminishing rapidly. If this process continues, no one will be left to keep the flame of Kihnu culture burning in the future.

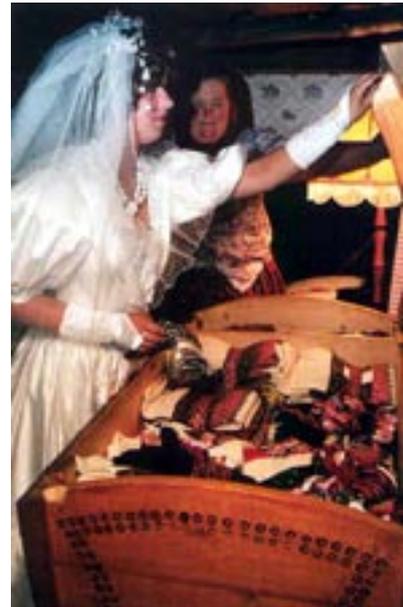


*Only triplets in Kihnu are already 10 years old.
Photo from summer 2000.*

The third cornerstone appears to be the local school, which should have a share in ensuring the continuing existence of the Kihnu language and culture. Today's educational programs in the 9-grade Kihnu school have to follow the standard programs of the urban educational system on the mainland. Due to mixed marriages between islanders and mainlanders, the Kihnu language and customs have lost their value as the major identity marker in many homes. When parents have lost the skills to teach traditional crafts and folklore, the school could develop into an important institution for passing down knowledge and skills from the community elders to children.

An additional means for preserving particularly the communal spirit of the Kihnu Cultural Space is the safeguarding and revitalization of the Kihnu wedding traditions. This most original tradition is strongly threatened by the changing economic situation on the island and constraints of market economy as well as the changing demographic situation. For those reasons, a special supportive organization, the Kihnu Wedding Foundation was established in 1994, but it cannot attain its goals without the general positive transformation and revitalization in the Kihnu Cultural Space. The objective aimed at is the preservation of the communal practices of the Kihnu islanders, their rich cultural poetic and musical heritage, ancient rites and customs that carry traditional ethical values and manifest the particular Kihnu identity.

Tourism plays an ambivalent role in the life of the modern Kihnu community. It has become a new promising branch of the economy but it brings about drastic influences: on one hand, it has enlivened handicraft traditions and given the local folklore groups a new standing in performing for tourists. On the other hand, it may involve a great threat to Kihnu culture, giving rise to a tendency, which proclaims the culture of ancestors a commodity for sale. Another major threat is the so-called alcohol tourism, which has become devastatingly popular as an attraction of Kihnu. The concept of cultural tourism is not sufficiently developed yet. In such a situation, the Kihnu Cultural Space is in grave danger as viable environment that would support age-old genuine cultural creativity of the Kihnu community.



The old dowry-chest with knitted gifts and a bride wearing a modern coif.



3. JUSTIFICATION OF THE CANDIDATURE

The Kihnu Island and its community (including their settlers on Manija) present a cultural space that has developed in relative isolation, maintaining their traditional communal lifestyle while adapting to socio-historical transformations, so that at present their living cultural expression in conjunction with natural environment appears quite unparalleled in the geographic proximity of the Baltic Sea and elsewhere. Yet this tiny community, their rich cultural heritage and picturesque nature are highly vulnerable to the increasing and levelling impact of the standardisation of modernity, especially in the most recent period of the general socio-economic transition affecting Estonia. Therefore, the Kihnu Cultural Space stand in serious need of international recognition with an intention to assist the process of sustaining and safeguarding this cultural heritage that enriches the variety of human experience.

The outstanding value as a masterpiece of the human creative genius and its roots in the cultural tradition of the Kihnu community

The Kihnu Cultural Space that is presented in this Application File for Candidature to be proclaimed the Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity forms a remarkable area of insular culture in the whole European region, where collective social practices and active practitioners engaged in a unique culture with distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features have preserved in their original context and environment up to the present. The Kihnu Cultural Space denotes a genuine symbiosis of a living community of people with unique cultural expression, an insular place with distinct nature defined by the surrounding seascape, and the livelihood activities of the local community that in the course of history has imminently adjusted to and depended on the natural environment. Their cultural expression and livelihood practices testify to human creative genius in survival and aesthetic aspirations under particular historical and natural circumstances.

The Kihnu Cultural Space evolved in the course of centuries as a result of the interaction of the human community and the natural environment on a tiny island. The surrounding sea, harsh climate and remote conditions created the Kihnu community whose survival was dependant on harmonious existence with nature, and the endurance of traditional knowledge and process of transmission

of cultural expression and skills of a persistent communal lifestyle. In spite of rapid developments and changes throughout Europe, many archaic features are still alive today on Kihnu and Manija – the islanders have maintained their traditional culture to date in folklore, customs, and crafting skills that continue to define their community. With their enduring traditional communal lifestyle that has continuously adapted to socio-historical transformations, the Kihnu Island and its community (including their settlers on Manija) present a cultural space unmatched in the geographic proximity of the Baltic Sea and elsewhere in its genuine, living heritage of traditional culture.

In order to provide just a few examples of other similarly unique cultural expressions that have been lost through assimilation processes caused by socio-historical constraints, in the following are given couple of parallels from the same geographic region. The neighbouring Ruhnu (Runö) Island in the Bay of Riga was previously inhabited by an original old Scandinavian community with its rich culture and original Ruhnu language, but when threatened by war in 1944, all the islanders migrated to Sweden where they assimilated into Swedish culture around Stockholm. Another cultural group, the Livonians who also belong among the Finno-Ugric peoples resided quite close to Kihnu on the Latvian coast of the Bay of Riga for centuries. However, only a few dozen persons who speak or understand the Livonian language remain today in contemporary Latvia of the 5,000 Livonians living there in the 19th century. They were incapable of saving their language and culture from assimilation into Latvian culture. It appears to be impossible to keep an original insular language and culture alive in mainland conditions under indifferent governmental policies.

Besides the Kihnu community, it is important also for the identity of the people of Estonia to safeguard the living Kihnu Cultural Space since in their original lifestyle, language, creative



The old wooden church in Ruhnu (Runö) was built in 1644. Three hundred years later whole community left for Sweden. Photo from 1935.

folklore and traditional folk art are preserved the ancient roots of the Estonian culture. For the Kihnu community itself, it is a question of retaining and promoting their identity in opposition to the threatening assimilation in a globalised world. To maintain the cultural diversity of Europe, administrative or research, custodian and practitioner communities of Estonia as well as of Kihnu should work towards creating a thorough understanding of Kihnu culture in its existing forms, while aiming at promoting and safeguarding its creativity in varied cultural expression. The Kihnu community and their cultural expression, the whole Kihnu Cultural Space is of outstanding value as a masterpiece of intangible heritage both for the community concerned and for the maintenance of cultural diversity, especially in relation to other expressions of Estonian culture, but also in comparison to nearby related or more distant coastal or insular cultures, as well as universally.



*All ancient traditions are followed even in the ortodox church in Kihnu today.
A young woman is not allowed to wear apron until her child is baptised.
August 2000.*

Its role as a means of affirming the cultural identity of Kihnu community, its importance as a source of inspiration, and its contemporary social and cultural role

In the Kihnu Cultural Space, their elaborate cultural expression through song, music and dance, through ritual customs that define the community, the ancient handicraft skills that emerge still today as vital traditional knowledge passed on to the younger generation and being displayed in the daily dress of the Kihnu women (and also in men's pullovers, *troi*) play a significant role as a means of affirming the cultural identity of the people living on Kihnu Island. On the other hand, their cultural expression serve the Kihnu community as an important source of inspiration and as a means of bringing the community together. At the same time, in the modern communicative world and in the context of certain current cultural events where uniqueness of different cultural expressions are highly valued, the Kihnu cultural expression also enacts on the intercultural level of exchange, while the outside recognition of their cultural uniqueness enhances the necessary self-esteem. This concerns particularly the case of present day active practitioners who willingly form performance groups with the aspiration of retaining the oral tradition in circulation that otherwise would fade with transforming social context.

For the Kihnu community, keeping their oral heritage and ancestral traditions alive appears vitally important, as it forms the basis of their creative frame of mind. Their aspirations for creative expression gave rise to folk songs sung by the seafaring Kihnu men during long sea journeys. These songs expressed their feelings and dreams. Often the lyrics composed by seamen reflect the philosophical attitude of the Kihnu people, their understanding of life as a rare gift, as a miracle



11-years-old Kristjan Michelson is a very good singer and likes to wear a troi daily.

donated to humans. For example, a song created by an unknown seaman during a long boat-crossing and recreated in circulation as common repertoire by other Kihnu men while navigating the Baltic Sea:

We are together here this year,
God only knows if next year too,
Some of us will become sand,
Some will be buried under the soil,
Some will be taken to Russia
[...]
Here we are considered stupid,
But we will go to Riga and live an easy life,
On a cushy job enrolling sailors,
There we slap cards on the card table,
There our vodka glasses glint
[...]
The forest gives us food, the sea gives us drink,
The waves will cover us one day
[...]

Sii me sjeltsös sjelle uasta,
Jumal aga tiäb, kus tulõva uasta,
Muist meid liiva liidetakse,
Muist meid maetas mulla alla,
Muist meid viiäks Venemaale
[...]
Sii meid pjetäkse ju lolliks,
Me lähme Riiga siidisjelliks,
Siidisjelliks, musterrolliks,
Seal meitel laksub kaardilaud,
Vahest vilgub viinakluas
[...]
Mets meid toidab, meri meid joodab,
Mere lained katavad
[...]



*For many men of Kihnu the sea has become a wet grave.
Painting by Jaan Oad.*

The most ancient song repertoire on Kihnu Island, however, is preserved by women, and particularly in the context of wedding traditions. The preservation of the traditional wedding ceremony created the ritual environment and communal necessity for handing down this oral heritage. The older layer of Kihnu songlore is an expression of deep rootedness in cultural history, as their collective singing activities have maintained the oldest singing style and repertoire closely connected to ritual context.



This ancient song tradition has historically had parallels on the neighbouring Estonian areas, but there it has disappeared from its original context long ago. For example, when the guests arrived at the wedding ceremony, the singers at the ritual sang the following verses:

Should you know this,
 Even have the slightest inkling
 How we got here?
 We must pass through three forests:
 In front of us we see a lumber forest,
 Behind us a timber forest is visible,
 In the middle, a dry spruce forest.
 We must pass through three lakes:
 One is a lake of spirits,
 This is the lake for young men;
 The second is a lake of beer,
 This is the lake for young women;
 The third is a lake of syrup,
 This is the lake for young girls.
 In front of us are nine brooks,
 Eight seas of fish,
 Seven stagnant rivers,
 Ten cold springs.
 Our horse drowned in the brooks,
 The blazed horse in the waves,
 The mare between the tussocks.
 We chopped branches into the brooks,
 Broad shingles into the waves,
 Then the woman will not get her foot wet,
 nor the ox its hoof,
 Nor the rooster its golden heels [...]

Peaks teie seda tiedämaie,
 Vähedegi arvamaiõ,
 Kuda aga meie siia saimõ?
 Läbi meitel minna kolmest metsast:
 Ees meitel irgub irremetsa,
 Taga paistab palgimetsa,
 Keskel kuiva kuusemetsa.
 Läbi meitel minna kolmest järvest:
 Üks ond järve viinajärve,
 See ond noorte meeste järve;
 Teine järve õllejärve,
 See ond noorte naiste järve;
 Kolmas järve siirupida,
 See ond noorte neide järve.
 Ees meitel üheksa ojada,
 Kaheksa kalamereda,
 Seitse seisavat jõgeda,
 Kümme külma allikasta.
 Hobu meitel uppus ojadesse,
 Lauku tjakku lainetesse,
 Mära mätaste vahelõ.
 Meie raisime oksad ojadesse,
 Laiad laastud laenetesse,
 Siis ei kastas naine jalga, ärg ei sõrga,
 Kukk oma kulda kannuksida [...]

In the unique Kihnu Cultural Space the age-old traditions and their creative expression has preserved particularly thanks to the maintenance and continuation of collective lifestyle and certain ritual practices. The Kihnu cultural expression is note worthily that of a community, the role of an individual becomes significant



Kalda Mall, one of the great singers in Kihnu. Photo from 1974.

as part of that singular community who feels the urge to carry on and find aesthetic creativity inside their communal tradition. This forms one of the most essential reasons for the safeguarding of the Kihnu cultural expression in the context of an intact cultural space that would provide the necessary spiritual, emotional, natural and material environments for the continuation of that remarkable yet vulnerable culture.

[Biodiversity interacts with cultural diversity](#)

The Kihnu Cultural Space evolved in the course of centuries as a result of the interaction of human community and natural environment on a tiny island. The surrounding sea, harsh climate and insular circumstances created the Kihnu community whose survival and the endurance of traditional knowledge and skills of a persistent communal lifestyle was dependant on harmonious existence with nature. The Kihnu community has managed to retain such balance up to the present.

The Kihnu Archipelago is rich in natural diversity. Hundreds of different birds nest here and many migrating birds make their stopovers here in the spring and in the autumn. Its clean environment makes Manija Island the best habitat for the natterjack, which is listed in the International Red Book of Endangered Species.



Natterjack (Bufo Calamita)

*Grey seals in March.
According to ancient Kihnu beliefs, seals
are actually the soldiers of the pharaoh of
Egypt who drowned in the Red Sea and
later turned into seals.*



The last remaining and decreasing population of grey seals in the Baltic Sea inhabits the waters of the Kihnu Archipelago. Being in the past traditionally dependent on seals for livelihood, the Kihnu people know well the vitality of the survival of different species. The seals of the Baltic Sea are today under the protection of the International Red Book of Endangered Species.

The sea holly (*Eryngium maritimum*) is a rare plant that has survived in Estonia on the rocky Kihnu Archipelago from earlier climatic conditions dating back thousands of years, and thus testifying to the unique conditions on Kihnu. Today its natural habitat is mostly in the Mediterranean region. It is protected by the Estonian Red Book of Endangered Species.



Mergansers like to live in homes erected by islanders

A new nature preserve composed of Kihnu and the other islands located nearby could hopefully provide answers to questions about such diversity. The Kihnu Strait Marine Park has been created at the initiative of the national government of Estonia to protect

primarily the natural riches of this region. The diversity of Kihnu human culture can be compared with the diversity of its nature. The rare combination of present and past in Kihnu should encourage hope that cultural diversity can be protected and developed on the islands of the Kihnu Archipelago in the future.



A boulder struck by lightning in Manija.



The surroundings of lighthouse in Manija are covered by grass tapestries.

Excellence in the application and passing on of the traditional knowledge and skills

In the course of time, traditional knowledge and skills were passed down mostly through communal activities in Kihnu culture. This concerned their traditional music and verbal art, their beliefs and ritual practices, as well as crafting skills related both to the livelihood necessities and to the aesthetic preferences of the islanders. For boys and men, the passing on of making fishing gear as well as boat-building skills were essential knowledge for daily survival. These skills were taught in family circle, but also through apprenticeship with master craftsmen and during collective working periods. Although the essential handicraft techniques and skills were passed on from mother to daughter, the girls and women were also continuously participating in collective events like *ülaljõstmised*, the regular handicraft evenings, and preparations for weddings.

Today, in the current social context the individual transmission of traditional skills is still observable in family environment, but communal participation nevertheless play an important part, though the scenery and particular events have changed in time. However, in the modern process of safeguarding the continuation of traditional cultural practices, the role of school and local educational programmes is gradually becoming more important. According to the educational policy of the Republic of Estonia, all schools are free to compose special programmes for introducing local history, nature, customs and folklore. In the nearest future, the Kihnu way of thought should be continuously brought into the school environment, and the school curriculum that combines traditional knowledge inventively into current teaching practices would provide a basis of systematic transmission of Kihnu culture to the future generations on the island. Another necessary aspect

A group of Kihnu boys in front of old school



is providing professional teacher training especially to young islanders who would thus acquire necessary skills for introducing the element of Kihnu culture more widely to the existing school programme. For example: in Biology – flora and fauna of the native islands in the Kihnu vernacular; in Geography – the Bay of Riga and the Baltic Sea in the Kihnu vernacular; in History – the main events, processes, personalities in the history of the island; in Physical Education – Kihnu games; in Music instruction – Kihnu folklore; in Manual Training – Kihnu handicrafts; in Visual Arts – naïve painting.

One highly important issue concerns the instruction in Grammar, where the young generation would need special classes in their native Kihnu dialect, in addition to learning standard Estonian. The Kihnu vernacular, *Kihnu kiel* as the islanders call it, is one of the most important components of Kihnu culture supporting the identity of the islanders. The Kihnu vernacular should be taught in the local school in order to maintain it as a living language, because of the increasing influence of standard Estonian through mass media, modern communication systems and mixed marriages.

The Kihnu dialect, however, is closely related to the ancient livelihood practices and expressive verbal art. For example, Kihnu vocabulary is rich in words that describe different stages of the sea, weather and especially forms of ice. Ice has such a variety of different verbal descriptions that it appears quite complicated to translate the dialogues of Kihnu seal hunters into Estonian or other languages. Although seal hunting is a means of subsistence from the past, it testifies to rich traditional knowledge and remains an essential component in verbal art, which might be lost as the specific vocabulary associated with traditional hunting and fishing is gradually fading.

*Kihnu Seal Hunters
in Gulf of Riga.
Painting by Jaan Oad.*



Since the harsh winters persist on the Baltic Sea with its thick ice and the dependence of the islanders on the ice-bridge for crossing to the mainland, many original words and specific expressions are still in use to explain the richness of the icy world. To give just a few examples:

tie – ice good for crossing,
rikne – ice very hard for crossing,
korgõ – ice which has air between water and ice,
tuulõeauk – tiny ice, dangerous to step on,
kuemm – ice lifted by boulders,
rjõnnajäe – a frontline where ice grows, etc.

This is a "kuemm".



*When ice grows in a windy sea,
a "rikne" appears in frontline.*

Its value as a unique testimony of a living cultural tradition

The Kihnu Cultural Space denotes a genuine symbiosis of a living community of people with unique cultural expression, an insular place with distinct nature defined by the surrounding seascape, and the livelihood activities of the local community that in the course of history has imminently adjusted to and depended on the natural environment. Kihnu folk culture and traditions find their most complex and bright expression through the very special Kihnu wedding ceremony where most Kihnu customs, dances and songs are demonstrated along with young women's handicraft skills.

Dominant of Kihnu culture – weddings

The communal celebration of wedding is the most significant factor that has preserved the collective practice of traditional culture on Kihnu and Manija with its complexity of ritual practices and aesthetic variety of cultural expression. It includes the process of proposal and engagement, its climax is the three-day-long and two-part wedding ceremony with various rites for preparing the new couple for transition into married life and affirming the renewal of kinship relations. As already described above, this central cultural institution, the old and unique marriage tradition links the greater part of folklore and handicrafts in the Kihnu Cultural Space. The complicated performance of the whole ritual includes a vast repertoire of songs and other kind of verbal folklore, music, dances; it includes a large display and exchange of traditional handicraft; the ceremony includes preparation of traditional dish and particular decoration of the involved households. It is a powerful manifestation of Kihnu identity and a significant factor in revitalizing the Kihnu community.



Golden weddings after 50 years of living together in Manija Island. Photo from 1985.

However, the full-size traditional Kihnu wedding has become difficult to arrange in recent years because of the pressure of socio-economic transformations. It is an expensive, time and effort

consuming undertaking; to the negative features affecting the recession should be added also the strong impact of mainstream culture, especially in the case of mixed marriages that have increased in the gradually growing mobility of the islanders. The Kihnu Wedding Foundation was established in 1994 as a private initiative in order to sustain that original tradition. It appears that this unique cultural expression that has defined the Kihnu Cultural Space in the most elaborate way has become alarmingly vulnerable and would need wider international recognition and support from cultural organizations so that this pearl of intangible heritage could continue to safeguard and revitalize the Kihnu community.

Symbolism in traditional dress, its patterns and ornaments

The persistence of traditional dress is a remarkable and distinct feature in the Kihnu Cultural Space. Elements of traditional dress still continue to carry significant meaning for the islanders and function as manifestations of particular status and identity. The Kihnu bride wears an apron over her striped skirt since the moment of becoming a married woman. The apron protects the most important, reproductive part of a woman's body. When the child is born, she removes the apron until the newborn child is brought to church. After baptism, the apron is put on again. The apron may be discarded under the condition of divorce, but a widow will continue to wear her apron till death and will be buried in full attire. This custom is strictly followed by the community.



The continued use of traditional signs, omens and symbols in other activities and handicrafts keep the convictions of the Kihnu islanders and their spiritual world together. All Kihnu women's handicrafts are decorated with colourful patterns and ornaments. Most of these elements are known worldwide. Geometrical composition of ornaments limits the number of possible variations and it is difficult to trace the borrowings of individual patterns. But the meanings given to the patterns by Kihnu women are significant. For instance, the octagon star that dominates in Latvia as a symbol of dawn,

cultural awakening and national identity, possesses magical powers for healing different diseases in the Kihnu patterns. This star with eight edges has a preventative function and protects women from illnesses when embroidered on blouses. The same kind of star was used in weaving blankets on the largest Swedish island of Gotland, and in textiles of the highlands of India and Peru. In Turkey, it is a symbol of love and faith and appears in tapestries as an octagon blossom of a magic plant. Symbols of the wheel of the sun are known all over the world and have been used in Kihnu patterns in conjunction with snake-patterns. This pattern is usually located on the head-dresses of married women that were traditionally worn daily, but today belong to the festive dress.



Internationally widespread ornaments are often intertwined with unique Kihnu symbols. These are geometrical figures of local plants and birds, sometimes also human beings. Every master craftswoman tells her own metaphorical story combining different elements together. This aspect of Kihnu handicraft is well recorded by ethnographers from the Estonian National Museum and researchers from the textile department of the Estonian Academy of Art.

A zigzag snake pattern on the bride's headware has a function of preventive magic.



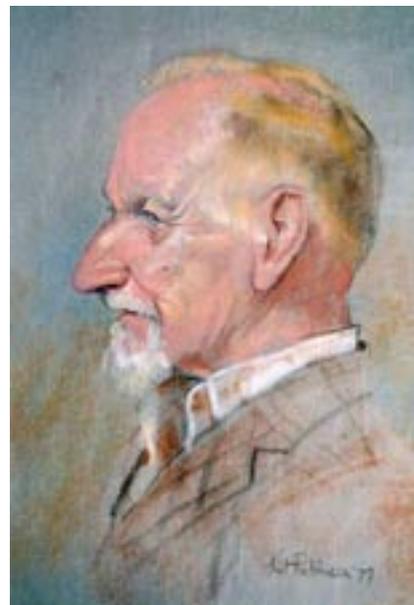
Recording of culture

Kihnu Cultural Space has been described and recorded during the second half of the twentieth century relatively well by various researchers. The first feature length black-and-white film on Kihnu weddings was made by folklore professor Eduard Laugaste in 1958. Ethnomusicologist Ingrid Rüütel has carried out decades long study of particularly music, songs and folklore connected to wedding rituals, but also those practiced in other situations. Folklorist Otilia Kõiva has also done thorough research on wedding rituals. The social and economic history of Kihnu has been researched by ethnologist Vilve Kalits. Sociologist Maaja Vadi was born in Kihnu and earned her doctorate degree in scientific studies on community behaviour.



*Dr.Ph.Maaja Vadi.
Summer 2000 in Kihnu.*

Thousands of items of Kihnu folklore have been collected and deposited at the Estonian Folklore Archives in Tartu. The Estonian National Museum has collected articles of material culture from their expeditions to Kihnu. The Kihnu dialect has been studied by dialect researchers from the Institute of Estonian Language. In this respect should be also mentioned representatives of the Kihnu community who have actively participated in recording their native culture, especially the well-esteemed teacher Theodor Saar (1906–1984) who made numerous documentations on the history, daily events and communal activities of Kihnu culture and provided valuable material on the vernacular dialect.



Theodor Saar

In addition, several art documentary films (directed by Mark Soosaar, Ingrid Rüütel) were produced on Kihnu and Manija islanders, on their lifestyle, folk art and nature by Tallinnfilm Studios and Estonian Television.

Risk of disappearing

The unique Kihnu culture evolved on Kihnu Island (and expanded later to the small Manija) over centuries in relative geographical isolation, with nevertheless fertile communication with the outside world, especially through seafaring. Kihnu lifestyle and livelihoods have always depended on the surrounding waters of the Baltic Sea that has played a significant role in creating the Kihnu community and configuring their expressive culture. Since times immemorial, most of the men have been engaged in seafaring, seal hunting, or fishing at sea outside Kihnu while the women usually remained on the islands taking care of the farmstead household.

Elderly women and the traditional way of cultivating land.



At the same time, all innovations and influences brought back by the men from overseas were adopted and synthesised into an original, self-sustaining insular culture according to the beliefs and customs of the islanders themselves. Thanks to their protective conservatism the Kihnu community created a strong identity that they have managed to maintain through several socio-economic transformations till the most recent decades, but showing alarming increase of negative susceptibility to present pressures and constraints.

The most recent period in Kihnu life has brought along reforms and transition to market economy with its constraints and pending commercialisation, which at the same time are accompanied by swiftly spreading acculturation. In listing the major dangers facing the maintenance of Kihnu culture, first should be mentioned that the vigour of the bearers of Kihnu culture is beginning to wane. The communal distribution of responsibilities between men and women is no longer manifest in daily life. The church or elements of folk beliefs have lost their significance in regulating the moral behaviour of the islanders. The aspirations of the younger to assimilate with the mainland urban culture has reduced their appreciation of

Younger women and the modern global entertainment. Passive consumerism is spreading to Kihnu.



the values of their own traditions. The empowering role of Kihnu culture has weakened because processes in the economy and educational system thus far have neglected to support the survival of folk culture, the Kihnu vernacular and spirit.

Secondly, the economy of tourism that has grown explosively is showing increasing negative impact. Although it provides a small proportion of islanders with employment, yet in light of recent developments, it is beginning to exceed its limits. The tourist season lasts two to three months a year from June through August on Kihnu and Manija islands. The owners of about a dozen tourist farms and one hotel aim at extracting maximum profit, and at the height of summer several thousand tourists may sojourn on Kihnu and Manija islands, increasing their population three to four times its normal size. Which endangers both the balance of natural environment and living space of the resident islanders. Careless guests feel insignificant to their surroundings, but focus on consuming alcohol. Tourism and especially alcohol tourism brings profits for the ferry lines and local vendors, but it could seriously harm the development of Kihnu culture.

In midsummer only ferry tries to transport thousands of tourists and their cars to Kihnu. Summer 2002.



The orientation to market conditions, which demand less sophisticated and less expensive products, has already influenced the quality of Kihnu handicrafts. Thirdly, there exist the danger of transforming the Kihnu culture into an exoticised display window culture. While the Kihnu people of old sang, danced and crafted beautiful knitwear for their own pleasure and enjoyment, today it is often performed for sale at tourist farms and as a spectacle at festivals, concerts and on stage.

The last decades have had a grave destructive impact on the previously persistent communal lifestyle and survival skills of the islanders of Kihnu, and therefore this community needs serious assistance in restoring communal initiative and re-affirming the identity of the Kihnu community, in order to re-create a viable economic community and protect the indigenous cultural expression against the levelling standardisation of modernity and safeguard this unique Kihnu Cultural Space from decay, acculturation and dissolving into the mainstream.



A tourist from Burkina Faso discovers beauty of traditional skirt in Manija Island. Photo from summer 1997.

Conclusion

The Kihnu Cultural Space with its folklore, customs, handicrafts, original wedding rituals, naïve painting traditions, etc., which has survived until the present day, is an outstanding value as a masterpiece of the human creative genius of the Kihnu community. The roots of the cultural traditions of Kihnu are in the past. Due to the island's long history of isolation from the mainland, the traditional culture and lifestyle were preserved here over the centuries. The cultural space of Kihnu supports the cultural identity of the islanders. It is a source of inspiration and intercultural exchange. Although a large proportion of Kihnu youth study on the mainland and bring contemporary urban culture with them during summer vacation and school holidays, girls nevertheless continue to wear the traditional striped skirts, sing the tunes of their grandmothers and dance old dances when at home on the island. Native customs, the Kihnu language, songs and other cultural phenomena secure one's identity and inner harmony.

The Rescuers.
Painting by Georg Vidrik,
1904-1942.
Will Kihnu culture need a
lifeboat, too?



Under modern conditions of intra-communal exchange and communication, the Kihnu and Manija community cannot be expected to return to historical isolation and become a living museum where time stands still. Islanders want and have the right to enjoy all the comforts of developing civilisation. The key problem remains how to keep the unique and original Kihnu culture alive in a changing world, how to secure the process of recreating Kihnu culture while safeguarding and promoting its unique identity and cultural expression, and eventually enhancing the living and viable Kihnu Cultural Space.

When isolation stimulated the creation of an original Kihnu culture a hundred years ago, nowadays a wise and conscious link to other cultures will help this insular cultural space to survive. International recognition of Kihnu culture as a masterpiece of

humanity should help create motivation among the islanders, and involvement of the Estonian people and the international community, which would inspire the general revitalization process through the recognition of the extreme fragility of traditional forms of cultural expression and an empowering conviction in the tenacity of a living cultural experience that enriches the whole humanity. Consequently, in order to gain international recognition to the Kihnu Cultural Space that would assist in sustaining and safeguarding this singular cultural expression in modern society, the current application seeks expert international support to the Kihnu Cultural Space through its proclamation as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.



4. MANAGEMENT

a. Responsible organisations and bodies for safeguarding, preserving and revitalising the cultural space

The co-ordinating body is the newly established Foundation Kihnu Cultural Space, the responsibilities of which are:

- 1) to work out the action-plan for preserving and safeguarding Kihnu's cultural space,
- 2) to guarantee the implementation of the action-plan,
- 3) to take responsibility for all other problems related to the project as a whole.

The body created to safeguard and develop original Kihnu culture elected the headmaster of the Kihnu Basic School (an 9-grade primary school) Mr. Rein Kupri to the post of chairman. The members of the foundation reached a consensus that the local school should act as the central, stable body for preserving and revitalising Kihnu Cultural Space. Much can and must be done by the school. The inclusion of the Kihnu native dialect in school programs is very important. All projects concerning the teaching of components of Kihnu culture in school must not lose sight of the fact that the oral basis is one of the important characteristics of this unique cultural masterpiece.

The activities of the foundation are not limited to the school alone. The body will monitor all developments in the Kihnu Cultural Space and work closely with the local municipal administration, the National Government and Parliament of Estonia as well as with international organisations.

Sihtasutus Kihnu Kultuuriruum

(Kihnu Cultural Space Foundation)

Linaküla

Kihnu vald

Pärnumaa 88001

Estonia

Chairman Rein Kupri

Tel./Fax: +372 (0) 44 69 933

The other responsible organisations include:

1. Kihnu Municipal Government and the Council of Kihnu Municipality as the bodies of local government
2. Pärnu County Government - regional responsibility
3. The Ministry of Culture as the representative of the public sector whose national competence is the organisation and co-ordination of the cultural policy of Estonia.
4. The Ministry of Education as the national body responsible for educational policy.
5. The Ministry of Internal Affairs as the national body responsible for regional policy in the name of the Minister of Regional Affairs,
6. The Ministry of the Environment as the national body responsible for land reform and the preservation of nature and the environment.

Suggestions from the Kihnu Cultural Space Foundation to responsible organisations

No	Responsible Institutions	Legal Status	National Competence of the institution	Contacts	Sources of funding
1.	Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Estonia	State	In general: to organise and co-ordinate cultural policy of Estonia Particularly for Kihnu: to establish a post in the Ministry of Culture for an officer responsible for Kihnu Cultural Space	Suur-Karja 23 15076 Tallinn, Estonia Tel.: +372 6282250 Fax: +372 6282200 kul@kul.ee Minister: Mr. Margus Allikmaa	Governmental
2.	Ministry of Education of the Republic of Estonia	State	In general: to organise and co-ordinate educational policy of Estonia For Kihnu: to confirm and financially support special programs for teaching different components of Kihnu culture in the local school, to prepare teachers for these kinds of native programs	Munga 18 50088 Tartu Tel.: +372 7350222 Fax: +372 350250 hm@hm.ee Minister: Ms. Mailis Rand	Governmental
3.	Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Estonia		For Kihnu: to maintain the traditional lifestyle on the island by supporting traditional means of livelihood – fishing, cattle breeding, land cultivation. To monitor the demographic situation on the islands of the Kihnu Archipelago and to upgrade the situation	Minister of Regional Affairs Mr. Toivo Asmer Pikk 61 15065 Tallinn tel.+372 6125001 fax +372 6125807 sisemin@sisemin.gov.ee	Governmental

No	Responsible Institutions	Legal Status	National Competence of the institution	Contacts	Sources of funding
4.	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia		For Kihnu: to work out the legal basis for using lands without privatisation, to expand the nature reserve area to include the entire territory of Kihnu, Manija and all isles surrounding the inhabited islands	Minister Heiki Kranich Toompuiestee 24 15172 Tallinn tel. +372 6262802 e-post min@ekm.envir.ee	Governmental
5.	Kihnu Municipality	local	Legal self-governing body elected by islanders, responsible for all administrative measures on the island. In this context: responsible for future development and planning of general land use on the island	Kihnu 88001 Tel.: +372 44 69910 Fax: +372 44 69990 kihnu@parnumaa.ee Head of Municipality Argo Lilles	Self-governing
6.	Pärnu County Government	regional	State representation in Pärnu County, different national functions in the county. For Kihnu: Responsible for traffic and all other communications between the islands and the mainland, responsible for cultural and social investments on the islands	Akadeemia 2 Pärnu 80088 Tel.: +372 44 79730 Fax: +372 44 79745 Governor Toomas Kivimägi	Governmental
7.	Kihnu Cultural Space	Foundation	Co-ordination of action plan, initiatives of new measures for safeguarding the Kihnu Cultural Space	Head: Rein Kupri Linaküla, Kihnu 88001 Pärnumaa, Estonia Tel.: +044 69930	NGO
8.	Foundation Kihnu Väina Merepark (The Kihnu Strait Marine Park)	Foundation	Preserving nature on the islands of the Kihnu Archipelago. Sustainable development of bio-diversity as well as diversity of human culture on the islands	c/o Kihnu Municipality Kihnu 88001 Tel.: +372 44 69910 Fax: +372 44 69990 kihnu@parnumaa.ee Head of Municipality Argo Lilles	NGO

b. Measures that have already been taken to revitalise the cultural space

So far Kihnu Cultural Space is protected and regulated by several Estonian legal acts:

- Constitution of the Republic of Estonia which underlines the obligation to maintain the nation and its culture,
- Local Government Organisation Act which regulates the competence of local governmental bodies in Estonia,
- National Culture Act has been drafted and is expected to be adopted soon by parliament to ensure better sharing of functions and responsibilities in the field of national culture,
- Cultural Policy of the Republic of Estonia where preservation of our cultural traditions is stressed,
- Copyright Act, which offers protection to practitioners.
- Estonian Popular Culture Act has been drafted and is expected to be adopted soon to ensure better sharing of functions and responsibilities in the field of folk culture.

In 1994, the Kihnu Wedding Foundation was established to support financially couples who celebrate the entire traditional wedding ceremony.

A new nature preserve area was established on January 10, 2001. Kihnu Strait Marine Park (KSMP - Sihtasutus Kihnu Väina Merepark in Estonian) is an independent non-governmental organisation founded by the municipalities of Tõstamaa, Varbla and Kihnu. The aim of the KSMP is to find new ways to preserve local cultural as well as natural heritage and to foster sustainable development in those three municipalities. The work is based mainly on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM) prepared together with specialists from the WWF-Sweden. The work is lead by an executive director who is supervised by a board of 7 members. Funding is mostly from different domestic and foreign foundations. There are several umbrella projects run by KSMP:

1. Preservation of semi-natural grasslands. The aim is to preserve one of the most valuable parts of local heritage - traditional

agricultural landscapes like wooded and coastal meadows - areas with enormous cultural, biological and aesthetic value. KSMP has organised camps for volunteers and seminars, and supported local farmers with necessary animals and equipment. All this work is based on the action plan prepared by KSMP specialists in 2001.

2. Legal protection for the region. KSMP has submitted an application to include the area on the list of Ramsar wetland sites. KSMP is participating in reforming the West-Estonian Biosphere Reserve. The aim is to add the area to the worldwide network of biosphere reserves run under the supervision of the UNESCO MAB program.

3. Education. KSMP has organised different educational camps for schoolchildren to foster increased appreciation among local people of their home region. KSMP is participating in the renovation of the house of Kihnu's best-known naive painter Jaan Oad. KSMP is supporting the activities of the Lao bird ringing station, where bird migration has been continuously observed for more than 20 years.

4. Tourism and local development. KSMP is working with the tourism infrastructure concentrating on facilities for nature tourism (bird observation towers, nature paths, etc.).

Several master craftsmen working for the tourist market have maintained handicraft traditions. The local folklore traditions have been continued in stage form by the folklore group Kihnumaa

Numerous folk songs and dances have been recorded in the form of photographs, discs, and video since the beginning of the 20th century. Many manuscripts are awaiting publication. Several TV documentaries and programs have been filmed, most of which are stored in the Estonian National Film Archives as well as in the archives of Estonian TV and in the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu. These activities help to create an understanding of values that are in danger of disappearing on Kihnu and Manija Islands.

All the above mentioned measures have not been effective enough to slacken the pace at which Kihnu cultural traditions are fading. More projects that are bold and extensive must be launched if revitalisation truly is the aim of actions for safeguarding and preserving this original cultural phenomenon.

5. ACTION PLAN

a. title of the project

Preserving and revitalising the Kihnu cultural space

b. the organization or body directly responsible for the implementation of the action plan

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c. the detailed description of the involvement of the individuals who are recognized as practitioners of the technical skill or know-how or the communities concerned

Kihnu Cultural Space as a small living community of less than 600 people is the sole bearer of this unique cultural expression. The master craftsmen, practitioners of traditional songs, dances and rituals form a constituent part of this close-knit community. Local school functions also as a community centre passing vital traditional knowledge on to the younger generation.

KIHNU SCHOOL will launch teaching of Kihnu culture from September 1st, 2004. Estimated number of lessons in the school program - one lesson per week for every grade.

1. MARE MÄTAS.

Teacher of history. Born on Kihnu Island.

Graduate of Tartu University.

One-year-scholarship for writing and publishing a schoolbook on history of Kihnu Island. The book will be used for school program from September 2004.

September 2003 - February 2004.
Research in different archives. 10 000 EUR

March - June 2004.
Writing a book. 4 000 EUR

July - August 2004.
Publishing of the book. 8 000 EUR

September 2004. Start of teaching of Kihnu Island history.

2. EVI VESIK.

LY LEAS.

KÜLLI SEPP.

Teachers of primary grades. All of these young teachers were born in Kihnu Island and are graduates of the Tallinn Pedagogical University.

One-year-scholarship for writing a schoolbook on Kihnu language.

September 2003 - May 2004.
Research in the archive of the Museum of Literature
Collecting materials for the book.
Writing of manuscript. 15 000 EUR

July - August, 2004.
Publishing of the book. 8 000 EUR

September 2004. Start of teaching Kihnu language in the Kihnu school.

3. MARIO SAARE.

Student of Tartu University. Born in Kihnu.

Two-year-scholarship for preparations to teach local flora and fauna in Kihnu School.

January 2004 - May 2005.
Collecting materials for a schoolbook. 18 000 EUR

May - September 2005.
Writing and publishing a book. 12 000 EUR

September 2005. Start of teaching local nature in Kihnu School.

4. ROSALIE KARJAM.

ANNE BURAVKOVA.

LEIDA TÄLL.

Recognized masters of knitting and all women's handicraft.
Teachers of girls handicraft in Kihnu School

Start from September 2003. One lesson per week
Salaries (per year) 3 000 EUR
Materials (per year) 1 000 EUR

5. VIKTOR BURAVKOV REIN KUPRI

Teaching men's handicraft in Kihnu School

Start from September 2003. One lesson per week.

Salaries (per year) 2 000 EUR

Materials (per year) 3 000 EUR

d. the administrative or legal mechanisms for safeguarding the form of cultural expression or the cultural space concerned

So far Kihnu Cultural Space is protected and regulated by several Estonian legal acts:

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- National Culture Act has been drafted and is expected to be adopted soon by parliament to ensure better sharing of functions and responsibilities in the field of national culture,
- Cultural Policy of the Republic of Estonia where preservation of our cultural traditions is stressed,
- Copyright Act, which offers protection to practitioners.
- Estonian Popular Culture Act has been drafted and is expected to be adopted soon to ensure better sharing of functions and responsibilities in the field of folk culture.

e. the sources and level of funding

- state and municipality (district and local) - human resources, technical assistance, budgetary funds
- private sponsors - technical and financial assistance
- different funds and assistance programmes (national and international) - financial assistance

f. the human resources available (their competence and experience) and the opportunities for training in projects related to safeguarding, revitalization and dissemination

Active practitioners and custodians of Kihnu cultural community who are recognized as experts of technical skills and know-how in various fields of Kihnu cultural expression include both native islanders and committed supporters from the mainland. Among the various master craftsmen Rosalie Karjam and Leida Tapp can be referred to as the most efficient in disseminating their skills in traditional handicraft. The singing tradition is carried on by talented and creative singers like Virve Köster, as well as performers of folklore groups. The most active in the field of music is Katrin Kumpan, the leader of the group Kihnumua. Custodians of Kihnu culture that are working in the field of education are Ly Leas, Kulli Sepp, Evi Vahkel, Evi Türk, Anne Buravkova and the headmaster of the local school Rein Kupri. The communal spirit is safeguarded by the active practitioners Vera Leas (head of the community centre), Annely Akkermann (head of Open Kihnu Foundation), Õie Vesik (Board member of Kihnu Cultural Space Foundation). The administrative body of Kihnu municipality is represented by Johannes Leas. The major figure working in the field of nature preservation on Pärnu County Municipality level is native islander Urmas Kase. Academic research field will be promoted and developed by folklorist Ingrid Rüütel, sociologist Maaja Vadi, cultural researcher Kristin Kuutma. The artistic documentation and research of Kihnu expressive culture will be enhanced among others by textile artist Anu Raud and cinematographer Mark Soosaar.

g. a detailed plan

The general aim of the action plan is to preserve and revitalise the Kihnu cultural space as an outstanding value of the human creative genius deeply rooted in the cultural traditions of the community with enormous potential to inspire the development of national culture, bring people closer together and affirm their cultural identity. Preservation of the Kihnu cultural space and its further development depends primarily on the continuity of the

basic traditional lifestyle and communal activities on the island. The cultural space can be maintained only if local people can continue their beloved activities like farming, cattle-breeding, fishing, etc.

Long-term Objectives of the Action Plan

- 1) to ensure the continuity of traditional lifestyle and basic communal activities on the island;
- 2) to encourage national and local authorities to improve legal and administrative measures in safeguarding and revitalising the cultural space;
- 3) to start the teaching of Kihnu dialect and foster the expressions of traditional culture in the local school,
- 4) to recognise and protect the practitioners of traditional skills and know-how
- 5) to systemise all archival materials related to Kihnu's cultural space, to accelerate their scientific research and return the results to the Kihnu cultural space,
- 6) to establish a multi-functional cultural centre in the form of an interactive multifunctional museum for collecting both tangible and intangible heritage as well as presenting, teaching and practicing the traditional lifestyle,
- 7) to co-ordinate a long term policy against alcohol abuse among islanders and to launch a project for replacing destructive consumer tourism (very often connected to alcohol) with cultural tourism,
- 8) to expand the territory of nature reserve over all islands of Kihnu Archipelago to preserve biodiversity and at the same time safeguard cultural diversity inside of community.

The following tables give a more detailed overview of the action plan designed to safeguard, protect and revitalise the Kihnu Cultural Space.

Sustainable basic activity

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
1.	<p>Application for national subsidies and special conditions for developing the traditional livelihood activities (fishery, farming, sheep breeding).</p> <p>Fishery-favourable quotas for Kihnu's fishermen and subsidies for processing the fish.</p> <p>Sheep-, cattle- and horse-breeding-modern technological equipment for local meat and milk processing, product development, marketing, counselling</p>	<p>Stable economic activity as the first precondition for the protection and preservation of the cultural space. Continuation of traditional communal lifestyle. Employment opportunities. Stabilisation and growth of the Kihnu population. Survival of traditional cultural landscapes.</p>	<p>Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Agriculture, Pärnu County Government; Kihnu Municipality Government; Foundation Kihnuväina Merepark; EU programmes</p>	<p>100 000 per year</p>	<p>2003-2008</p>	<p>Survival of the native population of the island Kihnu</p> <p>Survival of traditional cultural landscape - coastal and wooded meadows that are vital for the preservation of various species</p>

Sustainable basic activity

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
2.	<p>Establishment of the contemporary infrastructure and transport connections on the island</p> <p>a. reconstruction of roads;</p> <p>b. completion of Kihnu port</p> <p>c. all-the-year-round connection between the island and the mainland according to the needs of the local community.</p> <p>d. purchase of a new ferryboat</p> <p>e. airport renovation.</p>	Regular connection with the mainland as a precondition for any economic activity on the island and an important indicator of life quality	Ministry of Transport and Communications; Pärnu County Government; Kihnu Municipality Government; EU programmes	<p>100 000</p> <p>1 million</p> <p>500 000 per year</p> <p>250 000</p> <p>150 000</p>	2003-2008	Survival of sustainable community on the island. Equal opportunities for the inhabitants of Kihnu and mainland (health care, employment, school, nursery school, social needs)
3.	Elaboration of land use policy respecting the interests of island's native population	Survival of indigenous community ; Protect the island against turning into a summer resort for affluent outsiders	Parliament and Government of the Republic; Pärnu County Government; Kihnu Municipality Government	10 000	2003	Guarantee for the traditional use of land

Launching the national regional programme to protect cultural heritage

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
1	Develop a legal framework for Kihnu cultural space, which would ensure the co-operation between different sectors.	A common and coordinated action plan involving public and private sector as well as local community; adoption of legal acts on the level of the Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Estonia.	Ministry of Internal Affairs, Foundation Enterprise Estonia, Pärnu County Government; Kihnu Municipality Government	35 000	2003-2004	Cooperation between the different sectors in the society with the aim of reaching common objectives in safeguarding the native population and the culture of Kihnu; an improved demographic situation.
2	National programme – Kihnu culture programme – a structure to ensure the continuous financing of the activities foreseen in the protective rules. The programme would include study grants for the Kihnu youth on the condition that they will return to the island after their studies.	Enforcement and supervision over the activities which are not under direct responsibility of the national or local governments	Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Economic Affairs; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Social Affairs; international assistance programmes	20 000 per year	2004-2008	National support for the cultural projects of Kihnu. Stable and coordinated financing of the activities

Launching the national regional programme to protect cultural heritage

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
3.	<p>Establishment of a polyfunctional folk culture centre on the island, including a museum with traditional farming, a communal meeting place and a folkloric coffee house.</p> <p>Renovation of the Kihnu Museum with a fund-storage and facilities for a contemporary open exposition where all the Kihnu-related ethnographic objects, manuscripts, audiovisual materials, art-objects etc. are collected and exposed. Development of the electronic data-base for the above-mentioned objects.</p> <p>Opening old farmsteads for visitors Supporting Mõnu handicraft farm; fisherman's farm, Oad art farm</p>	<p>Foundation of a folk culture centre: the Kihnu museum with traditional farms, to ensure a natural continuity of traditional farming on the island. To give the inhabitants a possibility to get together and organize traditional parties with folk songs and dances</p> <p>Active and organic centre for collecting, preserving and practicing the traditions and demonstrating traditional materials. Workshops for practical activities (embroidering, weaving, woodwork etc.) to keep old traditions alive</p>	<p>Viljandi Cultural College; Art University; Museums (Estonian National Museum; Pärnu Museum, Estonian Literary Museum)</p> <p>Ministry of Culture, museums on mainland.</p>	<p>70 000 per year for operating costs</p> <p>500 000</p> <p>6000 per year</p>	<p>2004-2008</p> <p>2004-2008</p>	<p>Continuity of the Kihnu culture</p> <p>The data are available for users; open exposition gives visitors a good understanding of traditional way of life; practical skills at workshops are acquired and the handicraft traditions will continue</p>

Launching the national regional programme to protect cultural heritage

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
4.	To educate local people for the posts of different specialists such as museologists, guides, data-base developers. In workshops the local master craftsmen will be involved as instructors.	New job opportunities to stimulate educated young people to return to their home island. To provide livelihood for local master craftsmen and encourage transmission of the skills and know-how	Viljandi Culture College, Tartu University	12 000	2004-2008	Continuation of the traditional culture and guarantee of transmission of the tradition.

Traditional culture taught at Kihnu school

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
1.	Development of an integrated school curriculum based on traditional culture Subjects: a) Kihnu dialect and folklore b) Kihnu handicraft c) Kihnu songs and folk music d) Kihnu fauna and flora e) Kihnu history g) Kihnu games h) preliminary education in the field of sea-faring.	Acquisition of the skills of the traditional culture via the school programme due to lack of input at home	Ministry of Education; Tartu University; Pedagogical University, Foundation Kihnu Cultural Space, Kihnu School	50 000	2003-2204	Systematic transmission of Kihnu culture to the future generation on the island through school education
2.	a. preparation of Kihnu home study textbook b. preparation of respective workbooks c. obtaining study materials	Acquisition of the skills of the traditional culture via the school programme	Ministry of Education; Tartu University; Pedagogical University, Kihnu School	80 000 25 000 80 000	2003 2003 2004	Systematic transmission of Kihnu culture to the future generation on the island through school education
3.	Preparation of Kihnu ABC-book	to preserve Kihnu dialect	Kihnu School Kihnu Municipality Government	40 000	2003	Kihnu dialect preserved
4.	Kihnu folk costume as a school uniform	to strengthen the habit of wearing folk costume	Kihnu School	15 000	2003	Traditional Kihnu folk costume preserved

Traditional culture taught at Kihnu school

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
5.	Hobby education based on traditional culture boys' handicraft girl's handicraft art folklore home study	to spend free time meaningfully and participate in hobby activities based on traditional culture	Kihnu School Kihnu Municipality Government	30 000 per year	2003-2008	Cultural activities give more possibilities for spending one's free time. Communal spirit strengthened.
6.	Camps for children to promote interest in and respect towards oral and intangible heritage	The valuation of native culture in order to ensure sustainability of heritage	Foundation Avatud Kihnu Fond; Kihnu school; Kihnu Municipality Government, Ministry of Culture	15 000 per year	2003-2008	Traditional values transmitted through games and children-oriented activities. Communal spirit strengthened.
Motivating teachers						
1.	To provide educational and further education training opportunities for teachers taking into account the integrated curriculum.	State financed MA studies at universities	Ministry of Education	25 000 per year	2003-2008	Trained specialists for Kihnu school
2.	Motivating teachers with material benefits. Compensations for accommodation, transport. Human resource management.	10 teachers will be motivated to make their life and home on the island	Kihnu Municipality Government, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Regional Development Agency	10 000	2003-2008	motivated status of Kihnu school teacher

Preservation and development of the unique Kihnu traditions

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
1.	<p>Continuation of the activities of Kihnu Pulmafond (Wedding Foundation) for keeping the wedding traditions alive.</p> <p>Modern recording of Kihnu wedding</p>	<p>The survival and continuation of the traditional Kihnu wedding as the dominant part of Kihnu folklore and handicraft is related to the wedding-festivities and its preparations. Therefore the disappearing of the Kihnu traditional wedding would be a serious danger to the whole insular culture</p>	Kihnu Pulmafond	50 000	2003-2008	Survival of Kihnu traditional culture
2.	<p>Continuation of the tradition of Jaan Oad and other naïve painters – establishment of the museum in the Karjamaa farm where Jaan Oad used to live.</p>	<p>Continuation of the Kihnu original artistic style practiced by Jaan Oad and other Kihnu naïve painters</p>	Kihnu Municipality Government, Estonian National Museum, Pärnu Museum, Foundation Open Kihnu Fund, Estonian Academy of Art	70 000	2003-2008	Kihnu communal spirit and mentality strengthened. Valuation of art work of former generations

Publications, video and audio materials

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
	<p>Publication of ethnographic and folklore resources related to Kihnu</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handicraft album. 2. "Vana Kannel (Old zither)". Kihnu folk poems II: lyric and narrative songs. 3. Recent folk songs. 4. CDs containing Kihnu songs and instrumental music with introductions 5. Kihnu Dances (a book containing descriptions + video, CD). 6. Kihnu games (video, CD, photos, a book with a description of games) 7. Kihnu folk tales (texts and photos) 	<p>In a situation where a living tradition is at risk of disappearing it is essential to make the riches collected in archives accessible to general public and give them back to local community</p>	<p>Department of Ethnomusicology at Estonian Literary Museum, Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonian Academy of Art in co-operation with Kihnu community, research institutes, Estonian TV</p>	<p>7000</p> <p>10 000</p> <p>7000</p> <p>9000</p> <p>7000</p> <p>7000</p> <p>4000</p>	<p>2004</p> <p>2003</p> <p>2004</p> <p>2003</p> <p>2005</p> <p>2007</p> <p>2006</p>	<p>The publications will be used as guidebooks of collective memory at disposal of the islanders</p> <p>Promotion of the unique Kihnu culture among cultural tourists from the whole world</p>

Publications, video and audio materials

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
	8. Documentary film Love Story in Kihnu Style	Production of a new documentary to record the wedding rituals and customs from proposal till marriage with modern means and in high artistic quality	Estonian Film Foundation, Estonian Cultural Endowment, Weiko Saawa Film	30 000	2003	examples of traditional heritage recorded for future generations using modern technology
	9. Woman of Kihnu (1973,50 min) Videocassette of a romantic documentary by Mark Soosaar	Distribution of a documentary film on VHS videocassette and DVD disk	Estonian TELEVISION	1000		examples of traditional heritage recorded for future generations using modern technology
	10. The Seals (1974,35min) Jaan Oad (1982,20min), Kihnu Kristjan (1992, 30 min.) Videocassette with three documentaries by Mark Soosaar	Distribution of three documentary films on VHS videocassette and DVD disk	Estonian TELEVISION, Tallinnfilm, Weiko Saawa Film	1900	2003	examples of traditional heritage recorded for future generations using modern technology

Development of cultural tourism

Nr.	Components, projects schedule	Short-term objectives	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget (EUR)	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
1.	Training in the field of cultural tourism – Foreign languages, professional services, exchange of experience	Replacement of alcohol-tourism with cultural tourism	Kihnu Municipality Government, private sector, training organisations	15 000	2003-2004	Improved employment opportunities and resident motivation
2.	Development of various cultural tourism packages for different target groups	Replacement of destructive consumer tourism with well-organized cultural tourism	Tartu University Pärnu College, private sector	2000	2004	Improved employment opportunities and resident motivation