

# ARSIS

1/03



Internationalizing  
**VISUAL ARTS**

Translation Susan Heiskanen

**//** Our goal should be a creative welfare society in which art is an integral part of the innovation basis for social development, new knowledge, skills, know-how and welfare, where sustainable cultural values are equally recognized". This declaration is from the resolution Government decision-in-principle on art and artists policy adopted by the previous Government in office. Also the present Government approved the resolution in its program as a good basis for advancing the arts. The important task at hand is now to turn these principles into practical measures.

The decision-in-principle, and the policy proposal (TAO) it is based on, reflect a new approach to art policy. What is especially new about it is the wish to consider the significance of art to individual citizens and communities from as wide a perspective as possible. For an individual, art is a basic right that needs to be realized in practice. For communities, art is creative, cultural, social and economic capital. The adaptive use of art needs to extend to all levels of society where it may have impacts on the lives of individuals or communities: in the educational system, in working life, in the social welfare and health sector, in regional and local level, in economic activity.

Without artists there would be no artistic life. Creativity is one of the strongest and most valuable human skills. If we wish to enhance the innovative contribution of the arts, it is essential to increase support for the continuous artistic growth of artists themselves: to provide better conditions for educational, research and development work, international interaction and mobility, and experimental, innovative artistic activity.

This issue of the ARSIS centers on the internationalization of the Finnish visual arts. Finnish design and architecture are internationally well known, even to the point of having become a cliché. But in the past decade, also visual arts, performance art and media art, and their different sub-fields, have risen to international attention. Pekka Luhta examines the roots and present situation of performance art, Elukka Eskelinen media art and Erkki Pirtola the fascinating DIY phenomenon.

The rise of Finnish contemporary visual arts is not a 'miracle' – as Leena-Maija Rossi notes in her article – but a result of exceedingly purposeful work. Sari Karttunen examines the reasons for growing international interest in Finnish photographic art in an interview with Marjatta Tikkanen. The director of FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange Marketta Seppälä presents an overview of artists-in-residence activity, and Tiina Purhonen of the different operations of FRAME. Timo Valjakka brings new perspectives to Finnish visual arts straight from one of its metropolises – London, and Hannu Castrén in turn from the heartland of Finland.

The fields of comic and illustration art have now entered cultural policy. They have both received much international attention, as Heikki Jokinen and Mika Launis point out in their articles. Also the concepts of architecture have broadened and this year received special attention through the Architectural Heritage Year. This issue takes a look at follow-up measures in national architectural policy (Apoli), Finnish design policy (Design 2005!) will be introduced in issue 3/2003.

I will serve as the chairman of the Arts Council of Finland and the editor-in-chief of the ARSIS Journal until the end of this year. I hope that this theme issue of the journal will shed new light, to international readers as well, on the diversity of the Finnish field of visual arts.

Jarmo Malkavaara

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From series *Language is a Foreign Country*. Jorma Puranen, 1998

SARI KARTTUNEN

## INTERVIEW WITH MARJATTA TIKKANEN

Marjatta Tikkanen has been the Secretary General of the Union of Artist Photographers since 1991. International affairs are nowadays a central part of her work. She gives artists advice on questions relating to exhibitions, introduces Finnish photography to foreign curators and takes part in organizing international exhibitions. She was a member of the organizing committee for the *MoiToiNous* exhibitions held in Paris last autumn, and more recently, she helped with the realization of the *Zeitgenössische Fotokunst aus Finnland* exhibition touring Germany this and next year.

## THE MAKING OF FINNISH PHOTOGRAPHY

In autumn 2001 Tikkanen prepared a report for the Ministry of Education on the field of photography. In it she labels the period that begun in the mid-1990s as internationalization in Finnish photography and urges the active players in the field to join forces and lay out a strategy for internationalization. The strategy should outline aims and concrete measures both for the whole field and for the individual actors. Tikkanen also addressed the need to establish an English-language publication on visual arts to be distributed internationally. It seems that her wish is about to come true, as the FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange will soon begin to publish an English language journal.

– When there is no publication for current affairs in Finnish photography, the artists are pressed to produce exhibition catalogues, portfolios, digital publications, CD-ROMs and introductory portals. This kind of

introductory material is needed badly when an artist doesn't publish his/her works in the form of books.

### 'Finnish Photography' as export product

Tikkanen proposed that by investing more public support in photographic art and gathering the actors in the field under a joint strategy we could soon speak of a new concept 'Finnish Photography', which might even surpass 'Finnish Design' as an export product.

– I said that somewhat ironically, almost jokingly, but I was also being serious. I wanted try out the maturity of 'Finnish Photography' as a concept. The international demand for Finnish photography grew explosively in the 1990s. Yet photography still receives less than one percent of the state expenditure on culture. Of course it is not only a question of money, the breakthrough of 'Finnish Photography' would

also require more systematic cooperation among the actors in the field.

The success of Finnish contemporary art abroad has in recent years been so pronounced that international art journals speak of a 'miracle'. The top achievements include the 2001 Venice Biennial, where seven Finnish artists were invited to the main exhibition, of whom at least half could be regarded as representatives of photography art.

– One explanation to the international success of Finnish photography could be that we are not burdened by conventions on how it should be exported through official channels. In the days of state-led artistic exchange, photography wasn't exported to any great extent besides exhibitions centered on themes like "the Finnish sauna" or "architecture by Alvar Aalto". We have been able to jump straight into the present system, which calls for extensive networking and establishment of personal contacts. A great number of collaborative projects are carried out nowadays with many different organizers and financiers, and exhibitions are held in a variety of locations.

– Regional centers for photography were in a certain sense pioneers of internationalization as were the Union of Artist Photographer and its predecessor. They opened Finnish photography to international influences and presented it in international contexts well before the boom of the 1990s. The events brought to Finland prominent foreign photographers, visual artists using photography in their works and critics.

### Europe-centred phase

In the mid-1990s many young photographers dreamed of a breakthrough in New York. But instead, Finnish photographers

have in recent years reaped success in Sweden, France, Germany and Britain.

– We are now going through a strongly Europe-centered phase. Surely the dream of making it in New York still looms in the background, but it isn't spoken of very much. This may of course have to do with the present situation in the world. International art fairs can serve as a springboard to the U.S. market as they are frequented by prominent American dealers. Finnish photographers have gained visibility in the fairs, represented by a few domestic galleries or ones from Sweden and Germany.

– The centers of artistic activity have to some extent shifted, Germany, for example, holds now a prominent place in contemporary art. New major events continuously spring up in different parts of the world.

– Photographers have the advantage of being able to present their works in exhibitions of both contemporary and photography art. Photography art has its own international events in which Finnish artists have consistently participated, such as the Rotterdam Biennial or the Ars Baltica Triennial. Jorma Puranen, for example, presents his works on the both the forums. Pentti Sammallahhti, who has received visibility in the sphere of contemporary art, is especially popular in the fine art photography circuit. But successes in the field of photography do not receive the same amount of publicity as other events in contemporary art.

According to Tikkanen, the better possibilities since the 1990s for Finnish photographers to work abroad are much the result of Finland joining the European Community, which opened customs borders and concretely facilitated the export of art. It also increased student exchange among art schools and gave incentive for cooperation through the new funding programs.

– Residency activity has significantly increased the mobility of

**The Union of Artist Photographers was founded in 1988. It promotes Finnish photography and looks after the social and professional interests of artist photographers. The Union has belonged to the Artists' Association of Finland since 1995. It now has about 240 members. They tend to be highly-educated and young, nearly a third of them are under the age of 35. Approximately half of all the members are women.**

artists, as have the student exchange programs. Every year 5–10 Finnish photographers get to work in ateliers abroad. Many artist-in-residence centers provide working facilities expressly for photographers and video and media artists.

– A residential arts program centering on photography could be established in Finland in conjunction with some regional photography center and in collaboration with the regional arts councils, many of which already have ateliers abroad.

### New attitudes

Led by Timothy Persons, Gallery TaiK has effectively promoted young students on the international market. Isn't it a bit risky to make stars out of young people who still haven't completed their studies?

– I doubt that their production can be very extensive at that stage. But that doesn't seem to worry them, they seem to trust themselves. In my mind, this faith in one's own work is very important. And they do receive training in art marketing, they learn already at an early stage how works should be exhibited and priced.

– Having portfolios is largely a question of age and generation-bound attitudes. The younger artists usually have a portfolio, or even many different ones for different purposes, as they are essential for breaking through to the international art circuit. Older artists are still hesitant about marketing their works and image. There are artists like Ulla Jokisalo who has gained remarkably little international attention for someone on her level of talent and demand. I understand that in her case it is a question of personal choice.

– A change of attitudes has surely, been a precondition for international success. The present generation comes from a totally different starting point compared to the artists who in the 1980s tried to establish photography art. Young people take for granted the possibility to use photography as means to make art. For them the domestic field is no longer enough, they are looking for greater challenges.

Tikkanen states in her report that the expanding market has since the 1990s resulted in a disparity of income among photographers.

– International success is starting to have real financial significance. A small group of photographers already manage to make a living out of their art alone, although I doubt that there are even ten of them. And visibility doesn't necessarily correlate with income, for many artists demand can be a pitfall. The works are not unique, an artist can take several prints of a photograph, which may be on display in different locations at the same time. Regrettably, very few organizers of exhibitions provide financing for the proofing, priming and framing of works. It would require a considerable amount of sales to break even with the costs.

Tikkanen believes that more than an information center – which was a much discussed subject at the time of her report – the field of photography would need producers who would seek for financing and look after practical arrangements.

– One can only be amazed at how the artists who have met with the most demand manage to concentrate on creating new works under all the pressure caused by the exhibitions. We don't have the kind of galleries

that are able to look after promotion, and could also bear the production costs. Annukka Jyrämä noted in her doctoral dissertation a couple of years ago that in Sweden the situation is already different. Here in Finland the gallery that comes close to the model is Galerie Anhava. Finnish photographers are listed with at least Swedish, German and French galleries. These countries have more experience in top-level art trade.

– Some young artists have received their entire education abroad, others have taken courses through exchange programs. The threshold of moving abroad is no longer as high as it used to be.

But what makes Finnish art fascinating to people abroad: "the strange, northern people" or shamanism and exoticness?

– I don't believe that it is a question of "Northern oddness", one key explanation could be found in the content of the works: reflection on subjectivity and identity. People are nowadays a popular theme. Dutch photography has also received a lot of attention, and there too photography art centers on people. We have a long tradition of reflection on identity, which now happens to be in the forefront of contemporary art. Perhaps the ultimate explanation to the success of Finnish photography is perfect timing. We have a new generation of artists with a new attitude towards the art market, with highly developed technical skills and an excellent system of public support, compared to many other countries.

What formula would you suggest for maintaining international demand?

– Activity and initiative, self-confidence and faith in one's own work, a touch of madness and of course sufficient financing for artists to make art and for other actors in the field to maintain the networks.

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*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

**T**he use of the word 'miracle' places contemporary art in a mythical pigeonhole of artistic phraseology where it isn't proper to question or debate the quality guaranteed by the connoisseurs of contemporary art. The word 'miracle' leads us to believe that a class of more interesting artists has suddenly

Central Europe. The galleries of Helsinki, the number of which increased considerably in the 1980s, sought their way to art fairs and brought foreign art to Finland. In the past, it was mainly artist organizations that were engaged in artistic exchange. In the 1990s, new actors took on the efforts to internationalize the art scene, namely the Museum of Contemporary Art, Kiasma, the

'internationalizing' artists produce their works? What does national, for example 'Finnishness', actually mean? Why and what kind of a Finnishness is it important to propagate?

Another problem is the gate-keeping and exclusiveness in the field of arts, both domestically and internationally, which is connected with increased professionalization. An effective curator system often means tight schedules within which selections of artists have to be made. Many curators visit national art fields looking for well-known artists, and choices are easily made among those already chosen, even though the local actors in the field would be more than willing to introduce a wider range of artistic talent. When the same name lists keep reappearing on export news, the field tends to become steeply segregated.

A whole other problem has to do with the age structure in internationalization, which in turn is linked to the constant search for something new. Many artists find themselves already at an early age in the whirligig spun by curators when it is too soon for them to even talk about actual artistic production. Art schools have curators visit and assess the students' works and thus, for their own part, spur on the hunt for young talent. As the styles in demand change, so do the objects of demand, even rapidly. The art world wears out names, authors and works. The interest in different art forms and instruments fluctuates. Presently, the exhibition institution is interested in photographs and video installations – but how will things stand in 2006?

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*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*Leena-Maija Rossi and Sari Karttunen are part of a research group studying the internationalization of Finnish contemporary art.*

At the turn of the new millenium a great deal of discussion among the Finnish art world and media has centered on the internationalization of contemporary Finnish art. Representation of Finnish artists in international group and solo exhibitions in foreign galleries has been followed keenly. The phrase "Finnish miracle", used by some foreign art world practitioners, has been received with much enthusiasm. But are we really talking about a miracle?

## IS IT A MIRACLE?



*Njalabtoarvi from series Nomadi. Marja Helander, 2002*

emerged in Finland, popped into international consciousness out of nowhere. The phenomenon can – and in my mind should – be regarded differently. It would maybe be more appropriate to speak of the consequences of professionalization and purposeful work, or even of actual export efforts and their results. One might also consider how the situation has been affected by Finland becoming a member of the European Union and the general increase of mobility in the Western art world.

Serious export of Finnish art is not as such anything new and specific to the turn of the millennium. It started already in the 1980s when a few of our painters connected with neo-expressionism and some installation artists met with demand mainly in

Finnish Fund for Art Exchange, Frame and, especially at the end of the decade, Gallery TaiK at the University of Art and Design Helsinki, which has brought works by art students – especially photographers – to art fairs literally from the school bench.

So, much work has been done, undoubtedly even to the point of toil. And if we think about the former structure of the Western art world, which centered on "master painters" and metropolises, it is delightful to note that also art from small and non-Anglo-American cultures has found its way to the art circuit. Yet the present situation raises a number of questions. Why does it often seem like internationalization has become a value on its own? What are the audiences for whom the



TIMO VALJAKKA

## FINNISH ART IS VISIBLE IN LONDON

Finnish contemporary art is doing well in Great Britain, at least if measured by the fact that more and more Finnish contemporary art can be encountered in big and prominent museums, and in small alternative exhibition sites as well.

*Cave. Salla Tykkä, 2003. Cave is shown in Tramway, Glasgow, from 2 May to 8 June 2003.*

But is it really *Finnish* art that is in question here? Or is it a question about the success reaped by individual Finnish artists who represent, first and foremost, themselves, while being part of an international art scene where the nationality of an artist is a mere attribute?

MATISSE PICASSO AHTILA – the names of three artists featured at the same time were blazoned on the outside wall of Tate Modern in summer 2002. There is hardly a better way of expressing the standing of Eija-Liisa Ahtila's works among the tops of international contemporary art.

Only a few Finnish artists have reached similar visibility in London: Aki Kaurismäki, Soile Isokoski and Karita Mattila, today perhaps also Kimmo Pohjonen. Generally speaking, Finnish music is better known than visual arts. Music is also more easily perceived as Finnish.

A few British critics who have evaluated Ahtila's works have brought up the issue that she is Finnish and grounded their critique on rather hackneyed notions of a cold and dark country.

One critic associated the high technological quality of Ahtila's works with a modern, cell phone producing Finland. Most critics would just mention the fact that she is Finnish in passing, or ignore the matter altogether. Nationality can support interpretation but it doesn't give an artist additional value.

Ahtila's success has, however, clearly increased the interest in Finnish contemporary art and also steered the direction of this interest. British art experts regard video and experimental film, expressly, as the strongpoint of Finnish art. They can also name many artists from Laura Horelli to Mika Taanila, and from Heli Rekula to Salla Tykkä (whose works are right now prominently displayed in Glasgow).

The British experts' primary sources of information are not to be found in Finland. The most significant role is played by international major exhibitions such as Documenta, Manifesta and the Venice Biennial. For artists, successful participation in these kinds of exhibitions has meant immediate visibility in the art circuit.

Another, perhaps more surprising source of interest in Finnish contemporary artists is the

image of Finland: according to the most influential London style and fashion magazines, Helsinki is a really cool city. A right kind of positive interest in an artist's hometown may also awaken interest in his/her works.

London is the most multicultural city in the world, open and curious as such. Interested audiences can be found for anything that is new, original and well done. The gig of Finnish DJ and sound artist Vladislav Delay in Tate Modern in autumn 2002 was sold out. Elina Brotherus's photographs can be seen in galleries and magazine covers alike. Kaarina Kaikkonen is preparing a major installation in Brighton, due to open in June.

Riiko Sakkinen became something of a cult when the *Vogue* featured a T-shirt designed by him. During an artist-in-residency in London in autumn 2002, he sold his T-shirts at an underground station. Sakkinen is a good example of how a young artist can find a way to the consciousness of the art world through the backdoor, so to say.

*Timo Valjakka is the director of the Finnish Institute in London.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*



# AS THE CENTER SHIFTS, FINNISH VISUAL ARTS BECOME INTERNATIONALIZED

The shift in Finnish visual arts in the 1970s from influences of Western modernism to the ideals of Eastern socialist realism can be also viewed from the perspective of internationalization. From this viewpoint, the change can be interpreted as an overall frustration with the pursuit for real time value and breakthrough (which never seemed to take place).

**W**e have made a habit of asking people from abroad what they think about us Finns. This has had its own variation in the arts: might this or that artist please the international art world? At our least self-reliant, we would even think that we could succeed in internationalization only if the art we produced looked, to the very last detail, international. After the turning point in the 1970s, we strove to detach from the stressful modernism in which the center subordinated the periphery to its rhythm and pace.

In the post-modernist 1980s the isms were replaced by a multitude of styles; the individuality of the artist subverted the universal aesthetics of style. The center gave up its domineering mandate – although in theory more than in practice. It was quite natural for the Interrail generation of

artists to move across borders and to look solely for what was important to them, personally. The most crucial factor in the development of the identity of the Finnish artist was that the center was transformed into the artist's personal resource. In recent years, international student exchange among art schools has increased, and consequently, the possibility for young artists to link themselves right from the start of their careers to international settings is decisively different.

In the course of the past twenty years, growing numbers of curators for the international “grand gatherings” visited Finland. They began by saying that they knew hardly anything about Finnish art. Now many of these curators have already come to know Finnish art, although they unfortunately often tend to recycle the same safe and secure artist names in their exhibitions.

Important work, both from the standpoint of the overworked curators and of international breakthroughs, has been done by the FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Kiasma. Along with a few central museums, they form a systematically operating mega-level for internationalizing Finnish art, where only a very few artists can enter.

There are also other levels where achievements are made,

but these are usually at best passed over by the major media as minor events. This is a consequence of both the integral hierarchy among the different art fields and of a geographical hierarchy that still dominates the culture of our small country. Graphic artists have fared well internationally since the 1960s but they are not admitted in the top registry of international breakthroughs. Already in 1975, an international graphic art triennial called *Graphica Creativa* was established in the small city of Jyväskylä in Central Finland, placed in the periphery both in terms of the art form it represented and of geographic location. This is to show how graphic artists form their own international inner circle.

The marginal twin brother of graphic art, art photography, has together with video art surfaced as a central field of contemporary art. However, the international exhibitions held in photography centers in the small and distant cities of Oulu and Jyväskylä have been left with unjustly little attention. This year, a photography art biennial will be held for the first time in the eastern city of Imatra, which will make use of the cultural connections that have formed in the course of years across the eastern border.

The regional arts councils that operate under the Ministry of Education were set up in the latter 1960s. Their central goal has been to secure countrywide equitability in artists' working conditions and in the supply and reception of art. In the past years, many arts councils have also sought their way towards international exhibition work. The Regional Arts Council of Lapland has taken part in establishing a cultural zone for the Barents region, a region that is at present one of the most vital centers of world art. Curators might be well advised to choose, instead of landing on the Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport, to fly to the Rovaniemi airport in Lapland.

The Regional Arts Council of

Central Finland has together with a few other regional arts councils from inner Finland rented an artist residence in Prague. Last year the arts councils held an extensive art event in Prague, and are now planning to establish their own gallery in the city. As a collaborative effort between the Arts Councils of Central Finland and North Savo, also a series of Nordic exhibitions began in Finland, Sweden and Iceland at the turn of the millennium. And more is to follow.

International art exchange on a regional level would also perfectly fit the operating ideology of the regional arts councils. Its development would call from the Minister of Education a reorganization and increase of financing. The creation of such operating conditions would also possibly require hiring regional artists with experience in international activity. If and when such a project will be realized, any illusion of the smallness or bigness of Finland will dissolve and our culture can present itself on the international stage in its exact right size and whole diversity. The windows will open to all directions.

*Hannu Castrén is Central Finland's regional artist, arts critic and visual artist.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

# CHANGES IN THE FINNISH PERFORMANCE ART SCENE

Performance art was not widely discussed in Finland until the 1980s, when the art form started to rapidly evolve. Performances, videos, photographs and installations appeared in galleries and everyday environments. The breakthrough was linked to wider social and political phenomena: the value void that followed the radicalism of the 1960s and the cultural activism committed to power politics in the 1970s was filled with trends that in their spontaneous thinking and absurd emotional registry did not fit the earlier conceptions of art. The trend of nostalgic realism disappeared from theatre and visual arts, and the Finnish art world once again reached out to the wider world.

At that stage, performance art became a sort of operetta messenger for the new dawning of culture. Upon an unwritten order by the art world, performance art was assigned a special role in shaking up the cultural atmosphere. What the art world indirectly commissioned, the media directly expressed. The first to be called performance groups – Homo Dollars from the Theatre Academy, and Jack Helen Brut by the neo-romantic new image artists – became noted due to media publicity. Publicity built up the image of per-

formance art, which became characterized as based on the style applied by these groups.

In hindsight, the Finnish performance groups of the 1980s can, however, be regarded more as successors of the theatre reform movement than as representatives of performance art. They started by radicalizing improvisation, the status and audience relations of the performances and the connections between the members of the groups. This process ended in an analysis of the Russian modern avant-garde tradition, when the jesting energy made way for an emulative approach.

## Open structure

Performance art can be perceived both as a successor of international avant-gardism and as an art form that is linked to the latest forms of contemporary art. When it is referred to as avant-gardism, it implies cultural attitudes, performances and projects within the established art forms. Speaking of performance art as contemporary art in turn implies commitment to the background of visual arts expanding and diversifying into multi-instrumental time-space art. To this two central principles need to be applied: performances are mainly unique in time and place and, first and foremost, physical expressions.

Performance art is almost impossible to categorize under identifiable principles according to structure and form. Any such attempt would be futile. But merely describing a performance can well illustrate the principles. Performance art realizes the idea of an art work being completed in its reception; it is dialogical and open. In a performance, the circuit between the audience and the performer is like a living, ritualistic picture. The picture of the performance evolves from their

presence and, from a mediating distance, as documentaries, stories and discussions. Rather than as images, one could speak of performance as a text with a meaning that changes at the different stages and against the different backgrounds. Contexts serve as subtexts of the performance, from planning to documentation and critique.

## Technology and training

Performances fluently apply different means and instruments from the most traditional ones to cutting-edge information technology; they are not bound to specific instruments. Performances that make use of flexible combinations of instruments coincide with the notion of an instrument as a message. As performance artists are well-acquainted with the new technologies and not easily dazzled, they can also maintain a critical perspective to the fetishist additional value that technology is assumed to bring to art.

Does the central aspect of cultural policy – a commitment to the building of information society – link arts education and support for artistic projects to a single-minded conception of technology? While there is so much bustle around media art – educational plans, surveys and gigantic projects for channeling financing – the interest of arts administration in performance art has practically remained at zero-level.

This seems peculiar, since examples to the contrary can be found in other developed countries. For example, performance art education in Great Britain is on the level with education in other spheres of art. The constantly developing British 'live art' is a true example of an institutionally protected and reasonably supported art form.





*Willem Wilbelmus, 2002. Photo: Pekka Lubta*



*Irma Optimist, 2002. Photo: Pekka Lubta*

In Finland, the amount of public support to individual performance artists and projects is very small, for example in comparison to media art. Also education in performance art is still in its swaddling clothes. It is not provided anywhere on the level of higher education, even the Turku Arts Academy is about to conclude its four-year crossing borders program. In the Finnish Academy of Art there is no separate training program for performance art. In the Pallas further education program at the University of Art and Design Helsinki it is at least possible for a student to do their diploma work on performance art. For the past couple of years, also the Finnish Theatre Academy has included in its curriculum a training program for performance art and theory, led by Professor Annette Arlander. This has had at least an indirect effect extending to the field of performance art.

### The realities in the field

Performance art in Finland has strengthened its position in recent years: the number of artists and the amount of experimental activity have increased, which can be seen for example in combinations of performance practices, laboratories and studios. Studio Là-bas has emerged as the most significant joining force, mainly due to its experimental operating policy that brings together the younger and older generations. It has drawn around it an expert audience that is able to give solid feedback. This project, which Irma Optimist started in her studio in 2000, now operates nomadically and gives performances also outside the Helsinki region. In addition to a series consisting of over twenty evenings of performances, it has also organized large-scale collective performance happenings in Helsinki.

Là-bas also links the domestic field to more contemporary international activity. The performances consistently feature foreign guest artists as well as artists in residence from abroad.

Là-bas has also provided for the documentation of live art performances, which is important when unique, physical presentations are in question. Due to a lack of resources, main archives are only able to look after the recordings of live performance art on a random basis. DVD-level recordings of the works of some artists have been made for the archive, but the scope of the present situation as well as the development of recording technology require that the actors in the field must themselves see to the documentation. Nonetheless, it still remains significant where these documents are compiled. The Là-bas archive already contains hundreds of hours of recorded material.

Through what kinds of systems should the support be directed to the many forms and subsectors of performance art? It seems odd that there is no separate subsection for performance arts among the Art Council of Finland's project grants. It seems quite ironic that performance art is hidden in the group 'others'. There performance art must share the leftovers with projects which should fall within totally different subsections, and which, frankly speaking, do not in my mind even have sufficient artistic competence to compete with performance art projects. The tops of Finnish performance art enjoy international esteem, but are here in Finland sold on sale. Performance art needs its own grants subsection.

*Pekka Lubta is an art critic.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

In late October 2002, Anti contemporary art festival – an international city event – was organised in Kuopio in Finland. The festival was composed of works of Live Art and environmental art positioned in unusual yet everyday surroundings within the cityscape. Some of the artists involved with the festival were invited and some were chosen through a platform application process to which anyone was free to take part. The application process achieved a great result as the festival received over one hundred applications from 15 different countries. Of those who had applied about twenty artists were welcomed to participate. In 2003 the number of applications grew to over 160 from twenty different countries.

*The English Lone Twin artist duo on Kuopio Market Square in 2002. Photo: Pekka Mäkinen*



## AN ANTI-FASHIONABLE AUDIENCE

JERE RUOTSALAINEN

The Anti festival artists were given twelve pre-selected locations from central Kuopio for carrying out their works during the three days. It was fundamental for the structure of the festival that the sites had been chosen in advance. One might easily think that the selected places had nothing in common, yet they do activate people in various stages of their lives ranging from a hospital to a cemetery. This way even ordinary places have great meaning in the formation of identity and the building of one's roots. A fixed structure also has its effect on the artists' work. They only need to focus on a set audience instead of contemplating a take-over of the entire city.

For this festival the audience is more important than the place or building in which the work of art is presented. Through the

place we may approach an audience already present in its vicinity. These so-called regular people might not necessarily visit art museums or galleries but that does not make them any worse an audience. In Kuopio, the public was initially perplexed about having an art festival brought to the streets yet it wasn't afraid to comment and to look at the works. In larger metropolitan areas this isn't as easy to attain. Even a large event gets bogged down under everything and no one can make out the greater whole. Furthermore, the audience would not have equal opportunity to attend the events taking place around them.

In a book *Mapping the Terrain* the American curator and researcher Mary Jane Jacob introduces the term unfashionable audience. These masses populating our cities might actually get a whole lot more out of art, if only the art world bothered to

come down from its high horse of sparkling galleries to the real world and explore what is really happening in society. At its best, working in various interactions with the public is constructive also for the artists, especially in a world wherein the artists themselves have often lost a natural contact with their audience. Anti festival responds to this challenge by bringing a high quality program, free of charge, right where it's needed: to a coach station, a tax office and a petrol station. The meaningfulness of art is not a product of the cleanliness of the surroundings in which it is presented but rather stems from all the life that surrounds it. Anti to all!

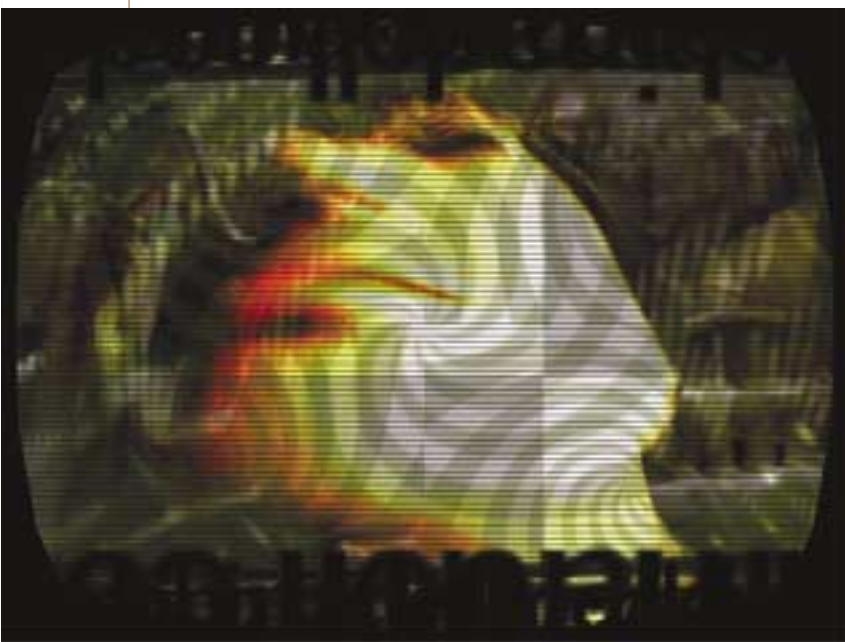
*Jere Ruotsalainen is producer of Anti Contemporary Art Festival and Regional Artist of North Savo Arts Council. Anti contemporary art festival in Kuopio from the 11 to the 14 of September 2003.*



# DEMOSKENE.KATASTRO.FI – THE EXHIBITION

In the Nordic countries, the first generation to grow up with personal computers and gaming as a widespread phenomenon came of age in the 1980s. Computers purchased for home use had a very rudimentary capacity for creating graphics and music, but it didn't take long for the kids to get bored with games and start becoming

technical and content matters, media behavior rose to a prominent role within the demo scene. Each active agent had to handle different communal and media roles and communication technologies. These were used in the act of branding the self, and generating hype about you and your team in various channels (demos, disk-based magazines, the Internet, IRC, etc.).



interested in using these machines for creative purposes. The first computers were extremely basic and using them for any creative work required that the user had to be well versed in how they work. Some kids had enough creative talent and the ability to absorb mathematics and new technology which enabled them to use these machines in a surprisingly multifaceted manner. A generation that created art primarily in the digital medium was born. In addition to being an expert on

The demoscene.katastro.fi exhibition presents demo pieces and the demo scene as a cultural phenomenon. It shows demo pieces made by the artists of the Finnish katastro.fi community using the equipment from the 1980s and -90s originally used to make them. Some newer material and commissioned pieces by the same artists are also included. The goal of the exhibition is to provide the visitors with a look at one of the avenues along which media art has developed. What makes this exhibition remarkable

is the fact that these pieces have never before been exhibited in one place, augmented by commentary on the demo scene as a cultural phenomenon. Documenting the equipment and methods used in the making of these pieces is of the utmost importance. The demo scene has a strong impact on many of its generation's media artists and it has had an impact on other areas of society. The Finnish IT-industry, for example, can trace some of the best expertise of its workers to the demo scene.

## Demos and The Scene

After the mid-80s some 12–20 year-old kids doing creative work on their computers started forming groups that would typically include a programmer, a graphic artist and a composer, all using computers. These groups would make pieces known as 'demos'. Demos were multimedia pieces that combined programming prowess with graphics and music. Demos pushed the envelope of what was technically possible using the home computers and were constantly seeking new ways of making ever more complex pieces. The content of these demos combined traditional esthetics with attributes peculiar to this new technology, as well as aspects of popular culture the kids found interesting. Influences were drawn from sci-fi, heavy metal album covers, MTV, advertisements, fantasy and pornography. Basically anything that might interest boys aged 12–20. Not all demos are completed pieces, some are done solely for the purpose of seeing how far a particular piece of equipment could be pushed. Demos that used creative problem solution in the area of programming were usually judged best. There were no programs for creating music, graphics or multimedia for the early home computers, so the youngsters pretty much created all their own tools.

Groups involved in making

demos sprouted up all around the world, especially in countries where home computers were widespread. These groups soon made contact with each other and started trading demos. This trade soon became global and what we now know as the 'demo scene' was born. Hundreds, if not thousands, of computer disks were moved via the mail every day. It was a cultural phenomenon born out of new technologies and the art created using these technologies, as well as the global interaction and trade practiced by the young artists. Magazines distributed via diskettes contained articles and reviews of pieces and the teams that made them. This same generation was quick to capitalize on the advantages of the BBS in the 80s and the Internet in the 90s. Both were used to distribute demos and to strengthen the communications network. Since the work was digital to begin with, exchanging the mail carrier's bag for a data cable was easy.

In many ways, the demo scene was a precursor to online communities spawned by the Internet. Many of the 'laws' and operational cultures of the demo scene can be seen in online and open source communities. Ripping (stealing) is frowned upon, pseudonyms / aliases / handles are used, popularity and fame within the confines of the community is important, violators are punished by exclusion or by some other form of 'branding', software and demos were produced by distributed teams, etc. The demo scene has many of the attributes talked about in conjunction with the Linux-community and communal art more recently.

*Lassi Tasajärvi is curator of katastro.fi*

*The demoscene.katastro.fi exhibition is up from 28 March to 15 June 2003 at Kiasma – The Museum of Contemporary Art Helsinki.*

*<http://demoscene.katastro.fi>*

*Image: Katastro.fi*



ELUKKA ESKELINEN

# TELL A STORY FOR YOURSELF

## (INTERACTIVE) MEDIA ART IN FINLAND – WORK IN PROGRESS

Media art is a hard-to-define thing. All art forms are unique and follow their own logics but in the case of media art one feels tempted to claim that it is “even more unique.” Consistent with the nature of media, media art keeps constantly changing as it searches for new channels of expression, new ways to speak and new audiences.

**A**lthough media art is commonly perceived as something new, its roots can even in Finland be traced all the way to the 1970s. In this article I will, however, center on more recent, mainly interactive, media art, its resourcing and its relation to R&D in digital communication.

Globally, media art has developed at a rapid pace, along with the new technologies – or regardless of them. The new media boom breezed past the field of media art quickly and without causing too much damage; some artists were or still are able to make a better living (or any living at all) in new media companies and only very few businesses are operated by media artists themselves on risk capital. In Finland, the operating environment of media art is characterized by great personal commitment and endeavor, and the notable artistic success these have brought along, and on the other hand by a poorly developed infrastructure for production support, which is mainly looked after by media artist organizations run largely on a voluntary basis (Mäkelä, Tarkka 2002).

In light of the underdeveloped funding infrastructure, media art is doing surprisingly well in Finland. It is one of the most internationally visible fields of Finnish contemporary art, and its creators are known both generally

and through the few Finnish top media artists. The field of media art is also very highly networked in an international setting.

### In search of production know-how

Media art projects differ from productions in many other fields of art by requiring a highly-skilled professional production team and a considerable amount of time and resources. The average life cycle of a media art project is about two years. Collective authorship is as much a common practice in media art as working alone.

As the distribution bases become more diversified, producing new applications requires from the artists, besides know-how in technology and communication, also multidisciplinary and artistic skills and, at the very core, a user-led approach. Technology changes content, and content changes technology. They have to be developed at the same time with the market, in the same projects. One evident problem in media art has been a constant race for something new. Productions are inflicted by “demo phenomena” that occur when the production team doesn’t manage the applied technology due to lack of time or resources. The phenomenon is familiar from the sphere of production development, and partly impossible to avoid. It causes problems when, for example, media art is on display in museums and users become frustrated with a poorly functioning productions. The management of multidisciplinary development groups places special requirements on producers, and consequently, more needs to be invested in their training.

The most interesting part of digitalization is not the new technologies or distribution bases but the new forms of expression it produces, such as Internet communication, games and interactive learning environments.

These are typically based on a multidisciplinary approach; for example, the development of a computer game requires a team of dozens of people, which may include producers, concept and space designers, designers, scriptwriters, directors of photography, sound designers, musicians, coders, costume designers, and visual artists.

Because media art is as an art form situated between many different art forms, between the commercial and the cultural, between technology and content, it has proven difficult to compartmentalize by officials and public financing mechanisms. Tapio Mäkelä and Minna Tarkka wrote in their report on Finnish media culture as follows (Mäkelä, Tarkka 2002):

“In art policy ‘visible’ media art overshadows a great amount of ‘non-visible’ media art. Support structures do not recognize or reach the changing forms of new media art or its artist profiles and production methods which differ from the traditional art forms.”

Already in 1999, the policy of the previous Government in office cranked up ‘Finland as a leading country in content production’, but concrete action has remained on the level of fragmented programs. Media art calls for a long-range funding policy and large sums of money. Funding and support measures could learn from the experiences gained in the film industry, where the importance of sustainability brought by production companies and organizations has been recognized. In media art, this would mean support not only for individual artists and production companies but also for organizations and actors’ communities in the field, this would guarantee the continuity of successful artists as well as the professional career development of young artists.

## On no man's land – media art and research

The faster the means, the more important the artistic and cultural contents – the motive power of media development is shifting from technology to stories. The development of new means of narration is only at its beginning, and experiments have shown that the task is full of challenges. A technology-led approach is near the end of its road as it has turned out that it requires meaningful contents for people to accept the new technologies. The production of phenomenal contents has proven more difficult than expected – the language of the new media has not yet been fully thought out. In this field, the line between basic research and applied research has to be thin; basic research in content production is implemented through practical projects. As media artists combine technology, content and users into a holistic whole, media art and culture have

a lot to offer to the research of interactive media.

One shouldn't pay too much notice to the burst new media bubble; in a high-technology country like Finland content production is still a field with great potential for growth. A small nation is an excellent testing ground for user-led experiments. An engineer is an expert in technology, an artist is an expert in people. Even though media art is by nature very closely linked to technology, at its core you will always find people. In media art it is customary to speak, not of an 'audience', but of 'users' or 'interactors'. As most media artists keep challenging the existing technological solutions, information is consistently produced on how the users respond to the different solutions. A more systematic collection of information, going all the way down to the motives, could advance the development of interactive media. If media artists were used as experts and developers on research teams,

many problems could be solved already at an initial stage.

The first integrated university-level research, development and experimenting grounds in Finland are still being established, and the research of integration development in media and design is only getting started. In question here is basic research, and its results must be, like other scientific information, made public. We have a positive chance to work up the field of media research and product development in Finland into a network of highly profiled, mutually supportive actors with natural connections to the other Nordic countries, the Baltic countries and throughout Europe.

*Elukka Eskelinen is the director of the Media Centre Lume.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*Ondulation will be presented in Media Centre Lume during Helsinki Festival 2003.  
Photo: Diana Shearwood.*

Tapio Mäkelä, Minna Tarkka  
MEDIA ART – FINNISH ACTORS AND  
INTERNATIONAL MODELS  
The Arts Council of Finland, Ministry of  
Education and m-cult, 2002  
Finnish, English summary  
ISSN 1456-4645  
ISBN 952-442-977-2  
<http://www.minedu.fi/julkaisut/pdf/mediataide.pdf>

Juha Suoranta  
EDUCATION IN MEDIA CULTURE  
Finnish

Media art is, alongside home and school, becoming an increasingly important education factor. It shapes our dreams and behavior and is at the same time both entertainment and an important source of information. Popular culture has become a new channel for learning. Juha Suoranta's book challenges all those who work with children and young people to become interested in media culture.  
ISBN 951-768-119-4  
[vastapaino@vastapaino.fi](mailto:vastapaino@vastapaino.fi)  
See also Juha Suoranta's article in ARSIS 2/2002



MIKA LAUNIS

## DUE CREDIT TO ILLUSTRATIONS!



Mika Launis. *Kantarellibattuinen taikuri* (A Magician with a Chantarelle Hat). Illustration for a poster for international children's books' day, 2000. Dry pastel on cardboard.

It has often been noted, publicly even, that illustration art should be assessed as a separate, sovereign art form, its standing as a subordinate of literature, visual arts and design is unacceptable. When illustrators have appeared in interviews, their low status has caused astonishment. Special attention has been paid in different organizations on the importance of the use of illustrations as a means of perceiving the world and interpreting identities.

Just one year ago illustrators were generally spoken of in a belittling tone. Now their actions and work have attracted a lot of interest. So what happened? For a decade or so various instances have proclaimed the value of and need for illustrators association. Finally, on 16 May 2002, Illustrators in Finland association (Kuvittajat ry) was founded on the premises of a long-operating Illustrator's club. The Association now has over 120 members and represents fairly extensively the core community of Finnish illustrators. When the association applied for state subsidy, it laid out its aims as follows:

"Illustrators in Finland was established to bring together the fragmented community of illustrators and to attend to its interests: as a mediator and representative party in contractual matters with newspaper and magazine publishers and publishing houses, in the management of copyrights and provider of copyright information, as the developer and lobbyist for adapted visual arts, in efforts to include illustrators' works in archives and museums and as a background influence and participator in education in the field. The Illustrators in Finland aims to exert influence on the library compensation system, which so far has unjustly left illustrators outside the grants system."

### Library grants

Library grants for illustrators and comic artists were for the first time entered among the Government art policy goals last summer. A small sum of money was included for their financing in the State budget proposal. When this didn't survive the parliamentary budget cuts, the Ministry of Education decided to finance them from its own budget funds.

The library grants are given to writers and translators, but never to illustrators – as is the practice in other Nordic countries. Illustrators started to voice their demand for a share of library grants already in the 1980s. The Ministry of Education has always willingly admitted that the short-coming is exorbitant. Not until now does it seem like the joint efforts of comic artists and illustrators have born results.

The arguments of illustrators have split in two on directions. The shortcoming mostly involves illustrated children's books, the most lent material in libraries. On the other hand, many have called for equal treatment of rightsholders – which has been a basic principle in all other compensation systems.

The sum of money that has now been allocated to illustrators and comic artists is small, only 15 000 euros, but the significance of a subcommittee set up under the Arts Council of Finland for its distribution is all the greater. The division has already been assigned, in connection with the distribution of funds, the task of preparing more extensive guidelines concerning the professional field; it is expected to outline development options for future action. Illustrators are representing their case for the first time in cultural administration.

### Museum of illustration art

Maria Laukka, director of the Voipaala Art Center, has long expressed cries of distress for illustration originals. She has



herself spent a great deal of time digging out the works of old masters – from the basements of publishing houses, in foundations, in closets and cardboard boxes of private estates. Much of the illustration heritage has already been destroyed. Finnish identity can hardly be portrayed without the works of the old masters of illustration.

The establishment of a museum of illustration art would presuppose wide-stretching cooperation, led by the Ministry of Education, among illustrators and the associations, publishing houses who possess them as well as the cultural foundations under their management. Where illustrations have so far mainly been seen as adornment in children's books and decoration for literary events, a museum could create a whole world of images, along the lines of the Swedish Junibacken world of Astrid Lindgren.

Such collections of and premises for illustration art would be especially needed for research purposes. The absence of research in the field has also led to a lack of reviews of illustration art in media. We are used to only hearing the closing words: "The illustration supports the text plot nicely". And when there are no reviews, there is no research, either.

### A look at the field

Illustrators have never been able to make a living out of illustrations for books, nor will they ever be without a reassessment of the existing forms of public subsidy. The creation of a functional subsidy system would require clarification of the contractual responsibility of publishing houses. It still is often the case that even well-known illustrators do not benefit from their contribution to financially profitable projects. Illustrators are not asking for a cent raise, but for acknowledgement of their professional status, a right to reasonable solutions.

The importance of illustrations in media and culture in

general keeps constantly growing, but there isn't sufficient training for professionals in the field. In the fields of marketing and communication concern has been expressed over the weaknesses of visual culture. When illustrations are assessed purely on the basis of their instrumental value, the concern is accordingly limited to style and design. These too are important, but my concern is that illustration art is not known well enough, it is not researched, and there is little knowledge of how to use it as an interpreter of the world or as a creator of identity.

Drawing is no longer the only means of illustrative narration, but freehand works will maintain their nature as initial capital that other techniques copy and shape to create new types of artistic solutions. Yet people with real skill are hard to come by.

Visual art is often spoken of in grandiloquent terms: it seems to refer to free-flowing imagery, diversification, wild differentiation, mobility of information technology. This picture of the humanity drawn by the new visual culture is however often hollow; because of its mobility and absence of boundaries it can only grasp fragmentary connections. All this could be done differently: still today illustrators look in their work for a warm core, for a sharp eye, for genuineness of emotion and mastery in interpreting it all.

Illustrators are not designers, or visual artist, or writers. They prioritize their goals in their own way and in doing so represent the oldest form of expression in art history – storytelling through pictures. They are the bearers of a humane cultural heritage.

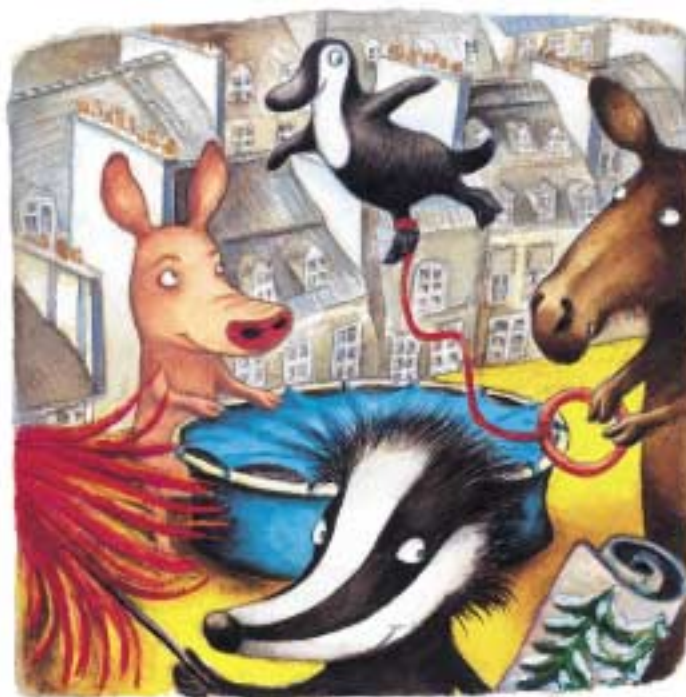
*Mika Launis is the chairman of the Illustrators in Finland.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*Markus Majaluoma. Illustration to book Haikaroiden automatka (A Car Journey of Storks), Tammi 1997. Watercolour and inked-in drawing.*



*Matti Kota. Illustration to book Puutarban kätköissä (In the Depths of the Garden), WSOY 1999. Gouache.*



*Julia Vuori. Illustration to book Sika Pariisissa (A Pig in Paris), Otava 2000. Watercolour.*



## FINNISH COMICS ARE GOING STRONG

# "I JUST CAN'T WAIT FOR WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS"

HEIKKI JOKINEN

Comic art is now more diverse than ever. It has emerged from the margins into being an integral part of the overall field of arts and become richer in form and content. Also the connections of comic artists to other spheres of the visual arts are now more vibrant than ever.

**D**ue to long-hatching development processes, the 1990s was a decade of great change for Finnish comic art. The most visible change was the increased diversity in comic art, in terms of both content and graphic appearance. New comic artists have now made a strong breakthrough, many of them with a background in arts education and possessing strong ties to other parts of the art world. More and more of them have in their works started looking for links to other art forms.

There are several reasons for this change. Among the most significant of them is that what used to be one, large audience has now fragmented into several small audience groups. While in the past nearly all the readers of comics would basically read the same comics, today we have a number of smaller audiences, each reading the comics of their choice. This trend seems to be universal, the same thing has happened everywhere in the world and in all spheres of the arts. Also the publishing structures in the field of comics have undergone major changes, the traditional big publishers have had to make way for smaller, specialized publishing houses. Finnish comic artists, inclined to be isolated by an unfamiliar language, are now remarkably often having their works published in the wider world.

Comic art as a form of expression is ready and ripe to break

through its old boundaries. The over a hundred-year-old art form has developed its own unique language, traditions and conventions. Comic art is, however, a very flexible form of expression that favors new experiments. Almost any type of technique can be applied in contemporary comic art. In recent years, comic art in Finland has assumed forms of woodcuts, oil painting series, mascara drawings and serigraphies. Young artists are drawn to the world of comics, wishing to try the limits of the art and often also with the skills acquired in arts education to do so. Many comic artists have now started to feel at home in the world of art museums and galleries as well.

All this would not have happened had comic art not come out of its pigeonhole in the margins and joined the other art forms in the open field of artistic production. In the 1990s, Finnish comic artists started to receive state grants, and this was a significant turn that encouraged and enabled more innovative work. This in turn resulted in a growing number of people in the spheres of research, arts administration and art critique who would know and understand comic art, same as any other art form. Now comic art reviews have established themselves on the culture pages of any self-respecting newspaper or magazine, as well as in literary critique.

### Travel letters from India

One of the most distinctive contemporary Finnish comic artist is

Katja Tukiainen (born in 1969). Her most recent album *Postia Intiasta* (Mail from India) is a subtly moving illustrated letter from a foreign country. Tukiainen describes India in a gently ironic manner. The round, almost childishly drawn lines splendidly convey atmospheres and emotions. The album weaves together small and big observations to form an intimate patchwork of stories. The different pieces of the book are carried along by a warm atmosphere and an understanding of the diversity of the world. The album will also come out in Sweden later this year. Tukiainen, who has studied visual arts, also does oil paintings. Their spirit and style link seamlessly with her comic art works.

Terhi Ekebom (born in 1971) recently published her excellent debut album called *A Cow's Dream*. It is substantially graphic comic art, a dark-toned and ambiguous wordless interpretation of the mysteries of love. The album stands as an example of modern comic art that expects a lot from its readers.

Today's comic artists have shown incentive to work collectively. Many high-quality works are now published by non-commercial artist groups. The situation is the same in other spheres of the arts, artists carry out their projects independently from beginning to end. Such artist groups include Napa, which has operated since 1997, and Asema, which was started a couple of years ago. Napa has in its anthologies introduced a great selection of new, Finnish comic art. Jenni Rope and Jussi Karjalainen select into their publishing line graphically impressive and contextually demanding comic art. Asema in turn concentrates on comics with longer-range narration. Stories by Mika Lietzen (born 1974) from Asema often explore the mental landscape of childhood. This graphically versatile artist masters the different styles but at the same time remembers to tell a story.



## Pig loves woman loves pig

As new authors have gained prominence, also the old hands at comic art are still going strong. Jussi 'Juba' Tuomola (born in 1965) has fast surfaced as the best-selling Finnish comic artist with his strip series *Viivi ja Wagner* (Viivi and Wagner). Its main characters are the male chauvinistic and cynical pig, Wagner, and his sensitive girlfriend, Viivi. Along with his fourth collection album, over a hundred thousand albums have been sold on his series, which is featured in newspapers nationwide. In form, *Viivi and Wagner* is not a typical newspaper strip, it is innovative in narration and in some respects even avant-garde. On the comics market, even a path-breaking artist can gain commercial success, as opposed to many other art fields that tend to be stuck in their traditions.

Timo Mäkelä's (born 1951) album *Vaaleanpunainen pilvi* (The Pink Cloud), with over 200 pages, revolves around the sensitive emotions of its four main characters. Mäkelä is a very skillful drawer who experiments with different visual techniques in his story, which is mainly set in Helsinki. His work contains strong themes: approaching middle-age, fear of dying, loss of love, the emptiness following the death of one's mother. The outcome is not, however, fear of future but personal growth and openness to life. Mäkelä was the first comic artist to receive a Finnish State Prize for Arts in 2001.

Finnish comic art has many faces, contents, audiences and authors. It has a glorious past and a strongly vibrant present. I just can't wait for what the future holds.

*Heikki Jokinen is a journalist based in Helsinki and a member of the National Council for Design.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*



*Image from Katja Tukianen's album Postia Intiasta (Mail from India), 2001.*

*Image from Terbi Ekebom's album A Cow's Dream.*



*Image from Timo Mäkelä's album Vaaleanpunainen pilvi (The Pink Cloud), 2001.*



HEIKKI JOKINEN

A majority of Matti Hagelberg's (born in 1964) works fall inside the description comic art. He does easily identifiable, strongly graphic pictures that he scratches out of black scrape board with a knife.

*Images from the French edition of Matti Hagelberg's album Holmenkollen, 2000.*

## KALEIDOSCOPE PICTURES OF REALITY

Hagelberg's stories are usually short slices, full of surprising combinations and imaginative situations. They are, however, all thematically bound together in creating a new parallel reality. Most of his works involve a kind of sense of being on the outside and rely on distinctive humor. One of his series with just a few pages features the architects Alvar Aalto and Albert Speer as well as Walt Disney and Porky Pig. Many of his works also portray God and the artist himself. Hagelberg's works reflect his nearly encyclopedian interest in the world, but are at the same time compact and controlled

in form. It is a striking combination.

Internationally, Matti Hagelberg is one of the most widely published Finnish comic artists. His album, *Holmenkollen* (2000), with 127 pages, was published in Sweden (2001) and France (2002). In Sweden, *Holmenkollen* was awarded the Urhunden Prize for best translated comic book.

Hagelberg regards Finland as a good place to work. "We have an excellent state grant system, one unlike anywhere else in the world. As Finland is a small country and a small cultural entity, if we didn't have a state grant system, Finnish culture would be very much more limited than it is today."

"I don't believe that we make a clear distinction between high culture, such as painting or music, and popular culture", Hagelberg assesses the cultural atmosphere in Finland. "I don't perceive myself as a comic artist, I just do what I do. Of course I'm not ashamed of being a comic artist, but if I held an exhibition of my paintings, I wouldn't perceive myself as a painter, either."

Some years ago Hagelberg also made an opera libretto for the opera *Marsin mestarilaulajat* (Master Singers from Mars), which was based on his comics. In Hagelberg's mind, that too was just part in the entity of his artistic work, not a case of its own.

Hagelberg makes comics from a strictly artistic basis. The outcome is sometimes called art comics, as a distinction from works aiming for big circulation. Hagelberg has himself too reflected on what his works should be called. "They are not so-called alternative comics, and non-commercial is not the right description, either. I would maybe use the word 'independent comics'." The concept is familiar from film and music. Presently, Hagelberg is working for a third year on his "Kekkonen" album.

"It is the second part of the trilogy that started with *Holmenkollen*, says the author. Its content, again, mainly consists of short stories. "If something can be said in a compact form, it's worth doing", Hagelberg summarizes his desire for short stories. Comic art is an excellent medium for compact story-telling as its content is conveyed by both images and words. "I don't see life as a single, solid lump but regard it as more dispersed, viewable from a variety of perspectives. There are several truths and perspectives to reality; my perception of it is kaleidoscopic."



# ON THE PARTICIPATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN THE ARTS WORLD



*President Tarja Halonen visiting  
the Esteittä seminar in March 2003.  
Photo from Kaarisilta ry.*

All levels of cultural life have become increasingly conscious of the uniqueness of disabled people as artists, as well as their special needs and wishes. 2003 is the official European Year of People with Disabilities. In this context, the European Council of Ministers is expected to adopt official resolutions on the accessibility of culture and the provision of equal opportunities in creative activities.

Interest is also apparent in Finland. An exhibition called *Hännätön kissa* (Studio Bobtailed Cat) by the disabled artists of the Kirsikoti home for the handicapped was held in the Museum of Contemporary Art, Kiasma last autumn. It received much attention from the public and the media. Now art by and with disabled people is again on display in the heart of Helsinki, in the Gallery 2003 exhibition by Cultural Society EUCREA Finland. It is held in the premises of the Lasipalatsi Gallery. The gallery presents an open invitation to artists who wish to deal with the subjects of disability or long-term illness.

## The disabled in Finnish cultural policy programs

In Finland, the Minister of Culture Kaarina Dromberg appointed at the beginning of March a committee "Disabled People and

Culture 2003–2005". It was to examine the question of access to culture and equal participation in creative activity from the standpoint of disabled people. The project is led by Project Secretary Sari Salovaara from the National Gallery. A three-year joint project is also being carried out in which a national information service directed at actors in the field of culture makes use of the experiences gained from the museum sector.

In the background of both these projects is a report by the Culture for All Committee issued in autumn 2002. According to the report, cultural activities of people with disabilities should be supported with financing from the Ministry of Education, whereas rehabilitative projects should be financed with National Lottery funds. The working group also strongly stressed the need to ensure physical access to cultural buildings and premises in renovations plans. The report proposes that increased access should even be made a condition of receiving public renovation subsidy.

In March, the Government made a decision-in-principle on the arts and artists policy. It was based on the Proposal for a Government Programme on Arts and Artists policy, in which disabled people are taken into account as an active part of the arts world – both as producers and as consumers.

## The disabled as professional artists

The status of disabled people as professional artists was discussed in a seminar Esteittä (Unobstructed) held at the University of Arts and Design Helsinki at the end of March. Most of the projects presented above where also touched upon in the seminar.

The TARU project centering on the development of cultural marketing and education, partly financed by European Social

Fund, showcases interesting artists from target groups that have not received any notable media attention. The project aims at increased employment through culture, mainly focusing on immigrants, representatives of minority cultures and disabled people.

Professional education has been a subject of interest in all fields of culture. Government Secretary Kaija Suorsa-Aarnio from the Ministry of Education has participated in an expert working group that was established in autumn 2000. According to the working group's report, educational opportunities for disabled people have been very limited in scope. Establishments of education can mainly be found on intermediate level and even there only six percent of the students specialize in the field of culture: in numbers this means 300 students in so-called general schools and 250 in special schools. Yet for many disabled people, the field of culture would be a meaningful and interesting line of study, Suorsa-Aarnio commented on the subject.

Ismo Helén, chairman of EUCREA Finland, stressed at the seminar that each person must be allowed to themselves choose whether to be an artist who is disabled or an artist who represents art by the disabled. Not until this choice is possible can a disabled artist say, as Helén did at the seminar: "I sit by my disability, proud".

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*The Department of Arts Education at the University of Arts and Design Helsinki and the Kaarisilta Center for Arts and Activities organized 27-28 March 2003 the seminar on disabled people as professional artists.*

*Publications of the Ministry of Education: [www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi)  
Galleria 2003: [www.galleria2003.org](http://www.galleria2003.org)  
TARU: [www.taru.info/](http://www.taru.info/)*

The Finnish field of visual arts has in recent years been shaken by a strange DIY phenomenon (Do-it-yourself Life). It all started from photographer Veli Granö's studies of courtyard artists, whom he remembered seeing as a child in the western plains of Finland. He discovered that much of the art that had impressed him as a child would often be destroyed after the artist quit the scene. He decided to set out on a journey to photograph such yards, ones that still exist and ones that are undergoing creative processes. This work resulted in a book called 'Onnela' (Happyland), which has fundamentally transformed the way in which contemporary folk art is perceived.

## DO-IT-YOURSELF LIFE. A DISSIDENT FINLAND

ERKKI PIRTOLA

**T**he word 'culture' initially meant something that grew out of the earth, something original. Whenever high culture starts turning dry, we seek for new sources in the naturalness and carnivalism of folk culture. It was probably this eternal renaissance of folk art that inspired the Finnish Union of Rural Education and the Kaustinen Center of Folk Art to join forces in a country-wide quest to find the lost masters of folk art and summon them to a great gathering.

DIY artists are hard to find because they often work in their home surroundings, for their own and their friends' enjoyment. When they live in secluded areas, or the art is made indoors, only very few people get to know about it. While some artists have indeed become famous as 'village idiots', many peculiar phenomena still remain hidden, only to pop up by chance.

One of the best known of these artists among the general public is Elis Sinistö, an over 90-year-old hermit, who lives amidst the fantastic architectural creations in his own 'recycling village' in Kirkkonummi. He still receives visitors and takes them on a peculiar tour of his grounds; dances, clowns around and recites

immortal wisdoms. He describes his existence as follows: "It's pure being, that's all. I own nothing, Mother Earth owns me".

### Bubbles of unrestricted joy

It was an incredible experience to travel around Finland searching for this art, some of it tucked away in hard-to-reach places. I would sometimes find new DIY artists by just stopping to ask someone the way. A whole new Finland opened out to me during the journey: alone and undisturbed, outwardly introverted people express themselves in most bubbling ways. Because DIY artists don't usually know very much about art – or even of each other's doings – but are driven by a original lust to create, their little artwork worlds are astonishingly unique.

The exhibitions were held after Kaustinen in the cities of Kajaani and Rauma, and in the Helsinki City Art Museum Meilahti. They proved that Finnish artistic form was still going strong. The displayed works spoke of a kind of closeness to nature and resourcefulness that wouldn't turn flat in a museum environment, but instead, all the animals, human figures, totems and steel roses drew strength from each other and joined in a grand discussion.

DIY art represents a full range of styles from folk art portraying ordinary people to highly modernistic forms, even conceptual art. This is perhaps best reflected in the life and works of Enni Id from Pudasjärvi. She was married to a man who wouldn't let her paint. So after he died, Enni painted colorful plant ornaments on the walls of every room in her red cottage, paintings that organically extended the surrounding garden indoors. She painted marvelously magical cats and other subjects, and turned her cottage atelier into a cultural center for the village community. When Enni died at an age over ninety, the house passed on to the village district, which still keeps the

house open to the public in summer.

### Animal Farm

The most common themes in folk art are animals. An animal represents the wild force of nature and, on the other hand, sensitivity. Alpo Koivumäki from Kauhajoki has, after giving up farming, welded a whole exotic jungle zoo into his yard. The tin lions nodding their heads, the amazingly real-looking crocodiles made out of tires, the scrap metal rhinoceros, the rubber snakes, etc. can all be found living in perfect harmony in an age-old, Ostrobothnian farm environment. They are resting in the shadows of a pine tree twisted out of barbed wire and palm trees made out of soup cans. The animals are ingeniously 'clumsy', exquisite art.

Former engine driver Timo Peltonen has built a colorful animal park off the side of an expressway in Korpilahti. When you drive past it, an unexpected sight flashes by and catches the eye. If you stop, you will get a chance to marvel at the figures carved with a heavy-set chainsaw, living their lives like they had just stepped out of a storybook world. The style of sculpting is far from regular commercial bear statues, the animals seem to be growling and stalking, each in their own peculiar way. The coloring of the figures creates an atmosphere of picturesque magic.

The works of late Rikhard Koivisto from Kauhajoki drew from a similar source of colorful myth. His forester's hands sent to flight apocalyptic tawny owls and pictures of Paradise in which Adam and Eve, under the spell of a sturdy snake still appear, surrounded by their animals, as opulently and innocently sexual, just

*Right page, above: Ilmari "Imppu" Salminen. Photo Veli Granö*

*Left: Juba Vanhanen. Photo Veli Granö*

*Right: Elis Sinistö. Photo Jan Kaila*









Above: Martti Hömppi. Photo Veli Granö  
Below: Timo Peltonen. Photo Veli Granö

a moment before the apple and the shame.

### Political blasphemy folkways

Old Finnish folk poems have gained new visual forms in sculptures of modern myth, where the old and the new happily mix. For example, former sheet metal worker Edwin Hevonkoski has dug into the memories of the Finnish-Russian War on his “Brothers-in-arms Trail” in Vaasa. In the middle of the forest, one can find a real dugout with trenches and a small consecrated chapel built in the form of the Cross of Liberty. After hundreds of statues, the solemn patriotism transforms into luxuriant laughter when one reaches the red ostriches made out of car-wash brushes, the realm of political blasphemy. Hevonkoski has sculpted out a unique history of Finland.

Political satire has always been a central part of folk culture. Powerlessness in the face of unjust decisions laid down from above has given rise to a strong countercharge of buffoonery. After sailing the seven seas, the old ‘popeye’, Martti Hömppi from Siuro, finds amusement in his retirement days as a ‘wood shed Picasso’ who with his decaying blocky nesting boxes makes fun of the blockheaded politicians. With the cubistish boldness of his sculptures, Hömppi turns the bitterness of economic depression into understandable laughter. In memory of his sailor’s days, Hömppi also likes to set his sculptures afloat on water. Besides telling stories with his sculptures, Hömppi’s way of presenting his sculptures to visitors, nearing performance art, is also part-and-parcel of the whole.

### The Do-it-yourself art of religion

There are many similarities between contemporary folk art and contemporary art in general. Juha Vanhanen, from Alavus, creates out of old farm tools works that

pass perfectly as conceptual art. He painted plows white and placed them as flock of swans taking to flight. As such, they symbolize souls rising to heaven. Vanhanen integrates his religious awakening into humorous folk art, which is something rather unusual. Religion and art are no joking matters, but Vanhanen preaches irresistibly, for example, through *The White Summer Harvest* thresher steered by Christ himself.

Eino Sillanpää, from Ylistaro, has taken the most profound symbol of Christianity, the Communion cup. This woodworker, who had to quit work because of paralysis, is a supreme master, an archetype representative of Finnish design, whose tankards present an amazing scale of styles and techniques. The tankards rise to their form with stately simplicity, modern style, or even as filigree poems seasoned with fantasy. In them you can see touches of Jugendstil and Gaudí, Zen and Goethianism, symbolism, as well as the master’s ‘thin-as-glass’ own imprint. Sillanpää claims that his work hasn’t been influenced by anything, really: “When I get an idea, I have to put it into practice right away”.

Ilmari Salminen, from Petäjävesi, is our “Andy Warhol of the woods”. He lives the Finnish idyll in a red cottage deep in the woods. Ilmari has made pictures of Finnish celebrities without ever meeting one in person. He cuts pictures of our common icons out of magazines, and glues them on the blank side of paperboard advertisements. He draws a frame around the picture with a clothes iron, out of which a fractal design grows symmetrically like a mandala. He has also collected objects into his own homestead museum, where he has installed a separate ward for unusual signs, UFO stations and countless self-made cellular phones. This museum of DIY life is always open to the public. As an entrance fee, each visitor is obliged to take one of the artist’s pictures.

Helena Maaskola, from Hel-

sinki, collected stones and objects from beaches and glued them into thousands of small sculptures. As a whole, her work is a remarkable attempt to create a unique miniature world.

DIY art can also be a statement on real estate policy, as is Marko Kaiponen's fantastic unencumbered home in Toivakka, round-shaped and built out of construction waste. Or a life-philosophy solution, as is Johannes Setälä's Kalevala-shamanism and accounts of spiritual journeys embedded in sculptures. The power of the Old Man of the North, northern light and a flood of visions spark through Setälä, an ancient knowledge transferred straight into nature in DIY form.

### Poor man's wealth

This is indeed the eleventh hour to collect these treasures. Because, unfortunately, local authorities tend not to care about this wealth, it must be brought to wider national and international attention. This occasionally does take place, as was the case with Tyyne Eskola, an 80-year-old painter from Kokkola, who acquired fame in New York when a local gallerist concentrating on outsider art discovered her.

The importance of DIY art is extending beyond the traditional field of art. DIY art is born by itself without grants or educational programs. It is made out of passion, as true art always has been. Anyone can start making it, there is a small and big DIY artist in every one of us.

Finns have not yet realized how we still are a native people, how excellent art we can produce. Our linguistic isolation and uncouthness are a natural resource, the value of which keeps growing as the world leans more and more on technology and turns into an unvarying mortar of information.

*Erkki Pirtola is a journalist and an art critic.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

## ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

Artists-in-residence activity (AiR) involves as a concept guest studios, centers for international artist exchange, artist residencies and guest artists. Generally speaking, it means a longer period (at least two months) which the artist spends in a new living, working or cultural environment, usually abroad.

According to the Proposal for a Government Programme on Arts and Artists Policy: "Artists-in-residence activity can be examined either from the artist's viewpoint or from the perspective of the community engaged in it. From the artist's viewpoint, it provides a chance to detach from the daily living environment in a new period of intensive work. Interaction between the different fields of art is also characteristic of residency activity. On the other hand, from the perspective of the host community, an artist can in many ways stimulate the local arts and cultural scene. Having visiting artists work together with local artists, teach in local schools and other institutions of arts education and arrange workshops, performances and exhibitions brings a very concrete, international breath of fresh air to the local community. Guest artists can also open new gateways not only to international art communities but also to other networks. Guest artists often work with projects involving, for example, urban or environmental art, and can thus have a very concrete effect on the local living environment."

In international contexts, the increase of artists-in-residence activity began in its present form in the 1970s, in Finland it started in the studios of the Nordic Art Centre (now known as the Nordic Institute of Contemporary Art). The activity has expanded to such an extent that there are now some twenty residences for foreign guest artists throughout the country: for example the art museum-led Raumaras in Rauma, the Loviisa Guest Studio receiving mostly guest artists from the Baltic countries, the HIAP Helsinki International Artist

Programme, the Ryyränen Centre of Arts and Culture in Koli and the Artist Residence of Inari maintained by the village society.

The Finnish Artists' Studio Foundation, a central actor in both dissemination of information and the maintenance of domestic contacts in the field, began artist exchange with Switzerland and Germany in the Tapiola Guest Studio in 1997. International artist exchange programs are represented by the European Pépinières Programme, which Finland takes part in and which is coordinated domestically by the Finnish Artists' Studio Foundation. The Pépinières Programme aims to provide young artists with work opportunities and to advance their international mobility and career development.

Each year the Arts Council of Finland awards artists and communities maintaining artist residencies approximately EUR 190 000-200 000 in artist-in-residence grants. Artists who have been accepted in accredited, long-term international artist-in-residence programmes (in principle lasting a minimum of two months) qualify for artist-in-residence grants. The grant is not aimed for visits to residencies that are already supported by the Finnish State: Cité in Paris, Athens, Marbella, Grassano, Villa Lante in Rome, Finnish Foundation for the Visual Arts in New York, Oaxaca in Mexico or Villa Karo in Benin.

The grants are available for artists but also municipalities, associations and other societies maintaining residences to cover the costs for initiating and operating the residences for artists.

*Jarmo Malkavaara is Chairman for the Arts Council of Finland.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*



# ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMS AS A CHANNEL FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION

MARKETTA SEPPÄLÄ

International interaction of Finnish contemporary art is now in a completely new situation compared to, for example, the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. The significance of the traditional centers of artistic activity has decreased and more room has been found for what used to be in the periphery. As was the case in the golden age of Finnish art a hundred years ago, Finnish identity is now again in a situation where it needs to be regarded from a new basis. We (too) need to discover a new, cosmopolitan identity that lives up to the challenges of our times, an identity in which our “own” distinguishes itself from all others. But how will today’s art settle in the cross pressures of integration and a search for cultural distinction, where the competition for visibility has become fiercer and, at the same time, openness to inter-action is literally a condition of survival?

Naturally, many obstacles are removed by the development of communication, but internationalization is not, due to geographical reasons alone, something self-evident in Finland. We need support structures and cooperation among different actors if we wish

to take part in international interaction and discussion.

There isn’t, however, any single solution to constructing such a support system. The situation keeps changing constantly and is thus continuously and genuinely “new”. The real challenges of extending contacts concern dissemination of information and the development of joint projects based on international initiatives. At the same time, changes in the nature of making art become more pronounced. Traditional support for exhibiting art no longer suffices as such, because artistic work is now shifting more and more towards media and technology-based art with higher production costs, and longer term community or multidisciplinary projects. What is in question here are the very areas in which Finnish contemporary art is perceived as innovative in opening out new perspectives.

One key to meet these challenges can be found in international artist-in-residence programs with growing importance in international cultural production. They provide artists with innate opportunities for long-term creative work abroad. Today there are some six hundred resi-

dential arts centers and programs in the world, mostly based in Europe, the United States and Canada. In recent years, dozens of residential arts programs have also been established in Australia, China, Southeast Asia, South and Central America and in our neighboring regions, Russia and the Baltic countries.

The most notable international residential arts center in the Nordic countries is the Swedish IASPIS in Stockholm, where each year some 20 foreign visual artists come to work for longer periods. IASPIS has also acquired residency contracts for Swedish artists in major centers of contemporary art in Europe, the United States and Japan. In 2000, Sweden invested 11 million crowns (1,2 million euros) in the mobility, work and international exhibitions of Swedish artists. And by inviting artists from abroad to work in Sweden, IASPIS has put the ideas of reciprocity and exchange into practice. At the same time, top-level foreign artists strengthen the name and status of Sweden in the international art world. With the exhibitions, publications and lectures linked to the artist-in-residence programs, IASPIS has enabled the artists working in Stockholm to become an integral part of the city’s cultural life.

The HIAP Helsinki International Artist Programme has been engaged in international residential arts activity in the Cable Factory cultural center since May 1999. The City of Helsinki has provided the program with premises and the Arts Council of Finland with most of the operational support. 36 artists from Europe, the United States, India, Brasilia and Chile have by now worked within the program. 10-12 visual artists and two choreographers take part in the program each year. The artists usually complete a new work during their residency to be exhibited in galleries, art centers, festivals and

museums in Finland and abroad. HIAP has been engaged in artist exchange with the Arts Council of England and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

The need to involve Finnish artists in international artist-in-residence programs is evident in the growing number of inquiries and grant applications addressed to different support systems. Thus far there haven't been sufficient resources to respond to these initiatives, which usually call for relatively high expenses. However, co-operation among actors has aimed to provide each year a few Finnish artists with the opportunity to work abroad.

FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange, HIAP and the Academy of Fine Arts Helsinki, which have each in their own operational fields faced the challenges of rapidly expanding residential arts activity, are presently preparing a development plan on the issue for the Finnish Ministry of Education. The idea is to attain synergy benefits by joining resources so that the operations of the respective parties could be made more effective. The aim is to create a model that would establish, through artist-in-residence programs, better conditions for Finnish artists to work abroad and, reciprocally, for foreign artists, curators and art critics to work in Finland. Especially important are the working periods based on international assessment that are connected to longer term collaboration projects. They in turn link to exhibition and publication opportunities, visits by critics and curators and other public relations work that is performed by the organizers on local level. The aim at the initial stage is to enter contracts with six international artist-in-residence centers.

*Marketta Seppälä is the director of FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*Marja Kanervo spent two periods working in New York, first in the Snug Harbor Cultural Center on Staten Island in the turn of 2000 and at an ISCP artist-in-residency in 2002. The program included exhibitions, contacts with the local art circuit and visits by curators and critics. At ISCP, Kanervo worked on a series of photographs on the homeless people of New York and planned an installation for a joint exhibition to be held in Venice in summer 2003 together with Terry Smith, a British artist. The picture shows a detail of an installation called "Intimate Excavation", which was realized in Snug Harbor.*



TIINA PURHONEN

# FRAME

## A FRAME FOR INTERNATIONAL INTERACTION OF FINNISH ART

The FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange was set up in 1992 to enhance international contacts among visual artists. The center operates under the auspices of the Fine Art Academy Foundation, which was founded in 1939. The main financier of the center is the Finnish Ministry of Education.

**F**RAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange celebrated its 10th anniversary last year. The roots of the center's operations were laid already in 1939 when the Fine Art Academy Foundation was founded. The School of the Fine Art Academy of Finland and the National Gallery operated under the auspices of the Foundation for some fifty years. When these establishments became nationalized by 1990, the foundation

remained a separate organization supporting art on a smaller scale. When the Ministry of Education started in the early 1990s to formulate a subsidy system that would enable the promotion of Finnish art in international contexts, the Foundation was found to be an appropriate overseeing body for the task. FRAME was established to work under its patronage as a support organization for maintaining international relations in the field of Finnish visual arts.

When FRAME started, there were two employees working at its office: director Markku Valtonen and coordinator Päivi Rajakari. In the past ten years, the staff has slightly grown, but the work of the center, as important to the Finnish art world as it is, is still carried out by only three full-time employees and one part-time employee. The staff consists of director Marketta Seppälä, curator Paula Toppila, coordinator Kati Kivinen and office assistant Marica Hakkarainen.

### Principal operations

The most central and visible line of action of FRAME is a project grant program in which Finnish artists can receive financial support for exhibitions held outside Finland. 106 grant decisions were made within the program in 2002. The staff of the center also work as curators for the exhibitions or implement exhibition projects in collaboration with actors in the international art circuit, and thus helps Finnish artists find opportunities to realize exhibitions for foreign audiences. Last year, 17 projects of this kind were carried out. FRAME also supports the participation of Finnish artists in international major exhibitions, biennials and triennials. 11 grants were given out for this purpose last year.

FRAME has an important role as an expert organization in Finnish art. The center maintains international contacts with opinion leaders, gallerists, art institutions and other stake-







*FRAME is, together with its Norwegian and Swedish counterparts, responsible for the exhibition program of the Nordic Pavilion at the Venice Biennial. This year the exhibition is hosted by OCA Office for Contemporary Art Norway; the artist selected to represent Finland is Liisa Lounila. Image: Liisa Lounila, stills from yet untitled new film to be premiered at the Venice Biennial 2003.*

presents Finnish art on its website, where 'artists of the month' are showcased. An English-language FRAME news journal is published twice a year, which can also be viewed on the website. At the beginning of 2004, FRAME will start to publish a new, more extensive and conversational journal in English with contents revolving around Finnish art. For such there certainly is a decisive need.

One everyday challenge of FRAME's operations is information services. The expert exchange program, publication of the journal, functional and informative website, international and domestic networks and public relations all serve to promote Finnish art internationally. The work of FRAME is long-range and all its activities aim to build up a permanent interest in Finnish art. The goal is that the opinion leaders in international cultural life would remember to look to us and make requests to Finnish artists and institutions.

### Gates open to diversity

In the eyes of a critical observer, today's art world at times presents itself as a star factory, in which a few, selected artists are on display in major exhibitions all around the world and a few prominent curators choose the brightest stars. The middlemen in the art world are often referred to as gatekeepers who guard the boundaries of the field of arts and decide what kind of cultural capital is desirable at a given time. In the global village, communications have become a pet child of this

reasoning in which objects and persons can be sought to the focus of the camera, brought into the spotlight or cropped out of the picture and left in the dark. In the activity of an organization like FRAME gate keeping is sort of built-in, the choice to highlight or to set aside an artist is present in the everyday work.

When the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu established the concepts of gatekeepers and "art field", he made visible the hidden structures that exist in the art world same as many other fields of life. This has enabled people who work in such fields to understand their operating strategies with more insight. According to Marketta Seppälä, the director of FRAME, the organization aims to enhance the visibility of as many Finnish artists and as many forms of artistic expression as possible. The objective is to maintain through art an extensive substructure that is fruitful to cultivating new perceptions and creativity. This objective is also reflected in how Finnish artists have, with FRAME's support, been visible not only in major international biennials and triennials but also in the context of smaller exhibitions. Of course there are Finnish star artists who serve as trailblazers, but a search for stars must not be a basis of activity. A small country's success cannot be based on a single exit or entrance road, it requires a network of roads and treaded paths, on which one day something will emerge.

### "To become a planet of human civilization"

When Finland set up its pavilion at the Paris World Fair in 1900, it was built as a stage on which a nation striving for independence presented through exhibitions and music performances its political and artistic goals to the international community. Even though Finnish architects, artists and designers introduced the concept of

Finnishness to the rest of the world, nearly all of them had drawn elements from international art trends to their style. The arts of a small Grand Duchy opened up to the European audience quite easily, due to the brilliance of these artists, which bound together the seams of 'Finnishness' from its many branches. The audience would see in it, not only us, but also itself. Finland presented itself as a nation with its own symbolic capital. Similar symbolic capital is moved around in the global village, but its core now is person to person communication. We need this discussion, to freely quote the words of former politician and eternal humanist Ele Alenius: "To become a planet of human civilization".

*Tiina Purhonen is an art critic based in Helsinki.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

[www.frame-fund.fi](http://www.frame-fund.fi)

holders in the field of arts. FRAME also has an expert exchange program, through which foreign professionals in the arts can be invited to Finland. The visitors get to meet Finnish artists, visit their studios and are introduced to the Finnish art world in general. A visit may also include a lecture, seminar or some other topical event. 30-40 programs of this kind are carried out yearly. FRAME is an important collaborative organization for many art institutions in and outside Finland. One typical form of cooperation is publication of books presenting the production of individual artists.

The FRAME office is a database of Finnish contemporary art, where shelves and shelves of articles and other material on a great number of Finnish contemporary artists are collected, and through which the visitors can become acquainted with Finnish artists in a quick and uncomplicated manner. FRAME also

GUNNEL ADLERCREUTZ

Finland is well known for its architecture and many notable architects. They have been relied on in conscious efforts to build the national identity of a young country. Building creates essential premises for all human activity, and architecture, as an art, also lays grounds for the other arts.

One of the objectives of the Government Architectural Policy is to ensure the rights of all citizens to the best possible architecture and built environment. The National Council for Architecture aims to consolidate these basic principles of government. Among significant marks of respect for successful architects and artists are the nominations for artist professors. Architect Mikko Heikkinen was appointed artist professor for five years from September on.

Mikko Heikkinen (born in 1949) has become a well-known name in the international field of architecture. In 1974, he started an architectural practice together with Markku Komonen (Heikkinen-Komonen Architects). They made their breakthrough in 1985 at both national and international levels by winning the architecture competition for a science center in the city of Vantaa. The building that it led to, Heureka, has been featured in prominent architectural publications all around the world. This also meant a change of course in Finnish architecture towards a new rationalism. The same development continued in the Finnish

## MIKKO HEIKKINEN APPOINTED ARTIST PROFESSOR

Embassy in Washington. The minimalist building creates a fabulous contrast to the verdant surrounding grounds. It has become an international architectural landmark, while it has at the same time served as an open and fascinating arena and meeting place for the arts, diplomacy and Finnish know-how alike.

Apart from designing new buildings, Heikkinen has also done brave and broad-minded designs in old industrial environments, such as the headquarters of Stateks and Senate Estates in the Sörnäinen district in Helsinki. The ability to make use of existing structures has been combined with new aesthetic values in a subtle and innovative manner.

Heikkinen-Komonen Architects has received several prizes in design competitions, but its greatest distinction is in the realized buildings. Outcome has been even more impressive than the plans, the beauty and uncompromising nature of the works is absolutely disarming.

As a designer and talent in architecture Mikko Heikkinen has always been drawn to concrete doing and art. He has worked as a distinguished lecturer and inspiring teacher both in Finland and abroad.

Besides architecture, Heikkinen has also shown broad interest in contemporary art. This can be seen in his numerous writings on the topic and, for example, in the program for the International Alvar Aalto Symposium, to which he has contributed with his ideas and responsibility as chairman.

*Gunnel Adlercreutz is Chairperson for the National Council for Architecture.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*



*The Senate Properties building by Heikkinen-Komonen office. Photo: Jussi Tiainen.*



## A YEAR FOR ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

The year 2003 is the Finnish Architectural Heritage Year. It forms part of the architectural heritage strategy laid down by the Finnish Government in 2001, which outlines the action to be taken by various operators, particularly the State, to promote the management and understanding of our architectural heritage. The principal organizers of the Heritage Year are the Ministry of the Environment and the National Board of Antiquities, with Timo Tuomi serving as Secretary General. Other participants include the Finnish Association for Local Culture and Heritage, regional museums, regional environment centres and central government agencies responsible for the management of our architectural heritage. In addition to various State agencies, all willing NGOs, local authorities and private parties are welcome to play their part.

HANNA GALTAT

**A**n advisory committee has been set up to promote the Architectural Heritage Year by enhancing public awareness of the economic and intellectual significance of Finnish architectural heritage. The committee comprises 23 experts and decision-makers and is chaired by State Secretary Rauno Saari. During the year, the committee will convene in two seminars and its deliberations will be included in the publication *The future of our architectural heritage*, which will offer perspectives into the

development of the built environment as a factor in wider social progress. The results of the advisory committee's deliberations will also be published on the Heritage Year's website.

The programme of the Architectural Heritage Year consists of a variety of events organized by various parties around the year and throughout the country. The varied programme is comprehensive, and includes exhibitions, publications, lectures, seminars, guided walks and visits. The public can also vote for the most popular building. An up-to-date calendar of events is available on the web for each location. In addition, the Heritage Year will appear in various media. On the website of the Museum of Finnish Architecture, for example, visitors can learn about a different building every month, and a poster showing each building of the month may be printed out on the National Board of Antiquities website. *The Etelä-Suomen Sanomat* newspaper will publish a series of articles on people responsible for developments in the city of Lahti, featuring architects and planners who have left their mark on its cityscape. The Architectural Society intends to publish a guidebook on the cultural sights of the Helsinki area.

The European Heritage Days have been organized at the initiative of the European Council since 1991; Finland joined in 1992. This year, the event will take place on September 12–14. The purpose of the event is to increase local awareness and appreciation of architecture. The Architectural Heritage Year forms this year's theme.

The European Heritage Days will celebrate the year with a pos-

ter exhibition entitled *Houses and Space*. The exhibition is intended for everyone interested in his or her surroundings and is suitable for showing in places such as town halls, libraries, schools or other public facilities. The aim of the exhibition is to draw attention to the diversity of the built environment and the significance and management of local architectural heritage. The motifs of the posters deal with the themes of the European Heritage Days over the past ten years and depict the built environment and changes in it. The series of posters is available free of charge in three different languages from the Finnish Association for Local Culture and Heritage.

In many European countries, the European Heritage Days have included an 'open house' event. They are an opportunity to visit interesting architectural sites that are not normally accessible to the public. The intention is to make the open house event a regular feature of the annual Heritage Days in Finland. In Helsinki, for example, the House of the Estates and the presidential lounge at the Central Railway Station will be opened to the public.

*Hanna Galtat is secretary for the Architectural Society.*

*Translation: Erik Miller*

*The website of the Architectural Heritage Year is at <http://www.ymparisto.fi/rakennusperinto/>*

*The events of the year can be found in the events calendar. New events will be added throughout the year. A programme calendar will also be published in August.*

*European Heritage Days and Open House, 12–14 September, 2003.*





HEINI KORPELAINEN

# ARCHITECTURAL POLICY BRINGS ARCHITECTURE CLOSER TO US ALL

The objective of architectural policy measures in Finland is to maintain a high quality of the built environment. Structured work to this effect has been carried out ever since the Government architectural policy program was adopted in 1998. The emphases of the program are quality of building, education, architectural heritage, promotion of architectural culture and questions relating to guidance and control. A committee was assigned to follow up on the implementation of the program over a period of three years. The committee's report and proposals were delivered to Minister of Culture Kaarina Dromberg in August 2002. The focal areas of the report are continuity of architectural policy, advancement of research and development, quality assessment of architecture, public education and fostering of the built heritage.

Measures entered in the policy program are still being developed, now under the auspices of the National Council for Architecture. The Council will, on a yearly basis, organize a seminar on the issue and produce every three years an overview of progress in the implementation of the architectural policy. Program implementation has also extended to the regional and municipal levels and to organizations of public administration. Its adoption has created a better environment for social discussion and brought the significance of architectural policy goals to wider attention.

Fostering of the built heritage is an important part of architectural policy. Built heritage is an inseparable part of today's rich living environment. The maintenance of the built environment requires information. Such information will be provided by the recently founded Building Technology Center, which is a result of decade-long efforts. A foundation has been set up and a board appointed for the administration of the center. Although the center doesn't yet have fixed premises, it will begin its work with exhibitions and book projects.

The first of the exhibitions will be held on the Suomenlinna Island off the Helsinki shore. In the future, the center will disseminate information on the development of building methods from different historical periods, building technology, and research on it. One of the goals of the architectural policy program has thus been achieved. Other measures centering on the built heritage are put forward by the follow-up committee for the National Strategy for Built Heritage. The development of regional organization for fostering the built heritage is one of the central goals of the National Board of Antiquities. This work has also been supported by the Finnish Ministry of Environment.

The importance of architecture has also been recognized in children's culture. The Lastu School of Architecture and Environmental Culture became a member in the Ministry of Education's network of cultural centers for children (Taikalamppu). The school is located in the small Lapinlahti municipality in central Finland. It concentrates on teaching architecture and design and on developing related exhibition activities. One of the main policy goals has been the development and inclusion of architectural education in school curri-



*Open architectural competition for Information Center for Architecture, Building and Design 2001. First prize Arkkitehtitoimisto JKMM Oy.*



cula. The secondary and high school basic curricula that are now being developed pay indeed more attention to issues concerning the built environment. Now that Lastu is part of the network, the further development of such teaching is for the first time financially possible on a larger scale.

The promotion of architectural culture is also actively carried on by the Museum of Finnish Architecture. It is engaged in the extensive EU-funded Gaudí Program, which aims to provide citizens of all ages

with incentive to study the urban environment and take an active part in urban planning. The museum is taking part in this development program in partnership with the Architectural Foundation in London. One objective of the project is to provide better public access to architectural archives. The Museum of Finnish Architecture keeps, for example, archives of awarded plans entered in architectural contests. The contests have a strong tradition of producing good architecture in Finland. The participants in both the open

and invitational contest enter their works anonymously, which enables many young architects to realize works and gain experience. One such contest was held for the ARMI Information Center for Architecture, Building and Design in 2001.

The effects of architectural policy are not always easy to detect. Changes in attitudes and structures take place gradually. Concrete events that could be marked as turning points are hard to date. One can't be certain of when architectural policy measures as such have had a decisive effect on the way things turn out. Nonetheless, the general atmosphere has been supportive of the policy and the measures introduced in its program have borne results. Architectural policy has advanced on a large front. Its achievements may not seem all that big, but they seem to produce multiplying effects. One example of this is when architectural policy is referred to in contexts beyond its usual scope. The building of a good living environment concerns us all. When the goals are common and meaningful, it is easy to maintain the will to keep up the good work. And that is what it's all about.

*Architect Heini Korpelainen was secretary for the follow up committee for the Government's architectural policy programme.*

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*Open design competition of Kerava City Library 2000. First prize Qvad - Arkkitehdit Oy.*





## CAREFULLY SELECTED ART CATCHES ALSO THE UNINTENTIONAL EYE

### THE STATE ART COLLECTION

A mention “work in the State Art Collection” in an artist’s resume is considered an excellent merit. The author of this article enjoys every day the artworks displayed on the walls of her workplace, as do thousands of other public officials. A wide selection of artwork catches the visitors’ attention in the employment office, in public agencies, in the lobbies of universities, etc. They are works that people do not go to deliberately see on display, and thus they reach an audience beyond the usual art enthusiasts.

TUULIKKI KOSKINEN

**T**he State Art Collection is one of the biggest collections of art in Finland. It can not be seen in a single visit because many of its nearly 12 000 works are on display in public facilities and lobbies throughout the country and in Finnish embassies abroad. Their display is not only part of the effort to improve the quality of the environment administrated by the state but also support for artists, as commissioning works is a natural way to employ an artist. Though, it is not to be seen as a grant system.

The Committee for Purchase of Work for the State Art Collection has been operating since 1956; its purpose was initially just to beautify state facilities. It has always centered on purchasing new works from contemporary artists, and the nearly 12 000 works in the collection thus represent a good cross section of Finnish art of nearly a fifty years. The Committee received under its care a little over a year ago the art collection of the former SKOP Bank, consisting of over 3 500 works. A collection of this size requires a great amount of maintenance and restoration work, especially since in public

spaces the risk of art becoming damaged is much greater than in museum facilities.

Every three years 11 members are appointed to the Committee for Purchase of Work for the State Art Collection. The Committee hosts representatives from the Ministry of Education and Senate Properties (a state owned company) as well as experts in the fields of visual arts, design, architecture and media and environment arts. Counsellor for Cultural Affairs Veikko Kunnas is the chair of the current committee, which was appointed in 2002. The practical operations are looked after by Senior Advisor Erika Hyyryläinen and Secretary Heli Ahmio.

The Committee represents a variety of voices and opinions which are often and openly expressed – professionals in the field tend to have strong views. Chairman Veikko Kunnas speaks highly of the members’ professional expertise and ability to ground their opinions. Artistic quality is the primary criterion for purchasing art, but there are also other things that a state collection has to take into account. According to Erika Hyyryläinen, the Committee’s choice of selection is restricted by subject matter, as the works will be placed in public spaces, as well as the technique applied, which may limit the possibilities to use the works. The Committee has, however, purchased, for example, media art, and media art exhibitions are visited with intentions of purchase same as exhibitions by representatives of other art forms.

In practice, the method for displaying media art will probably differ from the role of the more traditional works in the collection – an employee wouldn’t necessarily enjoy having a video installation displayed nonstop in his/her office. Another new challenge is placed by the popular trends in architecture, as the presently favored big, glass-



walled halls call for impressive, largescale artwork, which is often expensive to purchase.

The Committee for the Purchase of Work for the State Art Collection acquires the works of art with budget appropriation funds, which in 2002 amounted to a little over half a million euros. The equivalent appropriation is much higher in other Nordic countries, in Sweden, for example, 36,5 million crowns (3,9 million euros).

In practice, the acquisitions are made as commissions, by organizing art competitions or by purchasing works directly from the artists. For cost reasons, the competitions are usually invitational. If the budget was to be increased, the additional funds would, according to Veikko Kunnas, be allocated to commissioned works rather than direct purchases. Out of the 163 works acquired last year, five were made on commission. A future goal

could be to ask artists to present ideas for works and their placement, as opposed to planning art for specific sites.

The in Finland much discussed “one percent principle” for art, the goal to earmark at least one percent in construction budgets for artworks, has been a subject of discussion also in the Committee. Currently only about 0,2 percent of construction budget funds are allocated for the purpose, and Veikko Kunnas finds the goal very challenging in the current economic situation. According to Kunnas, privatization of state-owned companies and economic strain have undermined the prospects of this objective. Purchases of art have to be considered on a case-to-case basis.

In acquisition of art for foreign embassies, most of the attention has in recent years centered on new embassies. The Nordic Embassy Complex in

Berlin is a popular site for visitors, and the works commissioned from Carolus Enckell and Tapani Mikkonen for the Finnish Embassy in Stockholm, as well as the Finnish Embassy in Canberra have attracted a lot of attention.

Ideally, the Committee for the Purchase of Work for the State Art Collection would wish to be involved in construction or renovation plans at the earliest possible stage. The Committee’s current possibilities to engage in planning processes for other than new construction projects are regrettably limited. One interesting challenge to the Committee is the new House of Justice where the Helsinki District Court will be relocated. The old headquarters of the State Alcohol Monopoly will be renovated with reverence to style and its magnificent inner court awaits for innovative works of art.

*Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*Left page: Urbaani puu (Urban Tree).*

*Markku Kosonen, 2000.*

*Photo: Museokuva*

*Figure. Marikki Hakola, 2000*



# THE ART COUNCIL OF FINLAND'S SUPPORT TO VISUAL ARTISTS

The Central Arts Council and the national art councils have fifteen different forms of support to visual artists, six of which apply to all fields of art.

## Support to all fields

The national art councils annually give out state grants for individual artists and, on special grounds, also for critics, art teachers and researchers of art and art history. The grants are tax exempt working grants awarded for a period between six months and five years for safeguarding artists' working conditions, as well as education and continuing education, at home and abroad. The grant is paid monthly according to the state salary grade A9, which in 2003 was 1180,03 euros/month.

Support from the Central Arts Council is appropriated in the forms of project and travel grants, artists-in-residence grants and grants for multidisciplinary projects, media art and circus arts.

The project grants are aimed at the realization of a working plan, the compensation of working costs, performance, presenta-

tion and publishing costs and research in the field of art. They are awarded to artists, two or more artists jointly or project-specific work groups (excluding associations). On special grounds, they are also awarded to critics, art teachers and researchers of art and art history.

Travel grants are aimed at covering artists' and art experts' travel costs abroad, in connection with, for example, performing abroad. The grants cover only direct travel costs according to the cheapest alternative, but not study trips or similar visits.

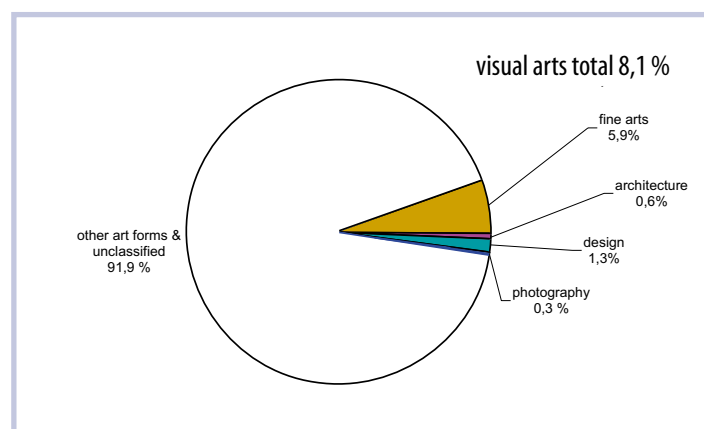
Artists who have been accepted in international artists-in-residence programs qualify for artists-in-residence grants, which cover travel and living costs. The grants are also available for municipalities, associations and other societies maintaining residencies with the purpose of initiating and operating residencies for artists.

Grants for multidisciplinary projects, media art and circus arts and other activities on the fringe area of art also have a separate appropriation. The grant is awarded, for example, to media art productions, as well as marketing and dissemination costs of media art and implementing such projects or events that do not qualify for any other form of financial support.

The Subcommittee for Children's Culture appropriates project grants and special subsidies for children's culture. Special subsidies are allowed for groups of artists, work groups and organizations for projects in specific theme areas (e.g. art education, children and art in a community). Project grants for children's culture are awarded on the same grounds as the projects grants.

## Grants by the National Council for Visual Arts

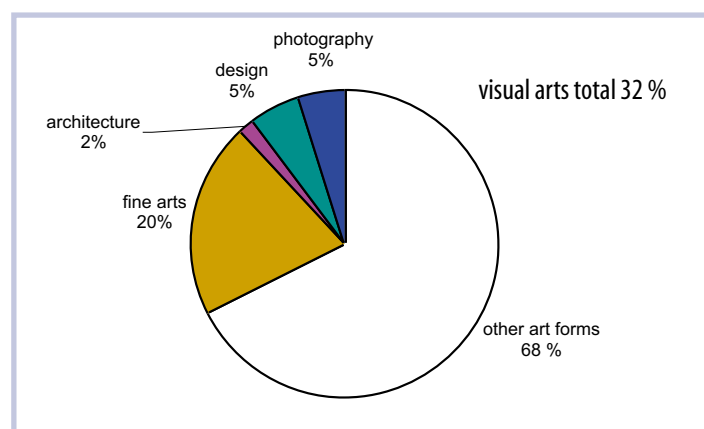
Subsidies for exhibition of visual arts are awarded to communities and work groups, to support national or international exhibitions or to arrange a significant



State support for art and culture\* in 2001 (total € 502,2 million)

\*State support for art and culture allocated by the Ministry of Education (incl. national heritage, artistic activities, cultural institutions etc.)

Source: Oesch 2002, Arts Council of Finland



State support for artistic activity\* by the ACF in 2001 (total € 16,3 million)

\*State support for artistis activity refers to support schemes of the Central Arts Council, national arts councils and boards.

Source: The Annual Report 2002, Arts Council of Finland

exhibition. The grants are not allowed for solo exhibitions by individual artists.

The most recently established form of support, subsidies to support atelier and workshop activities, are meant for work groups and communities and granted for the establishment, equipment, renovation and operational costs of artist's workshops and workspaces.

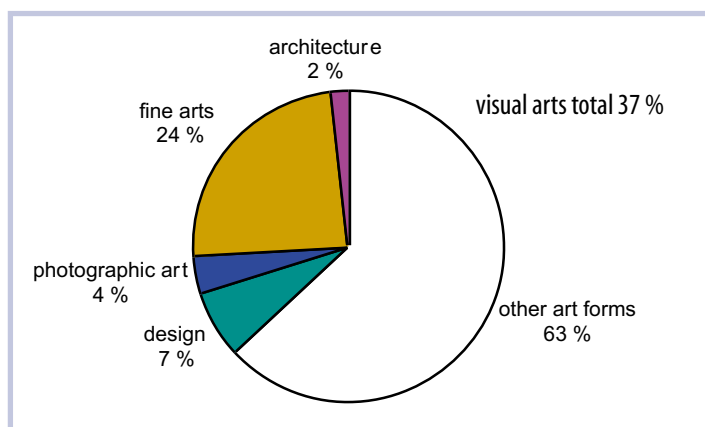
Visual artists can also apply for public display grants for visual artists appropriated by a separate Board for Compensation Grants to Visual Artists. The grant is aimed at the maintenance and enhancement of the financial working conditions of painters, photographers, sculptors, graphic artists, artists in the field of industrial art and artists who work in different media whose works can be publicly displayed.

## Grants by the National Council for Design

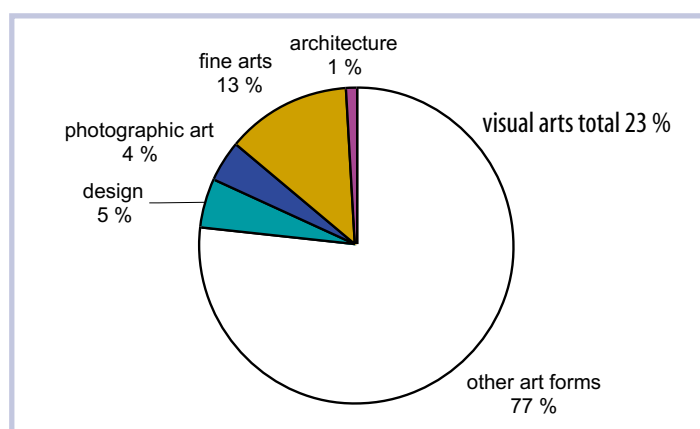
Artists, designers, work groups and companies in the field of design can apply for innovation support for design. Its purpose is particularly to encourage the creation and development of innovations into finished products.

Exhibition support for design is granted for national and international exhibitions of Finnish design and the costs incurred by the organization of exhibitions. The support is aimed at individual designers, groups or organizations, excluding companies and students of the field.

The third form of support by the National Council for Design is quality support for design. It is aimed at artists or groups of artists designing or producing handicraft or design products to



The proportion (%) of art forms represented by grant applicants in 2001 (N=5 337)  
Source: Facts and Figures 2/2002, Arts Council of Finland



The proportion (%) of art forms represented by grant recipients in 2001 (N=2 120)

cover, for example, working costs of machines, devices and materials needed in the planning and production of design products, and promotion and marketing costs.

### Grants by the National Council for Architecture

Grants and support for promoting and developing architecture are awarded for projects, exhibitions and events promoting architecture and protection, and for the implementation of regional architectural programs, architectural education, international co-operation and different kinds of development projects.

### Grants by the National Council for Photographic Art

Quality support for publications of photographic art is a Government appropriation aimed at publications in which a photograph is used as an independent

form of art and communication. Its objective is to raise the overall quality of Finnish photographic publications. The support is appropriated to private photographers or work groups for specific publications.

Production support for photographic art is granted for organizing and preparing photographic exhibitions and events. The support is granted for bigger exhibitions, not for solo exhibitions of individual artists (for which project grants can be applied).

The National Council for Photographic Art also awards subsidies for regional photography centers for their general activities or specific sub-activities.

*Anni Tappola is secretary for the National Council for Visual Arts  
Translation: Susan Heiskanen*

*More about the grants, periods of application and application procedures at [www.artcouncil.fi](http://www.artcouncil.fi)*

## Change of Chairperson at the Arts Council of Finland

Risto Ruohonen, who chaired the Arts Council of Finland since 1998, transferred to another post in March 2003. Ruohonen was appointed Special Government Advisor at the Ministry of Education, where he works at the Department for Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy as director of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Division.

The Government appointed PhD Jarmo Malkavaara as the new chair for the Arts Council of Finland for the remainder of its present term (until end of year 2003). Malkavaara is also new editor-in-chief for ARSIS magazine. Esa Rantanen was appointed the new secretary general.

The senior advisors for the national councils in the fields of visual arts are:

Mari Karikoski (architecture)  
Seppo Kauhanen (photographic art)  
Marja-Leena Pétas (design)  
Anni Tappola (visual arts)

*For contact information see [www.artscouncil.fi](http://www.artscouncil.fi)*

## Tanja Karpela was appointed Minister of Culture

Tanja Karpela (Centre), Bachelor of Social Services, Member of Parliament for the second term, has been appointed Minister of Culture in Finland. At the Ministry of Education, Tanja Karpela is in charge of matters related to culture, copyright, sports, young people, student aid and the church.





**Merja Heikkinen:**

## **The Nordic Model for Supporting Artists**

*Public Support for Artists in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden*

*Language: English*

Is there a Nordic model for supporting artists, and if there is, how does it work? The book presents the results of a study comparing public policy toward artists in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

Direct financial support for individual artists is one of the characteristic features of the Nordic arts policy. The report examines the historical development of state support for artists, the objectives, decision-making, and policy measures adopted, the volume and distribution of support, and research findings on the situation of artists in the Nordic countries.

The book follows the development of the Nordic model for supporting artists from its early history up to recent changes and reorientations, examines similarities and differences in the models of support adopted, and discusses present challenges to the Nordic model.

The study is part of a larger project on Nordic cultural policy. Other publications of the project, published by Nordisk Kultur Institut, include reports examining cultural policy in Faeroe Islands, Greenland, the Sami area and Åland, and a final report entitled The Nordic Cultural Model.

ISBN 952-5253-40-6

ISSN 0785-4889

**Pekka Oesch**

## **State support for culture in 2001**

*Cultural appropriations provided by the Ministry of Education*

*Language: Finnish with tables, figures and summary in English*

The statistics give an overall picture of expenditure on the arts and culture by the Ministry of Education in Finland in 2001. The main purpose is to ascertain the amount and distribution of public expenditure on the arts and culture in the fields in which The Arts and Cultural Heritage Division and Culture and Media Division hold the main administrative responsibility, and to determine to what extent the funds support the various forms of art. The survey covers year 2001 but the results of the previous 1994 survey are also included.

In 2001, total cultural financing was FIM 2,980 million which was nearly five per cent lower than in 1994. There is every likelihood that it could have been much lower without the favourable development of national lottery and football pool revenues. The most significant cuts have centered on statutory state grants for municipal cultural activities, public libraries and adult education. There has also been a five per cent growth in the total amount of support for artists since 1994, but no significant changes between the different forms of art.

In all, compared to 1994, more cultural financing in 2001 was covered by the lottery and revenues. More financing was also given to national art and cultural institutions. Otherwise, the main lines of cultural financing by the Ministry of Education were the same as in 1994. Despite small changes, the main structure of cultural financing has remained the same throughout the 1990s.

ISBN 952-5253-43-0

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