

HIAP

Helsinki International Artist Programme



2015

*The second annual publication of
HIAP - Helsinki International
Artist Programme*

HIAP 2015

Residencies

Frontiers in Retreat

Events & Exhibitions

6	Introduction: <i>The Ingredients of a Great Artist Residency?</i>	20	Jaroslav Andel	96	Introduction: <i>Multidisciplinary Approaches to Ecology in Contemporary Art</i>	136	Interpreting the Frame: <i>Reflecting on Interpreting the Frame Exhibition</i>
10	HIAP Gallery Augusta, HIAP Project Space & Office	22	Paola Anziché	98	Adaptations Utö: <i>Narrative and Sensory Enquiries into Island Ecology</i>	138	Axel Straschnoy: Neomylodon Listai Ameghino
11	Suomenlinna Studios & Guest Rooms	24	Boshko Boskovic	100	Deep Time Séance: <i>Embodied Enquiries into Geohistory and Planetary Futures</i>	142	HELSINKI GROUP
12	Cable Factory Studios	30	Jasper Bruijns	110	Excavations: <i>Explorations into Interdependencies</i>	146	Jesse Auersalo: Hold Me in Your Arms (and Never Let Me Go)
14	Residency Programmes 2015	32	Juhyun Choi	116	Zooetics	148	Human Interference Task Force (HITF): Insulation (Mounting Layers)
164	Residencies	34	Teresa Dillon	118	Sylvia Grace Borda	150	Tonight: <i>We are together, trapped on an island and becoming fragile</i>
166	Residency Exchanges	36	Branislav Dimitrijević	120	Carl Giffney	154	Learning Village 2015
166	Curator Residencies	40	Anne Ferran	124	Tuomas A. Laitinen	156	Tokamak: <i>The Idleness Academy: Where Art Sleeps...with One Eye Open</i>
167	Workshops, Retreats & Performance	42	Renée Green	128	Mirko Nikolić	158	The Safe Haven Helsinki? Symposium
168	HIAP Programme Partners & Collaborators	44	Hanna Husberg	132	Tracey Warr		
169	HIAP Board & Members 2015	46	Angela Jerardi				
169	HIAP Staff	48	Alevtina Kakhidze				
170	Funders	52	Heidi Kilpeläinen				
		56	Barbara Knezevic				
		58	Karel Koplímets				
		60	Jenny Marketou				
		62	Meadow, Meadow, Meadow				
		64	Katrín Ólína				
		66	Georgios Papadopoulos				
		70	Alexis Rodolphe				
		72	Jenna Sutela & Martti Kalliala				
		74	Danae Valenza				
		78	Triin Valvas				
		82	Jana Vasiljević				
		84	Disa Wallander				
		88	Ruth Waller				
		90	Elizabeth Willing				

INTRODUCTION: THE INGREDIENTS OF A GREAT ARTIST RESIDENCY?

As an introduction to the HIAP 2015 publication, here are a few thoughts about what are some of the essential features of a great artist residency, and how HIAP strives to provide these.

Freedom, freedom and freedom

During a residency at HIAP, artists have the freedom to decide how they want to spend their time. This basic traditional quality of artist residencies has to be emphasised and defended at times, when creative freedom is too often limited by the pre-defined goals set by funders and other institutions.

Our experience has been that emphasising the artists' freedom is one of the best ways to make the residencies both very focused and productive.

An inspiring residency community

One thing that is clearly beyond the control of HIAP staff is the inner dynamics of the HIAP residency community. We can do our best to create a good platform for exchange and dialogue, but at the end of the day, the spirit, energy and aspirations of the residency community are constantly in a state of flux.

Artists residencies are not only about professional exchange – it is also important to encounter your peers as individual persons. One

of the important keywords at HIAP is **hospitality** - generosity and sensitivity towards other fellow beings.

One big change in the composition of the residency community in 2015 was an increased emphasis on curator residencies. Amongst the 10–15 residency artists, we now usually have one or two curators in residence. The residency community also grew in size – we had more group residencies and collaborations with the local art scene than ever before.

An inspiring location

HIAP has the fortune of being located in two very special locations – the Cable Factory cultural complex and Suomenlinna island, a Unesco World Heritage site.

While Cable Factory is closely attached to the contemporary cultural life of Helsinki, Suomenlinna gives an opportunity to connect to the tumultuous history of the region. The island is also a great site to experience the strength of the four seasons, amplified by the winds coming from the open Baltic Sea. And finally – it is an island, an isolated miniature society, which can encourage utopian (or dystopian) thinking and actions.

Being situated in such inspiration-abundant locations, it is essential for HIAP to maintain a culture of critical dialogue so that the residency artist can explore the site-specific issues beyond

the superficial level. Fortunately there is a great diversity in the interests of the resident artists, and for many of them key sites are located far beyond the perimeter of our tiny island. Many of the resident artists head up north to Lapland, or develop projects in the nearby cities of Tallinn, Stockholm or St Petersburg.

Thematic discourse

Alongside the open-ended residency activity, which is built around emerging new topics, HIAP also engages in a long term thematic research and exploration.

The current important themes include global ecological changes and their local impacts on European natural environments (Frontiers in Retreat, 2013-2018), freedom of artistic expression in times of increasing censorship and repression of artists (Nordic Fresh Air, 2014-2016) and learning & education (HIAP Osmosis, 2015-2016).

We have now reached the midpoint of our biggest current undertaking - the Frontiers in Retreat project - and have included a special section dedicated to this project in this publication.

The above list is by no means a definitive list of what all artist residencies can or should be. Many artist residencies have their own idiosyncratic features, which can be difficult to gener-

alize upon (or even to pin down and describe).

One great opportunity to get an overview of how artist residency practice has evolved over the past years is the upcoming Residencies reflected symposium on 16-18 November 2016, organised by HIAP in collaboration with University of the Arts Helsinki / Academy of Fine Arts and Frame Contemporary Art Finland.

And finally, a few words about this publication:

This is the second edition of the annual HIAP publication. With 174 pages it's more extensive than the first one, but still does not cover all our activities. This publication introduces 27 residencies (approximately a quarter of the total 92 residencies) and 9 events (a limited selection of the total 76 events realised/co-realised by HIAP). Nevertheless, we hope that it can give a good general overview of all the diverse activities that took place at HIAP during 2015.

I would like to send warm thanks to all the contributors of this publication, and especially Jasmin Islamovic & Salla Lahtinen for the excellent design.

Also big thanks to our multi-talented and diligent staff, our wonderfully supportive board and all the collaborators, supporters and funders for an intense and fruitful year 2015!

*Juha Huuskonen
Director, HIAP*

HIAP 2015



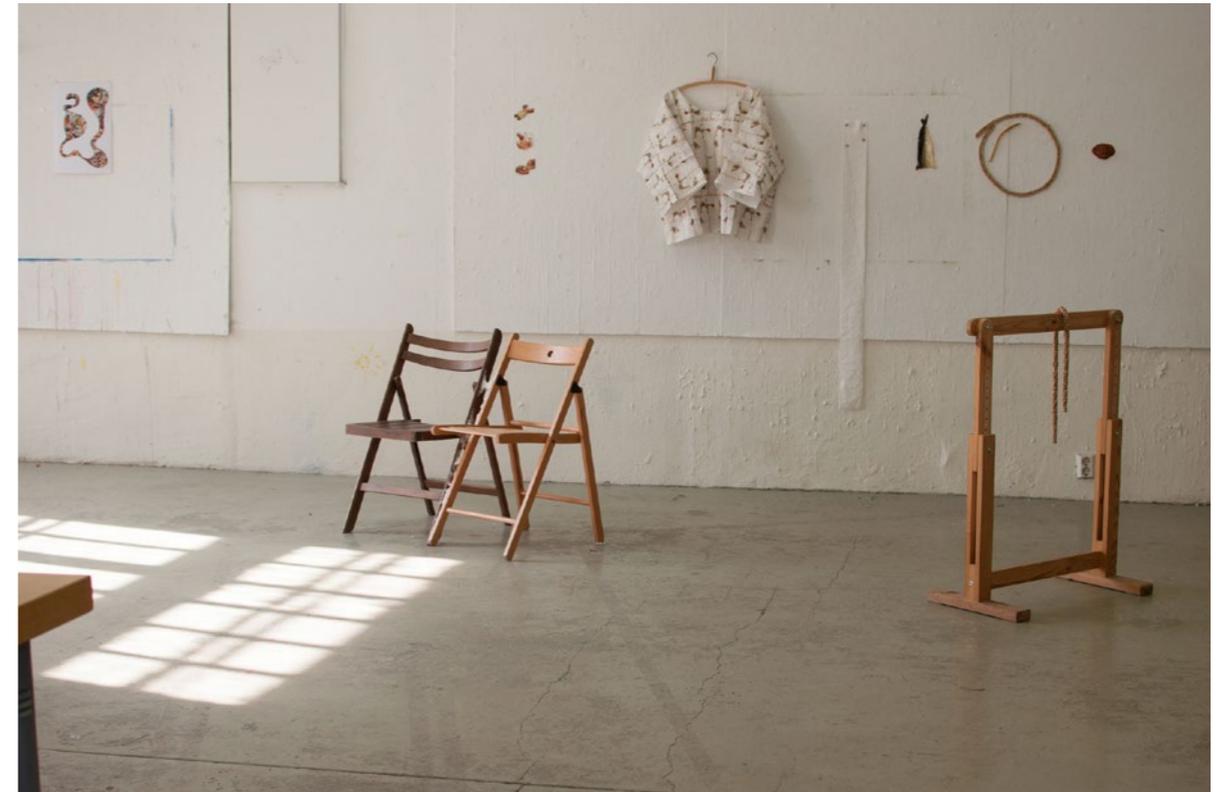
HIAP Gallery Augusta, HIAP Project Space & Office

HIAP, located on Susisaari island in Suomenlinna, provides two dynamic event spaces: HIAP Gallery Augusta and HIAP Project Space. HIAP Gallery Augusta, a non-profit exhibition space, hosts numerous exhibitions, performances and other events throughout the year. HIAP Project Space operates as a versatile event space housing workshops, seminars, and lectures.

Originally built as a barrack in the 19th century, both areas have been beautifully renovated allowing HIAP Gallery Augusta 175 sq metres and HIAP Project Space 130 sq metres of

adaptable art space. Both the gallery and project space function as diverse and flexible venues promoting the growth and understanding of art through open and varied exchanges. Each space, adjacent to HIAP's office and situated near the island's residency studios, is available for use to current residents as well as the local community.

Photo: Tuomas Laasanen

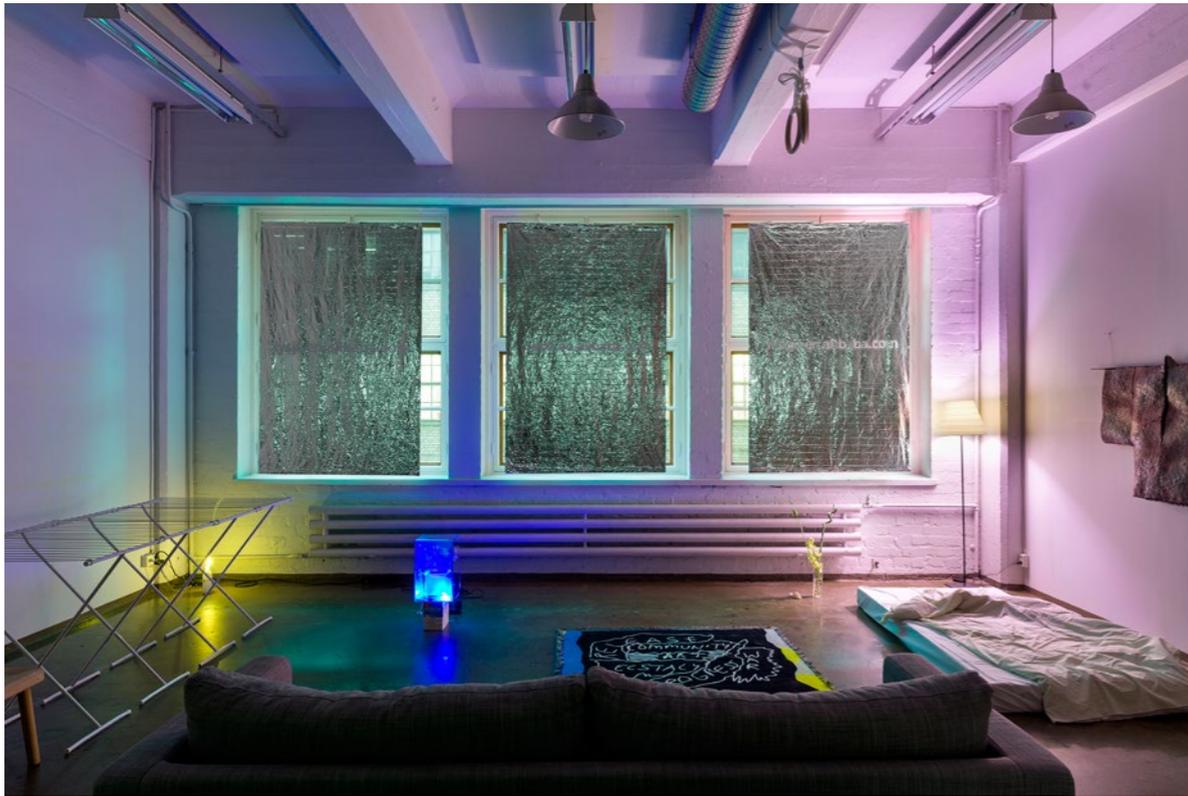


HIAP Suomenlinna Studios & Guest Rooms

HIAP Suomenlinna Studios is a two-story, red brick barracks, originally built in the 18th century. The complex is comprised of nine residential units, five artists' studios and four guest rooms. Studios occupy 80-120 sq metres and are divided between a downstairs work space and a separate loft-style living space.

Each guest room occupies approximately 30 sq metres and can house up to two persons at a time. The guest rooms are mainly offered to artists, curators, writers, researchers and critics from visual arts field.

'HIAP Open Studios' with Elizabet Willing, Summer 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen



HIAP Cable Factory Studios

The Cable Factory, situated on the western waterfront of the city, was used to manufacture cable and telephone equipment by Nokia from 1940 until the mid-1980's. With over five hectares of floor space, Cable Factory is the largest cultural structure in Helsinki. Dozens of studios for artists, architects, designers and musicians, as well as museums, art schools, non-profit organisations, commercial enterprises, dance and publishing companies and other cultural institutions inhabit the complex. The Cable Factory is the daily workplace for over seven hundred professionals in every field of art and creative business.

HIAP Cable Factory Studios are located on the fourth floor of the Cable Factory cultural centre. The three studios, each 60 sq metres, are fully equipped for independent living and working.

JENNA SUTELA & MARTTI KALLIALA, 'Disruption Begins at Home: The Loft', HIAP Cable Factory Studios, 2015.
Photos: Paavo Lehtonen

Residency Programmes 2015

HIAP Residency Programme

HIAP Residency Programme is HIAP's main programme, which has welcomed artists to Helsinki since year 1998. The programme focuses on contemporary art but is open for art professionals from other disciplines as well. Residency includes accommodation and a studio space at HIAP Studios, free of charge, for the duration of one to three months. HIAP provides the artists with residency services and curatorial support. Annual application periods.

Nordic & Baltic Residency Programme

Nordic & Baltic Residency Programme focuses on artists from Nordic & Baltic region. The residency includes accommodation and a studio space at HIAP Studios, travel costs, working grant and a production budget. The programme is supported by the Nordic Culture Point.

HIAP Residency Programme for Finnish Artists

The programme offers residencies in HIAP Suomenlinna for visual artists living in Finland. HIAP Residency Programme for Finnish Artists is supported by Arts Promotion Centre Finland.

Australian Artists Programme

Australia Council for the Arts collaborates with HIAP on a residency programme for Australian artists. The residency includes accommodation and a studio space at HIAP Suomenlinna studios for the duration of three months, as well as a working grant. HIAP provides the artists with residency services and curatorial meetings. Annual application periods.

Helsinki International Curatorial Programme

The programme offers residencies in Helsinki for international curators of contemporary art. The programme is co-organised by HIAP and Frame Contemporary Art Finland. The programme provides the curators with an opportunity to carry out research and to develop international curatorial projects while building contacts with art practitioners and cultural organisations in Finland. Annual application periods.

ARKO Curator Residency Programme

A residency programme which offers Korean curators an opportunity to carry out research and build contacts with art practitioners and cultural organisations in Finland. The programme is funded by ARKO Arts Council Korea.

Design Residencies

HIAP has collaborated with the British Council and Helsinki Design Week starting from 2012, offering UK based practitioners a one month residency in Helsinki coinciding with Helsinki Design Week. The British Council residency is for practitioners, who work at the intersections of art, design and architecture, and who have an interest in critical investigations and interventions into what constitutes design innovation. Annual application periods.

In 2015, HIAP also invited one designer from Germany for a one month residency, in collaboration with Helsinki Design Week.

CUNE Comics-in-Residence Programme

CUNE Programme gives comic artists and other professionals a chance to explore the culture, people, and local comics scene of their neighboring European countries. The programme is organised by the Finnish Comics Society and The Estonian Comics Society. Annual application periods.

The programme is supported by Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme and Eesti Kultuurkapital.

Residency Fellow Programme at the Academy of Fine Arts

The Academy of Fine Arts' Resident Fellow Programme brings together scholars, curators and artists working in the field of contemporary art: to collaborate, think and create. The programme includes two to four residency periods arranged annually. The resident fellows are hosted by HIAP at HIAP Suomenlinna studios. Resident Fellow Programme is supported by Saastamoinen Foundation.

Academy of Fine Arts Studio Space Residency

A one-year long studio space residency for the recent graduates of Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Helsinki. The programme is funded by the The Academy of Fine Arts Foundation.

Translator-in-Residence Programme

HIAP and FILI – Finnish Literature Exchange offer a residency programme for translators of Finnish literature at Suomenlinna. FILI is an expert and export organisation, which supports the translation, printing and publication of literature and promotes the awareness of Finnish literature abroad. Annual application periods.

Dance – Theatre – Performance

HIAP collaborates with several noted organisations and professionals to offer accommodation and premises for performing arts residencies and projects. Collaborators during year 2015 included Kiasma Theatre and Zodiak - Center for New Dance. In 2015, Tomasz Szrama and Liina Kuittinen organised several editions of Tonight, an all-night event focused on performance art.

Residency Exchange Programmes

HIAP has international residency exchange programmes that enable Finnish artists and curators to have residencies abroad, and offer residencies in Finland for artists and curators worldwide. The aim of the exchanges are to offer dialogue, collaboration and networking opportunities, and to foster mutually beneficial cultural interaction between the participating countries and regions. In 2015, HIAP realised residency exchanges with Temple Bar Gallery + Studios (Dublin, Ireland) and Center of Contemporary Art (Tbilisi, Georgia).

Connecting Points

Connecting Points brings the newest generation of young Russian artists to Helsinki. Poetics and politics are essential elements to the practices of those invited to the residency and are interwoven in such a way as to leave space for the rise of imaginative and new interpretations. The original concept (then titled Changing Places) for the programme was developed by curator Marita Muukkonen. In 2014 curator Jenni Nurmenniemi took over the programme responsibilities and it was retitled Connecting Points.

Connecting Points is supported by Ministry of Education and Culture.

Osmosis (2015-2016)

HIAP Osmosis explores new forms of learning and participation. In the framework of Osmosis, HIAP residencies intertwine with the curriculum of several schools and educational institutions, offering learning and networking opportunities for students and researchers. Osmosis approaches education and learning from a multidisciplinary perspective, through visual arts, design and curating.

The programme is supported by the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

Frontiers in Retreat (2013–2018)

Frontiers in Retreat is a research residency platform that fosters multidisciplinary dialogue on ecological issues within a new European network involving artist residencies, art and education organisations, artists, experts in various disciplines, as well as diverse audiences. The aim of the project is to broaden the understanding of global ecological changes and their local impacts on European natural environments by means of contemporary artistic practices and through a multidisciplinary approach.

23 artists have been invited from across Europe for research residencies in the centres run by the partners of the project. Their sites, recognised as frontiers, are approached as resonant of the entwined geopolitical and socio-economic processes. During the project, the artists will move within the residency network, research the particular ecological contexts of the sites, initiate knowledge exchange between diverse disciplines in incubator workshops, and develop new artworks. The activities undertaken by HIAP are curated by Jenni Nurmenniemi.

The project is coordinated by HIAP with the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union. The project connects artist resi-

dency centers located in “remote” areas across Europe in order to provide a unique, transnational platform for investigating local and global ecological concerns. Frontiers in Retreat is realised by seven artist residency organisations in Finland, Iceland, Scotland, Latvia, Serbia, and Spain in collaboration with a Lithuanian art organisation that will develop the educational programme of the project.

The project has been funded with support from the European Commission, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Kone Foundation and the Alfred Kordelin Foundation.

Nordic Fresh Air (2014–2016)

Nordic Fresh Air is a Nordic-Baltic network working for freedom of artistic expression in times of increasing censorship and repression of artists. It organises temporary residencies for artists and art professionals, who are forced to leave their home for political reasons. The programme in Finland is co-ordinated by HIAP, Perpetuum Mobile and Cooperative Buongiorno. The partners in Nordic and Baltic countries are MoKS (Estonia), Art Lab Gnesta (Sweden), Malmö City (Sweden), The Swedish Artists Organisation KRO, SafeMUSE (Norway), KiN Contemporary Art Centres in Norway and Freemuse (Denmark).

The network is funded by Nordic Culture Point and Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland.

The full list of HIAP Programme Partners and Collaborators in 2015 can be found on page 170.



THE BODYBUILDING PROJECT, A Non-Conclusion, Suomenlinna Island, Aug 19, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

RESIDENCIES

Jaroslav Andel: Interview

Curator Jaroslav Andel (based between Prague and NYC) did a one-week curator residency at HIAP in the context of HIAP Osmosis Programme. Andel is currently working on a traveling exhibition dealing with the theme Radical Pedagogy. This exhibition series also aims to provide a platform for a network of people and organisations to have a dialogue on this topic over the next few years.

Can you say a few words about how you understand Radical Pedagogy and why you chose this theme for the exhibition?

I approach the topic of *Radical Pedagogy* in a broader sense than it's usually understood - it's usually associated with the writings of Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire. My approach is that we need to question the fundamental premises of the modern system of education, as we currently know it. The reason for this is that I have recently organised a series of exhibitions addressing the major current challenges to democracy. And step-by-step, I realised that education is perhaps the main key to tackling the current prob-

lems. This is because education is the field where the society reproduces itself on individual and collective levels. It thus impacts everything else, and thus deserves much more attention and understanding. Therefore I made a decision that I would work on this topic on a longer-term basis, using various institutional forms and platforms. We face challenges that are genuinely new to us. We cannot deal with these new challenges by relying just on traditional means, i.e. without developing new tools and institutional forms. One of the goals of the project is to create a network of people and organisations from different fields who would collaborate in a more fundamental way than just producing exhibitions. We live in a world, which is more specialized, and at the same time more interconnected than ever before. To deal with this complexity and address the root causes of the current challenges, we have to reach beyond the boundaries of individual expert cultures and share and collaborate much more than we are used to.

You recently had a short curator residency at HIAP. Were there some key findings on this visit to Finland that you could mention?

Finland is of course known as the country with possibly the best education system - this is at least the way this education system has often been described in international media. The impression that I got during my visit, based on the meetings I had, is that people in Finland really care about education. And this is perhaps the primary reason why the system is successful. On the other hand I could see that there are also some serious problems, and that these are of structural nature. And this seems to confirm the premise I had, which is that there is a need to deal with the structural problems, which are similar around the world.

Jaroslav Andel's interview was conducted by Juha Huuskonen, Director of HIAP. The first exhibition related to Jaroslav's project on education opened in Reykjavik Art Museum on January, 2016.



Jaroslav Andel at 'HIAP Morning Coffee - Radical Pedagogy?', HIAP Gallery Augusta, Sep 30, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

Paola Anziché: *Into Lapin Raanu*

During my residency at HIAP, I was interested in exploring Finnish weaving history and its origins, since I knew how relevant weaving was in the cultural history of Finland. I was quite surprised as, little by little, I found out that most of the female artists who were only considered as ‘textile artists’ are mostly forgotten nowadays, and whenever I was inquiring information about Finnish weaving techniques, people in Helsinki didn’t seem to know that much about it. The reaction always seemed to be the same: “oh...that is a handcraft, it has nothing do with art.”

In recent years, there has been a general reconsideration of the interesting and lively exchanges about creativity between the innovative works developed by several generations of ‘textile artists’ (from the time of the Deutscher Werkbund and the Bauhaus school) until more recent artists’ success. Many fundamental questions regarding craftsmanship versus mass production, or usefulness versus formal beauty in a commonplace objects, have been touched upon. Subsequently, a different understanding and appreciation have been developed towards such innovative artists who have consistently experimented with both traditional and industrialized weaving techniques, redefining what textile art could be.

Also, the weaved carpets *Raanu* that I found the most interesting are a fascinating example of an abstract and non-figurative art as they reminded me of the nomadic carpets from the natives of North America. My intuition proved

to be right; I found out that the origins of the raanu are nomadic and come from the Sámi people, Finland’s indigenous people, who have been living nomadically long before the Finnish State was established. Raanu is an old woolen textile from the 16th and 17th century that was used as a blanket, a tablecloth or a curtain, mostly on the western coast of Finland. Its use as a blanket proved to be very important because of the cold climate and leaky houses. *Lapin raanu* in its original form is a simple textile with the natural color of wool and no patterns. The Sámi people also used to wrap themselves in raanus to keep warm.

Specifically, I focused my interest on Elsa Montell-Saanio who developed the modern Lapin raanu that became popular in the 70s. Currently, a major public collection of her work is absent from museums while private collectors collect most of it. No retrospective show of her work has been organized and very little writing about her work *Arktinen horisontti* has been published, with the exception of a small publication (containing poetic texts).

As I consider her textile work to be an incredible synthesis of several sources and influences, coming both from the natural world as well as from the cultural milieu of that time, I decided to compose all the selected materials I managed to find in a table composition – titled *Into Lapin raanu*. To me this is a starting point for a future investigation and a research trip that I would like to take in the Lapland region of Finland.



Boshko Boskovic & Jenni Nurmenniemi: *Learning by Retreating* – Two Curators on an Exchange

Two international artist residency centers formed the settings for one of the first interactions organized between New York and Helsinki via the Mobius program.

In recent years, not only have the artist-in-residence programs increased in number but also their role has become more and more significant in the production, distribution, and communication of contemporary art and artistic research in the globalized art world. Residencies also play an important part in many curators' work. Through their Mobius fellowships, Boshko Boskovic, the Program Director of Brooklyn based Residency Unlimited, and Jenni Nurmenniemi, the Curator of HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme, were able to undertake work exchange periods at each other's organization tailored with the support of the Finnish Cultural Institute in New York. This short dialogue between the two curators aims to articulate their experiences of this exchange.

Gaining insight into completely new cultural context by retreating from one's everyday environment, professional routines and responsibilities was the main mutually set goal for the

curatorial residencies. Each fellow took their personal curatorial approach to another, unfamiliar context while absorbing fresh ideas and ways of working from their new surroundings and residency communities.

Besides getting to know their host organizations closely, both curators realized their own productions in New York and Helsinki. In January 2015 at HIAP Gallery Augusta, Boskovic curated an exhibition utilizing the collections and archive material of the Finnish Museum of Photography, with several new works commissioned from artists living and working either in Helsinki or in New York. For her part, Nurmenniemi curated a one night site-specific performative installation at the premises of Residency Unlimited in April 2015. The two projects were well-received and got direct continuation after the residency periods. A version of the exhibition *Interpreting the Frame*, curated by Boskovic, migrated to the Finnish Museum of Photography in Helsinki while the second episode of Nurmenniemi's *Deep Time Séance* event [was] re-staged at Kiasma Theatre in Helsinki in October 2015.



Curators Boshko Boskovic and Jenni Nurmenniemi at 'Interpreting the Frame' opening. Photo: Tuomas Laasanen

The following dialogue between Boskovic and Nurmenniemi aims to open up how they conducted their respective residencies at HIAP in Helsinki and Residency Unlimited in New York.

Boshko: Jenni, let's start with saying that your residency in New York was two-folded: one part was to curate and to produce your event, *Deep Time Séance* and the other to further your research on artists that foster multidisciplinary dialogue on ecological questions. Were there enough hours in a day to

juggle the two while discovering New York at the same time?

J: I would say that quite a bit of juggling was indeed needed in order to advance my main project at home, *Frontiers in Retreat*, which aims to create new thinking around ecology through contemporary art, while at the same time producing a kind of event that I had never curated before in a completely unfamiliar environment. Also, part of my residency was dedicated to meeting the resident artists and curators at Residency Unlimited and to learn

from how you organize your program. All this resulted in a quite intense but invigorating two months.

B: While in residency, you had the opportunity to make studio visits with all the international artists in residency at Residency Unlimited, which at the time totaled 14. What was the most valuable thing that you got from these dialogues and are there any projects on the horizon that materialized from these encounters?

J: It was unbelievably valuable



'Interpreting the Frame', HIAP Gallery Augusta, Jan 30 – Feb 2, 2015. Photo: Juuso Noronkoski.

to get to meet all the artists at RU. Many of them were working on themes relevant to my ongoing work, which aims toward rethinking 'ecology' and the meetings resulted in not only exciting discussions but also in concrete plans for future collaborations. At the moment, there are two artist residencies, two curatorial residencies and one exhibition in the planning for 2016 – all these are direct outcomes from the meetings arranged by RU.

B: A residency is a temporal affair and supposed to be a time

when one retrieves from the day-to-day operations. How did you structure your time in New York and were you able to "disconnect" from your duties at HIAP? I am asking this question since while I was in Helsinki during my residency, I had to carve a bit of time for my professional duties with my organization, which is a testament to the connectivity driven world that we are currently all experiencing.

J: During the first weeks in New York, I was working quite closely on my projects at HIAP.

However, I had tried to advance them as much as possible prior to my departure, so that I could be able to properly disconnect and attune myself into my new environment for two months. It is not such a long time to be away, after all. However, as you mentioned, in today's constantly connected cultural landscape, it is nearly impossible to disconnect yourself completely. Thus, I stayed in touch with many of the people I am working with, the axis spanning from West Africa to Kainuu, Finland. I think I was able to find a nice balance be-



'Deep Time Séance', Residency Unlimited, New York, Aug 8, 2015. Photo: Residency Unlimited

tween my various projects and to gain the much-needed distance from my regular ways of working at home. Every now and then I notice with HIAP residents that they seem continuously occupied with their other projects taking place elsewhere to the extent that in the end they don't learn that much about their current place of residence.

B: You worked with three Finnish artists for your *Deep Time Séance* project: Tuomas A. Laitinen, Matti Ahopelto and Jaakko Pallasvuo. Two out of the

three were not present. How did this impact your choices and did the final outcome differ from how you planned it or imagined it?

J: The choice of these three artists that I had recently been working with in Finland was based on my discomfort with the idea of landing in New York and having to curate a public event without any experience of the local cultural ecology or dialogue with local artists just within 7 weeks time. I wanted to use the opportunity to create a completely unique,

hard-to-categorize type of situation for RU's amazing space, with artists that I have a close dialogue with and whose ways of working I am particularly excited about.

Two of these artists' contributions were planned in a way that did not require their physical presence. To be more concrete, with Pallasvuo, the whole idea was to transmit energies through his miniature sculptures, *Energy Objects*. In Laitinen's case, the fact that his friend and trusted collaborator, musician Matti Ahopelto was

present for the whole week of the event, made the whole performative installation possible. Their artwork was based on the seamless combination of Laitinen's animated imagery and Ahopelto's ambient drone music. In order to bring another type of presence to the situation, I invited New York based artist-physicist Tatiana Istomina (who I first met through your Mobius exhibition project!) to share stories related to the subjective yet shared ecological anxieties that sort of sparked the whole séance to begin with.

B: What are the similarities and differences that you observed regarding how our respective residency programs, HIAP and Residency Unlimited function and operate?

J: Comparing the two programs that operate with equal volumes but in radically different cities, I would say that RU is based on more structured networking, whereas things at HIAP tend to develop more organically. HIAP has only grown this big in the past five years, so I think I gained a lot of ideas how to further develop our networking and interlinking aspects as well as the planning and timing of public events. RU is extremely efficient in managing the huge number of residencies spread out in studios all across Brooklyn and Queens.

B: You were in New York during the art fair week where fairs such as the Armory Show, Independent, Spring Break Show and Moving Image, to name a few, took place. What was your

impression of seeing artworks in these circumstances?

J: From the fairs that you mentioned, Independent seemed the most fresh and intriguing to me, there I actually had the rare sensation of being surprised. I loved that. However, instead of fairs and biennials, I generally prefer a bit less buzzing set up when looking at art.

To me the most fun part was probably to get to see a few New York collectors' homes and their passion for living with art. All in all, the art fair week gave a nice kick-start to my New York spring. The rest of the time I could then enjoy more quiet seminars, panels, and talks as well as gallery tours and museum visits.

B: What are the things that you did not manage to do in New York and wish you had?

J: Well, I really wish I had experienced the hot New York Summer! I left when the cherry trees were in bloom.

Jenni: Could you describe briefly how you formulated your project idea? What were the key thoughts and motivations behind the concept? Why did it take this form? What kind of process was it?

B: The idea started from the desire to work with a group of Finnish artists who all have a photo based practice in one way or another. I also wanted to commission them to create new work for the exhibition

that I was conceiving. I needed a framework where the artists reacted to something in order to produce new work. When I visited Helsinki for the first time I fell in love with the Finnish Museum of Photography and their rich collection. Through conversations with Ilari Laamanen from the Finnish Cultural Institute in New York it became apparent that we could approach the museum and propose to work with their collection for the exhibition that I had in mind. Sofia Lahti, the curator of the collection of the Finnish Museum of Photography was very receptive to the idea that the five Finnish artists (Jonna Kina, Liinu Grönlund, Tanja Koljonen, Juuso Noronkoski and Mikko Rikala) could conduct research on their collection.

The process was two-fold – I had to study the collection myself first and then assign artists to particular collections from which they did their own homework and used it as an inspiration to create new works.

J: On temporality: you were able to divide your residency into two parts. Could you elaborate on the reasons for this, and what kinds of implications this had for your Mobius experience?

B: The first reason was a purely practical one since I was not able to take off from my work for 4–6 weeks in one go, so I had to divide it into two visits. This turned out to be a great thing for the project since it allowed much more time for

research, dialogue and production. The implications for my Mobius experience were purely positive since I could stretch my residency experience, so to speak, into a period of 7 months rather than condensing it into a 1 or 2 month residency. My first trip was in June 2014 when I did research at the Finnish Museum of Photography and had meetings with all the Finnish artists and HIAP staff. Then I had a period of 6 months in New York where I had fruitful conversations with the artists, obviously not for the entire 6 months, but periods of time, when we were discussing their research of the photo collection, what they would like to do, how they would present the works, discussing the publication, writing an essay about the exhibition, etc. I sort of continued the residency period at home, which was a fantastic thing and the luxury of having all this time and support from the Mobius program to dedicate to one project.

J: How did things work out in practice with the group of artists and so many institutional partners involved in your project: Finnish Cultural Institute, HIAP and The Finnish Museum of Photography?

B: It seems like a lot: five artists from Helsinki, two from New York, several institutions and a graphic designer, but because we had this time of nearly seven months to prepare, everything went very smoothly and the process was really a pleasurable experience. I have to add that the Finnish Cultural Insti-

tute in New York, which runs the Mobius program, had complete trust in me, which made things very easy on my side. We had regular meetings every few months where I briefed them on my progress so everyone knew where I was at any given point in time.

J: How did you feel about entering a new cultural scene (of Helsinki) that you had little previous knowledge about beforehand?

B: Well, I have to say that I had visited Helsinki once before, just for a few days, so I had some knowledge, but definitely not a vast one. This was a great opportunity to deepen this knowledge and get to understand the scene better. I was very happy that I was able to visit places outside of Helsinki such as the annual Art Festival and the new Serlachius Art Museum in Mänttä.

J: How do the ways of organizing residency programs at HIAP differ from RU, and what would you consider as similarities?

B: The biggest difference between the two programs is that HIAP is more of a centralized entity, your gallery space, the studios and housing are all on the island of Suomenlinna with three studios at Cable Factory, whereas RU has one central location in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, studios in several locations throughout Brooklyn and Manhattan and housing throughout the city of New York. In terms of programs

and how we schedule residents throughout the year I feel that the two programs are somewhat similar.

J: What kinds of long-term consequences do you think there are of your participation in this curatorial residency exchange?

B: I think I have created long lasting relationships with many Finnish artists and colleagues from institutions in Helsinki. I feel that my knowledge of the Finnish contemporary art scene has been broadened and I have created many more friendships in Finland altogether.

J: Now after some time, what would you consider as the most important outcome of your Mobius fellowship?

B: Probably the most important outcome for me was the long-term process of creating one exhibition and the beautiful publication designed by the talented Karolina Konieczna.

J: If you could, would you do something differently?

B: I would have somehow found a way for all the artists to be able to work with the collection of the Finnish Museum of Photography. In our case the two New York artists worked with other archival collections.

This article was originally featured on m0bius.net, the online archive of the Mobius Fellowship Program in August 2015.

Jasper Bruijns: (dis)Connect

We live in an individualistic culture. If we look at the numbers we can say that the urban places are the hotspots of loneliness. The urban locations offer endless possibilities, which in return can shape our personal prisons. Therein lies a contradiction; we strive to make real connections but so often we tend to avoid it.

(dis)Connect is based on a research on how people interact with each other. Recent results show that one out of three people in Western and Northern Europe feel isolated from time to time. What is causing this, can we recognise it in our own behaviour, and more importantly, what does this disconnection look like?

After making the film *Welterusten* in 2014, I asked myself: is there a way to get more out of the observational visual style concerning the thematic of my work? Loneliness, urbanisation and social behaviours were the starting point of the installation *(dis)Connect*, shaped at the intersection of film and photography. I was interested in making an installation that shows short moments in time through cinematic approach. These moments create insight into how disconnection looks like in our daily lives.

I wondered whether this disconnection is visible in all aspects of our lives such as entertainment, social media, relaxation, traveling and communication etc. This research resulted in many short observations in the public domain, both physical and virtual, and showed that the disconnection we share can be found within all of these aspects. Why is that? I believe it has something to do with the societal laws and the social roles we play. We teach ourselves different behavioural rules, which differ from every social role we portray. In traffic, we tend to behave differently from how we behave when we are at

the dentist's for example. These roles are strict and therefore do not allow a lot of room for self-expression within those social parameters.

We as humans do not enjoy being alone. Humans are social animals. People simply attract other people. Independence is highly valued in Western and Northern Europe, where people as individuals are responsible for their own happiness and wellbeing. This can be great but for some individualism can have a huge downside as well. These days we still like to be aware of other people but we don't easily take the effort to connect to each other. So basically we try to create the idea that we are not alone.

The collecting of observations, which move between the borders of film and photography, plays a lot with the element of time. Some observations are very subtle and others a bit more aggressive. I needed to create a space between them so that one will not overrule the other. HIAP Gallery Augusta offered that possibility, where the tranquillity of the space could ask for the required concentration of the viewer.

I worked in a non-narrated manner. The observations needed to be quite large in size because of the installation's subtle ways of communication and its cinematic backgrounds. The gallery space was transformed into a 'walk-in' photo booth, drawing many influences from the cinema. The people and the surroundings of the observations had to be presented in a way that the viewer would slowly get sucked into it.

With his short film Welterusten (Goodnight) Jasper Bruijns won the TENT Academy Award 2014 for best video art from graduating students as well as the Open Public Award. This granted him a two-month award residency at HIAP in February–March 2015.



JASPER BRUIJNS, '(dis)Connect',
HIAP Gallery Augusta, Mar 6–19, 2015.

Juhyun Choi: *Engravings*



JUHYUN CHOI, *Troll*, 2015

My engravings were inspired by Suomenlinna, where I spent one month in artist residency. From this old sea fortress, everyday I could see big ferries, while tunnels and caves made out of stones carved the layers of time. I wanted to create a relation between the place where I stood and the materials on which I engrave images.

I was especially interested in the wood and the tree – an ambivalent being that lives in two worlds: under ground and in the air, past and present. It is sedentary when alive and it travels when transformed into a boat. These woodcuts are, in a certain way, digging in the roots of the place where I had lived, thus forever carving the memories.



JUHYUN CHOI, *Winter and Summer*, 2015

Teresa Dillon: *Urban Hut*

I was selected for the HIAP, British Council and Helsinki Design Week Residency, 2015. The residency provided the means to kick-start the *Urban Hut* project, which looks at creating a free-to-use Urban Hut for Helsinki city-centre. It draws on existing traditions such as the Finnish Wilderness Huts, which are promoted by *nationalparks.fi* and provide people with basic shelter, while they enjoy areas of “natural” beauty.

Another similar structure is the Bothy, which can be found in Scotland and other parts of the UK. Traditionally Bothies were used by farm labourers as overnight places to stay, while tending large estates. Now the Mountain Bothy Association, which is a volunteer network, maintains these cottages so that people can rest in them while hiking or traveling across the country. I see Wilderness Huts and Bothies as special spaces where we relax, contemplate and enjoy the landscape. They are also examples of free, shared resources, shelters, which over time, we collectively care for and maintain so that everyone can use them. In this way they are examples of commoning a term, which is used to describe the social relationships that are at the heart of creating something, which we share and which belongs to all of us. Yet when it comes to creating such resources in our urban spaces, collective use and care are often met with skepticism.

Additionally although the idea itself – to transpose the Wilderness Hut into the city by creating a free-to-use hut – might seem quite simple, when you get down to it there are several “hard” issues to address. For example, land ownership and rights in the city, assumptions



TERESA DILLON, *Urban Hut Helsinki*, 2015

we have around urban space and its uses, protection, care and responsibility of city resources, accessibility and permission and what it means to develop an urban commons, to name but a few! This is where artistic, aesthetic, communication and design choices come into play and the residency provided the time to begin to work on these elements of the project. This involved selecting sites across the city and mapping them over 24 hours. I also held a workshop



Teresa Dillon at ‘Urban Hut Talk’ during Helsinki Design Week 2015.
© Aino Salmi / Archinfo

at DEMOS, Helsinki with members of the city council and other potential collaborators and partners, which was really useful and led to further understanding the realities of how this could work.

As Wilderness Huts are commonly used in Finland, the basic concept in some ways is already familiar. Also Helsinki’s *Sompasauna* shares some of the same sentiments as the Urban Hut, in that it is free-to-use and collectively managed. Such local examples help when developing projects like the Urban Hut, although it does not mean they happen overnight! During the residency it was helpful to work with the artist Jaakko Myyri, who was an intern at HIAP. Jaakko really got into the idea and assisted with the documentation. During Helsinki Design Week, I gave a talk along with the designer Tuomo Tammenpää and architect Anssi Lassila from OOOPEAA as part of the programme, which the

Museum of Finnish Architecture hosted. The Museum has agreed to further support the project and I am now working with Tuomo on how the community service and associated booking and reservation aspects of the website will work. I am also working on the community elements, which will focus on working at a local scale with the people, who live in the neighborhood in which the hut will be placed.

So for now, the project continues beyond the residency period but still requires further backing to make it happen. The aim still remains the same, which is to create a beautifully crafted, fun and useable, free resource, which fosters a spirit of welcoming and care and encourages us to rethink how we can live and develop shared resources in our cities.

polarproduce.org

Branislav Dimitrijević: Interview

Branislav Dimitrijević (b.1967), Professor of History and Theory of Art at School for Art and Design (VŠLPU) in Belgrade, is a specialist in art and film in socialist Yugoslavia and also regularly writes on relations of contemporary artistic practices and socio-political issues. Dimitrijević has been active as a curator and his projects include large contemporary art exhibitions. He kindly told us about the projects he's been working on during his stay.



Branislav Dimitrijević at 'Free Cinema Yugoslavia' event, HIAP Suomenlinna Studios, December 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

You've been in Helsinki for over a month at HIAP residency in Suomenlinna. Can you tell us about the project you've been working with?

Thanks to the grant from the Saastamoinen foundation, I felt privileged to make use of the Suomenlinna seclusion to finish some writing. The conditions of calm and tranquility on the island allowed me something which is otherwise quite difficult in normal working relations when one cannot fully dedicate to the process of writing which is, along with lecturing, my primary activity now.

As a curator I find Finland and Finnish art scene always inspiring. I already know many artists but there are many interesting things going on which I have become acquainted with just recently. Here in a residency I was also mostly surrounded by artists, and by being a non-artist in such a context I contributed to "open studio" event and otherwise very dynamic HIAP programme.

And there was a movie night, too...

In late November and early December 2015, I organised an ad-hoc, or "makeshift" event 'Free Cinema Yugoslavia' in my studio where I screened some films from the Yugoslav cinematography of the 1960s and 1970s, which is in my opinion still relevant today as an impetus to think, discuss and share knowledge about alternatives to dominating cultural and political hegemonies. The selected films have in common an attempt to highlight and reflect the relation between radical



'Free Cinema Yugoslavia' event, HIAP Suomenlinna Studios, December 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

politics, avant-garde art and alternative tactics of everyday life. Also, the cultural production and social agenda of the Yugoslav socialism has been my primary field of research, and the books I am writing are related to that.

In your opinion, what are the advantages for a curator/artist to travel and work abroad? What is it about getting away that you personally enjoy the most?

For artists and curators, as well as for artists-curators (the kind of operator which is becoming more frequent) it is essential not just to travel abroad, just to see, record and touch some

different locality, like a tourist, but to actually spend some time in that locality. I think that a very important experience emerges out of this condition of a changed living and working encounter. Getting away, as you put it, for me means to challenge my own perspectives but also to re-confirm something that is common for all of us.

What does your typical workday look like? How have you divided your time during your residency between working intensively and getting to know the local art community?

What is primarily important for my work at the moment is

to reach a "disciplined" working seclusion, as this is something I have practically never experienced in my, now 30 years long involvement with art, and something that I find impossible in my hometown. This is for me precious.

However, it was a relative seclusion as I was regularly meeting colleagues and artists in Suomenlinna, and also students from Academy of Fine Arts with some seminars and talks with students. I was meeting colleagues from different departments and I learned about local educational practices, which is quite important for my regular teaching work. Frankly, I am not a "monastic" type so I cannot stand being



'Free Cinema Yugoslavia' event, HIAP Suomenlinna Studios, December 2015.

Photo: Salla Lahtinen

isolated for a long time. In a nutshell, I find Helsinki a very interesting place. I enjoyed talking with people there and exploring similarities and differences in our backgrounds and opinions. I have also conducted a small research about the conceptual art scene here in the 1970s.

Your curatorial interest evolves around site-specificity. Are the locations where you work of any importance to your work's outcome?

As I tried to explain, the seclusion of Suomenlinna was for me very site-specific in relation

to my normal working environment, so it is not any place, it is a very specific place where you both have a sense of isolation, which is good for writing, and the sense of connectedness with Helsinki, which is just 15 minutes away by ferry.

The "physical narratives" of a place are always something that keeps me engaged. I am interested for example how the historical narrative is inscribed and presented in Suomenlinna, which is both a tourist attraction and a residential area. I am involved in issues of the "politics of remembrance" in my own country so it was interesting to explore how some

traumatic historical events (like the Finish civil war) are represented or not-represented on a site like this.

One of your research interests have been consumerism and popular culture in socialist Yugoslavia. Can you tell something about the topic?

It was quite a vibrant and interesting culture. Generally, I oppose the usual dichotomy when culture in socialist Yugoslavia is analysed between the so called "official" and "dissident" culture. It was much more complex than that.



Branislav Dimitrijević at 'Free Cinema Yugoslavia' event, HIAP Suomenlinna Studios, December 2015.

Photo: Salla Lahtinen

You are particularly interested in film production of the 1960s and 1970s.

Yes, it gave some remarkable results, but I'm interested also in other kinds of art production. Basically, I am interested in conditions of production of art in that period, which seem rather remarkable in comparison with the post-socialist crisis. My research is interdisciplinary and it involves visual theory as well as cultural and social theory and some limited understanding of economy.

And, yes, consumerism... This is for me on one hand, a very dull issue and on the other, a

crucial matter for understanding both the crisis of socialism in Yugoslavia and the crisis of the social-democracies in the west. Consumer culture is a powerful tool for replacing imagination with fantasy, and therefore for creating a world which is driven solely by private interests. I am intrigued by the psycho-social genealogy of this cultural logic.

What kind of advice would you give to a young artist going on a residency, perhaps for the first time?

Go there. Keep an open mind. Think about it... But, in general the only advice I tend to

give to young artists is something that I have learned from the artist Adrian Paci who said that he finally became an artist when he stopped being so concentrated upon himself and when he let the others and his immediate surrounding inside his work.

This interview was originally featured on Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Helsinki's website uniarts.fi.

Branislav Dimitrijević was invited by the Residency Fellow Programme at the Academy of Fine Arts funded by the Saastamoinen Foundation. Residency is implemented in co-operation with HIAP.



Anne Ferran

Anne Ferran was born in Sydney, Australia, where she lives and works. She was Associate Professor at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney until 2013.

Anne's recent photographic work is in collaboration with dancers, drawing on their ability to register and transmit subtle qualities in their surroundings. Performances for the camera can involve one, two or three dancers who improvise with lengths of coloured felt, the shifting shapes of the felt serving to amplify energetic forces that the camera records. During her residency at HIAP, Anne produced a new series of photographs in collaboration with Finnish dancer Ervi Siren.

Initially Anne saw this as a stand-alone project, separate from her concurrent research into Suomenlinna's prison camp period, and the Civil War generally. However, by the end of the residency connections were apparent. They began with the introduction of red and white to the colour range of the felt lengths the dancer was working with. Though there was no intention to symbolise the warring sides in the Civil War, those associations were apparent. Even more important was the way the collaboration with the dancer played out in this context; Ervi's depth of experience and her mature female dancer's body made it possible for the photos to resonate in complex ways with a still-troubling historical conflict. This was an important development, particularly since Anne's intention for the residency had been to develop "new" (meaning non-archive-based) ways of working with past events and contexts.



1. ANNE FERRAN, *Occupation*, 2015-2016
2. ANNE FERRAN, *Reprisal*, 2015-2016

Renée Green: Interview

An artist, filmmaker and writer Renée Green spent the month of August in Suomenlinna. In Finland she continued working with the film-project "Considering Cinematic Migrations – An Ongoing Research Project". In relation to this project she gave a seminar at HIAP Gallery Augusta, Suomenlinna. In this interview Green summed up her thoughts about the stay as well as artist residencies in general.

What advantages are there for an artist to travel and work abroad?

The title of my book of selected writings is *Other Planes of There*, so yes, I do think that for an artists to be exposed to a vast array of experiences and impressions is important. These might, or might not, involve travel, but most of my practice and thought is engaged with issues of translation, and for that, I had to travel.

How do you divide your time during residencies between working intensively and getting to know the local art community?

It is a combination of both. In this residency I continued gathering materials for a film project I initiated back in 2010 through the Contemporary Art Archipelago invitation. I also read and wrote. I did also engage with artists and thinkers I've been able to meet through the years. And then, I found the seminar hosted by the Academy of Fine Arts in Suomenlinna to be stimulating and a way to engage with others living in Helsinki involved in art and thought.

Last time you visited the Academy of Fine Arts in 2012 you gave a lecture in the

Wednesday Lecture series where you told that you have been filming in Turku Archipelago. Was there a special reason for you to be back in Finland for a residency?

One of the constants of my life and work has been the idea of returns: to locations, to ideas, to experiences. This was my fifth time in Finland, and I have to thank the Academy of Fine Arts for its sustained interest in engaging with my work, as it is the Academy's interest and kind invitations that have prompted these last visits.

During this visit you stayed and worked in the spaces of HIAP in Suomenlinna. Will the island be featured in your upcoming works?

The process of producing a film is a circuitous one. In my last film, *Begin Again, Begin Again*, some materials shot in Finland and even Suomenlinna were already used, no matter if their affiliation with their particular location was erased, coded. It is challenging to predict what will come out of the materials I've been gathering so far, but most likely they will make their way into new productions, which I hope one day to share with you.

This interview was originally featured on Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Helsinki's website uni-arts.fi. Renée Green was invited by the Residency Fellow Programme at the Academy of Fine Arts funded by the Saastamoinen Foundation. Residency is implemented in co-operation with HIAP.



Seminar with Renée Green, HIAP Gallery Augusta, Aug 26, 2015. Photos: Salla Lahtinen

Hanna Husberg

I arrived to Ireland after a two-week research trip to the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard. During those two weeks the sun hadn't set, and at those latitudes it wouldn't yet do so in the months to come. The flight to Dublin took me over vast expanses of open sea to the emerald isle, famously green even through the winter months, due to its mild climate and frequent rains. I had been invited to spend two months at Temple Bar Gallery and Studios in the heart of Dublin, and was also lucky enough to be hosted at the St. Patrick's lodge located inside the park with the national cathedral.

My intention for the residency had been to use the time allocated to go through the material collected in the Arctic, and to conduct more in-depth research in view of developing a film essay. Taking Svalbard, a former no man's land, as a starting point, would inquire into how the melting water of the Arctic is (in)visibly transforming distant countries, and influencing the socio-economical as well as the territorial realities of these locations. In travelling to Ireland I was interested in how the embodied experience of yet another island, with all its peculiarities, could provide a filter for creating a relationship to the subject of my research.

One connection between the two places soon became evident in clouds. The Irish weather was particularly consistent; 18°C, clouds with spells of rain and sun. On Svalbard, clouds were the main factor creating changes at latitude where the sun doesn't set for four months. The materiality of clouds and the transmissions and transformations they perform, whether



HANNA HUSBERG, *The World Indoors*, detail of the installation 2015

physical, biological, chemical, digital or other, became the main figure in *In the Vast Ocean of Air*, an installation I have since developed, consisting of five neon signs and a film. While I hadn't finished the project during my residency, some of the key decisions on how to approach it were taken during this time.

Instead, I spent an important part of the residency developing another installation *The world indoors* for an exhibition on "vulnerability", *The Baltic House Lab in 2015* in Gdansk (to be shown at the Rauma Biennale Balticum this summer).

The installation consists of three types of tropical houseplants – the areca palm, the mother-in-law's tongue and the money plant – in a combination designed to produce 'ideal' air conditions, together with a looped video on a monitor. Bringing up questions of material exchanges taking place through air and how we come to notice them, the installation addresses humanity's entanglement with a world made of and animated by the trajectories of things, beings and entities.

The residency at Temple Bar Studios and

Gallery provided me good conditions for fully focusing on doing research and producing new work and also allowed me to familiarize with the Irish art scene. The studio at TBS&G was very comfortable and the workspace was a good platform for meeting other artists. The staff was also very helpful in introducing me to the local art scene, and put me in contact with some Irish curators. I also organized a film screening of *The Free Sea*, a work produced at HIAP a year earlier, which was followed by a lively discussion.

Angela Jerardi

While in residency in Bergen, in November 2014, I began research as a first strand of a long-term project. This research derived from an interest in *every man's right* (which regulates public foraging of wild foods in Norway, Sweden, and Finland) and its relationship specifically to food security, migration and human notions of time. Following on this, through the support of HIAP and Frame, I was in residence in Helsinki in August 2015 to continue this work. While there, this research trajectory deepened, taking the narrative of the wild blueberry bush as a means to explore an interconnected web of social phenomena including: multispecies ethnography, human and plant migration, regulatory language, commodity chains, seasonal labor, and more broadly, the contingency of knowledge. My stay in Helsinki culminated with a presentation of a performance lecture based on these ideas at Galleri Sinne, Helsinki.

During my HIAP/Frame residency, I learned about Kulturkontakt Nord and its support of projects spanning across the Nordic region. I was thrilled to then receive a pre-project grant from its Arts and Culture Programme earlier this year, which has supported my continued activities. This grant will support trips for studio visits with a number of Nordic-based artists and to visit colleagues and peers working at contemporary art spaces in Bergen, Helsinki, and Stockholm. This funding also supports my research and writing, giving me time to further synthesize these ideas into a cohesive research trajectory. It will also allow for site visits to research centers such as the International Laboratory of Plant Neurobiology in Florence and



the department of Geography and Economic History at Umeå University, among others.

Drawing on Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's understanding of multinatural perspectivism and Anna L. Tsing's notion of salvage accumulation, I am curious about the intertwined cultures of plants and humans, the means through which humans engage with plants using paradigms of supply chains, resource extraction, regulation, and security, in juxtaposition to our nascent study of plant intelligence as it relates to the uniqueness of plants' "sessile life style", of living literally rooted in place.

Contingent on funding and support, I hope to develop this research into a multi-faceted series of itinerant public programs, including exhibitions and performances, in these three Nordic cities in 2017. My proposed resulting project, *Characters in a forest telling stories musically* takes the musical form of fugue as a metaphor and example for polyphonic curating and as a means for us to sense our entangled nature cultures.



'MEET THE CURATOR: Angela Jerardi & Yasmira Reggad', Sinne, Helsinki, Aug 25, 2015. Photos: HIAP

Alevtina Kakhidze

Text Jenni Nurmenniemi

Alevtina Kakhidze, resident artist in the *Connecting Points* programme in Summer 2015 born in Eastern Ukraine, inherited the Georgian surname from her father and was raised within Russian culture, in the artist's words "in its Soviet incarnation". Having lived in Kiev and in Muzychi, Central Ukraine since 1995, with a two-year research term at the Jan Van Eyck Academy in Maastricht (2004–2006), Kakhidze describes her own cultural identity as a mix of Ukrainian, Georgian and Western European influences.

She was invited to the HIAP residency thanks to her significant artistic work with the Maidan movement in Kiev during winter 2013–2014. The escalating conflict between Ukraine and Russia, together with the artist's personal biography, formed the basis for her work *Where The Wild Things Are* in the Manifesta 10 Biennial Public Programme. This was in Saint Petersburg, Russia in Summer 2014. This is also where I encountered Kakhidze and got the opportunity to discuss with her the complex dynamics between multivalent cultural identity, sense of belonging and the individual and collective tragedies caused by the continuing military conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

Kakhidze's artwork was the illustrated correspondence she had with her mother, who lived in the middle of the conflict-ridden zone. The mother persistently refused to flee her home for a more safe region, despite Alevtina's pleas. The phone conversations between the mother

and the daughter were translated into series of drawings and comic strips. In these, the challenge of maintaining everyday routines in the middle of the conflict as well as the numerous personal and collective tragedies brought on by it, mix into poignant and melancholic, at points close to absurd, visual and textual narratives. When Alevtina started to share them on Facebook, both she and her mother, known by the name 'Strawberry Andreevna', soon became internationally known figures, referred to even on major news channels.

Through this work Alevtina Kakhidze had become a mediator, who negotiated the complexities of the conflict in her artwork and also someone who physically traveled between Russia and Ukraine as the artist-spokesperson of the politically tense situation. Taking part in the Connecting Points residency programme allowed her to gain not only a moment to breath, but also a historical perspective to the conflict. During her residency in Helsinki, Kakhidze conducted research on The Soviet-Finnish War, called The Winter War (1939–40), investigating the similarities and differences with the contemporary situation in Ukraine.

By interviewing historians and specialists in Winter War, Kakhidze gained a basic understanding on the conflict that ended in Finland losing significant land areas to Russia, especially in the Carelia region. She learned about the consequent forced mass migration in Finland, as the Carelian population were obliged to start



This and next spread: Alevtina Kakhidze, 'HIAP Open Studios' & 'The Independent Ukrainian Garden', Summer 2015. Photos: Salla Lahtinen



their lives anew in different parts of the country. Looking into the statistics on the refugees and thinking about her own mother, Kakhidze became driven by a question: did some people decide to remain in Carelia after all? Did anybody resist and stay?

The responses given by the historians to this question were mainly negative, but in order to find her own answers, Kakhidze traveled across the Finnish-Russian border to the town of Vyborg. There she interviewed senior citizens, seeking for the equivalent of her mother, a local ‘Strawberry Andreevna’, or stories about people who would have stayed in the lost territories. The encounters and conversations she had were then translated into drawings and dialogues, around which she wrote and dramatised a short play. The play was premiered during the HIAP Open Studios event in August 2015, but as a continuation to her residency Kakhidze would like to realise the play in the future in collaboration with people closely connected with the Carelian refugee histories, for instance through one of the numerous Finnish associations that

still aim to keep the Fenno-Carelian cultural heritage alive.

Alongside her research on the Carelian refugees, Kakhidze engaged in a gardening project. From her beloved home garden in Muzychi, Ukraine, she had brought seeds of seven herbs: *Monarda Citriodora*, *Origanum Vulgare*, *Salvia Officinalis*, *Mentha Piperita*, *Hyssopus Officinalis*, *Artemisia Dracunculus*, *Hypericum*. During the month of July, the seeds were sprouting in Kakhidze’s studio in Suomenlinna. On August 3rd, 2015, at a hidden, unannounced spot on the Suomenlinna island, they were planted into the soil of ‘The Independent Ukrainian Garden’. The planting action was done by a group of HIAP residents, one Ukrainian and many Russian and Finnish. To Kakhidze, the garden is the metaphor for contemporary Ukraine. It is still flourishing as I’m writing this in Spring 2016. However, according to the artist’s instructions, it is to be left alone and unattended, with only coincidental visits by passers-by. According to Kakhidze, “it is not clear whether it will survive or not”.

Heidi Kilpeläinen: *IMPLICATED*

RRRAAAA...AAAARGH...A...AHAHAA...E...RRRAW...GRRRR...AGH...

..echoed the vocal expressions at my Cable Factory studio as I recorded them upon my arrival. I asked my neighbours not to call the police should they hear anything alarming through the wall.

I had wanted to make a new audiovisual composition for some time and the opportunity arrived in form of a residency at HIAP. (My neighbour in London wanted to call the police after hearing some piano playing through the wall so I thought it better to proceed with this project in a studio, preferably in another country!)

My first audiovisual composition was 'fed / up' where the video concludes in a rhythmic choir of gagging. The second one '**Implicated**', filmed and recorded at HIAP residency, is a composition of vocal expressions of frustration during difficult times. If UK (I live and work in London) seemed like a political mess so did Finland, not to mention the world...there was a lot to vent about!

*RRRAAAA...AAAARGH...A...AHAHAA...E...RRRAW...GRRRR...AGH...
RRRAAAA...AAAARGH...A...AHAHAA...E...RRRAW...GRRRR...AGH...
RRRAAAA...AAAARGH...A...AHAHAA...E...RRRAW...GRRRR...AGH...*

..flickered cropped images of mouths on the screen...on TWO screens! The equipment at hand allowed me to do multiscreen tests for the first time. I was in heaven. As a result **Implicated** became my first multiscreen video.

The composition begins with a rhythm, which dissolves from color, to black and white, to blank, white, flickering rectangles and from

there to the 'solo'.

I switched the camera record on and **clicked** my fingers...!

This was the moment I had been waiting for! My own, personal 'guitar solo' in this 'band of frustrated citizens'.

A fit of RAGE!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAARRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGG
GGGGGGGGGHHH!!

One take.

Done.

It felt ODD to be THAT 'angry'; To express my own public and private, bottled up 'stuff'! It was liberating and scary at the same time. I'm relieved I got it out.

Saliva dripped from the corners of my mouth (I guess I really got 'into character' ;)) I'm glad I remembered to press the record button as I don't think I could have repeated that performance.

I turned the image upside down on the edit-

ing program. That looked and felt right.

A single screen version of **Implicated** is now on display at **Beaconsfield Gallery** in **London**. The space for it is perfect. A dark, cold vault...a brick walled 'cave'. <http://beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects/heidi-kilpelainen/>

I was also at a residency at Beaconsfield Gallery 2015, in London. Experiments during that

residency evolved into 'fed / up' video (which was exhibited at Huuto Gallery, Helsinki 2015). Looking back now I realise how some of the performative experiments during that residency are at the root of 'Implicated' too. That residency was hugely important part of my transition from music back to visual arts. I had also engaged in visual arts during all those years, but my main focus was in writing songs for three albums. Feels great to be back. I feel free.

Yet music seems to be part of my DNA...or at least the desire to use my voice. So my background in music is clearly present in the current videos. I see and hear them as musical compositions.

La La La la la la la...Land of Dreams...(Satunmaa) ...I sing one of the most famous Finnish Tangos sitting on a chair...https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_tango

Tango Therapy Performance (**Lauluvastaanotto**) was another regular activity during my residency at HIAP. I performed at galleries and refugee centres in Helsinki. It was very rewarding and moving, especially my visits at the refugee centres. The youngest participant of Tango Therapy was a two months old baby girl, her mother asked me to sing for her. During one visit we all cried together...during another all the different nationalities sang back to me in their own languages. On that occasion the women at the centre declared, "We are not immigrants, we are not **refugees** in here. We are a big **FAMILY!**"

. This session concluded in singing, laughing and clapping hands together. I hope they got together for a singing session without me there. Few of us suggested that it might be a good idea under the circumstances. Boredom sets in easily at the centres and lack of activities can be testing on people's spirits.

'Tango Therapy' is a performance in which I sing to one person at a time sitting on two chairs opposite each other, while rest of the audience listens and follows the performance taking turns on the chair. The performance is an intimate and personal performance of songs, mainly of

Finnish tangos without any technology or amplification. Human presence and the eye contact is important in this piece, understanding of Finnish language is not of importance, it is the melody and the sentiment that communicate beyond the boundaries of language.

grrrrrrr...STAGE 1....gggggrrrrrrRRR...
STAGE 2....ggggggGGGGGRRRRRRR-
RRRR STAGE ...3...4...5....6 **IMPLICARE**
WATER WORKS!

Medication of drinking water supplies [A convenient light lobotomy] (Nazis) Earth's limited resources..

.Inequality
Manipulation

Sci Fi

Soma

Orwell

Artificial Intelligence

End of humanity as we know it 1%..tip of the pyramid

Sounds like good old **HK119** territory again ... (my music character signed to **One Little Indian Records** since 2006) www.hk119.co.uk I like including a bit of **humour** in my performances and work in general (when appropriate)

HK119 had a pinch of that. '**Implicare**' performance resonates with that world again.

I had the pleasure to perform a work in progress performance of **IMPLICARE** to a small audience at a HIAP Open Studio event. I was very pleased to experiment with a performance where I didn't just sing. The performance is a spoken word 'lecture' to a 'few, selected members of the elite' (the audience).

The lecture ends with a performance of a '**National Anthem for the 1%**' and a **choreographed dance routine**.

I am looking forward to performing that again with new, edited visuals in the background. The visuals illustrate a 'comic' build up from frustration, to a full fit of rage just before a state of catatonia, due to the consumption of 'IMPLICARE water' over decades.

(Artificial Intelligence Application can be

Barbara Knezevic: *On Unruliness of Things*

Text Jenni Nurmenniemi

Despite their neat appearance and careful composition, the temporary arrangements by Barbara Knezevic seem to function as sculptural and spatial investigations into the unruly nature of matter.

Composed of collected and recycled everyday materials – those very ordinary industrial, commercial and domestic ones human beings tend to surround themselves with – and carefully choreographed into exhibition spaces by Knezevic, it is as if these things would only temporarily agree to exist as art objects.

Through editing and rearranging of materials such as plastic, wood, leather and clay, the familiar shifts towards the unknown. These objects, that Knezevic prefers to call ‘things’, are treated and altered in the subtlest manner so that they could be infinitely reworked and put back together in a different way. In principle, they could return to their state of being before they were transformed into art objects.

Sometimes Knezevic accelerates these transformations by igniting things, allowing them to burn beyond control. Sometimes the materials

are exposed to other actions such as binding or wrapping. These acts will alter the materials in unexpected ways.

And yet, within the constraints set by the artist and the context of the exhibition space, these things are being quite unruly. For instance, clumps of clay perspiring heavily, wrapped inside tight plastic sheets and slowly shifting their form and creating their own sweaty ecosystems in the course of an exhibition. Or, a massive block of beeswax sliding from the wall to the floor from a vertical towards a horizontal existence.

In Knezevic’s works, the unruliness of matter manifests in manifold ways, questioning the idea of human mastery over materials. They are constantly doing things that human beings are unaware of. The notion of knowledge relies on epistemological arguments and on the idea of mastery. The not-knowing part is where Knezevic is trying to get at in her work, teasing out and amplifying the uncontrollability of all the earthly stuff.



1. BARBARA KNEZEVIC, *Embers*, 2016. 2. BARBARA KNEZEVIC, 2015

Karel Koplímets: Case No 11. TALSINKI



*KAREL KOPLIMETS, Case No. 11. TALSINKI,
Pigment print, 2016*

*1) KAREL KOPLIMETS, Case No. 11. TALSINKI:
Terminal D, Port of Tallinn, Estonia,
still from 2-channel Full HD video, sound 2016*

*2) KAREL KOPLIMETS, Case No. 11. TALSINKI:
West Harbour, Port of Helsinki,
still from 2-channel Full HD video, sound 2016*

Project Case No 11. TALSINKI is a work that embodies two tightly connected parts. The first part unfolds the topic of Estonian pendulum workers who are working in Finland but who continue on living in Estonia or have some other relation to the homeland, which requires constant traveling between Tallinn and Helsinki. The second part deals with the Finns who are carrying a great amount of cheap liquor and other commodities overseas. Different sources claim that there are about 15,000 short-term migrants working in Finland. Some unofficial sources have stated these numbers to be around 60,000. Also, there are statistics showing that Finns make 2,5 million trips to Estonia annually and that 80% of the travelers are bringing back liquor.

There has been a big shift after the 2000s (especially after the economic crisis) and each year more and more Estonians search for a job in Finland. At the same time lower prices and particularly cheap liquor attract a great amount of Finnish tourists to visit Estonia. This phenomenon could also be described as a kind of economical exchange – on the one hand, the Finnish construction market relies on Estonian builders, but, on the other hand, Finns are stimulating the Estonian economy by paying the excise tax.

As without ferry traffic all previously described couldn't be possible, the central piece is an image of the ship. The photograph is sealed in a glass box (frame), which is filled with a moving fog, to give an impression that the ship is floating among the clouds. The second part of the work is the video installation consisting of two video projections. The first video depicts Estonian workers getting off the ship through hallways in Terminal D in Tallinn harbour, while the second depicts Finnish tourists carrying commodities and liquor in Länsisatama in Helsinki harbour.

Jenny Marketou: *BREAKING NEWS*

BREAKING NEWS is the name of the ‘collective’, which is comprised by a group of six of my MFA students and myself, their professor at California Institute of Art (CalArts) in Valencia, California. The idea of *BREAKING NEWS* was conceived as an extension of my spring 2015 semester graduate course that I taught titled *Critical Art Practice As/And Commons*. Support for this project has been provided with a grant from the president of CalArts. Further research and organization took place during my self-directed art residency at HIAP in Helsinki in June, 2015.

After the invitation to the 5th Athens Biennial, with the theme OMONOIA which means CONCORD, we all went to Athens with the goal to initiate a series of collaborative projects with community groups, organizations and schools in Athens, scheduled to take place as parallel events during *Synopsis 1* - part of 5th Athens Biennial in November 2015.

Over the period of two weeks, I met with my students in Athens, Greece and after an invigorating research program that I co-lead alongside the volunteers at the Biennial, we collaborated on a non-profit organizational level with vital cultural and educational organizations deeply committed to the neighborhood’s groundbreaking artistic activist traditions such as *SynAthina* and *ARSIS* initiated by the mayor and the City of Athens.

Both organizations provided us with the resources to mount a series of public projects. One of the projects consists of a series of meeting sessions with a group of about 25 young adolescent refugees from Syria, which took place

at Victoria Square in Athens. The idea behind those sessions was to use the theme, the strategies and the physical experience of *PLAYING BALL GAMES* in order to offer an escape and to help the young people through the world of arts, play and games to reimagine a future, which we thought was really healthy, especially for young people that have been displaced against their will from one environment to the next, as a means of new community, cooperation and security.

When working at the intersection of art and social realms, the very first question and communication should be: Who benefits from the project and what are the expectations of the project initiator and different participants? Furthermore, we reflected invaluable methods and tips on how to balance the project idea with the interests of the intended young participants, taking into consideration the ethical and structural aspects of such a collaboration and encounters. Despite the unresolved tensions, children were able to transform *PLAY* into a creative art experience and enjoy the nature of a physical and mental activity such as playing specially designed participatory ball games with 12 foot beach balls on which they were allowed to color, draw and to write messages while they quickly started challenging the large size of the round inflatables with their hands and began pushing it around Victoria Square.

Even further, my aim with this innovative pedagogical art project and participation during an international contemporary art biennial with the theme OMONOIA is to combine



BREAKING NEWS COLLECTIVES, a Public Project at Victoria Square in Athens with Syrian young people, 2015. Sponsored by CalArts for OMONOIA 5th Athens Biennial. Photos: Blaine Nelson

the fields of art, education, and social activism and to position the work of an artist as having social, political, and pedagogical impact. It focuses on framing and supporting the artist as an activist, an educator, and an agent of change. Although each member of my students collective is involved in realizing their own project and approach, one of their main and sharing themes is that of ‘communal knowledge’ and how it responds to numerous, social and political conflicts. In a world ruled by continuous and increasing conflicts and questions about the economies of ‘justice’ and the rights of the ‘unheard’, the questions about the right course of action and how artists and thinkers reflect on new forms of artistic engagement and modes of representation that differ from the political and activist art of the 60’s and 70’s are in the forefront.

From another perspective *Breaking News* became for me a case study for pedagogical investigation on alternative economies for art education, which maps the emergent field of educational futures and how knowledge can be decolonized through interdisciplinary pedagogy. This emerges from my ongoing research on Alternative Models and Economies of Art & Pedagogy, which is inspired by the current protests at Occupy Cooper Union in New York City in building free educational futures. I am also interested in a number of basic questions that attempt to break from routine and explore how art schools and institutions, initiatives, curators and artists can prioritize their relationships with audiences and communities through current thinking around ideas of education, engagement and participation. I also noticed the difficulties of ‘collaboration’ and ‘participation’ among my students, which occurred in terms of their engagement from the formation of small individual project towards the pressure of bigger projects that a contemporary art biennial creates, thus forcing new paradigms for practice which to my opinion are sometimes in conflict with the nature of socially engaged projects.

Meadow, Meadow, Meadow

Text Piia Ahonen

Meadow, meadow, meadow was a refreshing exception.

The multi-national working groups and international co-productions are somewhat of a rarity in the Finnish contemporary dance field. *Meadow, meadow, meadow* was therefore a refreshing exception - an exception that would not have materialized without the support from HIAP.

A work of no less than five director-choreographers premiered at Zodiak in March of 2015. The authors are the choreographer-dancers Elina Pirinen and Maria Saivosalmi from Finland, the Palestinian-French vocal and performance artist Jassem Hindi, and the Irish theater artists Ruairi Donovan and Cathy Walsh. Hindi, Donovan and Walsh as well as Norwegian Kenneth Bruun Carlson were accommodated at HIAP's Cable Factory studios for over a month during February and March period.

International co-originators of the project were Pirinen, Saivosalmi and Hindi. Each of them originally invited a single performer, but the number of participants grew as the project progressed.

Piia Ahonen works with communications and press relations at Zodiak – Center for New Dance. She has worked in the dance field since the late 1990's, in different administrative positions as well as a critic.

In addition to choreographers, Kenneth Bruun Carlson, Alli Mattila (PKKY Dance Education in Outokumpu), Justus Pienmunne (Theatre Academy TeaK) and Aino Voutilainen also took the stage. In some of the performances, the artist Lotta Esko accompanied dancers. Heikki Paasonen designed the stage lighting.

Meadow, meadow, meadow consists of three parts. Three differently intimate meadows, three individual artistic visions. Together they form a contemporary landscape, where events affect each other and are moving forward with the inevitability of slowed down avalanche.

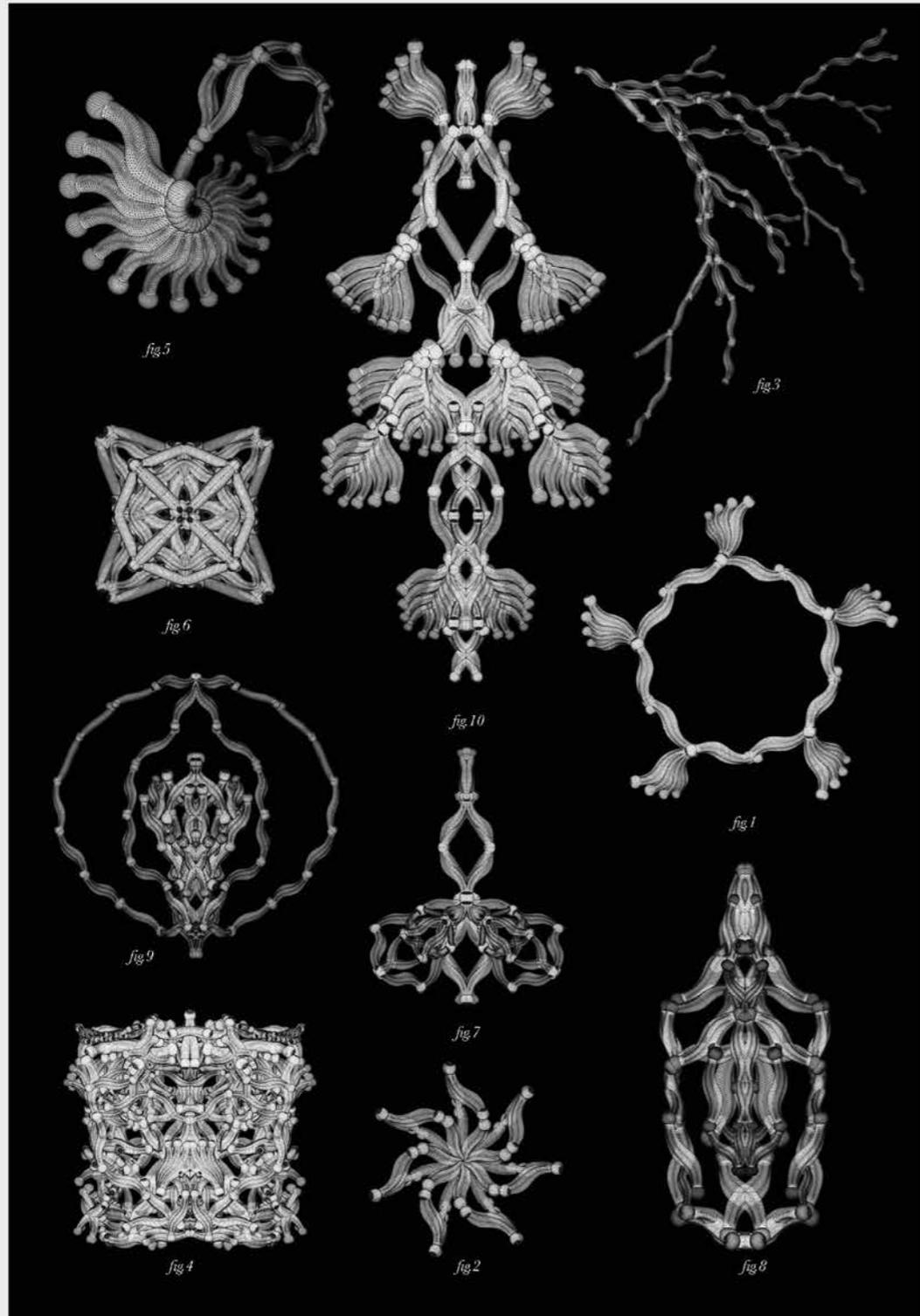
“It has been extremely meaningful making a collective artistic work, where each part had its own creator, its own auteur, while creating one unified work at the same time,” Pirinen and Saivosalmi say.

Meadow, meadow, meadow invites viewers to witness the slow storms of the solar plexus, intimate physical acts, many forms of extremism, a crime that had already taken place, a strange tenderness. This non-story is not a catharsis, but it radiates warmth and comfort.

The critics praised the work's courage to think both greatly and in detail at the same time. In particular, the middle part – meadow created by Hindi, Donovan and Walsh caused a lot of reaction and discussion. Its boldly inclusive spectator relationship was both praised and criticized.

English translation by Jasmin Islamović.





Katrín Ólína: *Primitiva-Talismans*

In 2014, Icelandic Designer Katrín Ólína began exploring Existential Questions in the Information Age. At the Aalto Digital Design's Laboratory (ADD-Lab) research platform and in HIAP residency in Helsinki, Ólína's work has materialized as the *Primitiva-Talismans*. Through it, she uses today's digital technologies to reconnect with the physical world.

Primitiva explores the inner cosmos and the space between the psyche and the designed object. Through studying systems and patterns Ólína identified a set of primordial symbols that she then developed into a collection of 40 'objects of awareness', or Talismans. They express existential questions and traits we either recognise in ourselves and need to bring to the surface, or that we aspire to.

Inspired by self-replicating patterns found in nature and by the mathematical beauty of biological forms, the *Primitiva-Talismans* were developed through parametric software using a single base unit: a curve replicated and built into meticulous three-dimensional patterns. The origin of the basic shape is the serpentine curve William Hogarth called the 'line of beauty' in his 'Analysis of Beauty' in 1753. Here the name, *Primitiva* (from the Latin *Primitivus*) refers to this primary, basic shape that Ólína used to develop her language of forms.

To navigate the *Primitiva* world, Ólína organised the content into a taxonomy, dividing the objects into four 'Kingdoms', each consisting of families of similar tropes and overseen by a single 'Guardian'. The Kingdoms of Seekers, Doers, Connectors and Visionaries rule the Art of Memory, Art of Change, Art of Love and Art of Transcendence.

Katrín Ólína's first book, *Primitiva - Book of*



*Primitiva, High Priestess. Photo: Sebastian Jansson.
Previous page: Illustration: Katrín Ólína Pétursdóttir*

Talismans', complements the collection. With an introduction by the English writer and award-winning architect, Charlotte Skene Catling, the book explains through text and images the archetypal structure of the *Primitiva-Talismans* and the ideas they contain. It contains 40 short texts and illustrations and can be used either with the *Primitiva* pieces, or on its own as a collection of ideas and inspirations.

Ólína launched the project in the rear garden tower of the Helsinki Observatory during Helsinki Design Week 2015.

"It's fascinating to go into the digital world and emerge with something that feels so ancient, familiar and unknown. Something about the Talismans reminds me of the lava in Iceland, but they could also come from the ocean floor - fossils or artefacts from a long gone shipwreck. The objects speak on many levels, they refer to nature, philosophy and natural science."

- Katrín Ólína

Georgios Papadopoulos: *Technologies of Value and the New Aesthetic of Digital Economy*

My contribution is going to reflect on the impact of digital technologies on the individual and collective perceptions of economic value from the standing point of aesthetics, stressing the importance of the representational capabilities of artistic practice and its ability to pre-figure the new visual vernacular that informs monetary exchange. My approach departs from the dominant economic analysis of how money facilitates exchange and circulation, to the study of how value is represented and communicated in the new regime of algorithms and interfaces that currently shape economic value. I am pointing here to the cultural implications of the mediation of economic interaction by digital technologies, speculating on the new conditions

Georgios Papadopoulos combines economics and philosophical analysis with artistic research. His research gravitates around money and its socioeconomic functions. Papadopoulos studied at the London School of Economics and the Erasmus University Rotterdam. He has worked at the Jan Van Eyck Academy, at the Dept of Aesthetics and Communication of the University of Aarhus and at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. In 2012 was awarded the Vilém Flusser Prize for Artistic Research by the transmediale festival in Berlin.

of economic valuation by locating how digital media intervene and signal the creation and transfer of economic value.

The new aesthetic of the digital economy represents a fundamental change in our experience; it is both the view from the capitalist machine (the way economic simulations organize economic exchange) and the view of that machine (the way the algorithms perceive us), overlaid with data augmentation, from a non-human-natural perspective (the viewpoint of economic and security profiling), hyperreal and wholly networked. Interface criticism and aesthetic analysis should explore the new modes of perception of economic value that address the synthesis between the real and the digital, the physical and the virtual, the human and the machine. Analysis is directed by a dialectic relation between criticism and the development of interfaces with a specific attention to critical and political interventions that aim at actual alternatives to the economic systems of valuation and exchange within digital networks of participation. To that effect a critique is going to address the new aesthetic and the new operational principles of digital interfaces, including both their mainstream version and the attempts to resist the mandates of economic value that come from the edges of the economic system. Tangible examples of this dialectic is the juxtaposition of corporate logos, like *VISA* or *PayPal*, with national emblems, as guarantees of authenticity and value, or the function of cultural memes in the penetration of digital currencies and their appropriation of the glyphs of traditional currencies as signifiers of reliability.



Image: The Dogecoin Foundation

The starting point of the analysis is the economic interaction with and through technology, whether it is simulations, digital interfaces, surveillance or predictive algorithms. The analysis presupposes that the limits between the real and the digital, the physical and the virtual, the human and the machine are becoming elusive and permeable. The aesthetic of the new digital economy and the aligned representations of economic value are a symptom of “the eruption of the digital into the physical” (Sterling 2012) following the reorganization of the market around networks and interfaces. Digital technologies like smartphones, tablet computers,



Georgios Papadopoulos at AID-forum - Skill of Economy: Artistic Research and Philosophy of Science' seminar, Metsätalo, Helsinki, February 2016. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

CCTV cameras, GPS, social networking, simulations, automated trading, recognition and profiling algorithms, are rising to super-ubiquity, conditioning individual and collective economic behavior including the behavior of states, banks and corporations. Yet all this is happening in an intellectual environment informed by the monetarist ideas about the neutrality of money, and by theories that tend to ignore the social significance of the technological mediations of economic value.

The capacity of digital technologies to represent and signify economic value conditions our perception of it and our ability for economic valuation. The digital, simulated, existence of the 'new economy' presents itself as the ultimate horizon of value, employing money and its facsimile of objectivity in an attempt to support the reconfiguration of the market in the image of electronic networks. The profound theoretical consequences of the circulation of money in networks and interfaces and its consequent digitalization should direct the aesthetic inquiry of economic value. The ability of digital technologies to represent and signify economic value obviously influences our understanding of the concept. Digital media communicate the economic significance of social relations, and quantify them according to the uniform organizing standard of price (Papadopoulos 2011, 53). In this capacity the media that instantiate money function as an integral part of interfaces of economic participation, transforming net-

work communications into economic value and enforcing the normativities of market exchange and private property on digital networks. Monetary media trace value by employing symbolic and iconographic elements, at the same time as they safeguard the authenticity of these representations by visible and invisible security technologies. Associative relations between graphics and haptics, between text and image, between encryption and surveillance — relations based on culturally specific meanings and shared presuppositions about the economy — inform and shape the collective representations of value in media of exchange and transmission (Papadopoulos 2015, 8).

Georg Simmel described money as the "purest reification of means, a concrete instrument which is absolutely identical with its abstract concept" (Simmel 1990, 211) referring to its ability to simultaneously signify economic value and mediate in social exchanges. In a similar fashion, Marshal McLuhan talked about money as the "coolest of all media", a medium that is its own message.¹ The self-referentiality of money gets intensified by the acceleration caused by new digital technologies in banking and finance. The new hyper-real and disconnected digital money has a transformative power on the individual and the market system alike. It challenges the tools of economic management, be it the econometric algorithms of national planning or the automated trading systems of financial speculation, "rendering" and

1 "There is a basic principle that distinguishes a hot medium like radio from a cool one like the telephone, or a hot medium like the movie from a cool one like TV. A hot medium is one that extends one single sense in "high definition." High definition is the state of being well filled with data. A photograph is, visually, "high definition." A cartoon is "low definition," simply because very little visual information is provided. Telephone is a cool medium, or one of low definition, because the ear is given a meager amount of information. And speech is a cool medium of low definition, because so little is given and so much has to be filled in by the listener." McLuhan (1993, 39)

"wracking" (Genosko 1999, 88) the very idea of economic value that it is supposed to serve. Digital monetary media are propagating circulation for its own right, breaking the relations of valuation to individual desire, collective morality and social significance. Circulation becomes the essence of the market system and subordinates economic value to networks and interfaces.

The proliferation of digital media of exchange and transmission has increased the scale and scope of economic transactions, altering the individual relations to economic value. Media, monetary or not, alter the human perception by transforming the relations among the senses and disrupting the psychological equilibrium of the individual user.¹ The extension of oneself through mediation is accompanied by numbness, a strategy resorted to by the body to restore the psychological equilibrium and to protect itself from over-stimulation of the senses.² The amplification and the acceleration of the circulation of economic value amputates the ability of the individual to experience the enjoyment promised by prices, at the same time as the desire that underlies economic value becomes blunt. The failure of satisfaction in a market system of amplification and over-stimulation, is caused but also obscured by the digitalization and the acceleration of the circulation of economic value, with the subject falling victim to the 'self-amputation' of its own ability to enjoy.

The new socio-technological paradigm transforms the individual sensibilities in the market at the same time as it challenges the cultural foundations of the economy producing a new imagery of value that fits the format of the new media of circulation and electronic networks. Digital technologies have evolved from a mere medium of economic circulation

1 "Technology alters sense ratios or patterns of perception steadily and without resistance." McLuhan (1994, 31).

2 "The principle of self-amputation as an immediate relief of strain on the central nervous system applies very readily to the origin of the media of communication from speech to computer." McLuhan (1994, 64)

to the dominant organizing force of economic organization. Their influence on the scale and the scope of economic interaction combined with their everyday use, are contributing the construction of a new *homo economicus* as they challenge the foundations of our understanding of economic value and of the principles of operation of the economic system.

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Alexis Rodolphe: TXT

This year HIAP launched a sound art residency programme in collaboration with SAMA (Sound Art and Sonic Arts education) programme at University of the Arts Helsinki. SAMA is collaboration between the Sibelius Academy, the Theatre Academy Helsinki and the Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Helsinki. This cooperation had been initiated before 2013 sans the full programme and the official name.

In the Spring 2015 the first guest of this programme was French sound artist Rodolphe Alexis, who works with field recordings, electroacoustic composition, radio pieces and site-specific installations and holds a particular interest in bioacoustics and phonography. Alexis is a founding partner of the sound art organisation Double Entendre and one half of the electroacoustic duo Ottoanna. His work has been published on various record labels including Impulsive Habitat, Herbal International, Touch Radio and Gruenrekorder, and he currently works as a sound recordist and sound designer for motion design productions, documentaries, museums and institutions.

As part of his one-month residency, Alexis organised a one-week workshop about field recording, basics of audio engineering as well as acousmatic composition followed by a lecture at the Sibelius Academy. During his residency, Alexis recorded sound material on the island



SAMA Field Recordings workshop: Visiting artist Rodolphe Alexis and student Minna Kallinen (The Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki)

as well as Helsinki centre and during a short trip at Nuuksio National Park. At the end of the residency, a concert with Rodolphe Alexis and students from the workshop was held at HIAP Gallery Augusta on Suomenlinna Island on May 15th. During this concert, acousmatic compositions using recordings from Suomenlinna were performed on six audio channels.

In addition to Rodolphe Alexis' own creation, students from the University of the Arts Helsinki performed acousmatic compositions based on their own recordings from Suomenlinna. Other performers included Minna Kallinen (KuvA), Davis Ozolins (SibA), Kristian Jalava (KuvA) and Jani Purhonen (KuvA).



SAMA Field Recordings workshop on Suomenlinna, student Davis Ozolins testing a hydrophone. Photo: Alexis Rodolphe

Jenna Sutela & Martti Kalliala: *Disruption Begins at Home: The Loft*

Text Jenna Sutela

Disruption Begins at Home is a project on the relationship between housing, debt, liquidity and ‘disruptive’ technological innovation. It considers the home/house/apartment as no longer only an apparatus for the reproduction of life – ‘a machine for living’ – but as a site of production, both in terms of actual wage labor performed at home and, for example, the general absorption of all social reality into the market.

The project got started as part of *Objects on Oil*, an exhibition at the Helsinki Photography Biennial 2014. In this context, we focused particularly on the fast online trading tools and powerful market analytical tools that the proliferation of the broadband Internet has brought to the mainstream as well as the domestic sphere and how any home office can now also become a virtual trading floor. Together with PWR Studio, we exhibited a three-screen browser based narrative interface, conceived as a hybrid offspring of domestic trading terminals and app/widget-based consumer tools.

The second part of the project, *Disruption Begins at Home: The Loft* took place at the Cable Factory in Helsinki on March 5, 2015. Studio 3, our residency apartment at the time, was harnessed

to function as a setting for a one-day exhibition exploring semi-public living, the idea of job-related housing as basic income and life qua production. Some of the objects in the show, such as a ceramic kimono by Raija Cammarano and a pile of tatami mats from Helsingin Ju-jutsuklubi, were found in the premises of the cultural complex that we then occupied. Other objects, like a diagrammatic carpet by Jaakko Pallasvuo and a system of drying racks from Tuomas Toivonen and Nene Tsuboi’s Kulttuurisauna, had to do with different domestic and building projects by our local friends.

Beyond calling the exhibition together, doing its interior design and living in the space, in the spirit of an open studio event, we also exhibited our recent projects. Martti Kalliala’s set of curtains referred to Andy Warhol’s Silver Factory as well as turnkey labor camp solutions sold online by Alibaba. Jenna Sutela’s work was an aquarium and a domestic data center a home for the natural computer called *Physarum polycephalum*, a single-celled yet many-headed slime mold that was processing data in the house.

Our new home starts here.



JENNA SUTELA & MARTTI KALLIALA, *Disruption Begins at Home: The Loft*, 2015. Photo: Paavo Lehtonen

Danae Valenza

Text Katie Lenanton

In 2012, Australian artist Danae Valenza and her collaborator Simon McGuinness hand carved vast spheres of ice for the installation *Composition for Ice and Choir*. Suspended within the vaulted ceiling of the Mission to Seafarers mariners hall in Melbourne, Australia, the spheres slowly melted throughout the nine days of the Next Wave emerging artist festival. Each drop-let fell into open barrels, their movements triggering a series of pentatonic choral scales that reverberated throughout the space. Over time, a layered soundscape of sometimes cacophonous harmonies emerged, extracted and stretched through time. They were shaped by fluctuations in temperature, the presence of people and the strange aura of the heritage building itself. As the ice melted, a hypnotic chorus sung out, its winding rhythm adhering to the enigmatic rules of its own creation.

Having worked with ice in this way, a residency in the Finnish winter seemed a natural fit. Travelling from island to mainland via icebreakers, traipsing through snow showers

and shuddering through negative temperatures swaddled in layers of thermals certainly provokes a different world view. The duo arrived having worked together on a number of sound-based installations activated via performative actions. These experiments were often characterised by open instructions to performers that tested ways to prompt, shape and control acts of improvisation. The resulting video documentation depicts an ongoing process of collaborating with musicians, performers and ever-changing nature itself.

For three months, Danae and Simon were based in HIAP Studios on Suomenlinna Island. They had developed an interest in Nordic cultures via a self-directed residency and mentorship in Sweden, which helped to put Finland on their radar. In Sweden, *Sound Park* (2013) utilised an improvisational methodology that was re-tested in Suomenlinna. Musicians played along to a drum beat as they wandered through a Gothenburg nature reserve, keeping in earshot of each other but attempting to be led by meandering instincts through the surrounding forest. Some 18 months later, Suomenlinna's 200 year old tunnels provided a context for a similar yet more contained experiment. Four Finnish musicians were partially separated from each other in adjoining stone-walled rooms, improvising to a distant drummer's beat as the chilly afternoon sun set. While ice had dictated the soundscape within the mariners hall in Melbourne, here it provided a relatively inconsequential external presence, noiselessly melting while the brisk wind seeped into tunnels and extremities, testing the endurance of performers and videographers alike.

Katie Lenanton (b. 1985) is an Australian independent curator who has managed numerous participatory and ephemeral public art projects with early career artists. Her research interests include the intersection of non-visual art experiences with hospitality cultures and friendship; archives and collections; and craft traditions. Her recent MA studies pivot around developing speculative museology frameworks with the aim of finding ways of working with 'unworkable' items in collections.



1) DANAЕ VALENZA, *The Torn Cloud*, 2015

2) DANAЕ VALENZA, *Marble Arcade*, 2015



DANAЕ VALENZA, *Sound Paintings*, 2015

To Danae's mind, the tunnel improvisation wasn't entirely successful but the experience will inform future iterations of this working process. Other field recordings, however, have crystallised into a new body of work, *The Torn Cloud*, which was exhibited at Gertrude Contemporary in Melbourne and Firstdraft in Sydney. A chance encounter with a collection of initials carved into stone along a section of the island's coast provoked thoughts about the residue of human labour and the longevity of these imprints.

The exhibition's centrepiece is a custom-built scaffold whose joints have been replaced with cast bronze hands. It's an imposing materialisation of community or collective action working with/in urban contexts, monumentalising anonymous labour and traces of human touch that remain largely invisible within our built environment. Its structure speaks of tenuous physicality and the fleetingness of permanence,

prompting us to consider how we notice, let alone acknowledge the latent remnants of human labour. In dialogue with this work are a series of 'Sound Paintings' that speak of playful bodily responses to musical performances, and a soundtrack of field recordings, which were siphoned from a number of cities.

Time can behave strangely when you're temporarily living elsewhere. The anticipation, expectations and suspension that comes with being somewhere unknown are as likely to prompt a flurry of experiments as they are to actuate ideas that sit on ice, gestating indefinitely. At HIAP, Danae and Simon found time to research, wander and become inadvertently influenced by unfamiliar surroundings. These innocuous moments act as foundations for future ways of working, illustrating the capacity of residencies to accommodate art practices that thrive on experimentation and improvisation.

Triin Valvas: An Itinerant's Itinerary

Text Paul Flanders

Some reflections on *Viktor's Travels*, a forthcoming series of 'honest guides' by Triin Valvas.

Triin Valvas is a production designer and illustrator currently working on the first book in a collection of 'honest guides' to places she's visited entitled *Viktor's Travels*. I had a chance to sit down with Triin and talk about the series and the protagonist of these guides, Viktor – an introverted Baltic native with the whole world in front of him. What follows are some reflections on that conversation.

"Of all the affairs we participate in, with or without interest, the groping search for a new way of life is the only aspect still impassioning," wrote Guy Debord in the *Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography*. Other avenues of thought, the aesthetic among them, simply weren't getting us anywhere. What was needed, Debord argued, against the profound sense of detachment brought on by the spectacular alienation

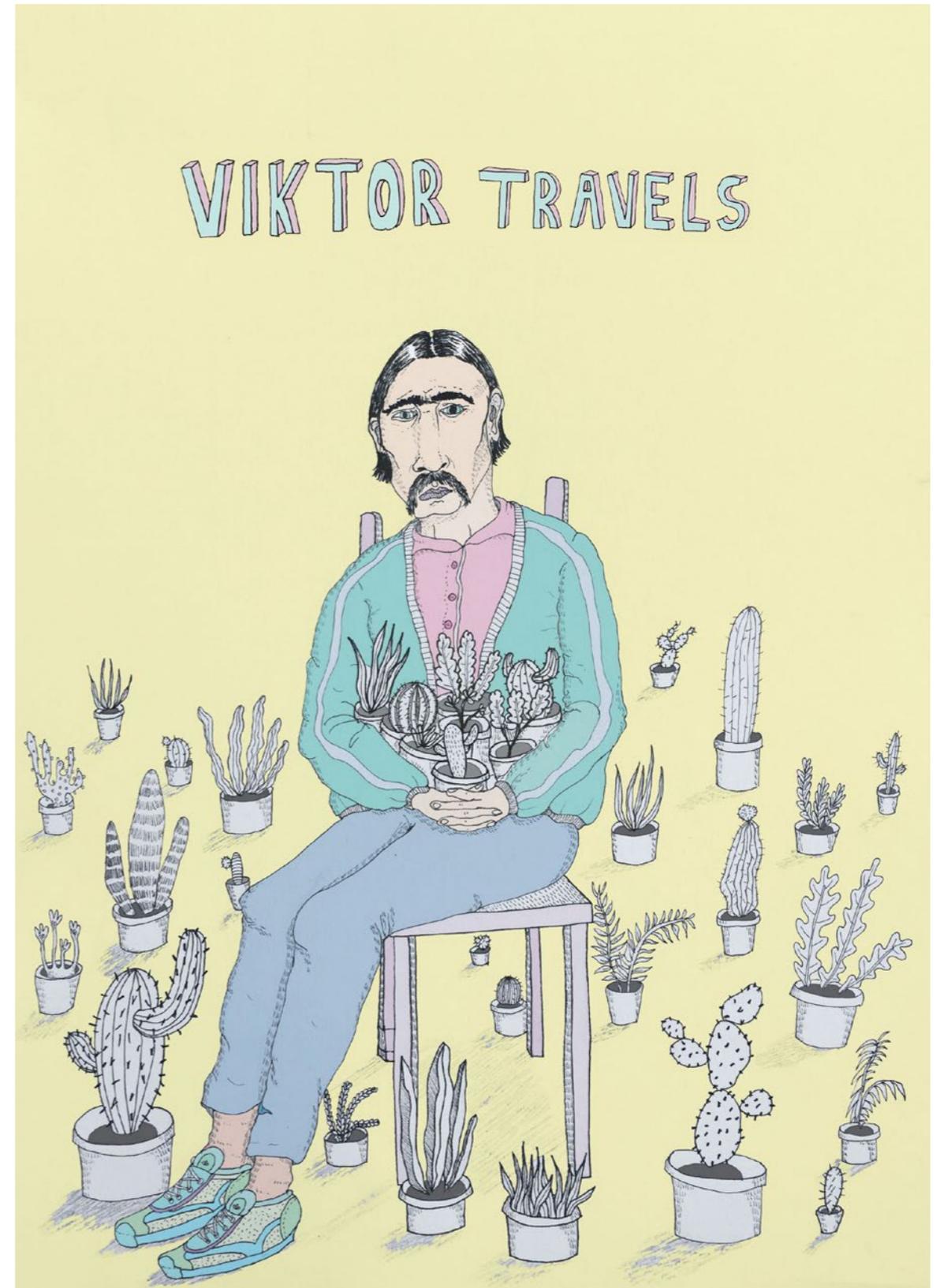
Paul Flanders is an art and media writer/producer hailing from the Texas Hill Country currently based in Helsinki, Finland. He's studied at Reed College and Universitet de Barcelona and is wrapping up his Master of Arts degree researching the philosophy and culture of IP regimes in the arts with the working title: *Cartographies of Copyright*. He's recently been banging on instruments, writing and organizing exhibitions, happenings and other exploding inevitables drawing inspiration from collective politics art technologies and weird sounds.

amidst the buzz of post-war Europe was not the extraordinary, but rather, a fresh and sober look at the situations we find ourselves in everyday.

To defamiliarize, as Viktor Shklovsky put it, or to intentionally misread, as Harold Bloom revised it, has become something of a necessity for me and my friends, as millennials. The promises made of bright futures turned out only to be blindingly inaccurate in our new blinking digitalized societies. It has produced, not the explicit and tactical aimlessness of the Situationist Internationale, but a different response to anxiety. One most intimately related to a distortion in our relation to the physical spaces and places we find ourselves in. I had to discuss this sensation with Triin immediately after hearing about Viktor.

Viktor is the protagonist of a new series of 'honest guides', *Viktor's Travels*, about the places author and illustrator Triin Valvas has traveled to. (Think of honest as in the way people talked about it in the good ol' days: as in no stars, dollar signs, reviews or ratings; something more akin to a feeling than a fact.) We're introduced to Viktor, a dapper introverted Eastern-European with the whole world in front of him, right from the start. The guides always take place *in-medias-res*. So when we meet him he is blossoming into a product of his own time (which is also our own time), and he's off to greet a world that is steadily and intricately encroaching upon his own.

The idea to write *Viktor's Travels* sprung up in response to an overbearing environment too. In fact, according to Triin it came about "from necessity". Triin is an avid scuba diver and part of the package deal is that scuba diving (like skiing,



TRIIN VALVAS, *Viktor Travels*, 2015



TRIIN VALVAS, *Viktor Travels*, 2015

surfing, sailing and other extreme s-sports) often takes you to strange and foreign places for intensive trips. But on one trip in particular, a diving trip in the Maldives, she had to stop diving.

She had been diving excessively, some 4-5 dives a day for several days already. When the total amount of compressed oxygen and nitrogen reaches unnaturally high levels in the human body it occasionally results in the lethal ecstasy officially labeled, Nitrogen narcosis, a kind of gleefulness that produces forgetfulness and lightheaded failures to check gauges and gadgets underwater, often leading individuals to drown. This did not happen to Triin, but she was feeling a little lightheaded and after a series of stomach glitches after bearing witness to a gigantic school of pasty white humans chase a lonely whale shark for kilometers she decided to sit the rest of the day out.

The radiant colors of the underwater world were not lost on her though: the shimmering bronzes, HI-C neons and high-fructose UV blotches left streaks behind the residents scattering around the tiny island resort from event to occasion and Triin with idle hands. So, she started to walk around aimlessly and sketch and sketch and sketch until she sketched an entire honest guide to the Maldives. Only the 'honest

guide' wasn't from her perspective, really. Well, it was and it wasn't. It was from Viktor's – an alter ego of sorts whose childlike 'unworldliness' would serve as the ultimate lens to view the effects of the world. Up until the moment she had taken her break from diving she had been oblivious (or blissfully ignorant) of the way the different sites and locations had channeled her towards certain actions and behaviors, to see certain things and move around the islands as if on a string or a track. "So, the idea formed itself," she says, like the moats around sand castles do.

The title *Viktor's Travels* hints at multiple destinations but the book Triin is currently working on, the one she researched and presented during her time at HIAP, details Viktor on his maiden voyage away from familiar lands. And, what safer place to go than a trip to Helsinki?

Viktor's Travels: Helsinki (my own title) is illustration heavy, detailing in color Viktor's journey by boat, his arrival on the shores of Helsinki and a subsequent series of run-ins with locals, old friends, fellow foreigners, tourists and travelers. While Viktor is constantly meeting interesting characters, one gets the sense early on that the geography of the city is the inspiration for the form of the book. It's summer time and life

in Helsinki happens outside on the streets, in the markets, parks and islands in a simultaneously exhausting and exciting way the endless summer days allows for. The plot wanders through familiar and unfamiliar streets, gets lost on some of them, pauses in public drinking spots, casually name-drops hit bars and hangs out in inviting cheap ones. As a genre it's 1/3 graphic novel, 1/3 travel guide, and 1/3 critique of the latter by way of the former. Viktor's sauntering through the streets of Helsinki take on the qualities of a late *flâneur* while simultaneously ridiculing it – his leisurely aimlessness isn't the product of wealth or caused by a desire to detach, he simply has difficulty attaching.

It's apparent early on that he's soft spoken, honest and nondescript. To a certain extent it's known he's Estonian, although nowhere is it stated. It's not stated because being Estonian isn't really the point, except maybe to the chagrin of Triin's own countrymen, but works more as testament to her adroit capacity to gently offer up stereotypes to her readers in all their relatable embarrassing humanity.

As the first in a series the complex relationship between Estonia and Finland is ripe for this approach. The hackneyed images of various types are illustrated exotically but always in a familiar locale, as if stressing the literal meaning of something seeming "out of place." At one point early on in the book Viktor steps into the gleaming tram waiting at the harbor to take him into downtown Helsinki when a jolt violently shakes a baby stroller next to him, bringing down its curtains. Three heavy-set 24-packs of Karhu beer stare up at him and their proud father earnestly beams at him as he tucks them back in. Triin's ability to look through Viktor's gentle eyes to get us to laugh at the stiff caricatures we make of others, places and perhaps unknowingly, ourselves, takes on special precision and humor as a graphic novel. She doesn't need to hammer home any moral points, the illustrations themselves "argue for things", as Dave Hickey would put it.

However, the book is by and large a-political. It is not explicitly about Finno-Estonian relations or stereotypes, nor is it explicitly about Viktor, per-say. Rather, his naiveté is the occasion to visit familiar sites, be they bars, parks, is-

lands or general tourist destinations throughout the city and view them with a fresh eye. Triin's illustrations are fun sketches of what it might mean to *see what these spaces make of people despite what we might make of them*. Put another way, I get the feeling that Viktor's good-heartedness will almost always be tested, wherever he goes. Not because good hearts, like childhood, must succumb to the difficult reality of the modern age, but more because Viktor's travels aren't only about the strange places he stands but the strange things he stands for. To paraphrase Triin, "Viktor doesn't really worry about the simple things, he doesn't fret the broken schedules or lost time. He's interested in the meaning of things unexpected."

While Triin grew up in Tallinn, she had the rare opportunity to visit Finland in her youth. There seems to be some sense of familiar with Helsinki, with its history. She has a knack for taking the reader through the old cobblestone streets, strolling through large open squares, surveying the strong stonewalls used to defend the city by the sea. Her grasp of an older history than the one Viktor is consciously aware of turns the spaces he's illustrated in into places.

Because *Viktor's Travels: Helsinki* isn't out as I write this article it's hard to promise any reader will learn about Helsinki's hidden spots, its best bars or friendliest neighborhoods but I can say they'll see something honestly unfamiliar. It's not a travel guide after all—it's an honest guide. But more powerfully, the reader can see how the places we absently move through, move us. They provoke sensations in us and influence our feelings, whether that be a sense of familiarity and safety or foreign power. But how to accomplish this in our day-to-day lives? For Guy Debord, psychogeography is just that: "the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals." With Viktor though, we have an entertaining chance to see the familiar differently. I, for one, am looking forward to the next place Viktor travels to. Not least because Viktor's travels are exceptionally fun to glance through or entertainingly relatable to read, but because each page is, in such cases, *a sum of possibilities*.



JANA VASILJEVIĆ, *Suspended Disbelief*, 2015

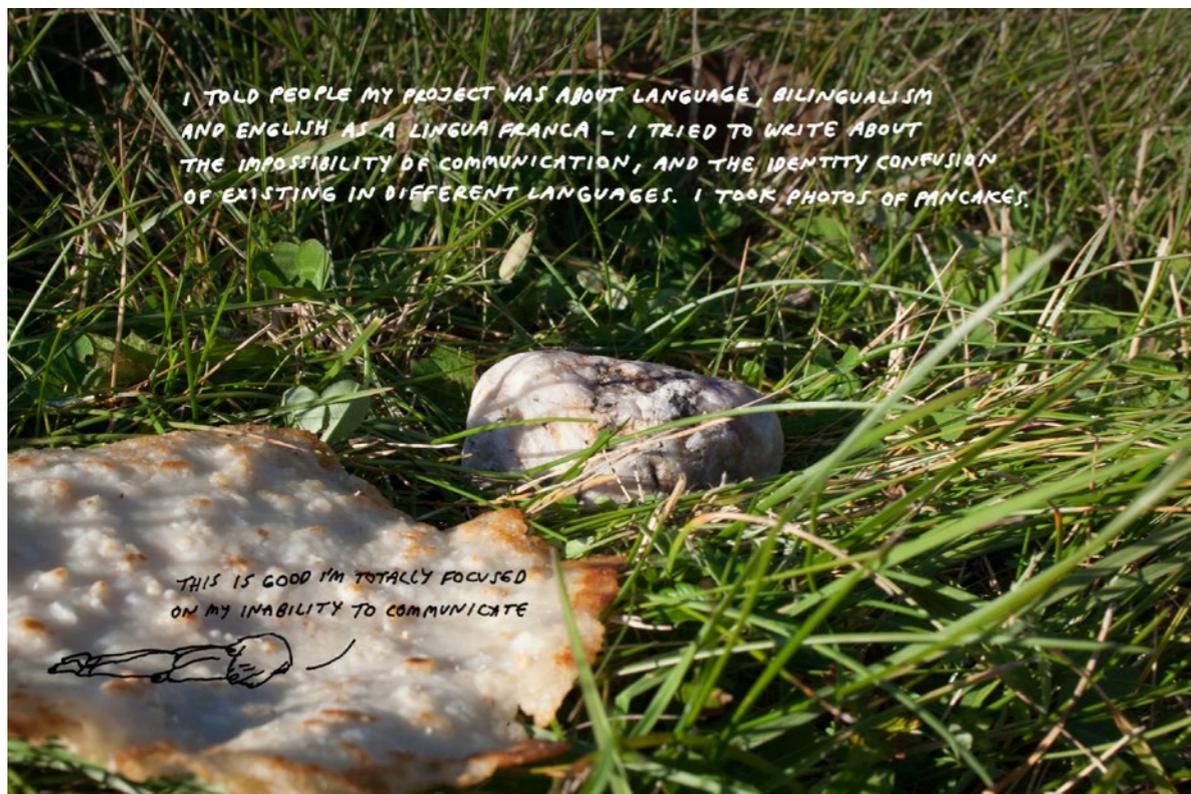
Jana Vasiljević: *Suspended Disbelief*

After a few years of making work around family history, shooter games, war and love, Belgo-Serbian comic artist Jana Vasiljević decided to start working on a graphic novel. The way, in which her childhood and the childhood of her great-grandmother intertwine, combined

together with the computer games she played in the 90's and a handful of historical accuracy, provide the perfect starting point for *Suspended Disbelief*. All the works were made during the CUNE comics in residency at the HIAP, Suomenlinna.







Ruth Waller: Suomenlinna, Summer 2015

Ruth Waller is an artist and Associate Professor, Head of Painting at the Australian National University School of Art, Canberra. During her three month long residency period at HIAP as part of the Australian artists programme, Waller immersed herself in the lush and diverse nature of Suomenlinna by gathering samples of the particular seasonal colours and material surfaces of the rocks and life on the island, envisaging them as the basis of larger paintings. In the following text, Waller thinks on her artistic journey and many discoveries.

Each morning and evening I walked the island, always carrying my little camera. I hadn't actually taken photographs for some years, but on Suomenlinna I rediscovered photography and took hundreds of pictures, fascinated by this landscape, which was so new to me. I had never seen so green a place – in certain glades the air itself seemed gaseously green. The mosses and lichens and the changing array of wildflowers were so bright, luminous and luxuriant. I wandered the foreshore rocks. They reminded me of Tove Jansson's *The Groke*. The waters of the gulf had a strange, heavy look: sometimes metallic blue, sometimes gelatinous and green. Having lived for some years in Canberra, Australia's inland 'bush capital', I was overwhelmed here by the sense of vast space, of air and light, and intrigued by the small rocky islands scattered on the horizon. Ever since reading *The Summer Book* I had wanted to experience this.

It was summer. The days were fabulously



'HIAP Open Studios', Summer 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

long, but the weather was very changeable. It rained often, but mostly not for long, followed by brilliant bright sun. There were wild winds and storms. I looked out for 'Hattifattners'. It was great to experience the island in all these weathers. I had to go briefly to America in June and came back the day after Midsummer. That evening the island was engulfed in a dense white mist. It was very beautiful. A small group of picnickers sang folkish harmonies far below me down on the foreshore rocks. It was magical, like being in a painting by Caspar David Friedrich.

Thousands of tourists came each day. They generally didn't bother me (except when they left rubbish behind; that was incomprehensible.) But I noticed small clumps of moss would often be dislodged by all this foot traffic. So I began my moss rescues, collecting stray clumps



Ruth Waller presenting her work at 'HIAP Open Studios', Summer 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

of mosses and small cuttings from the vividly coloured tiny succulents growing across the rocks. Using the plastic trays used to package vegetables at the SIWA store I made a series of miniature moss gardens.

In the still light of the early morning I was startled by the crystal clarity of the landscape reflected in the various ponds around the island. I took lots of pictures of these inverted landscapes.

In the studio I made a several new bodies of work, including a series of experimental small three-dimensional paintings- developed by working into and distorting paper honeycomb spheres. I painted with watercolour and gouache enjoying the luminosity of their matte pigments. The colours I chose reflected the qualities I found around me in the plant life of

the island. I added granular pumice and micaceous medium to the paint to allude to the geology of the place. These were demanding pieces to resolve- they had to read well as paintings from very angle, they involved many surfaces and I explored ways of 'training' them into distorted and irregular forms using wires and other props. I wasn't sure quite what they were; they had a vegetative look, something like a mutant lettuce. Some were more book-like, some a bit planetary. The more layers of paint I applied, the stronger they became- they are still frail, but much more robust than the paper lantern forms from which they were made. I liked the idea of people holding them carefully and turning them around- like the planet in miniature, or some fragile and unfamiliar life form, both organic and mineral.



Elizabeth Willing

ELIZABETH WILLING, Birch printed Serviette shirt (Printed paper serviettes, one size fits most), 2015.

Next page: ELIZABETH WILLING, MURU Rope (TalkMURU cereal and saliva), 2015.

Elizabeth Willing's practice examines gastronomy with an emphasis on the collective experience of food. Her interest is in the sensory elements of food; smell, flavour, and material structures, as well as the ideology that accompanies these elements. She works to isolate and recombine these elements of food, to open up new emphasis and directions. The result is a body of work that moves between multisensory experiences, the social or convivial potential of 'serving', or considering the political and ethical concerns of humans who are becoming increasingly aware of what they eat. During her residency at HIAP, Elizabeth created a new series of work and researched foraging culture both in Helsinki, and greater Finland.



**FRONTIERS
IN
RETREAT**

2013-2018



*'Deep Time Séance', Kiasma Theatre, Helsinki,
Oct 18, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen*

INTRODUCTION: MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO ECOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Frontiers in Retreat, HIAP's long-term collaborative inquiry into the intersections of art and ecology, has reached midway. During its first couple of years the Frontiers network of remote residencies has strived to generate a deeper, more complex understanding on the interlacing entanglements unfolding between locally articulated ecological concerns and larger systemic, global processes.

Ecological concerns cannot be considered as purely environmental concerns, but should be understood as wickedly complex problems that require transgressing the borders of disciplines. Artists have the capacity to mediate between and synthesise different modes of knowledge, which is crucial to the understanding of complex co-dependencies between ecological, social, economic and political phenomena. This ability is required in order to come to terms with a hypercomplex question such as global climate change.

Questioning the notion of a frontier, that implies the idea of humans infinitely seeking new territories to explore, conquer and colonise, the project set out to investigate how situated knowledge on local environments could inform knowledge-formation on larger ecological changes that shape habitats and transform societies on a global level.

What is also questioned is the taken-for-grantedness of current globalised world system that relies completely on an easy access to certain raw materials such as crude oil or rare minerals. Would it be possible to maintain the current data-heavy technosphere and globalized economy if an abrupt change in climate or availability in 'natural resources' would occur? Would the physical and imaginary frontiers of human civilisations shrink again into more narrow horizons and localised engagements?

In the project there are seven core sites, with their distinctive ecosystems and entwined ecological-social-economic and political concerns, that are observed through different lenses in the course of five years. Through their distinctive artistic approaches, the invited artists work at and in between the ecologically and culturally diverse locations, researching the specific ecologies of each site. Most of them get to work in various residency centres (or engage more deeply with one site), circulating and mediating knowledge within the network.

With these artists, who work across various epistemic frameworks, methods and understandings on 'ecology', we are engaging in experimental forming of knowledge – often in collaboration with local inhabitants and communities.

HIAP has developed and initiated the project and runs it in partnership with the following organisations: Cultural Front – GRAD, Serbia; Skaftfell – Center for Visual Art, Iceland; Scottish Sculpture Workshop – SSW, Scotland; Interdisciplinary Art Group SERDE, Latvia; Centre d'Art i Natura de Farrera, Catalonia; Mustarinda, Finland; and Jutempus, Lithuania.

Most of the sites are located far away from urban centres within fragile ecosystems such as glaciers, ancient old-growth forests, archipelagos, high altitude mountain villages or small, mostly depopulated rural communities. All these sites can be somehow recognised as frontiers, where the complex interlacing of human activities and the materialities and processes of particular natural environments becomes tangible in an intensified, crystallised way.

Conceptually and methodologically, the project relies on radical openness that allows its participants to navigate across different epistemological multiplicity and to generate difference instead of a singular narrative on ecological change. This also allows observations and new knowledge to emerge slowly over a long period of time, through situated engagements conducted in dialogue with the residency centres, local inhabitants and communities.

So far the project partners have been work-

ing with the Frontiers artists alongside local artists at numerous different sites, curating and organising research visits, field excursions, residencies, lectures, discussions, interdisciplinary incubators and exhibitions.

In the coming years, these processes will be woven together through a concluding exhibition that will take place in all the seven Frontiers sites as well as on the virtual platform currently in the making. Towards the end of the project, acclaimed thinkers and writers will be invited to reflect upon the emergent knowledge brought about by the artists processes. The final symposium in Helsinki in Spring 2018 will gaze into the future and pave the way for further interdisciplinary inquiries beyond the European Frontiers framework.

Through artistic and multidisciplinary inquiries into the deep history of the Earth, into the current ecological changes shaping our biosphere, as well as into possible futures, Frontiers in Retreat aims to generate a more complex understanding on the ecological changes affecting the living conditions of humans and more than humans alike, locally and globally.

Jenni Nurmenniemi
Curator, Frontiers in Retreat

Adaptations Utö: Narrative and Sensory Enquiries into Island Ecology

Turku Archipelago, Sep 24–27, 2015

Text Jenni Nurmenniemi

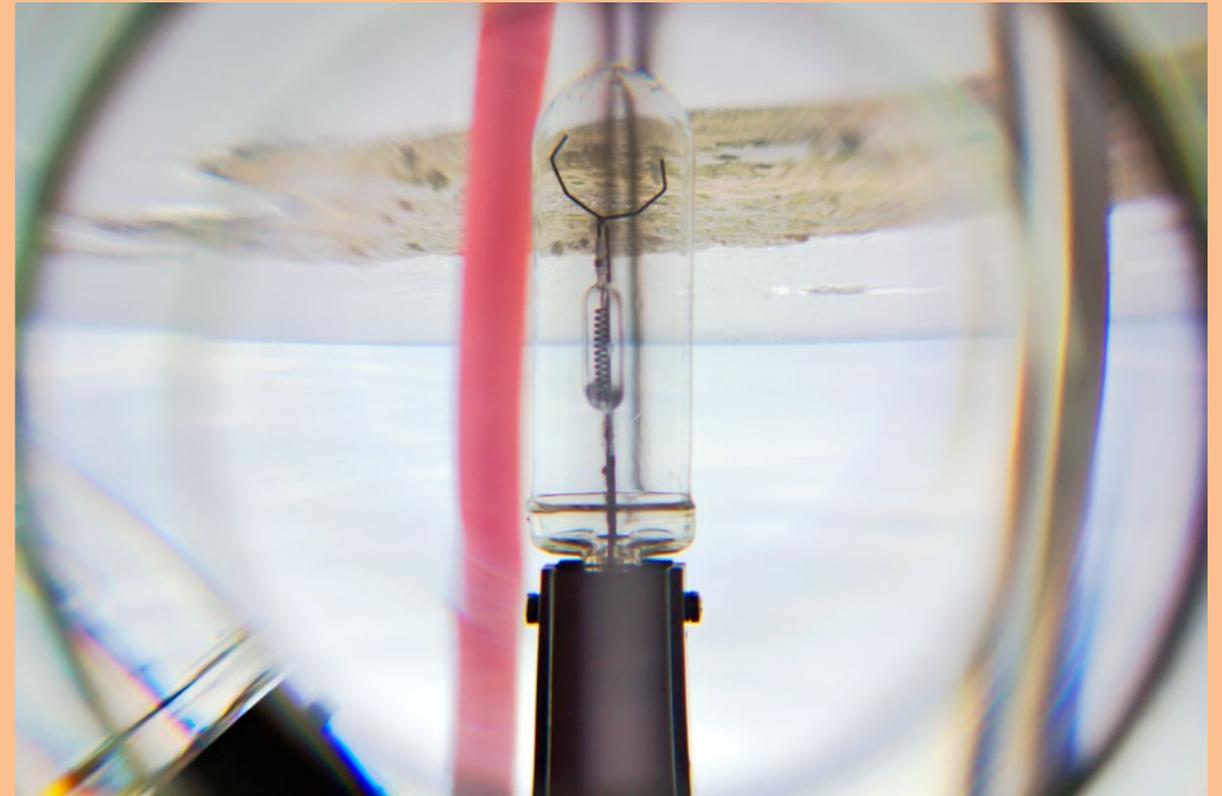
The fifth episode in the series of seven Frontiers in Retreat incubators, with the title *Adaptations*, was organised by HIAP and a number of partners on the island of Utö in Turku Archipelago in late September 2015. This excursion brought 68 artists, curators and organisers, art students, specialists of various disciplines and local interlocutors together to engage with Utö island's histories, its human and non-human forms of life, and the entwined social and ecological concerns typical to the site.

This workshop, that took the form of a slow-paced incubator, set out to explore the methodological questions of situated, embodied knowledge and narratives as a form of knowledge transfer and collective memory. The overarching thematic question, through which these issues were filtered, was the complex interlacing of ecological and social change on an island that, depending on the point of view, is simultaneously at the forefront and the final frontier before the open Baltic Sea.

Utö is the furthest inhabited island of the

Turku archipelago. Due to its geopolitical position, it has a distinct history, infrastructure and social ecology from its surrounding islands. For centuries, it has been an important strategic location influenced by the presence of a lighthouse, a military base, and a navigation station. Histories of communication technologies, military infrastructure and ecological change converge there. Besides allowing us to look closely into questions of locality, the complex ramifications of global political, economic and ecological changes crystallise in this small island community.

In the incubator, multisensory forms of observation and communication were used in approaching the issues at hand. The incubator also provided the participants the chance to share and extend their methods for capturing situated or context responsive research. It fused local knowledge, scientific expertise that is closely and empathically attached with the site, and diverse artistic approaches. Also, it attempted to speculate with possible adaptations called for by



Utö, September 2015. Photo: Katri Naukkarinen

the current changes within the Turku Archipelago ecosystem.

Through looking into the various ecologies (the marine biosphere, social and economic structures) of Utö and its surroundings, the participants were encouraged to rethink how to approach questions of locality and the concepts of 'frontier' and 'periphery'. Change was another key concept, as the invited experts and local inhabitants shared their knowledge on how the archipelago has transformed over the centuries. Historical perspective to life on the island was opened up through stories shared by long-term inhabitants of Utö.

Adaptations workshop aimed to form horizontal platforms for knowledge exchange through slow transitions, field studies, subtle sensory exercises, screenings and discussions. The partici-

pants reflected upon what kinds of understandings of the local ecosystems these experiential and experimental practices might produce? What kinds of artistic devices could mediate these understandings? *The Adaptations Utö* field notes, photographic essay, audio recordings and videos can be found on the Frontiers in Retreat research blog: frontiersinretreat.tumblr.com.

The workshop was curated by Jenni Nurmenniemi in close collaboration with CAA – Contemporary Art Archipelago (Lotta Petronella & Taru Elfving), Jutempus (Zoetics) – a working group led by Gediminas & Nomeda Urbonas (Art, Culture and Technology Program, MIT); associate partners from Aalto University (Professor Pia Lindman) and University of the Arts Helsinki (Professor Ulrika Ferm).

Deep Time Séance: *Embodied Enquiries into Geohistory and Planetary Futures*

Deep Time Séance at Residency Unlimited,
Brooklyn, New York, Apr 8, 2015 &
Deep Time Séance: Contamination at Kiasma
Theatre, Helsinki, Oct 18, 2015

Text Jenni Nurmenniemi

Slowly condensing into layered, immersive performative installations, the first two iterations of *Deep Time Séance* in New York and Helsinki set out to form new kinds of ritualistic gestures and situations for subjective and collective encountering of the unsettling ramifications of human-induced climate change. Through digging into deep history and the mythic undercurrents of ‘modernised’ 21st century societies, the two séances sought to envision new metaphors and future scenarios for the Earth we inhabit.

The concept for *Deep Time Séance* came about through a somewhat alchemical fusing of two notions that might seem distant at first glance. The concept of deep time, introduced by one of the founders of modern geology, James Hutton (1726–1797), allows insight into the deep history of the Earth through looking into the perpetual circulation of matter as if ‘re-

corded’ into its geological formations. The notion of deep time allows us to grapple with the abyss of time beyond human comprehension, and to position human existence in relation to Earth’s slow life cycles. Séance, in turn, was a popular term in the early years of the 20th century, when it meant a ritualistic session for communicating with the spiritual world. Both concepts share the underlying striving towards something beyond direct reach or comprehension. Coined together, they signify a synergistic attempt to form new compositions and solutions out of unlikely substances.

A synergistic attempt is a fitting expression for describing the two *Deep Time Séances*. Combining layers of 3D-animated landscapes and live ambient soundscapes into site-specific immersive installations, working across poetry, science fiction, and personal narratives on ecol-

ogy-related anxieties, setting into circulation series of sculptural energy objects, and, finally, contaminating the situation with subtle performative interferences, the séances brought together an assemblage of artistic means.

With two different constellations of artists from various fields, the two events revolved around the ways in which humanity coexists and coevolves with diverse substances (such as oil, copper, coal...), how these substances have been turned into ‘natural resources’ on which societies of the present century are wholly dependent, and how these materials operate in the world, simultaneously mediated by and shaping human actions and experience¹.

Deep Entanglements of the ‘Rational’ and the Magical

At the surface level, 21st century civilisations seem to be constructed upon rational economic, scientific, technological, and democratic decision-making systems that are more or less detached from religious value systems and dogma. However, a quick glimpse into the not-too-distant history unravels their entanglement with the spiritual, often downright magical thinking. One fascinating example connected to the thematics of *Deep Time Séance* is provided by North American scholar Jamie L. Jones in her recent essay *Oil: Viscous Time in the Anthropocene*². Jones brings into light the spiritual roots of modern geology and early oil extraction industry through the 19th Century geologist-spiritualists William and Elizabeth Denton’s imaginative embodied research. In their quest for oil, the Dentons coined the then-novel geological

1 See for instance ‘Energy and Experience: an Essay on Nafhology’ by Tere Vadén & Antti Salminen: <http://www.mcmprime.com/books/energy-and-experience-an-essay-in-nafhology>

2 Jamie L. Jones (2016): ‘Oil: Viscous Time in the Anthropocene’. An essay in the series *Speaking Substances*, published by Los Angeles Review of Books: <https://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/oil-viscous-time-in-the-anthropocene>

metaphor of the Earth’s strata as an ‘archive’ or a ‘medium’, with spiritualist methods of entranced channelling of non-human agencies.

The Dentons were not an exception in their use of otherworldly methods for the advancement of modern science and accumulating capital. In the turn of the 19th and 20th century, séances and other concepts leaning towards the supernatural were very popular – also among the scientific minds and within circles of political power. Jones’ essay shows how spiritual discourse, methods, and metaphors played a part in gaining access and justifying the use of the newly found ‘infinite ocean of oil’, and demonstrates “the spiritual behind the bad romance between oil and modern Western culture”³. For the formation of the *Deep Time Séance*, recognition of these entanglements was essential. In brief, the ways in which we relate to our environment and its non-human entities are largely informed and understood via myths, beliefs, and metaphors, and it is these we need to look into, when envisioning future scenarios for humanity.

Resource Exhaustion, Petro Subjectivities and Paradigm Shifts

Humanity’s recently formed interdependence and coevolution with substances like coal, oil, and copper, have contributed a great deal to accelerated technological and cultural changes that seem to be abruptly intensifying into a global-scale ecosystemic imbalance. Our dependence on these materials is also central in defining how we experience the world, the formation of our subjectivities. Copper conducts currents of energy and information, coal gives heat, oil allows global mobility for our goods and us. In the past five decades or so, their accelerated global circulation has started to show also unwanted consequences.

Considering the amount of valid scientific data available on the human imprint on the biosphere, one would think there would already be a massive multidisciplinary movement towards finding more sustainable scenarios for the fu-

3 Ibid.

ture of humanity. However, it seems difficult to come to terms with all the data generated by diverse information and knowledge systems operating within the increasingly complex world system. Encountering anthropogenic climate change would call for synergistic efforts able to reach across the highly specialised, segregated disciplines, and systems of belief and communication. With the underlying idea that artists seem to maintain an exceptional capacity to cross and push disciplinary boundaries and operate between narrow categories of specialised knowledge, Deep Time Séance set out to poetically meditate upon the past, present, and future of our fossil-based existence, and envision new trajectories that could replace our unsustainable petro subjectivities.

Ritual Practices for Facing Climate Change

The choreography for the first Séance started to unfold in Brooklyn, New York, in February, 2015. The key point of departure was the site, a former chapel transformed into an art space hosting the activities of Residency Unlimited. Working in the space on several ecology-related art projects, with accumulating subjective climate-change anxiety, my thoughts oscillated around ways of instigating change, or large-scale paradigmatic shifts. The conflict between neoliberal quartile-paradigm for maximised profits and any attempt towards more sustainable human existence within this biosphere seemed paralyzing from both personal and societal perspective. I was reading about ‘dark green religion’ and researching the Whole Earth Catalogs¹. This, combined with the sacral architectural features of my workspace, made me wonder what ritualistic gestures or ‘tools’ might be needed for tackling the polarising local and global conditions that call for massive adjustments in our accustomed ways of living, and for adapting to abruptly changing environments.

1 The Whole Earth Catalog, 1968–72. A series of influential counterculture catalogs on ecology and tools for self-sustainability, published by Stewart Brand.

What would a ritual for mourning the loss of biodiversity and arable land, polluted water and air, destroyed forests, and our increasingly toxic bodies be like?

Scholars on environmental movements, such as Bron Taylor, have stated that to instigate the kind of global scale paradigm shift called for by the intensifying ecological urgencies, “*humanity would actually need to come up with new ‘religion-resembling’ set of beliefs and practices, based on a conviction that nature is sacred, has intrinsic value, and is therefore due reverent care.*” Connected with this belief is the idea of kinship with non-human life, and an awareness of the interdependent nature of life on the earth².

Reaching the kind of ‘biospheric awareness’ described by Taylor requires adopting a perception of time beyond the human perspective, including the realisation of extremely slow planetary life cycles. This paves the way for an understanding of the constant change within and around us, and puts human existence into perspective – without denying the fact that human activity, especially during the past 150 years, a mere blip of time on the planetary scale, has indeed had an effect on the entire biosphere³.

The First Deep Time Séance: Circulation

As part of my curatorial residency within the

2 Taylor, Bron (2009): ‘Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future’. University of California Press. 2009, 2–10.

3 In this sense the contested concept of the Anthropocene seems still valid, without denying the multiple agencies of other than human entities. See for instance a paper from Jan 2016, on Science: Waters, Colin N.; Zalasiewicz, Jan; Summerhayes, Colin; Barnosky, Anthony D.; Poirier, Clément; Gajuszka, Agnieszka; Cearreta, Alejandro; Edgeworth, Matt; Ellis, Erle C. (2016-01-08). “The Anthropocene is functionally and stratigraphically distinct from the Holocene”. Science 351 (6269): aad2622. ISSN 0036-8075. PMID 26744408.



‘Deep Time Séance: Contamination’, Kiasma Theatre, Helsinki, Oct 18, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

FCINY’s M0bius Programme¹ in New York in Spring 2015, I had been commissioned to curate a one-night event at Residency Unlimited. Out of the above concerns, the concept for the first séance began to unfold. This happened through an artwork that magnetically drew others to join in. The core was formed around a site-specific video installation and a live music performance, realised as a close collaboration between artist Tuomas A. Laitinen and composer/musician Matti Ahopelto. I had recently heard Ahopelto playing a fantastic concert inside Laitinen’s four-channel installation *Conductor* at the EMMA Museum in Finland. Laitinen’s broad artistic research into the global circulation of copper came close to my ideas of the interconnected entanglements and shared agencies between humans and diverse

1 M0bius Mobility Programme for Art Professionals: <http://m0bius.net/projects/deep-time-seance>

substances. For the Séance, Laitinen animated eerily glowing rock formations and views of mesmerising, ever-changing landscapes, where the surface of the Earth had transformed into azure blue dunes of copper ore. This barren landscape was devoid of humans, although apparently formed by them.

The cyclic movements of this strange, deserted mineral world, rendered into waves, were observed from above as if by an extra-terrestrial gaze. Occasionally, the view opened deep into the earth, seemingly to the insides of the pulsating sea of blue ore. This, in turn, was transformed into caves that were slowly filling with reflecting spikes piercing through their ceiling. Playing between the layered scrim screen structures, Ahopelto’s ethereally flowing ambient soundscapes opened up portals into an unfamiliar time. In this scenario, one could not tell if this was the Earth, whether it was the past or the future. The only living presence was Ahopelto’s figure, hovering in the landscape, unreachable except for the sound mass oozing



'Deep Time Séance: Contamination', Kiasma Theatre, Helsinki, Oct 18, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

from his synthesizer.

It was as if humans had exhausted the Earth of the last valuable minerals, and this ceremony was looking at the Earth from the distant future, with only a few tiny fragments of its materiality reachable to us. The remaining tangible fragments were manifested in the form of circulating energy objects: small ceramic pendulums by the artist Jaakko Pallasvuo. During the performance, these amulets were passed to intuitively chosen participants, who were instructed either to keep them, or to pass them on to someone else. The energy objects brought in a haptic dimension, as well as the idea of the circulation of some sort of strange capital in a form that could be read as an art object. However, by insisting upon them circulating freely and randomly, beyond conscious control, the artist made a point of refusing their intentional use as such. Rather, he made them into 'tools' carrying special, unnamed powers. Later on, in the weeks and months following the séance, some of the talismans reappeared, worn by people on

different occasions, posted on social media, or having been passed on as gifts.

Another important element in the New York séance was the passage into ritual, conducted on this occasion by artist Tatiana Istomina. For her *Scary Stories* project (2014, ongoing), Istomina had used drawing and storytelling to explore concepts of fear, and to create a record of personal and collective anxieties. By then, Istomina had invited 65 people from the US, Europe, Asia, and South America to tell her stories about anything scary in their own lives or in their community. After that, Istomina asked them to respond to another person's story through digital drawing or writing. The stories and drawings were then edited into short films. Several of these narratives dealt in some way with the anxieties related to ecological questions, and a selection of these stories was played out, accompanied by illustrations.

The stories led the way into a shared discussion among a small group of séance participants on anxieties caused by the totality of

climate change. On an individual level, when encountering a massive issue, an unrepresentable hyperobject¹ such as climate change with its diverse direct and indirect implications upon human and other futures, one can easily become paralyzed. In order to deal with the intensifying environmental urgencies, absolutely *everything* should be rethought and adjusted, including the embodied, subjective connections we have with our environment, and our relations to the Earth's diverse inhabitants. After an oddly purifying group discussion, the rest of the audience flowed in, food and drinks were served, and everyone took their places on the pillows laid out in the space and took off on the journey into crystallised layers of time.

The Second Enquiry: On Contamination

The next iteration of Deep Time Séance was commissioned for Helsinki in October 2015. Quite unexpectedly, it happened within the framework of an annual international theatre festival *Theatre.now* that had climate change as its theme². The venue was to be the KIASMA Museum's Theatre, and hence the piece would be considered in the context of contemporary theatre. Working within theatre with its cultural conventions, stage, and a fixed, frontal viewing situation posed challenges for the immersive, embodied, and participatory aspects of the séance. There was a danger of it turning into a spectacle, instead of an embodied collective enquiry, aiming towards a more biospheric awareness. Yet, the chance to develop the séance further, namely in the context of negotiating climate change and crossing disciplinary boundaries, was a unique opportunity. Thus, the concept was modified according to the new parameters.

1 Morton, Timothy (2013): 'Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World'. University of Minnesota Press.

2 Theatre.now, 'Shared Space: Music, Weather, Politics', 15–18 Oct, 2015, <http://www.kiasma.fi/en/calendar/kiasma-theatre/theatre-now/>

What remained from the first séance was the intuitively layered assemblage of various artistic approaches. This time, the underlying theme, circulation of matter, and the interconnected operation of materials in the world, was tackled through an idea of bodies and contamination. The idea was to disrupt the persistent notion of the human body as a vessel with stable boundaries, the inside and the outside. The leakages in this paradigm were made visible through looking into how toxins, pollutants, and plastic become part of our bodies and genome through air, water, soil, and accumulation in our food chains.

The uncontrollable circulation and infinite combinations of synthetic toxins in our blood streams and metabolic systems, the radioactive waste from Fukushima, the gigantic plastic fleets in the oceans, all acted as key references for this séance. For its three acts, Tuomas A. Laitinen crafted three different visual scenarios that again merged seamlessly with Matti Ahopelto's improvised music. This time Ahopelto's synthesizer was accompanied by Tapio Viitasaari on the trumpet. For each three acts, the image was constructed in three layers, on semi-transparent scrim screens spanning the entire width and height of the stage, and installed a few metres apart from each other. The elements on each screen were in a dynamically flowing relation with each other, creating a strong sense of spatiality. Again, the musicians were playing between the layered screens, gently disrupting the images with their presence.

The first act started as a 15-minute sunrise, viewed through a thickening smog, accompanied by a serene soundscape. The sun's slow journey across the sky was followed by a series of photographic images, discovered from the radiating waters near Fukushima Japan. Ordinary family snapshots had been exposed to the radioactive pollution that had corroded them into ghastly, distorted visions. These were left slowly lingering on the screens, nightmarish images dissolving into each other. In the second act, the ominous atmosphere turned abruptly into swirling vortexes of toxic waste leaking out of a giant, detached nose. In this violent scenario, the music intensified into an act of exorcism, testing the physical limits of the audi-



'Deep Time Séance: Contamination', Kiasma Theatre, Helsinki, Oct 18, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

ence. Again, in stark contrast to this, the third act opened with a carefully composed, generic and soothing R&B-inspired muzak, into a virtual space on stage, an infinite marble hall, empty except for a single human figure holding a microphone. In this final act, actress Anna Rawlings performed a text by Jaakko Pallasvuo, a fragmented poem or spell that in an ominous tone commented upon contamination and deterioration, drawing from a wide spectrum of references from Shakespeare to contemporary Wicca culture.

Printed on artisanal Nepalese marigold-petal paper and handed to the audience in fortune-cookie style notes upon entering the space, the complete text was only delivered at the very end, with Anna's seductively spoken words. In addition to slightly deranged arrangements of

flowers and fruits, other tangible things in the space were Pallasvuo's energy objects, randomly dispersed in the auditorium. They were there to be found and taken, this time without any instructions. Following the theme of contamination, the whole setup was very subtly contaminated by a choreography by artist Laura Jantunen. With four other dancers, Jantunen guided selected audience members to specific seats, and during Laitinen's and Ahopelto's performance, while remaining seated among the audience, they performed a subtly distracting dance score based on an extremely slow, synchronised collapsing of their bodies.

This time, the ritual started with a collective reiki session, guided by artist Pia Lindman. Reading carefully chosen excerpts from science fiction novels and contemporary poetry on the

subject of escaping from the Earth, Lindman tuned the situation and audience for a mental journey. All the while, she was making ink drawings illustrating the excerpts. The light needed for the reiki meditation session was provided by the light of mobile phones that audience members in certain seats were asked to project on their faces.

After Laitinen and Ahopelto's performance, when all the performers had disappeared into the marble hall, the séance ended with a small tea serving on the stage, to which only a few of the audience members were invited. This practicing of recurrent selection among the audience was more or less present in all the elements of the séance. It was a means to reflect upon the increasing polarisation between a small minority who will have access to capital and means to

thrive despite the consequences of global ecological crises, and the growing masses of people carrying these consequences, leading their lives under increasingly precarious conditions. This completes the circle, leading us back to the present moment. My concluding thought ties in with the questions about rituals and mourning I posed myself during my time in New York. We need embodied enquiries into deep history and distant futures, in order to critically question and recognise the historicity of neoliberal economic policies that aim to fast profit-making in a quartile time scale, without consideration to long-term economic, social or environmental consequences.



'Deep Time Séance: Contamination', Kiasma Theatre, Helsinki, Oct 18, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

You walk through a white cloud of smoke.
Your nose begins to bleed.
A clump of your hair falls out.
Your posture changes.
Your back draws up into a hunch.

You walk through a white cloud of smoke.
You've been texting.
You've been looking for somebody.

You're in a forest.
There are three witches here:

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
An iPod shuffle.
Your master's decree.
The keys to your apartment.

You walk through a white cloud of smoke:
Wizardry, Alchemy, Allurement, Sorcery

Climate scientists conduct their research while unwittingly destabilizing the social order. Climate scientists develop depression and anxiety, plagued by what some describe as pre-traumatic stress disorder. The knowledge of our approaching end can be too much to take on. For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.

"A human being has so many skins inside, covering the depths of the heart. We know so many things, but we don't know ourselves! Why, thirty or forty skins or hides, as thick and hard as an ox's or bear's, cover the soul. Go into your own ground and learn to know yourself there."

2277 AD, 1667 AD
London SE1
An ashy industrial building lit by torches,
windows covered with cardboard and burlap.
Glass is hard to come by here.

You are a hunchback, weaving yarn.
You are nearsighted. Sometimes you wonder
if a curse has been placed upon you.

A horse carriage outside drags plague victims to
their mass graves.
You tap your lifeless iPhone.
You rub a rabbit's foot,
for good luck.

Dying is easy, it's living that scares you (to death).

Fire, element of warmth, let me control you.
Water, element of moist, let me control you.
Air, element of storms, let me control you.
Earth, element of nature, let me control you.

Maybe you walk through a white cloud of
smoke.
Maybe a good spirit hands you an amulet.
You don't know that the thing you've received
is an amulet.
The amulet will protect you where engineering
has failed.
Where linear thinking has failed.
You count your blessings.
You walk through a white cloud of smoke.
The smoke makes its audience barren.
You are unable to have children.
Culture can't reproduce itself.
Plays are written and never put on.
No ideas worth repeating.

As civilization folds, we unravel.

The future looks bright today. It looks a lot like
the past, when we crawled out of the ocean's
depths. We learned to walk, climb and build.
We invented linear progress. The future looks
like a reversal of that. The sea splashing against
us, mute and indifferent.

On a piece of parchment, write the following
words:
Air cannot freeze me.
Fire cannot burn me.
Water cannot drown me.
Earth cannot bury me.

Excavations: *Explorations into Interdependencies*

HIAP Gallery Augusta, Helsinki,
Jun 6 – Aug 30, 2015

Text Jenni Nurmenniemi

Excavations, the second international group exhibition organised in the context of the Frontiers in Retreat project (2013–2018) weaved together long-term artistic processes, new commissions and recent artworks by seven individual artists or collectives. Of the participating artists, Carl Giffney (Dublin), Mirko Nikolić (Belgrade/London) and Tue Greenfort (Berlin/Zürich) had been living and working at HIAP and other sites belonging to the Frontiers European residency network during 2014–15.

Other three, Barbara Knezevic (Dublin), Hanna Ljungh (Stockholm) and Tuomas A. Laitinen (Helsinki/Los Angeles), had taken part in other HIAP residency programmes during the last two years. Based on our shared conversations and consequently emerging material and thematic connections between the artists' work, the concept for the exhibition took its final shape between Autumn 2014–Spring 2015. An important part of this process was my dialogue with artist/researcher Saara Hannula (Helsinki)

ki) that had begun within the *Dissolving Frontiers* exhibition of the previous summer. Our shared concerns around encountering the intensifying global climate crisis thus brought in also The BodyBuilding Project, a multidisciplinary collaboration led by Hannula.

In their various ways, all the participating artists explored historical or emergent interdependencies – the coexistence and coevolution of the diverse beings and things inhabiting this earth – through acts of surfacing, exposing, extracting, reassembling, redirecting and rehearsing. Therefore, the exhibition functioned as a site for various forms of artistic excavations. The overarching concern present throughout the exhibition process was the aim of 'going beyond the binary', namely the persistent Nature-Culture dichotomy. The possibility for doing this was explored by looking into the interconnected circulation processes of materials within interlinked earth spheres: biospheric, technospheric, socio-political, economic. The



'The BodyBuilding Project: A Non-Conclusion', Suomenlinna Island, Helsinki, Aug 19, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

exhibition observed the human relationships with the diverse ecosystems of our biosphere through affective, embodied and experiential approach.

Throughout the summer, Gallery Augusta was inhabited (literally) by The BodyBuilding Project. Formed by changing, open constellations of both human and nonhuman entities, The BodyBuilding Project aimed to establish a continuous collective practice that visitors could join at will. The objective was to collectively figure out what kind of sensibilities, subjectivities and relational capacities we, as beings and as a species, would need to develop in order to better respond to the uncertainties and ecological urgencies we are currently facing. Together, they hoped to develop a series of relational practices to help us to begin building bodies capable of projecting life beyond our collapsing horizons.

Through durational embodied exercises (such as somatic movement sessions), foraging edible plants from Suomenlinna, reading ac-

tivities and weekly gatherings open for all, the BodyBuilding Project sought embodied ways for grappling climate crisis and for digesting the vast amount of theoretical and conceptual information available on the subject. Osmosis between 'inside' and 'outside' was important, as many of the activities organically spread beyond the gallery premises to the surrounding islands. The first exhibition, operating as the basecamp for the bodybuilding activities, was constantly shaped according to currently ongoing exercise. A varying number of camping tents were set up for both gallery and outdoor activity. The tents also provided intimate spaces where visitors could listen to an audio piece narrated by Robert Kocik (of the BodyBuilding Project) or read the numerous books brought into the exhibition by the Project participants or lent from HIAP's Frontiers Reads library.

From curator's point of view, surrendering to this kind of openness was something new as there were only a few relatively stable coordi-



HANNA LJUNGH, *Specimen 1, 4 & 5*, 2014. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

nates in the space, marked by ‘stones’: Hanna Ljungh’s three sculptures reminding geological samples and Barbara Knezevic’s sundial made out of three natural rocks and their black leather shadows. Otherwise everything was in constant flux throughout the whole duration of the exhibition.

The first impression of the second exhibition hall of Gallery Augusta was darker and quieter. The three artists showing their works there had all been researching into human coexistence with metals, namely copper and bronze, or working through these metals – like Carl Giffney with his *Dependence Shoes*, 25 kg pair of Dutch clogs cast out of bronze.

Painstakingly hitchhiking and trekking throughout Finland during his February 2015 Frontiers residency in Mustarinda, Hyrynsalmi, Giffney used his bronze shoes for activating discussions around national and cultural independence, dependence and present-day colonialism. His whole journey until then, realised

during recent residencies in Finland, Scotland and the Netherlands, was edited by the artist into 1,5 hour video saga *I really don’t feel them* (2015–). In the video, Giffney’s conversations with young Sámi musicians and representatives were especially telling in regards of contemporary forms of colonialism and identity politics. In the exhibition, the bronze shoes and the video work were shown together, in a way that visitors could also try out wearing the shoes – of which one of the Sámi youths in the video says:

“If I would have to wear these shoes, I’d rather walk with my hands”.

Looking more directly into the workings of a specific material in the *worldsystem*, with the aim of blowing up the persistent divide between animate and inanimate matter, Mirko Nikolić’s ongoing artistic project *we ♥ Copper & Copper ♥ us* (2015–) explores cultural meanings and representations attached to copper. From the



The finissage of ‘Excavations’, HIAP Gallery Augusta, Aug 28, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

abyss of the internet, Nikolić mines visual and textual references related to this metal, ranging from copper coloured hair to construction materials. He recirculates these representations via his *Copperlove* website and “contaminates” them with an unexpected vocabulary of love. By collating the metallic final products and their representations, Nikolić brings attention to the global desire to mine, extract, and refine raw materials. Casting a critical gaze into extraction industries and future mining initiatives (for instance in Serbia and Finland), Nikolić works to expose and alter the ways in which humans and metals interact.

For *Excavations*, Nikolić’s created the first demonstration of a DIY data centre, ‘a virtual copper mine’ to be activated outdoors, at a few of the numerous planned mining sites of Southern Finland during the artist’s second Frontiers in Retreat residency at HIAP in April–May 2016. Hanging from the ceiling by colourful straps that were set up across the whole gallery

space, the tube construction made out of fabric (printed with visual mapping of geological data), power chords, plastic, metal, computer screen and a self-made data server, Nikolić’s mobile mining site occupation centre conducted the way between the first and the second exhibition hall.

Copper was also at the core of Tuomas A. Laitinen’s new work. The one-channel video *Powder of Sympathy* (2015), premiered at HIAP, was a condensation of the artist’s 2,5 years research tracing and filming the often obscured movement of this raw material in the world. For Laitinen, copper operated as a conductor – both a physical and a philosophical one – a vessel transmitting and transforming material, energy and ideas: “a tool for thinking through the structural premises of our environment and how those affect our everyday life”.

In *Powder of Sympathy*, a frantic flow of images sourced by the artist from Benin, West Africa; Detroit and San Francisco, United States;



The vernissage of 'Excavations', Jun 12, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

Beijing and Ordos, China, is set in motion and blended with feverish pounding, hissing and rattling soundscape. Accompanied by Jenna Sutela's script, the video narrates and juxtaposes the mythical and chemical characteristics of copper. Beginning with its healing properties then progressing to its conductive role in the development and continuity of electricity-dependent modern societies, the work's occasionally disrupted images dissolve into entropy.

On the surface, Hanna Ljungh's sculptures resemble pillars of geological cross sections in their rich layering of colourful minerals. Upon closer examination, they consist of synthetic materials and organic residues of contemporary human existence. Completely indebted to dead organic matter – utilized in the form of fossil fuels – we are constantly creating another fossil stratum that has our markings on it. Maybe Ljungh's sculptures could be like the future fossils of the Anthropocene, an era in the histo-

ry of the earth during which human activities left an imprint on the whole biosphere. Despite these more austere associations, the sculptures playfully tackle the passage of time on a geohistorical scale and confuse the borders between the natural and human made.

Dealing with time, (unruly) matter, agency and circulation in a very different way, Barbara Knezevic's work is concerned with how objects function materially, ontologically and economically in the world. Her work considers the peculiar human relationship to the things around us typified by the art object. Knezevic assembles and forms everyday materials into temporary sculptural arrangements. Being very simple in their composition, Knezevic seeks the barest most economical intervention into the materials. Thus, the materials, objects, and arrangements maintain their capacity of returning again to their unadulterated state – before they became artworks.

For *Excavations*, Knezevic brought a three round, grey rocks, typical to Suomenlinna fortress island. The artist placed each of them lying on a black piece of leather, cut in a way that they seemed like the stones' shadows. The piece, titled *Certain Time of Day* (2015), was activated and transformed according to the sunlight that the stones were exposed to during the long summer days. At certain hour, the actual shadows of the rocks met the simulated leathery ones.

Time and sunlight were also of essential importance to the activation of Tue Greenfort's take on sculptural mycology. His work, *Pleurotus Mychorriza Ostreatus. On-going Mushroom Cultivation Research. René Descartes, An Essay on Methods, 1899.* (2014–), had first been exhibited at HIAP during the *Dissolving Frontiers* exhibition in the summer 2014. For *Excavations*, Greenfort decided to attempt to activate the mushroom cultivation that had been dormant for the past year. This time, mushrooms again acted as the central agents of the artwork, informing rhizomatic ways of existing and decomposing beyond dualist thinking. The cultivation had been inoculated on a carefully selected Finnish edition of René Descartes's 1899 methodological essay. In this piece by Greenfort, the thinking of one of the key characters of Western dualist philosophy was literally dissolved by mushrooms. During the first year, the cultivation thrived producing a few small mushrooms protruding between the pages of the book. This year, however, it seemed that mold overpowered the mushrooms, and in the course of the summer the book had to be secluded under a glass and placed into direct sunlight to dry out. At the time of writing this, the microbiological processes are still going on – for an undefined period of time.

To conclude, *Excavations* aimed to form situations for the rethinking of subjectivities and practices within the increasingly precarious (ecological, economic, social and political) parameters of the early 21st century. With its side programme, the exhibition process turned HIAP Gallery Augusta into a space for exploring new possibilities for coexistence between



CARL GIFFNEY, *I really don't feel them*, installation view. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

humans and other entities inhabiting and operating in this world. Using their unique artistic approaches, all invited artists aimed to question conventional ('modernised', 'Western') understandings of nature and ecology. The artists were also open for interaction and dialogues within the experimental and not at all stable structuring of the exhibition, letting their works to be drawn into conversations and debates initiated by The BodyBuilding Project and amplifying the interconnectedness, for instance through a mixtape compiled for the exhibition by Tuomas A. Laitinen. All this formed a temporary space for unexpected associations and encounters among the artworks, the visitors and the temporary inhabitants of the space.

Zooetics

Text Tracey Warr

Zooetics is a coinage, a word in progress to explore new ways of engaging human knowledge and research with other forms of life and to imagine designs, prototypes and interfaces for future interspecies ecologies. *Zooetics* encompasses all life from mammals to molluscs to microbes, and addresses the paradigm shift in science, culture and society proposed in the argument of the Anthropocene. It engages with shifts in contemporary understandings of nature and human/non-human agencies.

Zooetics is a cross-disciplinary exploration of future environmental fictions and models and is part of the Outreach and Education Programme of the *Frontiers in Retreat* project. The metastructure of *Zooetics* was initially inspired by the site specificity of Kaunas University of Technology in Lithuania (KTU), where the campus is historically negotiating its borders with the Lithuanian Zoo and a valley named after romantic era poet Adam Mickiewicz. By colliding these three territories – a poetic approach with scientific and other discipline approaches, by using fiction and art as a tool to reach towards the unimaginable, *Zooetics* offers prototypes for future, radically altered interspecies relations.

The *Zooetics* discursive programme entailed a series of public keynote lectures in December 2014 and October 2015 held at KTU. The lectures and workshops, given by leading international writers, artists, designers and researchers, outlined and opened up debate on the Anthropocene, the concept of Nature, interspecies interactions, new materials research, food and farming research, communities of species, maker culture, spatial design, contagious and infec-

tious stories. The visiting speakers were Keller Easterling, Matthew Fuller, Caleb Harper, Natalie Jeremijenko, Jae Rhim Lee, Timothy Morton, John Palmesino & Ann-Sofi Rönnskog, Dimitris Papadopoulos, Christian Schwägerl and Skylar Tibbits.

Emerging as a consequence of the lectures and workshops, artists Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas created *The Psychotropic House: Zooetics Pavilion of Ballardian Technologies*, an artwork inspired by J.G. Ballard's fictional technologies in his collection of short stories, *Vermilion Sands*. The Zooetics Pavilion was exhibited in *XII Baltic Triennial* at Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania in 2015 and at Bunkier Sztuki Gallery of Contemporary Art, Krakow, Poland in 2016. Artifacts on view in the installations were produced as experiments for the production of mycomorphs, forms grown from mycelium mixed with other substances. Mycelium, the fungal network, is the greatest mass of any living organism on the planet. It is the vegetative part of mushrooms and a life form that can cannibalise other cultures or materials, create hybrids, and make new nets and constellations. Its potential as the material of the future has been researched and promoted by mycologists and ecologists alike, suggesting its use for sustainable and biodegradable materials or post-disaster spill toxin remediation, for examples. *The Zooetics Pavilion*, taking on the concept of Ballard's living and responsive "psychotropic house", tests the idea that objects, buildings and forms, rather than only being produced, can also be grown. This experiment aimed to push the common understanding about materiality towards a rhizomatic concept using mycelium.



1) 'Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas, *Psychotropic House: Zooetics Pavilion of Ballardian Technologies*', Gallery Bunkier Sztuki, Krakow, Poland, 2016. Photo: CAC Vilnius

2) 'Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas, *Zooetics Pavilion*', Gallery Bunkier Sztuki, Krakow, Poland, 2016. Mycelium with sound installation: various life forms – maggots, crickets, stick-insects, seals and pelicans recorded and produced by sound artist Antanas Dombrovski during the interspecies writing workshop 'Zoo Stories' at the Lithuanian National Zoo in Kaunas. Photo: CAC Vilnius

3) 'Mycomorph Laboratory', Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania, 2015. Photo: Nomeda Urbonas

During the Mycomorph Laboratory workshops in Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, artists, scientists, students, and school children were invited to carry on further experimentations with mycomorphs in a temporary lab infrastructure in the exhibition space. The participants explored hands-on the characteristics of mycelium and its ability "to collaborate" with other materials, such as wood, straw, sugar and flour among others; as well as searching for a form that would be able to grow continuously. After preparing and leaving their own mycomorphs for further growth in the lab, attendees often continued their experiments in their own studios and homes or in the forest.

The iteration of *Zooetics Pavilion* in *A Million Lines* exhibition in Krakow incorporated a sound element with the mycomorphs. The sounds, sourced from various life forms: maggots, crickets, stick-insects, seals and pelicans, were looped and mixed by sound artist Antanas Dombrovskij after the interspecies writing workshop *Zoo Stories* at the Lithuanian Zoo in Kaunas in October, 2015. The mycelium mycomorphs here took on a function as amplifiers for another case of interspecies communication.

Zooetics Pavilion was conceived in partnership with Baltic Champs, Lithuania-based edible mushroom production company. The Mycomorph Laboratory architecture was realized in collaboration with Paulius Vaitiekūnas, Andrius Pukis, Jautra Bernotaitė, Mykolas Svirskis; visualization - Sayjel Patel; mycelium growing technology - Paulius Pilipavičius; project communication - Dionizas Bajarūnas. The educational program was organized in collaboration with CAC educator Audrius Pocius and KTU students group led by Inga Siderevičiūtė. The project was also supported by contributions from Marijus Bakas, Dalius Keršys, Gediminas Stoškus, Skirmantas Zygmantas, and KTU volunteer students.

Zooetics is conceived by artists Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas, with writer Tracey Warr, and curator and writer Viktorija Šiaulytė.

Zooetics was supported by Lithuania's Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania and Lithuanian Council for Culture.

Sylvia Grace Borda: *Farm Tableaux Finland*

Sylvia Grace Borda is continuing work on the development of *Farm Tableaux Finland*. This is a continuing and evolving artwork that comprises a series of photographic panoramas and portraits of Finnish farming and food production. The *Farm Tableaux* series also serves as a champion and active agent in facilitating dialogue about agricultural practices, land stewardship and its relationship to creating sustainable food systems and economies.

The artist is producing these visual artworks using Google Street View technologies in collaboration with Google Trusted photographer, John M. Lynch. The *Farm Tableaux* series has the potential to provide a means of reflection about how agriculture is defined within Finland. The project aims to use the visual arts as a way to portray farmers and food production in situ and accessible as part of an online medium.

Importantly, *Farm Tableaux Finland* opens up questions about how individuals, communities, and regions consider agricultural environments as potential catalyst sites that can move us beyond “what’s being served on the dinner plate”. Through the commencement of this project there has been a resurgent interest in farming and land stewardship through public forums, art exhibitions, and newspaper reviews that have formed around *Farm Tableaux*.

While it may be presumptuous to state that art can inform social policy or sustainable development – *Farm Tableaux Finland* is supporting a visual platform to the participating farmers and to the public and, in so doing, raising a renewed awareness of food production.

For a project about contemporary farming

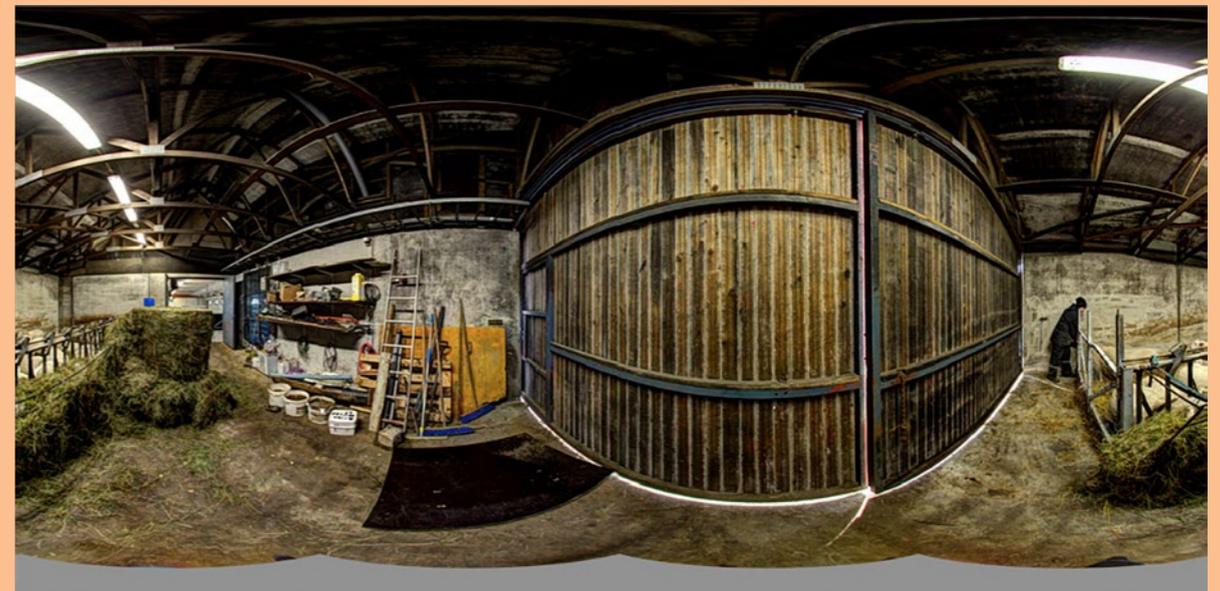
to succeed, it requires collaborators and close working partnerships. Organizations representing farming, biodiversity, conservation, and animal rights are offering guidance and time to assist in the development of the project. Without such support, the artworks would not be able to adequately address the real tensions across economies, distribution, conservation, and production. By slowing down the art-making process and incorporating the input of collaborators in relation to their industries, the artwork becomes more real to its audiences.

Indeed, the visual arts can provide a supporting role as a reflector of social interpretation and ownership and act as signifiers of wider public issues impacting farming communities today. The artist and partners are becoming aware that such a project as *Farm Tableaux Finland* is acting as a communication channel about regional, national, and global challenges, that it is hoped will overall assist in the common goals of resilient ecologies, social, and economic sustainability. The series was presented in 2015 at both the Oulu Art Museum (Jan 23 – Mar 15) and at the Mänttä Summer Arts exhibition (Jun 13 – Aug 31).

Farm Tableaux Finland is produced with the support of HIAP, MTK, MSL, and through consultations with Ruokatieto, Luomuliitto, Viskaalin Farm, Hannu Lahtela at Maltiolan Jaloste Oy, Kinnusen Mylly, Visit Finland, Aki Ajolan from the former Eat & Joy’s Market, and the Elo Foundation. It also marks the first ongoing art project developed for Google Street View.



SYLVIA GRACE BORDA, *Mise en Scene: Farm Tableaux Finland*, Markus Maulavirta preparing for ice fishing, Salla, 2014-.



SYLVIA GRACE BORDA, *Mise en Scene: Farm Tableaux Finland*, Niina Leskelä tending to Texel sheep at Viskaalin Farm, Muhos, Oulu, 2014-.

Carl Giffney: *I really don't feel them*

I really don't feel them, is a feature length documentary in HD + stereo made by Carl Giffney across 2014 and 2015 in Finland, Scotland and The Netherlands. It spans three residencies at: HIAP, Suomenlinna (FI), The Scottish Sculpture Workshop, Aberdeenshire, (UK) + Mustarinda, Hyrynsalmi, (FI). These residencies form part of a broader project entitled, *Frontiers In Retreat*.

Here Carl Giffney tells us about his time at HIAP, his work and its connection to Finland:

The work that was completed at HIAP in 2015, *I really don't feel them*, is the fourth leg of a four legged project that begins in The Netherlands, before moving to Scotland and then to Finland. The first three legs involved making active research, shooting video, making props, editing, performing and scripting. At HIAP, the results of this nine month period (video, sound and stills) were edited and produced to make *I really don't feel them*.

The film is centered around a very special pair of shoes.

The film opens in The Netherlands. That's where the shoes are from – Holland. They are clogs you see, but not just any clogs. We move to Scotland, where the shoes are being made. They are made of bronze. They are being cast at a foundry. There is a full moon rising. As the bronze and molds are being prepared, the furnace is lit. At the same time in Scotland there is a vote going on about National Independence from Britain. We see the votes being counted and the results collated on live TV. A small crowd watches the results. The bronze is poured. The vote turns out to be a 'No to Inde-

pendence'. The shoes are cast. The full moon retreats. The crowd disperses.

So that's how these shoes become so special. They come to embody an event of collective dependence, as apposed to independence, through means usually associated with mythology or witchcraft, a theme that runs through the video. The dependence that the bronze shoes embody through their sheer physical make up is also quickly clear. They weigh in at 27 KG, so are difficult to lift, let alone to wear. They are polished to a golden mirror finish and reflect everything. They are cold and slippery and beautiful. We move to Finland, where we see them being worn by me on a winter journey North into the Arctic in search of the Sámi people. I am hitchhiking, bussing and driving over 850 kilometers. My aim here is to ask these people, who I imagine have very specific opinions of independence, what they think of the shoes that I am wearing.

That's essentially the experiment of the film – to make a pair of 'dependence shoes', travel up Finland in them, and ask the Sámi what they think of them. Its central concern is in how we place ourselves, or lack to place ourselves, within traditional and new social contexts to do with independence. How do things happen around us? Things that are much larger than us and we have little connection to. It's a documentary film that follows a series of performances that all probe those issues within a European framework.

In many different ways it asks, how does dependency work in a collective sense? It asks these questions, as questions that are broad, but are also ones that are essential to under-



CARL GIFFNEY, *I really don't feel them* (HD video still), 2015

standing climate change – things to do with dependency and big scenarios happening that involve so many people. I feel an impeding motion through the film – one of huge things happening in front of us – as if we watch. This inability to place one's self within a social capital is at the core, but it's a positive film too. We see young people taking up old and new pursuits. Musically, it features some Sámi rap, psychedelic house and rune singing. A sense of generational shift is strong, one that does continue tradition but only in some parts.

Suomenlinna was a place of production for me, and a great one. The island, in particular its many stone fortifications and cannons, feature heavily in the film and many of the wind sound tracks were recorded there too. I spent much time walking the island and exploring Helsinki by day and by night meeting many people from many different countries and backgrounds, talking to many of them about dependency and the climate.

I returned to HIAP Suomenlinna for a second residency in 2016 to plan making a new work based wholly in the locale. I think that, significantly, in 2016 The Republic of Ireland marks its 100 year anniversary of independence

from Britain, and in 2017 Finland marks its 100 year anniversary of independence from Russia. I say 'marks' as Ireland currently tries to figure out how, or if, to celebrate, commemorate or parade. I wonder what parallels can be drawn across Finland and Ireland's upcoming anniversaries?

Closer to the micro-system, of course, Suomenlinna is an independence of its own. I think this independence affects my work in two ways. As it is separate from Helsinki, geographically, the island becomes like one big studio – full of animals, plants and buildings. In this context I feel that it is also a home base from which to explore and investigate the city of Helsinki from a remote position. The short boat trip to and from Suomenlinna island becomes a time for thinking and gathering thought for me – a little like the car drive from my studio to my home in Ireland.

I hear that in winter, when the sea is a frozen solid, some animals can make it to the island by walking out across the ice.

I really don't feel them is available to watch in full, along with various other projects and contact details at carlgiffney.com.



CARL GIFFNEY, *I really don't feel them* (HD video still), 2015

Tuomas A. Laitinen: *Conductors and Mediators – Unfolding a Process*

This is a story of many exhibitions, journeys and residencies, which led to multiple outcomes extracted from the same source. In the core there is one particular thing, a conductor – both physical and philosophical – that allowed me to explore the precarious material conditions of the world. In this case the conductor was copper. I traced the movements of this particular raw material in order to delve into the undertow of our existence. In the end this body of work was not about copper as such so I will emphasise the word ‘conductor’ here, meaning a vessel that can transmit and transform material, energy and ideas. This conducting element appealed to me as a narrator and amplifier for a rich cluster of themes. It opened up a way to ponder upon the possible social, economical and ecological narratives of near future. It was a tool for thinking through the structural premises of our environment and how those affect our everyday life. This substance led me to think about how material interfaces modify my thoughts and also steer the way I am ‘acting’ and operating in my environment.

In the beginning though, this project started as an inquiry of how humans build and destroy environments and infrastructures and what sort of consequences these actions pose for planet earth. We have specific culturally and politically charged locations here; places like Beijing, De-

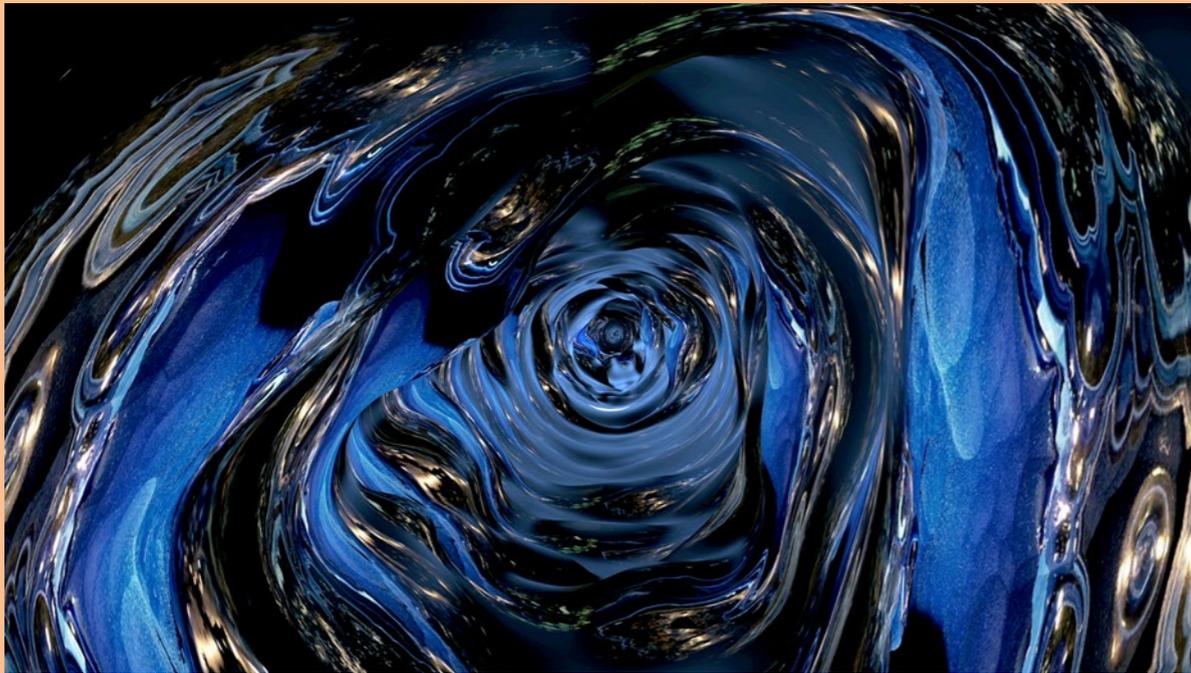
troit, San Francisco and Ouidah in Benin. I was gathering material from these places, observing the rapid ebb and tide of decay and development on display. The hunter-gatherer type of digital scavenging was the practical basis for the project. In the end, the footage was morphed in a heavy process when I was at HIAP residency in late 2014. During my stay, I was editing a video installation that was compiled from the cumulated data.

The results of this work were presented in my solo exhibition *Fundamental Matter* at EMMA – Espoo Museum of Modern Art. The main piece of this exhibition was a four channel video installation *Conductor*. In this work my intention was to create a platform to think about circulations of matter in a global context and show the causalities within this process. The installation was deliberately sensorial. It utilised half-transparent scrim screens so that all the images were overlapping each other. The audience was invited to meander around the installation and go through the structure and become part of the work. The border between inside and outside vanished.

Parts of the gathered material were also exhibited at my solo exhibition in Helsinki Contemporary in January 2015 and at a group exhibition *Frontiers in Retreat – Excavations* at HIAP during the summer of 2015, curated by HIAP’s



TUOMAS A. LAITINEN, *Fundamental Matter*, EMMA- Espoo Museum of Modern Art, 2014.
Photo: Ari Karttunen/EMMA



TUOMAS A. LAITINEN, *The Powder of Sympathy*, 2015.
Still images from the video.

curator Jenni Nurmenniemi. For this exhibition, I produced a single channel version of the piece *Conductor* called *The Powder of Sympathy*. This work took its name from a form of 17th century sympathetic healing magic. This ‘medicine’ used copper sulphate as one of the main ingredients and it was believed that this powder was able to heal through the ether without touching the wound. The origin story of this medicine was then juxtaposed with actual qualities of copper, its effects on human body and in the end, its entanglement to the infrastructures of modern society.

One very major new usage for this cluster of filmed material was a multidisciplinary performative installation *Deep Time Séance*. This project was realised in Residency Unlimited in New York and in Kiasma Theatre in Helsinki with a diverse group of artists led by curator Jenni Nurmenniemi. *Deep Time Séance* is an ongoing project, a blend of music, video installation and performance where one of the aims was to think about how we could approach various ecological issues in experiential way, e.g. exploring the affects related to these complex issues. In the video part of *Deep Time Séance* Helsinki there were two clear starting points. First, there is a 3D modeled nose that is leaking various materials from its nostrils. These particles resemble combinations of plastic, viruses and bacteria. Secondly, the materials keep piling up to become something like the Pacific Ocean garbage vortex, an image of the effects of human actions affecting the environment. This was also a reflection on how our bodies are taking in various toxic substances and how these materials come out in new forms, creating myriad combinations.

Looming in the background of this whole body of work is the concern of how the systems that humans have built are altering our habitat and slowly consuming resources. The important question is implied here by science fiction writer Ursula K. Le Guin: “*To use the world well, to be able to stop wasting it, we need to relearn our being in it*”.¹ The long-term effects are often hidden

1 Ursula K. Le Guin, *Late in The Day, Poems* 2010–2014, PM Press, 2016.

from sight; they lurk behind the corner as veiled circulations of substances and assets or in deep time processes waiting to announce themselves to us (our actions are, of course, a catalyst for some of them, e.g. pollution or climate change).

One very concrete example of a circulation that came up in my research was a metal recycling centre in Detroit. The crumbling city has a lot of abandoned houses where metals can be illegally excavated and sold to recycling centres. Then these companies are transporting their stock to China in containers where the material is repurposed for electronic gadgets or maybe directed to infrastructure development. At the same time, Chinese companies have been acquiring mines for raw material around the African continent, surfacing questions about a new wave of colonialism. I was also working in an e-waste village in northern Beijing that was supposedly dealing with 25% of the city’s electronic recycling. Here we have some hard figures from *The Atlantic* magazine by Adam Minter, the author of *Junkyard Planet*, a book that is examining junk trade globally: “*For example, in 2012 China produced 5.6 million tons of copper, of which 2.75 million tons was made from scrap. Of that scrap copper, 70 percent was imported, with most coming from the United States.*”²

To conclude, my path that led to the production of these pieces involved a radical U-turn in terms of how my research related to the actual works. Fortunately this happened in a way that I was still able to see that preliminary work somewhat helpful. In the beginning I was studying aspects of real estate development and built environment and through this information I found the core substance that eventually enacted as a catalyst for the ideas seen in the final pieces. I wanted to explore how we use these material compounds as our tools to approach and communicate with our surroundings. Sort of ‘alchemical’ in their formation, they bring forth questions pertinent to our mutual future.

2 Adam Minter, *How China Profits from Our Junk*, *The Atlantic*, November 1, 2013, www.theatlantic.com

Mirko Nikolić: unmining for #copperlove

In the spring of 2015, I spent two marvelous and intense months in Suomenlinna working on the first phase of two-year project *we ♥ copper & copper ♥ us*, residency part of Frontiers in Retreat programme. What follows are extracts of my notes from the residency period, compounded by after-residency reflections and intermittent tweets from the twitter account of the project.

1/ back-ground

Metals are the inner skeleton or infrastructure of our societies and our technologies. We live in deeply metallic naturecultures, and even our bodies are “walking, talking minerals” (Vladimir Vernadsky). Hence we are wired, internally and externally, with ‘metallic lives’, yet the dynamics of this intimate dependency is sometimes quite opaque, comprehensively black-boxed, offshored, invisibilised...

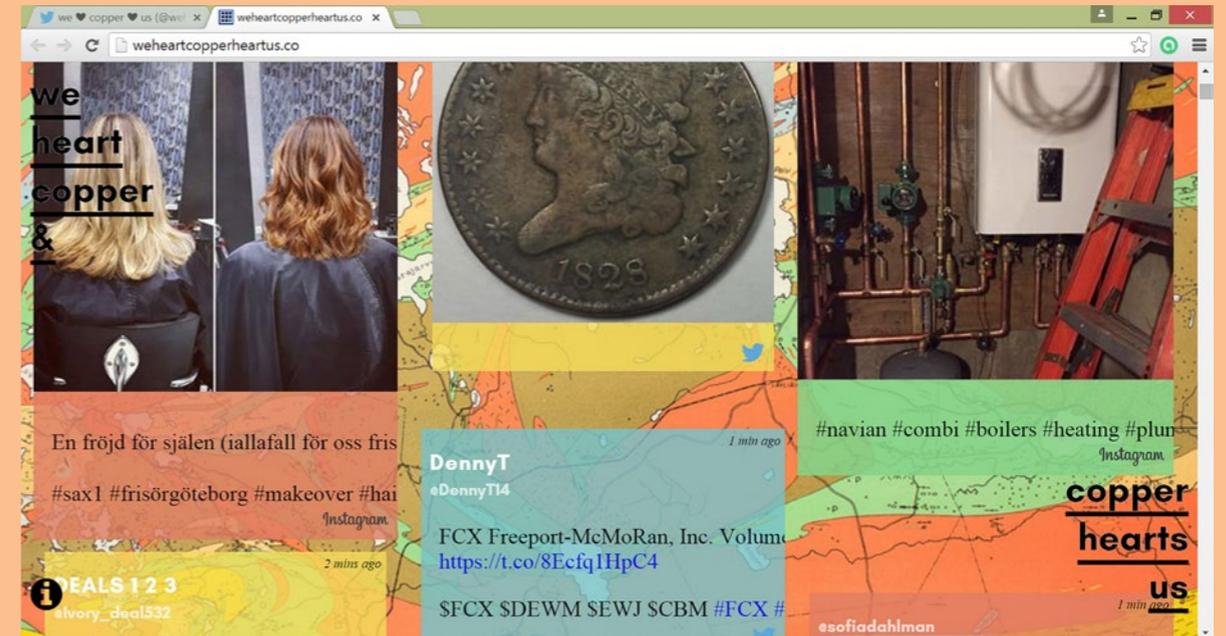
Computers and mobile phones are made of hundreds of chemical compounds, comprising dozens of metals and rare earths. In other words, each information and communications technology device is a tiny mine. Millions of years of ‘nonlinear history’ of the Earth are compressed into chips that run trades on scale of nanoseconds. As we are acting on geological scale, the atmosphere has not remained intact either. We are in the middle of anthropogenic global warming, and one of the ways to overturn this scenario is, as Naomi Klein exclaims, to “keep stuff in the ground,” and not only the notorious oil and shale gas. Mineral mining that



what is at stake is the reconfiguration of nonhumans as other than nonmen. All images courtesy of the artist.

underpins ICT can equally be damaging on social and environmental levels (e.g., ‘coltan wars’ in Congo, massive spill in Mexico, etc. etc.)

The workings of the IT companies share a few traits with mining industry, not only a common mineral base, but certain logics too. Let’s think about ‘big data’, or ‘data mining’. Beyond semiotic correspondence, I would argue that *mining* data is a quantitative extension of *digging* the earths. Internet users’ activity is turned into resource, extracted, smelted (into datasets), re-sold, molded into corporate services, sold back to the same or different users...The ‘big data’ thirst of IT juggernauts replicates and upscales the craze of gold rush into the digital realm. There is no discontinuum between data and mineral mining; they are part of a unique extractivist mindset (HT Brett Bloom’s ‘petro-subjectivity’) hard-wired into our devices and daily inter-actions.



share the 'fragility of things' with #tantalum #yttrium #europium #neodymium #lanthanum #terbium

2/ in the mangle

From these considerations, I delved into research about various facets of ‘mining’ in Finland. The country has a long mining history starting in 1540, and a strong present. As of September 2015, in operation are 23 precious metals (antimony, gold, uranium, silver), 12 base metals (cobalt, copper, nickel, zinc), 1 diamond, and 4 other types of mines. However, most of Finland’s mines are cyclical, dependent on boom and bust cycle of global commodity markets. When the price drops below certain level, the mine becomes unprofitable and is temporarily put on hold, leading to extended periods of (temporary) lay-off of workers. This has to do mostly with relatively low minerals concentrations in the ore. Nevertheless, in tune with the larger Scandinavian trend, recent Finnish governments have worked towards enhancing the outlook of mining industry. Despite its not too large reserves, the country has in fact established itself as one of the world’s most attractive destinations for mining. This outlook is premised on a permissive and efficient mining regulation, advanced infrastructure, human resources, and highly detailed geological datasets.

The state-run Geological Survey of Finland (GTK) assembles and provides open access to the information about the country’s geology. One of the main activities of the GTK is mapping and estimation of potential or so-called ‘undiscovered resources’. This data is key for attracting mineral-hunters/explorers and investors from over the globe. Together with Kosovo, Finland is the only other country that has been geophysically surveilled in its entirety. Counter to these developments hovers the massive environmental disaster caused by leaks from tailing ponds of partially state-owned Talvivaara mine in 2012 and 2013.

On the other side of the mineral-data mangle, the big data boom has landed into the country in grand style with Google’s SF-ish data centre at Hamina, an old paper mill conversion right on the shore of Baltic. Across the sea in Luleå, Sweden, Facebook built its own massive data centre. Data needs cool air and water, and the European North is becoming attractive for these huge data-crunching installations run by U.S. Internet stacks.

Data and minerals shape convergent or divergent futurities of Finland, different modes of occupation of land and distributions and



“I think you value consciousness too high and rock too little”
(K.S. Robinson via. @mckenzie_wark) // #copper ≠ mind &
#copper ≠ matter



mean estimate of undiscovered resources in Hitura (W. #Finland)
via GTK > #nickel 44,000t #copper 18,000t #cobalt 2,100t



#cuprite beyond (human) measure



#weheartcoppermine

divisions of labour. *we ♥ copper & copper ♥ us* situates itself into this mesh of data, policies, financial interests, and geological strata. Data is made of minerals, and minerals' presents and futures are impacted by data. Can we somehow repurpose the data & minerals deep yet opaque linkage, make it more transparent and, hopefully, egalitarian? Extraction logics of big data and minerals are in my view inseparable sides of the same equation that should be publicly discussed from the ground up.

During my stay I have had the chance to attend a couple of symposia about mining at the University of Helsinki. These passionate and inspiring academic and activist debates led me to realise the complexity of the issue. There is no yet known way to build a smartphone or basically any piece of technology without turning earths upside down. How this is done is what makes a whole lot of a difference. Apart from that, we need to consider the circulation of stuff that is already above ground; enormous quantities of metals end up in dumpsites and drawers waiting to be recycled. Some of it can be done first-hand, as I learned at the Fairphone Urban Mining workshop at Open Source Circular Economy Day at Suvilahti. There are many tactics and strategies to think against the self-fulfilling one-way 'Great Acceleration'.

To make my way through this intricate mess/h, I chose to follow the traces of one sin-

gle character. I got charmed by copper, one of the longest-standing companion elements of humans, the first metal to be mined on a large scale. The oldest copper artefacts are dated around 5,500 BC, which also represents the transition from the Stone Age to Copper Age. Even today copper is the most popular conductor of power and data. Further, it is one of the metals indispensable for the health of vegetal, animal and human bodies. Its economic/technological importance is such that it is often cited as indicator of how well economies are doing. As a sibling of 'peak oil' stands 'peak copper'. But, beyond its chemical properties, usages and applications, how do we humans truly think and feel about this shiny element?

3/ #weheartcopper works

we ♥ copper & copper ♥ us actualised in two intertwined developmental processes. In collaboration with the awesome Romulus Studio we worked on an online #weheartcoppermine. The website would be an aggregator of public conversations about 'copper' from across the social media (twitter, instagram, tumblr). I wouldn't have thought so, but this spring/summer the word (and the metal) was trending in fashion, jewelry and interior design, and hair colour styles. It's been all over the news as it reached 6-year lows on the commodity mar-

kets. (Maybe this social media buzz pulled me in sub-consciously to focus on this metal and not any other?!)

As we all learned from Edward Snowden, Internet is not really cyberspace. Alternative to the cloud is to host our stuff locally (as back in the '90s). #weheartcoppermine was set up on an oldish, upcycled PC happily hacked out of its box and turned into an up-and-running web server by Mikko Laajola. As well as bringing the web back home, I was thinking how to reinvent the sealed architecture of common data centres. Stranded wires are made of bunches of tiny wires braided or twisted together and coated by plastic insulator. Following Jussi Parikka's advice that 'data needs air' (i.e., cool breeze), why not open the wires thus the servers to the atmosphere?

A hybrid of a dog agility tunnel, hoola hoop, nomad yurt and wind tunnel became a #weheartcoppertunnel. The skeleton of the tunnel is a single spiral of PVC cable tube, enwrapped into a fabric emblazoned with digitally printed camouflage pattern derived from Finland's geological maps. Thanks to the amazing tailoring and sewing skills of Siru Juntunen, the messy sketches and prototypes materialised into a full-blown piece of soft infrastructure (or supra-structure). The tunnel was furnished with seven ratchet hooks on both ends, as well as having internal straps running throughout that

would allow it to be suspended. The internal loopholes would be used to hang the server's panels – an open box nested within an open tube.

This DIY open datacentre landed the website locally, all the while remaining fully dependent on the World Wide Web. The website is a live feed of posts from various websites. It basically consists only of links leading to the original posts using the <embed> feature. On a very small scale it replicates the archiving of tweets that National Library of Congress and the British Library have been doing. On the other side, as the website is powered by platinum, copper, silicon, gold, aluminium, and many other non-humans, this is also a place where they can potentially track what *we* think of them.

In the *Excavations* show #weheartcoppertunnel was cozily stretched through the arched passage of Gallery Augusta. As part of the show, on 17 June, together with the BodyBuilding Project, we organised *CONVEY: 12 hours of shared practice*. The lovely BodyBuilding bunch held a full day of open practice sessions, and I performed #copper #love #maintenance, a sort of ceremonial launch of the tunnel and a good-bye to the residency.

#weheartcoppermine
weheartcopperheartus.co

Tracey Warr

Tracey Warr was in residence at HIAP Suomenlinna in January 2015, where she worked on a future fiction novel entitled *The Water Age* set on an inundated coast 200 years in the future, in a globally warmed scenario with significantly raised sea levels. Relating to the subject of the novel she ran three workshops on aquatic life with children at Annantalo Art School in Helsinki, in collaboration with art educator Elsa Hessle. During her residency Warr published a series of blog posts entitled *Posts from an Island* on her website traceywarrwriting.com and gave lectures on the use of future fiction in art, watery future scenarios, and the dynamics between fictional technologies and real technological developments to students at independent Art School MAA on Suomenlinna island and at Aalto University.

The research she undertook towards the novel included study of selected science and future fiction, especially by women writers such as Ursula Le Guin, Octavia Butler and Doris Lessing and by writers focusing on the environment such as J.G. Ballard in *The Drowned World* or Kim Stanley Robinson's *Three Californias and Science in the Capital* series.

Warr drew on analyses by W.H. Auden, Samuel R. Delaney and Gerry Canavan (see

Green Planets, 2014) to map out the archetypal polarities in science fiction of utopia/dystopia, city/country: the utopian techno super city versus arcadia – the perfect countryside, or their flipside, the Bad Big Brother City with super surveillance and fascist state control (*Brave New World*, 1984) versus a Rural Dystopia of natural disasters and diseases. Canavan labels adapted versions of the city somewhere between utopia and dystopia, Junk City (Philip K. Dick, William Gibson) where humans adapt to urban, techno chaos, and the rural flipside of that is a toxic, polluted, encroaching nature. And then there is the final archetype: Quiet Earth, a world without humans (which is where Clifford D. Simak's *City* ends up).

Warr declares herself to be a hydrophilic, committed to swimming and gongoozling (which means staring at life as it passes by on water). Like John Cheever's character in *The Swimmer* or Roger Deakin in *Waterlog*, if she sees water she wants to get in it. So she is trying to imagine a future relationship with the hydrosphere that is not dystopic and that draws on aquatic flora and fauna for inspiration. There are many interspecies hybrids and other species 'familiar' in our myths, fairy tales and nursery rhymes. Diving deep into the properties of



Workshop on aquatic life with children at Annantalo Art School in Helsinki, 2015. Photo: Tracey Warr

aquatic and amphibian life, she explored body technologies such as octopus ink, fish spit and mucus, frog poison, the waterproof fur and closable nostrils and ears of otters, the waxy water repellent surfaces of lily pads, ducks' oil glands to waterproof their feathers and their webbed feet, salmon leaps, the long, thin legs of wading birds, and underwater sound transmissions by dolphins and whales.

Water, itself, will be a kind of character in her novel. She has been exploring its properties, reading the 'water magicians' of the early 20th century – Victor Schaubberger and Theodore Schwenk, who studied the structure, movement, and health of water, its motility, eddies and vortices, its viscosity. Her research also en-

compassed sea steading, floating fishing villages and markets, underwater wearables including diving suits from various times, chandlery objects, and artists working with water including Susan Derges and Tuula Närhinen (who also takes part in the *Frontiers in Retreat* project).

Warr's fiction assumes that we will be living with more water in the future. She argues that although our ability to manage water has been sophisticated for a long time, since Flemish medieval water engineering for example, there is also a limit to our ability to control water as King Canute demonstrated. It would be better to think about cooperating with water.

EVENTS

&

EXHIBITIONS

Interpreting the Frame: *Reflecting on Interpreting the Frame Exhibition*

HIAP Gallery Augusta, Jan 30 – Feb 22, 2015

Text Dahlia El Broul

Photography has a multiplicity that is feasible in a post modernist framework. No longer beholden to the subject, images turn into new artifices or completely shift into symbiotic experiences. That is what *Interpreting the Frame* exhibition at HIAP's Gallery Augusta excels at. The show, curated by Boshko Boskovic, succeeds at giving a depth and breadth to photography that is unexpected, situating it outside the medium of documentation or historicity and giving it a critical standpoint. The exhibition unites an awareness of the changing role of the archive with the contemporaneity of the artists to create a reflexive exchange.

The space, infused with music, presents the audience with an analytical dialogue that is nonetheless imbued with a certain gentleness and warmth. Artists Zeljka Blaksic, Liinu Grönlund, Tatiana Istomina, Jonna Kina, Tanja Koljonen, Juuso Noronkoski and Mikko Rikala use sculpture, drawing, film, video, and site specific installation to create new works inspired by the photographic archive of the Finnish Museum of Photography as well as collections from Russia and the United States. One sentiment expressed during the opening was how the mini-

malist ambiance of the space adds to the overall delicate nature of the show. There are intimate corners where one can feel very much alone. Works are strategically placed with long distances between them, exaggerating atmospheric gaps and echoing sounds.

Dahlia El Broul is an independent curator, educator and artist-illustrator, originally from New York City, USA. She has curated a number of exhibitions at Aalto University's NODE Gallery and helped developed Hard Rain Goes Aalto, a large-scale project focusing on climate change and the anthropocene. Additionally, she led the educational programming at the Espoo Museum of Modern Art for the exhibition Ote/Points of View. In New York, she designed and delivered arts education curricula for institutions and schools across the city such as the Hudson River Museum, the 92nd Street Y and the Brearley School. Furthermore, she continues her work as an illustrator in the field of children's literature, recently publishing works for Rovio Entertainment and Intuary Inc.



Opening of 'Interpreting the Frame', HIAP Gallery Augusta, January 2015. Photo: Tuomas Laasanen

The artists' use of the archive is pleasantly surprising. Instead of approaching the collection as sanctified and frozen, the artists have managed to recreate something that is increasingly mutated, with moments liberated from their calcified positions. This narrative is expanded not only through their interpretations but also through the perception of the public – such is the case in Kina's work. She invited guests to narrate descriptions of photographs to others, who would then draw their interpretation as the account unfolded. The final results are not diluted iconographies but thoughtful and imaginative realizations. The works operate as transmissions, suggesting fragments of what could survive the process of archival retelling, and what is left.

Awash in darkness, the second gallery space defies the pallidity of the previous room. Light emanates from two large projections and a small screen, and close-knit sitting areas heighten the intimacy. Grönlund's video investigates the di-

chotomy of what we see as illusionary knowing and what we hear as truth. The work straddles the intersection of performance and photography as her dry voice narrates over slow-moving video clips. The polemic positioning of the archive is clear in this work when she proclaims, "In the next four hundred years almost all of the buildings in Manhattan will have been taken down and replaced by new ones." What seems to be scrutinized is the inevitability of more and more human manipulation and rejuvenation, as archives only last as long as their handlers support them.

The questions I remain exploring, hover around the function and position of the archive. Do archives remain in flux, are they teetering on the balance of being ignored or renewed? What is the role of these massive collections? In many ways these works play with the archive as a medium to challenge its authenticity and authority.

Axel Straschnoy: Neomylodon Listai Ameghino

HIAP Gallery Augusta, May 08–31, 2015

Text Pontus Kyander

Axel Straschnoy's *Neomylodon Listai Ameghino* is a research-based art project about science and speculation, about the construction of knowledge and truths – but also a story about personal and professional competition, about the colonial culture of exploration, and about deceit, delusion, and the culture of display.

In 1895, local estate owner Captain Eberhard found a large skin in a cave in Southern Patagonia, Chile. It did not resemble any then known animal, being amazingly thick, covered with reddish grey hair, with a layer of roundish bones (ossicles) embedded into the deeper layers of the skin, forming a protective armor for a quite large animal. The skin was in itself surprisingly well preserved, as if it had been killed not that long time ago. Eberhard, having no idea what it was and not seeing much value in it, had it attached to a tree on his grounds. There it remained for some years, admired by locals and foreigners alike, some of who cut off and brought home parts of the skin.

In 1897, the Swedish explorer and geologist Otto Nordenskjöld passed by on his expedition to Tierra del Fuego. He made some investigations of the cave and found two other pieces of skin and a few other items that were brought to

Uppsala together with a large amount of other findings from his very extensive explorations. Two years later, Nordenskjöld's younger relative and fellow explorer/scientist Erland Nordenskiöld also visited the cave, making further – thoroughly documented – research into the cave. His findings were brought back to Sweden. Several skin pieces ended up in Berlin, through the work of the German scientist Rudolph Hauthal, who excavated the cave for the newly founded Museo de La Plata in Argentine – which through this work came to hold a large portion of the bone parts, but less of the sensational skin.

Pontus Kyander is a curator and art critic, and a former museum director and professor of fine arts. He is currently the co-curator of Gustav Metzger's retrospective Act or Perish (CSW Torún, Poland; Kunsternes Hus & Kunsthall Oslo; MUSAC León, Spain) and of the sound and moving image festival EMAP 2016: S.O.S. Art for a time of urgencies in Seoul, South Korea 24-29 May 2016. He has known and worked with Axel Straschnoy since 2011. He is currently based in Helsinki.



Photo: Kolme Perunaa

Important for the development of the almost hysterical interest that took place in those years right before the turn of the century was the competition between two local scientists. On one end was F. P. Moreno, founder of the Museo de La Plata, and on the other his former employee Florentino Ameghino, later known as a founding father of Argentinian paleontology. Moreno had secured a piece of the skin in 1897, with yet another ironic turn of the story, when leading a group of Argentinian land surveyors trying to establish the disputed border between Chile and Argentine. Ameghino, who had been fired after a dispute between the two, managed secretly to examine the skin fragment and secure a few ossicles for himself.

Soon a pamphlet of his appeared, making a rather bold assessment: the well-preserved skin was proof of a living animal in Patagonia, a last member of the mammal assumed long since extinct. Ameghino claimed to have heard about it from a geographer and traveller Ramon Lista, who was supposed to have not only seen, but

also shot at one – the bullet just bouncing off the armored animal. Although Ameghino asserts Lista also wrote about it in one of his books, there is no evidence of this in Lista's published works. Nevertheless, this gave Ameghino reason to honour the animal with the name *Neomylodon Listai Ameghino*, not only stating it was a mylodon, originating from the extinct pre-historical ground-sloth, but a modern one, and giving the credits of its discovery to the then late Ramon Lista (and claiming a bit of the credit for himself). The pamphlet, being speedily translated and published in the respected scientific journal *Natural Science* in London in 1898, made an impact in the scientific world as well as in the popular press.

Scientists had very soon started to question the assertions made by Ameghino, first and foremost his colleague and former employer F. P. Moreno. He went as far as implying that Ameghino might not even have seen any part of the skin, but possibly only examined some of the ossicles, well aware that Ameghino would not be able to show any proof supporting his theory. Moreno – who certainly had access to a part of the skin and had visited the cave – stated rightly that the skin must indeed be very old, but launched a theory of his own, indicating it might have been killed by a human, meaning it had existed well into an age when also humans roamed the plains of South America. Another scientist, the previously mentioned Rudolph Hauthal, who also was an employee of Dr Moreno and thus had all the reason in the world to support his superior, launched the theory that the animal – now going under several different scientific names, to add to the confusion – had been kept by humans in stone walled corrals. The latter theory was soon refuted, the assumed 'walls' consisting only of material from parts of the cave having collapsed.

For a brief period, the scientific explorations of the cave, as well as articles on the findings, were numerous. A prize was even promised to the one who could catch or kill a specimen. Locals realized there was a business to be made with items found in the cave, and the place was plundered of most its holds and made quite useless from an archaeological point of view. As no further signs of any live *Neomylodons* were



AXEL STRASCHNOY, 'Neomylodon Listai Ameghino', HIAP Gallery Augusta, 2015. Photos: Kolme Perunaa



found, the debate faded and died.

For science, the debate proved a dead end. But instead, it forms a richly layered narrative from many other points of views. The remains found of the animal were to a great extent brought to Europe by scientists not very different from the adventurers and exploiters pillaging the natural and human resources of the colonized world – Moreno himself gave his piece of skin to the Museum of Natural History in London. The narrative twists (in the popular press as well as in the scientific journals) proves how readily the edges of the world were used to project perceptions of the fantastic – just as in the almost simultaneous fiction stories by H.G. Wells, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Jules Verne. Thus, it is not only a story about science, but of colonialism as well, and how fiction and fantasy are woven into the assumed factual scientific weave.

Axel Straschnoy's installation *Neomylodon Listai Ameghino* consists of four custom-built vitrines. Two of the vitrines are for actual findings related to the assumed surviving mammal – one is exclusively for parts of the skin, the other for bones and other material. The two remaining vitrines are for documents created by the popular and scientific debate about the *Neomylodon*. A film looping in a projector displays Straschnoy's own documentation of the cave in Southern Patagonia where the findings were made.

The exhibition will travel between museums in the Europe as well as venues in Argen-

tine and Chile, the antipodes of this strange and challenging story about the animal briefly known as the *Neomylodon Listai Ameghino*. While the work travels, it will only show the material locally available. When premiered at HIAP Gallery Augusta at Suomenlinna, Finland, a small amount of preserved coprolites (*faeces*, i.e. poop) from the cave was on display in one of the vitrines dedicated to such material, the only scientific material that reached as far as Finland. The other vitrine is exclusively for the remains of the skin, and remains empty in several venues. At the Evolutionsmuseet in Uppsala, a far richer display was presented, including more coprolites, a couple of nails, and even some pieces of the skin. But the presentation will continuously be as random and fragmented as the findings that are spread to museums around the world. The whole image or at least the complete findings can only appear after the project has toured to all the museums holding parts of the *Neomylodon* to a viewer who could by some spell of magic be able to perceive them all at the same time.

The work consistently points at what is not present: the layers of the story that reveal themselves indirectly and the documentation that connects the installation to so many other narratives. The most important story might be the one about science and truth, how theories and certainties are projected like the figures you might see when watching clouds, only to be dispersed and replaced by others.





'Helsinki Group' exhibition,
HIAP Gallery Augusta,
Nov 2015. Photo: Pasi Autio

HELSINKI GROUP

HIAP Gallery Augusta, November 27–28, 2015

'HELSINKI GROUP' is a collective of works that may be seen as memories stored outside the brain, or a group exhibition that explores the idea of an exhibition as a vehicle for social imagination. Imagine it as a hybrid genre of a travelling show in a suitcase and a cabinet of curiosities. Also it may be seen as a library of objects, a book written in real time, an assemblage, consisting of choreographed objects, space for potentialities; it may function as a ghostly vehicle, both figuratively and literary, for an audience, artists, art objects, and imaging.

A reading based on the writings by the curator of the exhibition Valentinas Klimašauskas, was performed during the opening night. Using the structure of traditional Lithuanian polyphonic songs, the reading unites fragments, poems, quotes, stories about new friendships (as a metaphor for an old internet), on the importance of becoming Neanderthals, why Gertrude Stein would not pass the Turing test, the AI of

language, and random companies of post-humanist assemblages.

The following passage is excerpted from the reading's script:

How to Clone a Mammoth (in Three Voices and with a Fisherman's Exaggeration)

or

The Science of De-Extinction in the Economy of Clicks

Organised by Baltic Notebooks of Anthony Blunt, Vilnius and Ruler, Helsinki in co-operation with HIAP. Supported by Lithuanian Council for Culture.

With contributions by: The Baltish Notebooks of Anthony Blunt, Kaspars Groshevs, Morten Norbye Halvorsen, Pakui Hardware, Laura Kaminskaitė, Eglė Kulbokaitė and Dorota Gaweda, Mikko Kuorinki, Jaana Laakkonen, Nicholas Matranga, Kimmo Modig, Elena Narbutaitė, Jaakko Pallasvuo, Carl Palm, Dexter Sinister, Ola Vasiljeva and others.

5.

Gertrude Stein would not pass the Turing Test, if I told her

If I told her
that Pablo Picasso was a Neanderthal would she believe me
would he believe me?

He said it himself
leaving the cave of Lascaux:
"We have invented nothing" or
that "none of us can paint like this."

Forget the progress, the idea of progress.
Forget Napoleon; forget the leaders,
the Central bank of Europe,
Forget the Imperial English.

Why go clockwise when we may travel anticlockwise?

One day he woke up – or was it I,
finding myself to be a woolly Neanderthal.

What a surprise!
And then people taught me things
No one from us, Neanderthals, did before, not even Picasso.

See it for yourself:

Dancing karaoke together with my inflatable air mattress and its remote control in one hand, while googling for a vegetarian lasagne recipe with another hand, and abusing accelerating substances under the constant shower of neutrinos with a full mouth of 3D printed dental implants, for example!

Thus let me introduce myself again.
I am a cloned Neanderthal friend of yours.
I'm 37, not married, but not single too, a freelancer.
Struggling to pay my Health Insurance.
Talking strictly technically I am not exactly a Neanderthal.

I am the hybrid of an illegal immigrant,
drifting in an overfull boat in the Mediterranean
wrapped in thermal blankets on a seashore,
the hybrid of heating up times and genes,
a living post-species fossil, a hairy robot,
although don't call me Artificial Intelligence.



The reading at 'Helsinki Group', HIAP Gallery Augusta, Nov 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

I did not pass the Turing test too.
Which means that for you
I am more a machine than a human.

You may ask yourself what can you learn
from your thicker-skulled ancestors
who were considered not intelligent enough,
the species of hominids that went extinct 1,500 generations ago?

Well, while openly oversimplifying
I can remind you that it was my people
who were the first known artists and who also happened to invent hashtags.

So here comes my proposal.
Let's spend more time together, let's hang out.
Forget the Imperial grammar (forget manners).

What is your favourite algae, fungus,
or yogurt bacteria ice-cream?
Invite a living nonhuman organism to an exhibition, to a museum,
and do a guided tour, grow it inside.

Drip it, make it more humid,
less human, honey. Don't avoid
geckos and mosquitos; avoid ideas
influenced by biological predetermination.



*'Helsinki Group' exhibition,
HIAP Gallery Augusta,
Nov 2015. Photo: Pasi Autio*

Invite a traveller or an immigrant.
If it rains outside don't mention art,
at all. Wear masks. Cucumber mask is great.
And not just for the opening or drinks.
It also takes the stress away, if any.

Exchange your straws, cloths, jokes.
Give away half of your belongings,
longings, debts, and doubts. Unlearn something.
Look at the neon crosses on the church towers.
Can you howl like a wolf or Allen Ginsberg in an android voice?

Cultivate a new addiction. For example,
invite a neighbour for a cup of tea
and keep asking about the future of our solar system.
Have you heard the latest news about the Ceres,
the so called dwarf planet?

Withdraw from one of your addictions.
Better help someone enslaved or looped
into economical, logical, racial, sexual,

other conditions of prejudices.
Learn a poem but don't tell it to anyone.
Go collect plastic bags on a wild beach instead.

Water rain-making-bacteria in a balcony,
spill water out to the street, and create
conditions for a short lived rainbow.
Spill it on some passers-by. Have a discussion
on the issues of ecology or ethics or both.

Buy some vegetable seeds and plant
them anywhere in the city. Slow the city down.

Make it asleep like a falling bag of cement
which did not pulverize while being used for
cloud seeding in the sky by Russian air-forces
and went through the roof of the house of an old lady
in Moscow, in a manner of devil
from "The Master and Margarita."

Jesse Auersalo: Hold Me in Your Arms (and Never Let Me Go)

Graphic Designer of the Year 2015 Exhibition,
HIAP Project Space, Aug 22–30, 2015

Science fiction writer Ursula K. LeGuin was right to note that the first tool in our evolutionary history was not a weapon, but a carrier bag: “We’ve heard it, we’ve all heard about all the sticks and spears and swords, the things to bash and poke and hit with, the long, hard things, but we have not heard about the thing to put things in, the container for the thing contained.” (*The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, 1986)

To celebrate his Graphic Designer of the Year award, Jesse Auersalo put up an exhibition about plastic bags. “The idea comes from my own plastic bag collection, which I’ve accumulated during my travels,” Auersalo explains. “The bags serve not only as carriers of things but also of meaning, representing different places and events. My favorite bag is from Chinatown, New York. It’s hard plastic and kind of ugly. The text and the base color are so close that it’s hard to tell them apart. This bag, among many others, has continued its life in my luggage as a means of classification: that’s where the socks go.”

Beyond their esthetics and organizing function, Auersalo is interested in plastic bags as communication devices: “While a luxury shopping bag may carry the kind of status value that amounts to its reuse as an accessory, a bag from a local grocery store is the most mundane thing



HELEN KORPAK & JESSE AUERSALO,
Recreation II, 2015.



SAMU VIITANEN & JESSE AUERSALO, *New Breed*, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

to walk around with. It often ends up lining a garbage bin. Some shopping bags, like the blue IKEA bag, have transcended their original role by becoming the main item of interest, primary to what they hold within.” Furthermore, Auersalo has been observing the ways in which things get exhibited or concealed within plastic bags and how the closing of a bag hints at its contents: “Think of a knot in a bag of garbage versus a seal on a gift bag, for example. The latter can be read as an invitation while the former likens more to a warning.”

Auersalo’s sustained exploration of plastic bags, starting from still lifes of debris, is based on an uneasiness with the illusion of a pristine object world where everything is seen as replaceable after the first sign of wear. “At worst, a weakly built thank-you-for-shopping bag doesn’t even make it home from the corner deli in one piece,” he describes. “At the same time, our plastic refuse is blocking sewers and forming giant continents in the oceans.”

The silkscreen printed plastic bags in Auer-

salo’s exhibition show, very concretely, how one man’s trash can be another man’s treasure. By displaying the bags in different uses – from recycled conversation pieces to objects wrapped around a head – the illustrator and artist seeks to provoke questions about their afterlife, which often exceeds, for good and for worse, whatever use or meaning was originally assigned to them. Plastic, in Roland Barthes’ words, is the very idea of its infinite transformation: “It is less a thing than the trace of a movement.” (*Mythologies*, 1957)

The exhibition included works Auersalo has created together with Osmo Harvilahti, Helen Korpak, Mikko Ryhänen and Samu Viitanen.

The exhibition was sponsored by Grafia – Association of Visual Communication Designers in Finland, in co-operation with HIAP. The Graphic Designer of the year by Grafia is awarded annually for merits and success in the field of graphic design or based on other actions that improve the quality and appreciation of graphic design.

Human Interference Task Force (HITF): Insulation (Mounting Layers)

HIAP Project Space, November 27, 2015

Insulation (Mounting Layers)' continued Human Interference Task Force's ongoing creation of methods to approach what appears as alien to human perception (from radiation to vibrations). The performative exhibition engaged with radiating fossils assigned for insulation, and posited gestures stretching far ahead in time (from navigation to construction). By inserting a zoom cutting and observing sideways, HITF's interference into multiple layers of material boundaries manifested as a performative exhibition – constructing a context that allows engagement with materials such as plastiglomerates and copper. The clothes worn during the performance were offered by ensemble and the audio track was remixed by BLAC UHDAY. The exhibition was revisited through the ever-manipulated documentation posted on the website of O FLUXO.

Established between Anna Mikkola and Matilda Tjäder in 2014, HITF departed from research on nuclear semiotics, which arose in the U.S. in 1981 under the group named as The Human Interference Task Force and set up by the U.S. Department of Energy. The group aimed to determine whether reasonable means exist (or could be developed) to reduce the likelihood of future humans unintentionally intrud-

ing on radioactive waste isolation systems. The proposals were published in the report *Reducing the Likelihood of Future Human Activities That Could Affect Geological High-Level Waste Repositories*.¹ Acting against this historical foundation the project is constantly pushed into new scenarios to seek ways on how to decode semiotics – with the methodology of projecting from the present into future scenarios.

Locate material.

Locate corpse, locate senses, locate movement.

Seek for solid ground.

Chart the territory to enable a transition.

Let a zoom initiate movement.

Consider mass of material to be isolated from human touch.

Observe two membranes colliding departing in a feedback-looped rhythm.

Seek contact while remaining apart.

1 Human Interference Task Force, *Reducing the Likelihood of Future Human Activities That could Affect Geological High-Level Waste Repositories*, <http://www.iaea.org/inis/collection/NCLCollectionStore/_Public/16/010/16010246.pdf>, 1984.



HITF: *Insulation (Mounting Layers)*, HIAP Project Space, November 27, 2015.

Photo: Noora Lehtovuori

Attest by mimicking – Indicating the speed at which a connection is possible.

Localize the core and dismantle it.

Slide through sediments.

Insulation entails an interaction between axioms. The skin and its inside. The core and its crust: crop the space and scale containment.

Cushioned camouflage sleeved protection. Texture disappears onto skin, appearance in disguise.

Knots, ingressions binding thoughts: tubes interlacing enmeshing in symmetry beyond words.

Eliminate the traction and elide its signal. Slide sideways through. Like a headless worm encountering a jellyfish finding affinity at first.

Permeate elastic surface: a vibration, a chill followed by a microscopic head-slide.

Mount layers.

Follow a minimal stretch of joints, outward movement within local constraints.

Land in position.

The material is insulated.

HITF emerges in episodes as continuously evolving research on the resonance between humans and earthly materials. HITF combines movement research, sound, video, sculpture, and text. The performative exhibition *Insulation (Mounting Layers)* was HITF's third episode and a culmination of a month-long residency at HIAP in Helsinki. As part of the residency, HITF arranged a research trip to Olkiluoto; an area with two functioning nuclear power plants and a third under construction. The trip consisted of a visit to an exhibition on nuclear energy and a visit in their low level waste repository. The area also includes Onkalo, a future deep geological repository, which at the time of writing still is under construction. Being a container for high-level nuclear waste Onkalo posits practical questions on the insulation of material that will be highly toxic for million years. How to communicate to future human?

Tonight: We are together, trapped on an island and becoming fragile

HIAP Gallery Augusta & Project Space,
April 2014 – December 2015

Text Michelle Lacombe

A year-and-a-half ago, Liina Kuittinen and Tomasz Szrama asked me to perform in Tonight. The invitation letter they sent to me was black. It was a nightmare to print legibly, but I liked the difficulty. I liked everything about this, actually. Let me explain.

Good performance art is typically demanding in some way. Or at least it should be, because, in the experience of difficulty, posturing fails. As a result, the 'live' occurs and intimacy can be established, which always allows for a more embodied experience of the work for artist and public alike. The visceral simply communicates meaning beyond the reach of the visual or the intellectual. It connects more deeply. While performance is not the only discipline in which you experience artwork before you see or understand it, it is the one in which this specific reordering of the senses dominates. Consequently, platforms that support encounters between performance art and the public are at their most effective when structured around an experiential, embodied, or visceral encounter before a visual or a cerebral one.

Tonight very concretely puts this into practice by situating the encounter between performance art and the public in the experience of exhaustion. It is difficult not to read this as an easy metaphor. Watching performance is always tiring. The discipline demands constant engagement from its public. You watch every moment pass. Like lying in bed awake all night, time operates under a different logic – acutely evocative and experiential, despite the paradox that characterizes it. Always overwhelmingly aroused or overwhelmingly bored. So, sleepless nights are very much like the experience of performance, and, in its form, the event cheekily underscores what we all know: by the end, you will be exhausted.

Occurring overnight on the island of Suomenlinna, Tonight proposes a demanding context in which to encounter art. To attend – as an audience member or as a participant – is to agree to self-imposed endurance and fatigue. An internalized body cycle is broken when night expands toward extinction instead of erasing itself through sleep. And, under this tension – tired – we slowly shatter. Fatigue breaks the



Nieves Correa & Abel Loureda at 'TONIGHT', HIAP Project Space, September 2015. Photo: Antti Ahonen

body in a very real, experiential way. The emotional, the cognitive and the physical – none of you is spared. And it is in this crumbling state, excessively sensitive and uncomfortable, that your swelling exhaustion is punctuated, amplified, or relieved by performances. Eight actions presented over a period of six hours. Mine, referenced below in three parts, was the last one.

BLINDED

I came from Canada by plane, sitting next to a drunken man. He was nice and proved to be reassuring during the flight, particularly near the end when my glasses broke. However, he quickly disappeared upon arriving in Frankfurt, literally minutes after promising to help me find my connecting gate. I slowly pawed my way to my next plane, holding my glasses against my face. It was difficult and uncomfortable to see. I arrived in Helsinki already tired, and I lived like that for days.

EXHAUSTED

Before leaving for Finland, I was warned about the darkness. I was told there would not be much daylight, or something like that. Indeed, it must have gotten to me, because for the duration of my stay I had insomnia – a heavy and disorienting kind. I slept in stretches no longer than three hours, usually less. I was confused and never knew what time it was. From the moment I arrived to the moment I left, I felt lost. Luckily, Suomenlinna proved to be a beautiful place to wander back and forth, at all hours, in the darkness.

POSSESSED

While on the island, I was housed in a large studio with a second-floor attic apartment. It was more than comfortable, a romantic place to drink, read and lie awake in bed. Not long after arriving, someone told me that the place I was



Travis McCoy Fuller at 'TONIGHT', HIAP Project Space, April 2015. Photo: Antti Ahonen

staying was haunted. I wasn't surprised – not because of any real belief in the paranormal, but because everything I had encountered since arriving in Finland seemed somewhat haunted. This living space was no exception. A domesticated fortress stable-turned-studio was a convincing home for a ghost to inhabit. From that moment on, I was accompanied in my sleeplessness.

Beyond everything that the act of staying up all night connotes, it is the shared exhaustion itself that is the most striking aspect of Tonight. Here, artist, audience, organizer, everyone is fatigued. Individually, this produces a very specific state of bodily hyper-sensitivity, an emotional, cognitive and physical fragility that, when shared, creates an immediate, though difficult, intimacy. This connectedness is raw and uncomfortable, a state that is perhaps not coincidentally also somewhat ideal for the encounter or creation of performance work. Perhaps it's because guards are down when people are worn

out, but maybe also because being too sensitive bonds the public with the artist, who is already always too fragile when the distancing mechanism of representation is abandoned. Regardless of why, drained and vulnerable is a place where tangible moments can be experienced and meaning can be created. So, we consent to the difficulty proposed by Tonight. However, a clear result of the discomfort slowly building overnight, people leave quickly once they can again escape.

The imagined experience of being trapped on an island is part of a familiar North American pop-cultural index. In TV shows, on screensavers, and in countless high school logic puzzles, people forced into proximity by surrounding water turn inward to confront each other, themselves, or their context. In philosophy this narrative also occurs, illustrated most ironically when a university art teacher of mine used the stranded island community as a metaphor to defend the importance of the artist in contemporary society. At the time, I was op-



Helge Meyer at 'TONIGHT', HIAP Project Space, September 2015. Photo: Antti Ahonen

posed to bringing the artist to the island. Pregnant women and doctors came first, which generally left little room for anyone else. But now – ten years later – here I was, an artist stranded, at least for the better part of a day, on an island.

Logically, to be on Suomenlinna without a boat is to be trapped. The ferry passes only every forty minutes to an hour between 6:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. the following morning. However, the daily life of residents normalizes the situation, and so, even at its worst, the manner in which you are trapped is no more than an inconvenience. Yet, despite the inescapable comfort provided by the surrounding community, the context proposed by Tonight still somehow manages to inform your experience of the event quite vividly. Being stranded for four hours between the last and first ferries is enough to trigger something, even though the restraint operates mostly on a conceptual or a poetic level rather than a real one. This is probably because the narrative of being stranded on an island is such a dramatized and evocative one. Linked equally to themes of innovative survival and unforeseen danger, utopic community (re)building and threatening solitude, it is a rich mine of references to tap into. Additionally, and perhaps more pragmatically, attending Tonight means that you have already resigned yourself to the experience of being stuck, since it is an interesting and relevant way to encounter performance, regardless of the lack of tangible risk.

Though perhaps unoriginal, the metaphor of the stranded island community re-



Étienne Boulanger at 'TONIGHT', HIAP Project Space, September 2015. Photo: Antti Ahonen

mains a relevant way to think about viewing performance, because the narrative mirrors the power dynamics inherently contained in the experience of live art. While we could turn away or walk out, we almost always stay. Whether gripped by the artistic proposal or resigned to it, we are trapped. Only a dramatic gesture can provide escape. In parallel, while there are assuredly ways off Suomenlinna for those willing to make the effort, we collectively play out the narrative because pleasure and meaning can be found in it. Simultaneously constrained by the nature of the work and the limits of the land, it becomes evident that you are stranded on an island at every performance event.

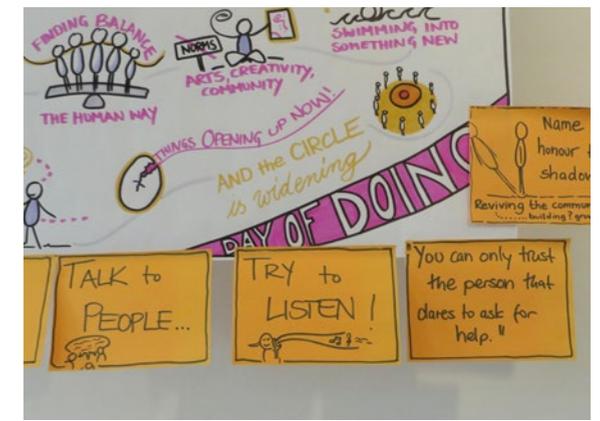
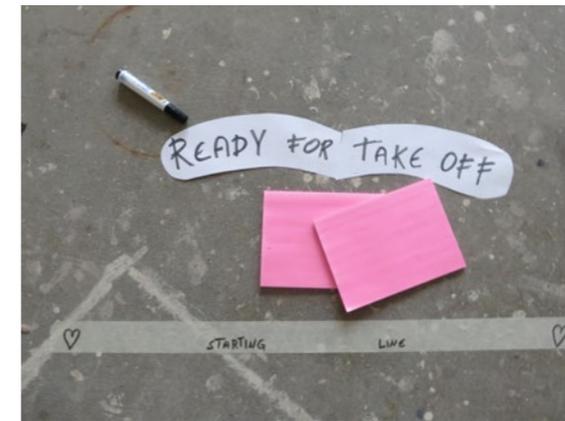
Two artists, Tomasz Szrama and Liina Kuitinen, brought to life their idea of a performance art event. Organised in HIAP's Gallery Augusta and Project Space, the series called Tonight started at midnight and finishing in the early morning hours on various Fridays. During the period between April 2014–December 2015, Tonight exhibited 84 performers from 19 different countries in 11 events. The series appeared extremely challenging for artists, audience and organizers alike. It was also ephemeral, like the art form it was presenting. Michelle Lacombe described her impression of one of the Tonight events from the perspective of a participating artist.

Learning Village 2015

HIAP Gallery Augusta & Project Space,
Mar 27 – Apr 2, 2015



'Learning Village', Director of HIAP Juha Huuskonen (mid.) participating in the programme.
All photos: Irmeli Aro



Oskari Niitamo, a participant

What I learned in 'Learning Village' about facilitation and hosting learning events:

- **Open Space Technology (OST)** → 'no planning mindset'
- **'Harvesting'** → systemizing knowledge collection / production
- **'Letting it be'** and not applying structure → enables emergence
- Applying **beginner's mind** mindset, openness and mutual encouraging
- Take care of **basic facilities** (important for comfortable feeling) e.g. food
- People don't want training but want to **be active practitioners**
- Clarity is required on the **'calling question'** (included in the invitation)
- Facilitation is about building an **inclusive learning culture** (a village)

- There are to be **no apprentices or masters** in the village
- **Non-contributing participation** (lurking) is acceptable and respected
- There are **different modes of participation** e.g. butterfly vs. busy bee
- **Inclusion** and embracing diversity is necessary for a flourishing village
- The process is often **careful, unhurried** and veeeryyyyy sloooooow

The first Learning Village event in Finland took place at HIAP's premises in Suomenlinna during 27 March – 2 April 2015. The event was initiated and hosted by members of the international Art of Hosting community. Art of Hosting is a nonprofit, self-organised network, which focuses on learning, developing and facilitating participatory leadership and different communal processes.

Tokamak: *The Idleness Academy: Where Art Sleeps...with One Eye Open*

HIAP Suomenlinna Studios, Jul 31 – Aug 7, 2015

Text *Olga Jitlina*

At the time of writing this statement of purpose of the sixth *Tokamak* residency, that took place as always on the island of Suomenlinna at HIAP, Helsinki, Finland, the organisers were not quite agreeing on last year's organizing concept. The Somnolent Director of the Academy, Alexander Skidan, wishes to speak of Non-Productivity or Inoperativeness ironically referring to French philosophy (Bataille, J.-L. Nancy) and the Italian tradition of post-operatism. However, some other members of the directorial collective find this term suspicious – or too heavy and academic-sounding and prefer to use the lighter, tinkling words *Idleness* or *Indolence*, echoing somersaults in a fountain, collective siestas in a football pitch, sequin explosions, mass exodus to the balcony, picnics in a full metro carriage, glorious skating in a garbage can, looking for a unicorn in an office building and curly clouds! Of course, vague rococo clouds!

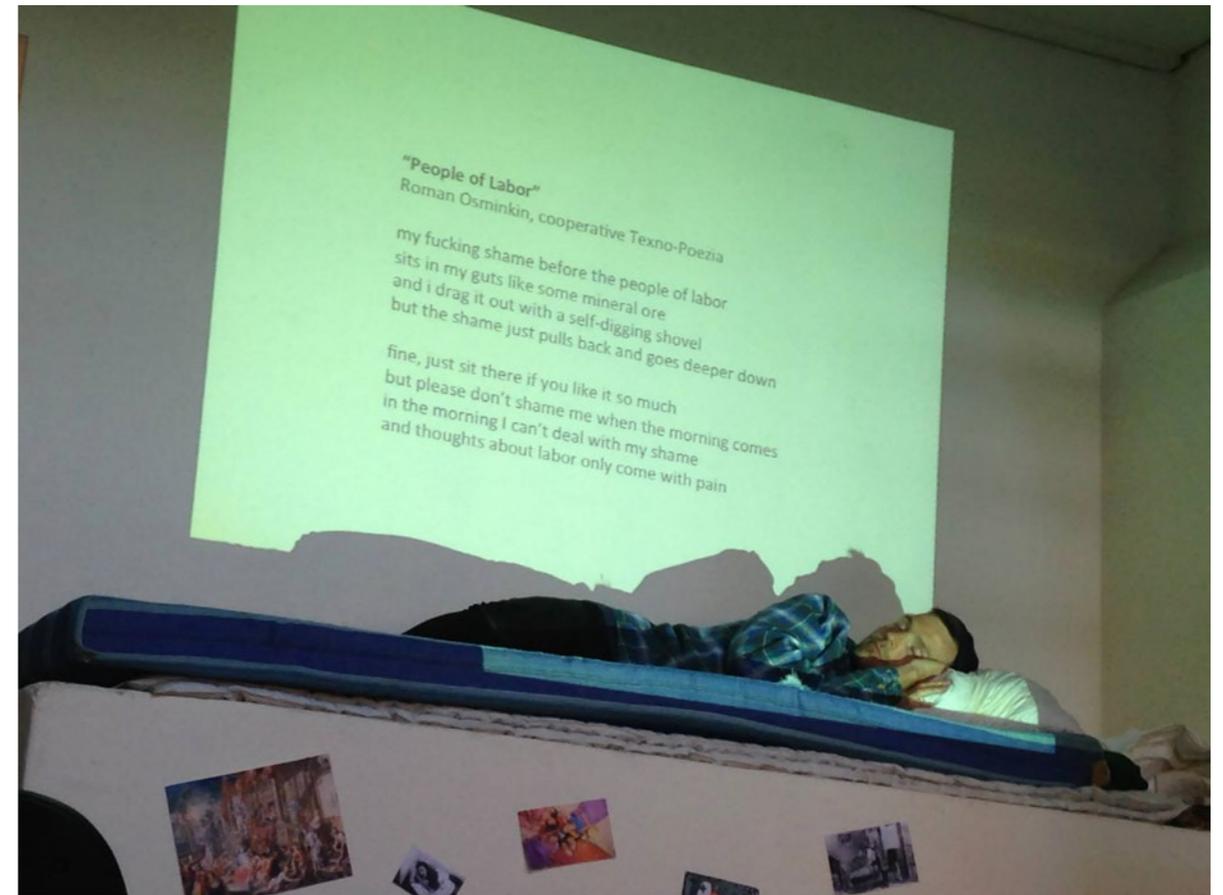
The Dubious Director from United States, Emily Newman is distressed by the idea that we do not use the time productively. She suggested that we have our *Idleness Academy*, but that we make a book documenting the process or do something else to neutralise the *Idleness*, the thought of which makes her extremely nervous



EMILY NEWMAN AND TOKAMAK IDLENESS TEAM,
It's Time To Kill Time! (Silkscreen on pillowcase), 2015

– especially in such close proximity to sea cliffs. How, she proposes, will we finally know if the *Idleness* worked?

To calm her, the Galloping Director, Olga Jitlina (myself) can suggest speculations on the Russian etymology of the word: '*prazdnost*' in fact derives from *prazdnik*, feast (religious), holy-day, fiesta, Shabbat – when God himself had a Saturday day off. *Indolence* has proved to be a mysterious, but valid strategy in Russian fairy tales. Ivan the Fool manages to achieve all of



Roman Osminkin's performance at 'Tokamak'. Photo: Tokamak

his goals while lying on top of a stove, which he also uses as means of transportation when going to the czar's palace. There is also a tradition of praise for *Idleness* from the point of view of economy and social science, (Bertrand Russell) as a means to make a break in accelerating useless growth. There was also the posture of refusal to obey the state imperative of obligatory everyday labor in the Soviet Union and Eastern block among underground artists and intellectuals (Order of Indigent Painters, Joseph Brodsky and many others).

Nowadays when 'independent' artists become subjects and actors of the precarious economy, their art is subjugated to multiple simultaneous projects, deadlines, the principles of networking, PR and self-promotion to such an extent that it almost totally formats their art. In this crazy gallop, at some point management or self-management, can even substitute for art

itself. Experiencing constant stress and frustration, artists turn into nervous workaholics not able to relax and enjoy anything besides their professional interests.

In order to rescue Art, Artists and maybe Time itself from the accelerated modes of production, we have decided to promote and hopefully practice *Idleness* as a potential alternative mode where art can hide and may take other forms and pace or maybe, freed from aim, merge with life in an avant-garde *Indolence*.

Organisers: *Emily Newman and Olga Jitlina*

Participants: *Pavel Arsenyev, Alexey Bogalepov, Francis Brady, Alexei Grinbaum, Sarah Fury, Sasha Kazantsev, Marina Mareeva, Vlaislava Milovskaya, Roman Osminkin, Jonathan Platt, Anastasiya Ryabova, Sasha Sizova, Alexander Skidan, Aria Spinelli, Darya Sukhovei, Oxana Timofeeva, Irina Valkova, Anastasiya Vepreva*

The Safe Haven Helsinki? Symposium

Ateneum Hall, Helsinki, November 3, 2015



Ramy Essam at 'The Safe Haven Helsinki? Symposium', November 3, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtinen

Text Marita Muukkonen

The Safe Haven Helsinki? Symposium was a forum to address the growing importance of Safe Havens, that is, residencies for art professionals at high risk in Ateneum Hall on November 3rd, 2015.

In the context of an increasing number of serious conflicts and crises afflicting the world, there are already more than 50 Safe Haven cities worldwide, 30 of which are located in Nordic countries. Helsinki is the first city in Finland to join the network. In December 2015, Helsinki City Council decided to establish a two-year Safe Haven residency for art professionals, as well as to institute short-term residencies aimed at providing a 'breather' after an artist suffers serious violations of freedom of expression in their home country. The funding is guaranteed for the year 2016. Short-term residencies have been curated by Perpetuum Mobile and co-organised by Perpetuum Mobile and HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme over the past two years in Helsinki with very positive results.

The Symposium was organised by Perpetuum Mobile and HIAP in coordination with

Marita Muukkonen is an internationally active curator based in Helsinki and Berlin. She is the co-founder and co-director of Perpetuum Mobile, a curatorial vehicle, which brings together art, practice and enquiry. She has been a Chairperson of HIAP; Curator at HIAP; Curator at Frame Contemporary Art Finland; Editor at FRAMEWORK – The Finnish Art Review (the international art magazine); and has held key functions at NIFCA – The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art over several years.

the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN), which coordinates the network of Safe Haven Cities and Regions. One of the keynote speakers of the Symposium was Ashraf Araqchi, an art critic and journalist, who has written about the deliberate destruction and theft of cultural heritage by ISIS in Mosul, Iraq until his life was threatened and he fled in the wake of a failed murder attempt. Currently Ashraf has a Safe Haven residency in Stockholm. The second keynote speaker was the first short-term resident in Helsinki, Ramy Essam from Cairo. "The voice of Tahrir Square", as he is known, spoke about the meaning of the 'breather'-residency, which he took up after being tortured and forbidden to play music for two years in Egypt. The discussion included a panel with the director of the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) Helge Lunde, co-director of Perpetuum Mobile, Marita Muukkonen, journalist Iida Simes from PEN, and Helsinki city council member and activist (SDP) Thomas Wallgren.

In Helsinki, next to Ramy Essam, the current short-term residence programme for art practitioners at risk has hosted the photographer Issa Touma from Syria (2014), the curator and researcher Vasyl Cherepanyn from Ukraine (2015) and the rap-musician El Haqed from Morocco (2015).

In addition to voicing their support for the programme, each of these former participants has engaged the local community through a range of performances, exhibitions and installations. A rare initiative internationally, this pilot programme is being financed by the Nordic Culture Point and the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. SafeMUSE Norway is a collaborator for organising 'breathers' for musicians at risk.

Fine Arts Impasses during Arab Spring

Text Ashraf Atracchi

In all the revolutionary emergence, social mutations and changes, there are always cultural and artistic movements that take place along the social movements and reflect the reality of that era, thus becoming a part of the social rebellion.

When looking to the cultural and artistic movements in the Arab world during the Arab Spring uprisings, one notices directly that all the attempts couldn't reach the level of responsibility required for this turning point in society; from productivity to presenting the daily facts and details. In other words, the fine art movement was in a state of intellectual coma during this period. If we compare it to the French revolution, for instance, we will see the huge difference between the cultural movement that accompanied it and the artistic attempts that occurred during Arab Spring. *Liberty Leading the people* by Eugène Delacroix, the painting that became a symbol to all the liberation movements around the world immediately comes to mind.

In an overview, we can notice that many musical events for example, were a good representative of the social movement in one way or another. We must never forget the attempts that have had a great impact on the revolutionary emergence, like the art of caricature, which acted as the interface against the despotism. Cartoonists played a great role in the deep shakes the liberation movement caused during Arab

Spring. Arab rebels and the public were able to easily access caricature art through social media or other digital platforms, while the public considered it as their silenced voice that was now able to reach everyone. Social media, especially Facebook, played a dual role in deepening the visual dialog, while standing against all kinds of oppression and violence.

With that said, there was a huge gap between fine arts and other art forms. Fine arts actually failed in both production field, and in keeping up with the social rebellion. Instead, it became more like a virtual image driven by nostalgia that evoked top Arab artists, whose influence and effectiveness ended long time ago. As Elias Al Khoury said once: *"When the revolution started, it seemed like no one was ready, the cultural elite lost twenty years without learning the lesson from when the Soviet Union collapsed and fell apart. The public's revolution won't wait for the elite to prepare itself."*

With a simple observation of the lack of productivity and the quality of fine arts during Arab Spring, we can see just how diffident and poor it was. It didn't answer people's questions, nor did it chronicle a historical record or an interim resource. On the contrary, the Fine Arts movement was completely off-key.

Arabic-English translation by Antony Merjan. English language editing by Jasmin Islamović.



Journalist Iida Siimes (PEN) interviews Ashraf Atracchi (right) at 'The Safe Haven Helsinki? Symposium', November 3, 2015. Photo: Salla Lahtien

HIAP 2015

Residencies

Australia

Katie Goodwin, Australian Artists Programme
Danae Valenza, Australian Artists Programme
Ruth Waller, Australian Artists Programme
Elizabeth Willing, HIAP Residency Programme
Anne Ferran, Australian Artists Programme
Mark Hislop, Australian Artists Programme

Belgium

Bart Vandeput, Frontiers in Retreat
Juhyun Choi, CUNE Comics in Residence
Jana Vasiljević, CUNE Comics in Residence

Canada

Sylvia Grace Borda, Frontiers in Retreat
Pavitra Wickramasinghe, HIAP Residency Programme
Jonathan Villeneuve, HIAP Residency Programme

Czech Republic

Jaroslav Anděl, Osmosis Residency

Cuba

Ulises Reinaldo Urra Hernandez, Residency Fellow Programme at the Academy of Fine Arts

Egypt

Ramy Essam, Nordic Fresh Air

Estonia

Karel Koplimets, HIAP Residency Programme
Triin Valvas, CUNE Comics in Residence

Finland

Jenna Sutela, HIAP Residency Programme
Marti Kalliala, HIAP Residency Programme
Tuomas A. Laitinen, HIAP Residency Programme

Hannaleena Hauru, HIAP Residency Programme for Finnish Artists
Saara Hannula, Frontiers in Retreat
Anniina Ala-Ruona, Frontiers in Retreat
Minna Pöllänen, HIAP Residency Programme for Finnish Artists
Jukka Hautamäki, HIAP Residency Programme for Finnish Artists
Eveliina Hämäläinen, Academy of Fine Arts Studio Space Residency
Pasi Mäkelä, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak
Kirsi Joenpolvi, Osmosis Residency
Joonas Sirén, Academy of Fine Arts Studio Space Residency
Tommi Vasko, Frontiers in Retreat
Veli Lehtovaara, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak
Elina Pirinen, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak
Maria Saivosalmi, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak

France

Alexis Rodolphe, SAMA Sound Art Workshop

Germany

Ruairí Donovan, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak
Jassem Hindi, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak
Cathy Walsh, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak
Tue Greenfort, Frontiers in Retreat
Iohanna Nicenboim, Design Residency Programme
Stephanie Steinkopf, HIAP Residency Programme
Matilda Tjäder, HIAP Residency Programme
Anna Mikkola, HIAP Residency Programme

Greece

Georgios Papadopoulos, HIAP Residency Programme

Iceland

Katrín Ólína Pétursdóttir, Nordic & Baltic Residency Programme

Ireland

Carl Giffney, Frontiers in Retreat

Italy

Irene Sorrentino, FILI Translators Residency
Paola Anziché, HIAP Residency Programme

Morocco

Mouad Belrhoute (El Haqed), Nordic Fresh Air

Netherlands

Jasper Bruijns, Residency Collaboration / CBK Rotterdam: TENT - HIAP

Portugal

Tiago Cerqueira, Collaboration Residency with Zodiak

Russia

Anna Tereshkina, Connecting Points

Serbia

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Branislav Dimitrijević, Residency Fellow Programme at the Academy of Fine Arts

Slovenia

Julija Potrč, FILI Translators Residency

Spain

Fernando Garcia-Dory, Frontiers in Retreat

South Korea

Sujin Lim, HIAP Residency Programme

Sweden

Hanna Ljungh, Frontiers in Retreat
Disa Wallander, CUNE Comics in Residence
Ashraf Mohammed, Nordic Fresh Air
Emma Bexell, ESKUS Collaboration Residency
Stefan Stanisc, ESKUS Collaboration Residency

Ukraine

Vasyl Cherepanyn, Nordic Fresh Air
Alevtina Kakhidze, Connecting Points

United Kingdom

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Robert Kocik, Frontiers in Retreat

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Nino Sekhniashvili (HIAP Helsinki)

Helsinki-Dublin Residency Exchange

Hanna Husberg (TBG+S Dublin)
Barbara Knezevic (HIAP Helsinki)

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Boshko Boskovic (United States), Mobius Residency Programme
Bora Hong (South Korea), ARKO Curator Residency Programme
Ece Pazarbasi (Turkey/Germany), HICP – Helsinki International Curatorial Programme
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Marcio Harum (Brasil)
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Workshops, Retreats & Performance

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Learning Village

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Olga Zhitlina, Emily Newman, Nastya Ryabova, Pavel Arsenev, Vladislava Milovskaya, Sarah Jury, Aria Spinelli, Francis Brady, Marina Mareeva, Oxana Timofeeva, Jonathan Platt, Nikita Pirogov, Aleksey Bogolepov, Sasha Sizova, Olga Zubova, Roman Osminkin, Anastia Vepereva

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Tonight Performance Art Events

Mireia Arnella (Spain), Étienne Boulanger (Canada), Shannon Cochrane (Canada), Nieves Correa (Spain), Alice De Visscher (Belgia), Jolijn de Wolf (Netherlands), Abel Loureda Fernandez (Spain), Bartolomé Ferrando (Spain), Susanne Fjørtoft (Norway), Travis McCoy Fuller (United States), Linda Inkeroinen (Finland), Jouni Järvenpää (Finland), Lovisa Johansson (Sweden), Pekka Kainulainen (Finland), Anne-Liis Kogan (Norway), Tanja Koistila (Finland), Tanja Koistila (Finland), Aapo Korkeaoja (Finland), Beate Linne (Germany), Philip Luddite (Finland), Antti-Juhani Manninen (Finland), Anna Matveinen (Finland), Kineret Haya Max (Israel), Christian Messier (Canada), Helge Meyer (Germany), Siiri Nevalainen (Finland), Katja Paju (Finland), Franzisca Siegrist (Norway), Suvi Suvereeni (Finland), Hiroko Tsuchimoto (Japan/Sweden), Panu Tyhtilä (Finland), Erik Wijkström (Sweden), Willem Wilhelmus (Netherlands/Finland)

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SIC
Sinne / Pro Artibus
studio das weisse haus
Temple Bar Gallery + Studios Dublin
Theater Viirus
Zodiak – Center for New Dance

Frontiers in Retreat (2013–2018)

Frontiers in Retreat is organised by HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme in partnership with the art organisations Mustarinda (Finland), Scottish Sculpture Workshop – SSW (Scotland), Interdisciplinary Art Group SERDE (Latvia), Skafffell – Center for Visual Art (Iceland), Centre d'Art i Natura de Farrera (Spain), Cultural Front – GRAD (Serbia) and Jutempus (Lithuania). The project has been funded with support from the European Commission, the Kone Foundation, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Alfred Kordelein Foundation.

Nordic Fresh Air (2014-2016)

Nordic Fresh Air is co-ordinated by HIAP, Perpetuum Mobile (Finland) and Cooperative Buongiorno (Finland). The network partners are MoKS (Estonia), Art Lab Gnesta (Sweden), Malmö City (Sweden), The Swedish Artists Organisation KRO (Sweden), SafeMUSE (Norway), KiN Contemporary Art Centres in Norway (Norway) and Freemuse (Denmark). The network is funded by Nordic Culture Point and Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland.

HIAP would also like to thank The Governing Body of Suomenlinna and Cable Factory for their collaboration and support.

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