



The Inaugural Esther Art Fair Debuts at the New York Estonian House

As a lush parade of international art fairs opens in New York this week, the alternative Esther launches at the New York Estonian House, invoking vibrant history and community alongside a singular display of cutting-edge visionaries in contemporary art.

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1 MAY 2024



Today in New York, the avant-garde **Esther** art fair debuts at the iconic **New York Estonian House**, open to the public from May 1-4. Founded by **Margot Samel** of the namesake contemporary art gallery in New York, and **Olga Temnikova** of **Temnikova & Kasela Gallery** in Tallinn, Estonia, the exuberant endeavor brings together galleries from around the world for a pioneering exhibition concept.

Inventing the resounding success of **Condo** and **Basel Social Club**, whose unconventional and collaborative presentations illuminate vibrant opportunities for global art fairs, Esther newly launches in the historic and rapturous Beaux-Arts building, promising visitors a singular experience. 25 international galleries showcase the expressive works and site-specific installations of leading-edge creatives, alongside a shimmering array of events and performances.



Installation view of Esther at the NY Estonian House, photo by Pierre Le Hors.

The New York Estonian House is a Picturesque Set for Esther's Debut

Meticulously designed by Brooklyn architect **Thomas A. Gray** in 1899, the elegant four-story house boasts a grand entrance hall, meeting rooms enhanced by rich woods, spellbinding halls, and lively clubrooms, which set the picturesque scene for a visionary art fair.

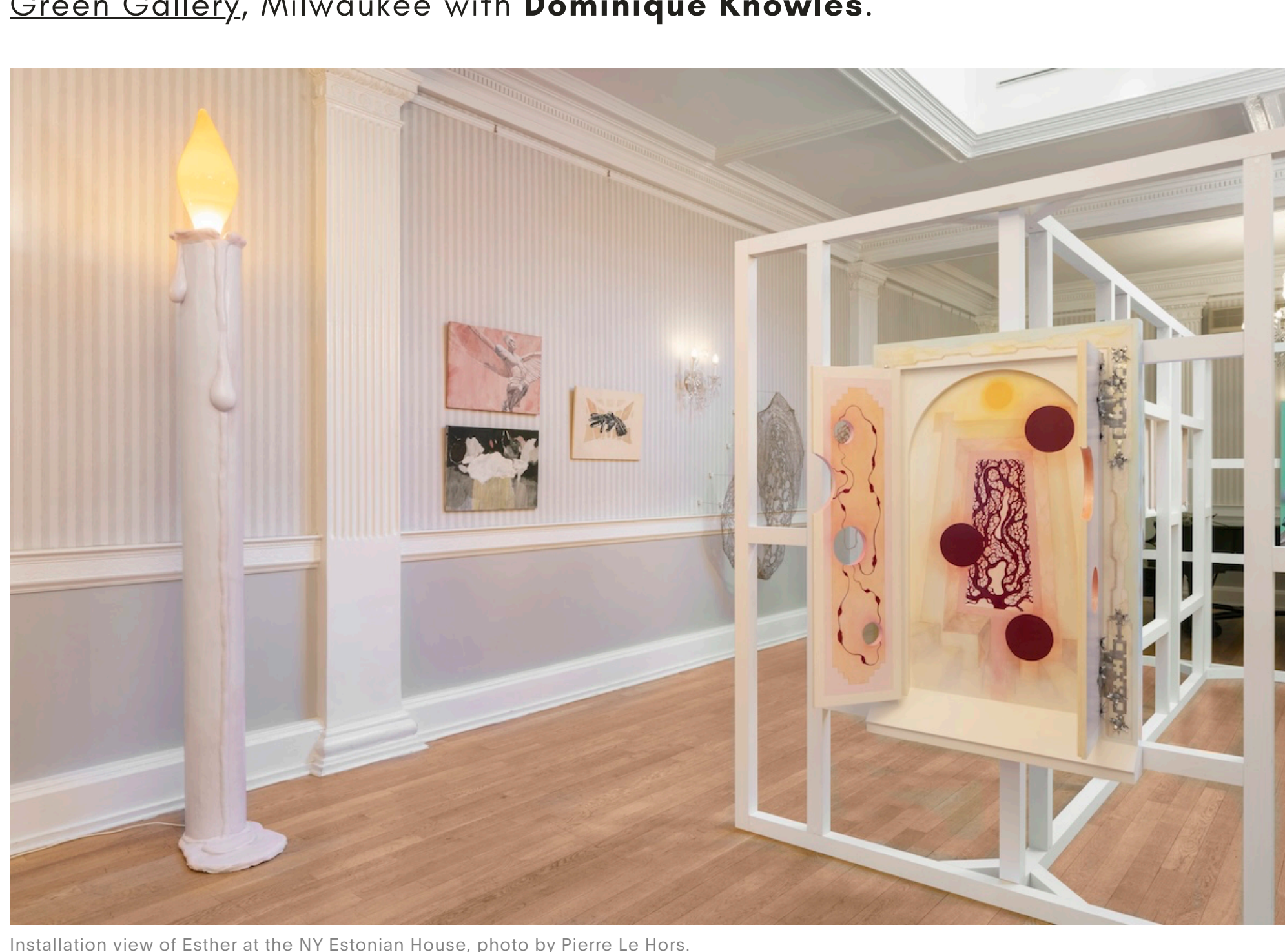
With an original purpose to stand as a substantial civic club in Manhattan's dynamic midtown district for the local working-class community, the building was eventually purchased by the **Estonian Social Society**. During this evolution, the space became a crucial meeting point for Estonian refugees following World War II.



Installation view of Esther at the NY Estonian House, photo by Pierre Le Hors.

In turn, Esther proposed that exhibitors interested in being a part of the alternative fair submit undertakings inspired by the locale's vivacious architectural and historical details.

The inaugural iteration of the sweeping event includes a carefully curated roster of participating artists and galleries, including **BANK Gallery**, Shanghai with **Bony Ramirez** and **Oliver Herring**; **Kendall Koppe**, Glasgow with **Mark McKnight** and **Sevina Tzanou**; **Laurel Gitlen**, New York with **Eric Sidner** and **Matthew Watson**; **Seventeen**, London with **Botond Keresztesi**, and **The Green Gallery**, Milwaukee with **Dominique Knowles**.

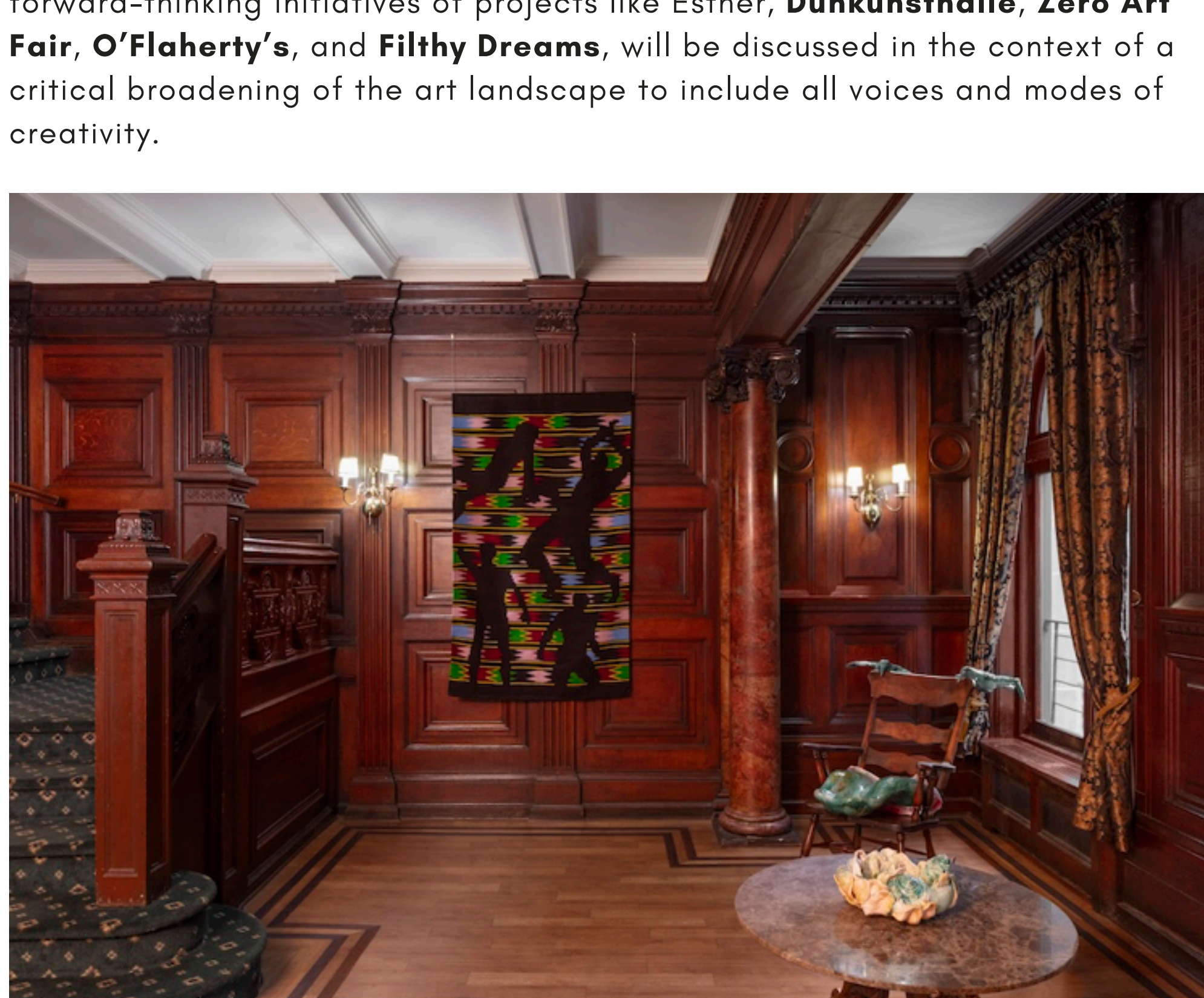


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An Immersive Program of Events and Live Performances Unfolds

An immersive program of events and live performances unfolds throughout the run of Esther. The fair will spark euphoria today with a revitalizing book launch and discussion with visionaries **Jaanus Samma** and **Carlos Motta**, presented by **Lugemik**, titled "Flow of Patterns. Works of Jaanus Saama." This evening, visitors will be enthralled by the additional book unveiling of *Crystal Grid* by **Paul Kuimet**, who will speak sincerely with **Danilo Correale**.

Tomorrow, a conversation between **Magda Sawon** of **postmasters 5.0** and **Laura Raicovich** of **Francis Kite Club** will center on the provocative question: "Rules: What's there to break and how do we break it?" The forward-thinking initiatives of projects like Esther, **Dunkunsthalle**, **Zero Art Fair**, **O'Flaherty's**, and **Filthy Dreams**, will be discussed in the context of a critical broadening of the art landscape to include all voices and modes of creativity.



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Friday, May 3 will bring an exclusive artist walkthrough beside **Servane Mary**, **Anders Dickson**, and **Jan Wade** will give pure life. An authentic their poetic exhibition, followed by live music by **Sugarlife**. An authentic their poetic dinner will set the night aglow, as resident **Chef Maria** prepares a delectable and welcoming gastronomical affair.

An effervescent talk and book signing with **Emma Kohlmann** and **Silke Linder** takes place on Saturday, May 4, focusing on Kohlmann's inaugural monograph *Watercolors*, published by **Anthology**, which will round out the enchanting initiation of Esther into the global art scene.



Installation view of Esther at the NY Estonian House, photo by Pierre Le Hors.

What is the New York Estonian House?

The Estonian Educational Society of New York (New York Estonian House) was established on December 7, 1929. On that day, the first joint meeting was held with the participation of representatives of Estonian organizations participating nationally and wishing to act for the benefit of Estonians. Participating were: representatives of the Estonian Society "Edu", "American Estonian Music Club", "Estonian American Athletics Club", and "Estonian Club of New York".

The original act was signed by 77 representatives and was renamed "United Estonian Society". The first regular meeting was held on January 19, 1930 at the Finnish House on 5th Avenue. On August 7, 1930, a special meeting was convened, and a new name was created for the group: "The New York Estonian Educational Society", in an effort to purchase a building and minimize the tax implications of a private purchase - the Society established its headquarters at 310 Lenox Avenue in Harlem.

In the fall of 1938, the Society moved to bigger quarters in Harlem at 5 East 125th Street. In 1943, Estonian Educational Society, Inc. was formed to facilitate the purchase of an appropriate property for the Society - the building at 243 East 34th Street was then purchased for \$25,000.- in 1946, and the Society was able to have its Annual Meeting in its own building in 1947.

The influx of Estonian refugees after World War II brought many more Estonians into the Society, and the Estonian House became a very active center for Estonian activity in New York.

In 1950, the Society purchased a large piece of land in Long Island, which was subsequently developed by local Estonians - buildings, a pool and a sports facility were built, and this became the summer camp for local Estonian children. Since then, the Society has served as the center and focal point of Estonian activity in New York. — Source