

THE CONCRETE CREATURE

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This is a story that begins in Rīga, my hometown.

I live just beyond the heart of the city, in a place where Soviet-era concrete blocks rise like tired giants. When you walk through here, you see the wear of years: jagged cracks running down facades, broken tiles, and the hushed rustle of trash tucked just out of view.

It was on one of those dull, rain-streaked days, when the sky matched the greyness of the buildings, that I noticed something different. One of those cracks in a garage wall seemed different. It looked like a creature, or at least it looked like it used to be one before crumbling apart. But it's searching for a way to live on.



I was attending conference “Games for Health Europe” abroad this month, where lectures flowed into coffee breaks. During one of the breaks, glass bottles of soft drinks were brought out. People opened them, tossed the caps into a small glass jar, and moved on.

The caps were discarded without thought. So I asked the staff what would happen to them. “We’re just throwing them away,” they said, casually.

After just one question I found myself with pockets full of dozens of bottlecaps for the rest of the event and the flight home. At the time, I had no idea what I would do with them, but I knew they would become something greater than themselves.

In Rīga, cracked walls are part of the everyday landscape if you’re outside the centre. Just recently, a building near my school had to be evacuated because the structure had begun to crack. It was declared unsafe for people to live in. They quickly patched it up but you can still see the scars.

This project is my way of imagining what might happen if recycling didn’t just aim to create something new, but instead tried to heal what already exists. What if materials like bottle caps didn’t just become raw matter, but prosthetics, patching the wounds of architecture left behind?

So I chose a wall, a small, broken part of a garage. Where the broken creature was painted with graffiti. Not to fix it in an engineering sense, but to make a statement that would pop.

This piece isn’t meant to be permanent. It’s meant to be seen. It’s meant to bring awareness to how much is discarded without actually being damaged. And how these discarded things could fuse with other partially broken things to create something new.



The creature laid there, broken. Crumbling from the centre. The rain pooled in its cracks, and the wind whistled through the hollow space where bricks once held firm. But around it, there was always trash. Bottles, wrappers, caps, forgotten things, like itself.

One day, it realised something, there were so many bottlecaps thrown away right in front of it. So many of them. Bright, round, full of potential. And there was hope. The creature began to gather them, pressing them into its wounds like scales. Not perfect, not seamless, but they held.

And in that small act, it began to survive. Not by becoming something new, but by reshaping what was broken. One discarded piece at a time.