

# Kiasma

[www.kiasma.fi](http://www.kiasma.fi)

2010 **45** vol 12

**Denise  
Grünstein and  
Hidden Stories**

**The Way to ARS**

**Who Recalls  
Glazunov?**

**Art about Us**

**Là-bas  
Celebrates**

**Viewer in the Main Role**

**Summer Calendar**







# Hidden stories

Denise Grünstein considers herself a romantic. Nature and landscapes act as settings for the photographic works. These large-scale pieces form a series of stories with no beginning and no end. They are like stills from a movie that does not exist.





© DENISE GRÜNSTEIN

Figure 6 from the series *Figure in Landscape*, 2001

In her pieces, the artist travels in between reality and dream.

“I am interested in what I don’t understand,” says **Denise Grünstein**. However, she does not like to explain her works in too much detail. As the name of the exhibition suggests: *Figure Out*. Find things out by yourself!

#### HAIR BY THE SHORE

People are used to facing each other, but what happens when the eye contact and facial features are taken away? In some of her works, Grünstein puts hair at centre stage.

Hair, and especially the loss of it, has a strong symbolic value in Western society. Hair is a symbol of power and erotic attraction. Cutting off long hair or clipping off a ponytail are also rites of adulthood. Many believe that hair extensions add femininity and that wigs cover for lost hair. However, who are these women, whose hair is cut off in order to make these extensions, and who is ready to give up their hair for the beauty of another?

Grünstein’s *Figure Out* series was partly photographed in Skagen in Denmark, a place where the Nordic artists of late 19th century gathered to immortalise their objects in the transparent shore landscape.



Denise Grünstein: Headhunter, 2009

Also reminding us of the traditions of old is the headrest seen in the work *Headhunter*. They were used by the early photographers to hold the target's face in place for the exposure time that lasted several minutes. The side profile of the female figure is as though from a police archive picture wherein a person is depicted from different angles in order to make identification easier. The model does not see the viewer. She is only an object.

#### WHAT IS LEFT WHEN DIRECT CONTACT DISAPPEARS?

As the face is covered with the hair, the spectator never meets the eyes of the figure. In addition to the physique of the person, the spectator can observe the surface, materials, clothing, and hair. Not all Grünstein's works even have a human figure, but maybe just a beautifully folded costume, dress, and a wig on a table or strewn across the sand. The peculiar simultaneous feeling

of presence and distance makes the experience very dreamlike.

#### STAGES OF DANGER AND DRAMA

The colours of the glowing green forest surround the staged, even threatening, scenes in the series *Figure in Landscape*. By the woods you can run into a charming red-haired woman in a well cut outfit. The works reveal hidden signals of insecurity, fear of violence, and anxiety. You get the feeling that something is not quite right. There is an expectant atmosphere. Something is going to happen. Then, everything stops.

"Hold still!" Grünstein stops the movement of the model in the panoramic landscapes. Using a large negative size monorail camera requires the model to stand still for a while. The works also pay homage to classic photography





Denise Grünstein: Malplacé, 2005

In the series *Malplacé*, there is a nostalgic dimension as the artist returns to the places of her childhood in Hanko area. At the borders of nature and civilisation, there is a confused-looking woman who seems to be lost. In the black-and-white works, you do not hear the happy sounds of the childhood summers, but instead a darker undertone.

□ Satu Metsola

*Denise Grünstein's exhibition Figure Out from 30 April to 15 August on the fifth floor of Kiasma. Figure Out is the artist's first major exhibition in Finland. She has had exhibitions at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm (2001) and the Hasselblad Center in Gothenburg (2005) and also several gallery exhibitions around Europe.*



Denise Grünstein was born in Helsinki in 1950, but moved to Sweden as a small child. She is one of Sweden's most famous photographers. Aside from her artistic work, she is also known for her advertisement photography, portraits, and other commercial work.



Speaking of art with just a geographic definition is never enough.

## ARS is building up fast

**ARS IS THE LARGEST** contemporary art event in Finland that is arranged once every five years. The eighth ARS will be opened in a year's time, and this will be third time in Kiasma building. Since 1961, it has presented thought-provoking and topical pieces from around the world.

**THE STARTING POINT** for ARS 11 exhibition is African contemporary art. Geographically, Africa contains over fifty countries and hundreds of languages and cultures. African cultures and identities are not only ethnically or geographically based, and you can also not speak of Africa without terms such as colonial power and migration.

**ART IS** both local and international at the same time. Many African artists study, work, and live outside of their native country. Speaking of art with just a geographic definition is never enough. More important than the countries and continents are the contents of the art: the issues and questions that it expresses.

**THE FIRST ARS ARTISTS** will visit in order to acquaint themselves with the museum space in the spring, although the final artist selections are not to be completed until autumn. The most important things in the preparations for ARS have been the personal discussions with African artists and curators. Their expertise and critical comments have directed and guided us in our work.

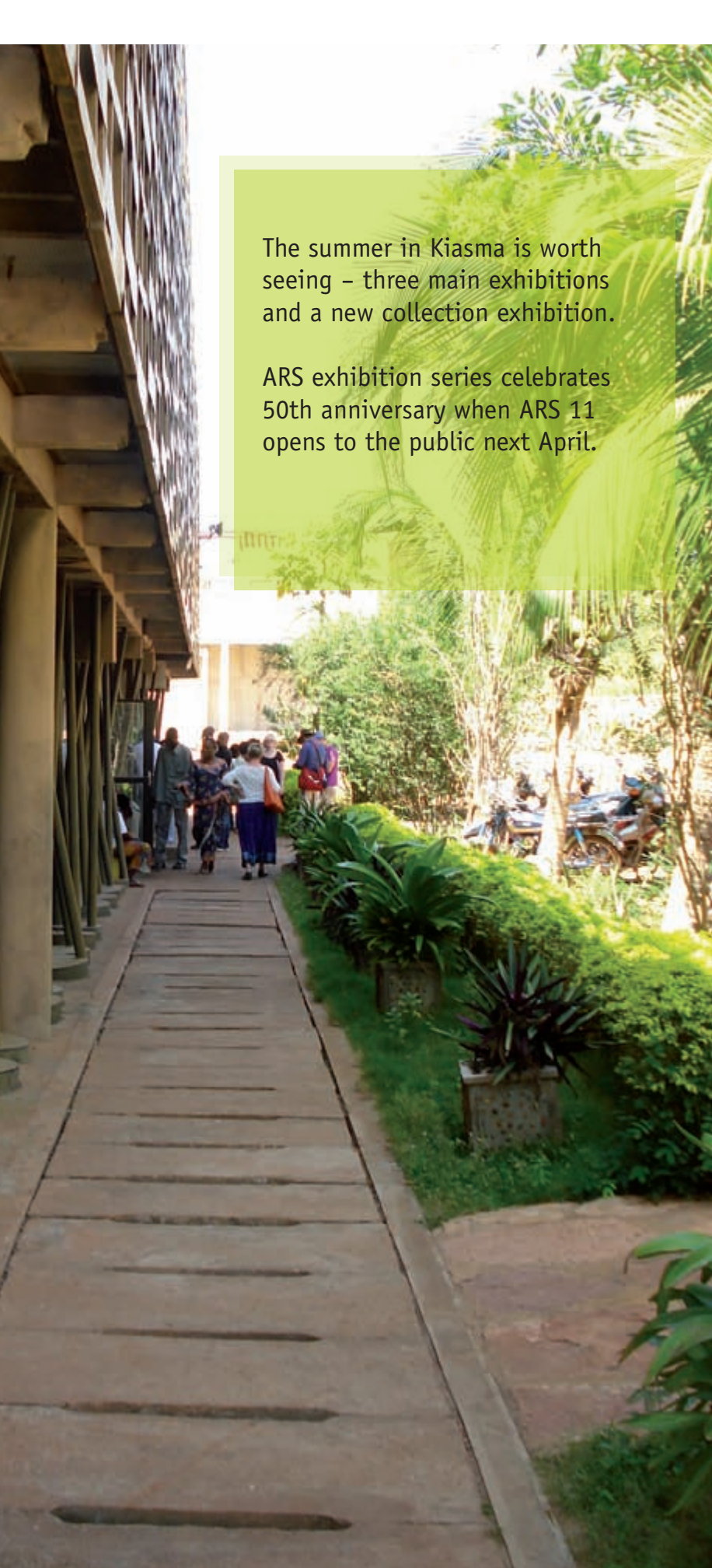
**SEVERAL FINNISH** art museums and galleries co-operate with Kiasma and arrange their own exhibitions related to the ARS event. Important in the ARS preparations is also the networking and co-operation locally, nationally, and internationally.

□ Pirkko Siitari, Deputy Museum Director

*The photo is from the first ARS 11 planning trip when ARS Curators Pirkko Siitari and Arja Miller visited Bamako Photography Biennale in Mali. Read the story on page 22.*







The summer in Kiasma is worth seeing – three main exhibitions and a new collection exhibition.

ARS exhibition series celebrates 50th anniversary when ARS 11 opens to the public next April.

## Kiasma Magazine 45

KIASMA MAGAZINE | ISSN 1456-9124  
Publisher | Museum of Contemporary Art  
Address | Kiasma, Museum of Contemporary Art  
Mannerheiminaukio 2, 00100 Helsinki, Finland  
www.kiasma.fi | e-mail kiasma-lehti@kiasma.fi,  
Tel. +358 (0)9 173 361, Fax +358 (0)9 1733 6503  
Editor in Chief | Communications Manager  
Merja Kukkonen +358 (0)9 1733 6507  
Subeditor | Press Officer Päivi Oja +358 (0)9 1733 6534  
Web | Network Media Manager Janne Heinonen  
Graphic Design and Lay out | Timo Vartiainen  
Translations | Multidoc  
Printed at | F.G. Lönnberg  
The schedules of exhibitions and events are subject  
to change.

### CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE

Merja Kukkonen | Editor in Chief  
Satu Metsola | Curator  
Arja Miller | Chief Curator / Exhibitions  
Päivi Oja | Subeditor  
Kaija Papu | Comic Strip  
Pirkko Siitari | Deputy Museum Director,  
Chief Curator / Collections  
Jonna Strandberg | Producer / Kiasma Theatre  
Jari-Pekka Vanhala | Curator

PHOTOGRAPHS | Denise Grünstein, Seppo Hilpo,  
Johanna Lecklin, Lauri Luhta, Satu Metsola, Arja Miller,  
Kristina Myntzing, Henrik Palmberg, Richard Rutledge,  
Petri Summanen, Sari Tervaniemi  
© Charlotte Lund Gallery, Siro Micheroli © Sasha Huber  
Finnish National Gallery / Central Art Archives:  
Pirje Mykkänen, Henri Tuomi

CONTACT PERSONS | Deputy Museum Director  
Pirkko Siitari | Director's Assistant Tuula Vuorio +358 (0)9  
1733 6516 | Chief Curator / Exhibitions Arja Miller  
+358 (0)9 1733 6537 | Chief Curator / Collections  
Pirkko Siitari +358 (0)9 1733 6519 | Head of Education  
Sanna Hirvonen +358 (0)9 1733 6514 | Kiasma Theatre,  
Producer Riitta Aarniokoski +358 (0)9 1733 6512 |  
Head of Marketing and Sponsorship Sanna-Mari Jäntti  
+358 (0)9 1733 6653 | Cooperation Coordinator  
Päivi Hiilka +358 (0)9 1733 6668 | Communications  
Manager Merja Kukkonen +358 (0)9 1733 6507

THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART was founded  
in 1991; the Kiasma building was completed in 1998.  
Kiasma was designed by Steven Holl (USA), the winner  
of the architectural competition (Chiasma). Kiasma  
has five floors. It's total floor space is 12,000 m<sup>2</sup>, of  
which the galleries account for 9,100 m<sup>2</sup>. Kiasma's art  
collection has some 7,900 Finnish and foreign works of  
contemporary art. The Museum of Contemporary Art  
Kiasma is part of the Finnish National Gallery

KIASMA *Chia.sm*, n. chiasma. *Chi.as.ma*, n., pl. -mas,  
-ma.ta. 1. Genetics. an exchange of segments between  
two of the four chromatids of paired chromosomes  
during late prophase and metaphase. 2. Anat. a crossing  
or decussation, esp. that of the optic nerves at the base  
of the brain. *Chi.as.ma.typ.y*, n. Genetics. the process of  
chiasma formation, which is the basis for crossing over.  
Cf. *crossing over*.



ENGCA / HENRI TUOMI

In the spring, you will have an opportunity to see both the artwork and the artist. Maiju Salmenkivi's painting *Sparkles* (2008) is a part of the collection exhibition *It's a Set-up*.

## Seeing art and artists

**KIASMA** presents contemporary art as variedly as possible. There are works from dozens of artists simultaneously on show in the exhibitions. And Kiasma Theatre brings performance artists to Kiasma. In addition to the works of art, you can also meet the artists themselves. Who are they? What do these professionals do and how do they view their work?

The first Wednesday of each month is Kiasma's free night. In addition to the free admission, there is often a special programme to enjoy and a possibility to meet with artists.

In April, Kiasma Theatre is a venue for **Sanna Kekäläinen's** new *Onni-Bonheur-Happiness 2*. Get to know the piece in the

Demo Wednesday's open dress rehearsal.

On the same Wednesday, *The Night of the Artists* brings **Hanna Haaslahti, Hilda Kozári, Tiina Mielonen** and **Maiju Salmenkivi** to meet the general public. The artists **Jussi Kivi, Veli Granö,** and **Outi Turpeinen** will discuss obsessive collecting and the frontiers of art.

In the spring, the room Rauha (3rd floor) is a place for discussion. Visitors include the artists **Salla Tykkä, Hilda Kozári,** and **Elina Merenmies.** □





## Become a work of art

**ARTIST Johanna Lecklin** sets up her *Story Café* in front of Kiasma for a week, 6–11 April. In the café, the visitor gets a free cup of coffee in exchange for a story. At the same time, they can view stories previously recorded on video in different countries, such as personal memories, adventures, embarrassing events, anecdotes, or stories heard on the bus.

“When I first began recording stories, I assumed that the narrators would be truthful and that their stories would be recorded on the videotape as such. Soon, however, I began to wonder as to what extent they were in fact performing,” Lecklin says. She has now recorded around 250 stories in over ten languages in seven countries. The tapes have been edited into an installation shown at the *It’s a Set-up* collection exhibition. □

## Tailored workshops

**ART HAS** an extraordinary effect on you. Just seeing it invigorates, delights, amazes, and puzzles you. Just think about what will happen when you finally get to try to make art.

Kiasma offers workshops guided by professionals to various visitors. We can tailor suitable activities to a group of friends, work ability promoting groups, and other work communities, therapy groups, and school and nursery groups. Get to know the workshops on the Kiasma website [www.kiasma.fi](http://www.kiasma.fi)

Popular baby and toddler workshops will also continue in the autumn. □

## What’s on in Kiasma

**KIASMA** is back in the headlines. It is easy to pick the most interesting gems from the exhibitions, shows, lectures, and other events, when you know exactly what is going on in Kiasma.

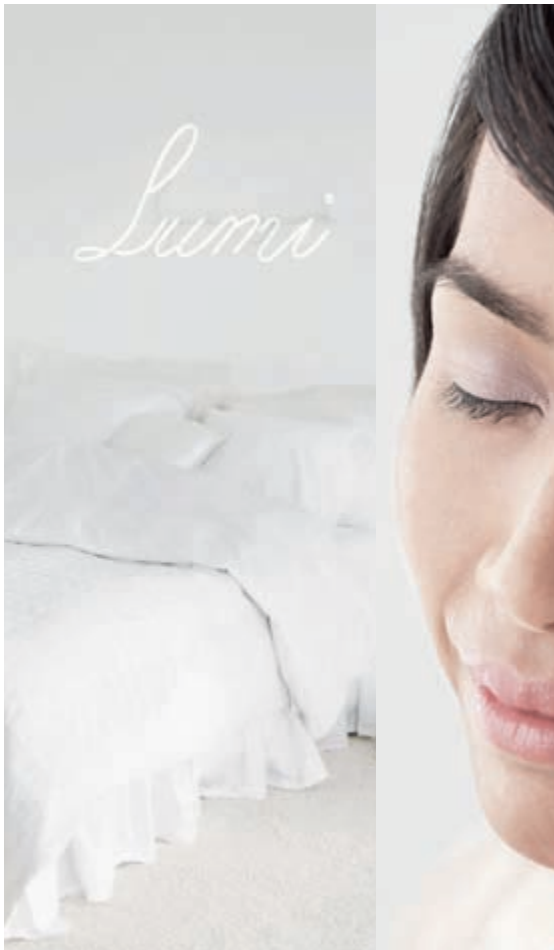
Around once a month, you will receive an email about Kiasma’s programme conveniently to your email address. Just join the Kiasmail mailing list at [www.kiasma.fi](http://www.kiasma.fi) □



PETERI SUOMAINEN

## Book a tour

**HOW TO TREAT** your mother on Mother’s Day? Where to go with a bachelor party? Maybe a guided tour for your friends to enjoy? Guided tours of contemporary art offer a crash course into the central issues and themes. Check out the selection at [www.kiasma.fi](http://www.kiasma.fi) □



### Uusi Lumi on ihme

Lumi on Tikkurilan uusi, valkoistakin valkoisempi sisäseinämaali. Sen valoisuus tuo tilaan uusia ulottuvuuksia. Täyshimmeä Lumi-pinta myös peittää tavallista tehokkaammin. Valkoinen on nyt lumivalkoinen! Lumi-värikartan sävytetyt valkoiset luovat tilaan eri tunnelmia, kuin valon ja varjon leikki hangella.

**MAALILINJA  
PALVELEE**

[WWW.TIKKURILA.FI](http://WWW.TIKKURILA.FI) • 010 860 8600

IDEAT • VÄRIT • MAALAUSSUUNNITTELU • TEKIÄPANKKI  
ARKKISIN KLO 9-19 (PUHELUN HINTA NORM. PVM/MPM)



**TIKKURILA**  
*Maalaa maailmasi*

## Kiasma in Brief



ENG/C/AA/PIREMYKKÄNEN

## Kiasma for two

**WEDNESDAY** is a day for pairs! By showing your Veikkaus card, you will receive two museum tickets for the price of one. This benefit is valid until December, and you can order a free Veikkaus card from the Veikkaus webpage [www.veikkaus.fi](http://www.veikkaus.fi) □

Café Kiasma, with its summer terrace, offers a place for rest and relaxation. At Kiasma Store you can pick up a book or buy unique gifts.

Café and Store have the opening hours of the museum. □





Merce Cunningham – modern dance as it was in the year 1958.

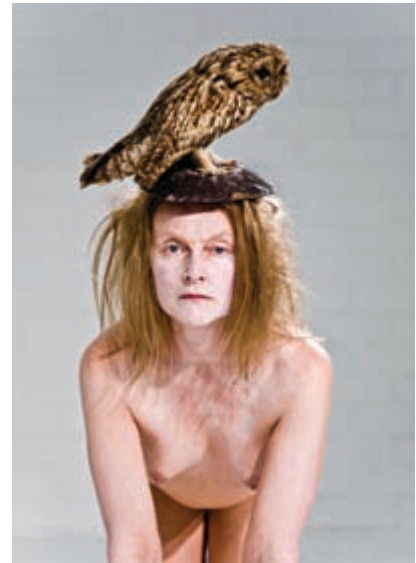
## Why is modern dance like it is?

**THE SPRING SEMINAR** of the Kiasma Theatre focuses on the development history of modern dance. The theme of the seminar is the choreographer and teacher **Merce Cunningham** (1919–2009). He is one of the greatest pioneers in post-modern dance. For example, he abandoned the narrative form of modern dance and broke many unwritten rules that are typical to dance, for example that the dancers should always face the audience.

During his career spanning over 60 years, the productive Cunningham managed to redefine the conventions of modern dance, but he also created over 150 dance performances, cooperated with composer **John Cage** and established the Merce Cunningham Dance Company.

On Saturday 10 April, the researcher of dance **Tiina Suhonen** and choreographers **Ulla Koivisto** and **Reijo Kela** discuss Cunningham's impact on Finnish dance.

In addition, there is a screening of **Charles Atlas'** and Merce Cunningham's dance movie *Coast Zone* (1983) and a TV documentary *The Collaborators: Cunningham, Cage, Rauschenberg* (1987), where Cunningham speaks with his close colleagues, the composer John Cage and artist **Robert Rauschenberg**. □



## Happiness 2

**SANNA KEKÄLÄINEN**, known for her experimental contemporary dances, had the premier of her dance performance *Onni-Bonheur-Happiness* in the Kiasma Theatre in February 2009. After this first performance, Kekäläinen reinterpreted and worked on her performance for a year. In April, this transformed piece comes back – or for the first time rather – to Kiasma. We can finally find out how time and experience has formed happiness. □

## Helsinki-Turku-Africa

PERHAPS the best known Finnish video artist **Eija-Liisa Ahtila** and her work *Where is Where?* (2008) as well as the world famous British video artist and director **Isaac Julien** and his work *Western Union: Small Boats* (2007) will be shown in 2011 as a part of the Cultural Capital Year of Turku.

Both works are from Kiasma's collections and focus on the history of Colonialism in Europe. These large-scale installations have not been seen in Finland before.

The works will be shown successively in 2011 and, for their theme, they are a part of the ARS11 exhibition's Africa theme. The exhibitions are produced in co-operation with the Kiasma Foundation. □

## Fire and Rescue Museum



JUSSI KIVI'S Fire and Rescue Museum will be shown at Studio K until 16 May.



Ilya Glazunov's exhibition opening at the Kunsthalle Helsinki in 1975. From left, Minister of Education Marjatta Väänänen, Artist Ilya Glazunov, the Soviet ambassador to Finland Vladimir Stepanov (in the background), The President of the Republic of Finland Urho Kekkonen, Director of the Soviet Union Institute Valdemar Melanko, and Curator of Kunsthalle Seppo Niinivaara.

**KIASMA** is open Tue 10 am – 5 pm, Wed – Fri 10 am – 8.30 pm, Sat – Sun 10 am – 6 pm, Mon closed.

### EXCEPTIONAL opening hours

#### FIRST OF MAY

Fri 30 April 10 am – 5 pm  
Sat 1 May closed

#### MIDSUMMER

Thu 24 June 10 am – 5 pm  
Fri 25 June closed  
Sat 26 June closed  
Sun 27 June 10 am – 5 pm □





## Who recalls Glazunov?

**IN THE 1970S**, when President **Urho Kekkonen** still ruled the country, the Finnish art world experienced an exceptional phenomenon when the Soviet painter **Ilya Glazunov** gained a sudden success.

Ilya Glazunov became known especially for the portrait of President Kekkonen that he painted in 1973 and for the successful exhibition that was held in the Kunshalle Helsinki two years later. In Finland, the time was favourable for using art and its publicity value both in domestic and foreign policy.

Portraits form a central part of Glazunov's Finnish production. They build quite a gallery of the leading figures in politics, organisations, and cultural circles. A productive artist, Glazunov also depicted many of his Finnish friends and supporters in paintings and drawings.

The style of this unofficial art ambassador of the Soviet Union was different from Social Realism

it had a strong base in Byzantine art and Russian tradition. Some Finnish critics partial to the realism of the time also shunned Glazunov's stylised pieces and especially his audacious role as a favourite of the high society – and the President himself.

With Glazunov, many typical extremes of the commercial art world emerged: the artist's publicity with all its curses, like rumours of copies, forgeries, and vague purchases. Each era has its own Glazunovs – artists whose production tell of the erratic art taste of the elite and whose works are used as instruments in political action or other image-making.

Ilya Glazunov's main artistic production from the 1970s forms a completely different story than his series of portraits made in Finland. The grand depictions of Russian history, Soviet life and illustrations of classical literature are addressing

a different public, closely tied to nationalistic spirit.

In the exhibition at Kiasma, the focus is in the values and artistic ideas of the Finnish society in the 1970s, all reflected through the Glazunov phenomenon. How do we view that time through today's perspective, do we still recognise the people in the paintings and know their stories – and who still recalls Ilya Glazunov?

□ Jari-Pekka Vanhala

## Collections

Kiasma's collections are presented once a year in a temporary exhibition. This provides a fresh and varied point of view to the constantly renewed art collection. Now it is time for the 11th collection exhibition *It's a Set-up*. Including, for example, Tiina Mielonen's work *Mountain*, 2009.

# Viewer in the leading role

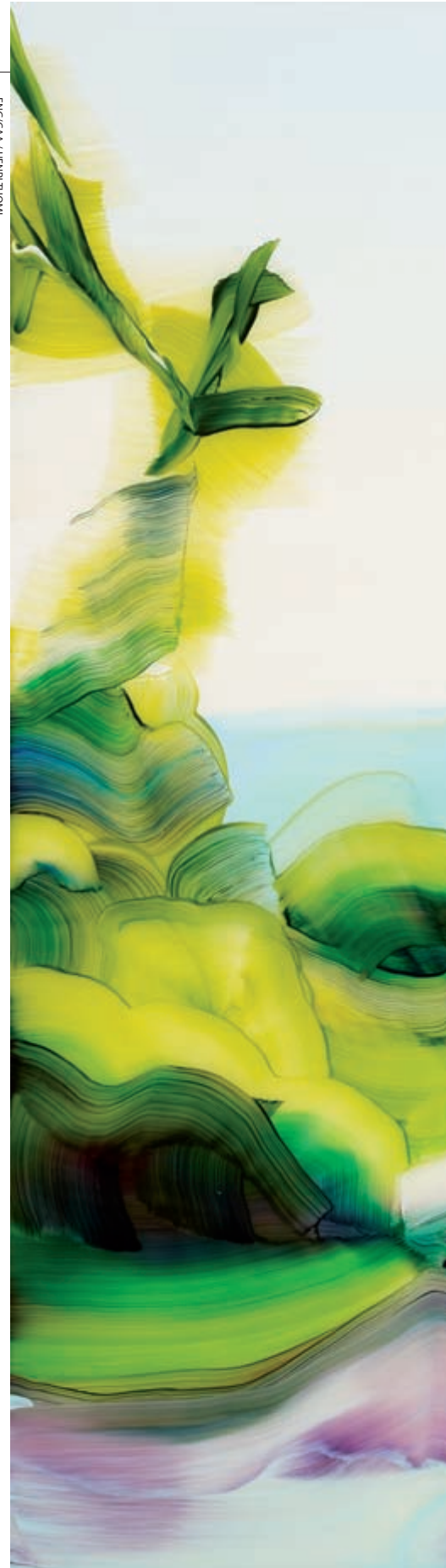
The new Kiasma collection exhibition is aptly named *It's a Set-up*. The name is connected to the event nature of contemporary art; how works are constructed and how art is viewed. All of it is sort of set-up, describes Chief Curator Pirkko Siitari.

*"It's a Set-up* makes you think: if this is a set-up, then what is not? The line between spontaneous and planned, or staged and natural, is thin. The viewers have an important role to play. It is up to them as to how they experience the exhibition and how it turns out. ", tells **Pirkko Siitari**.

### Where did the idea come from?

"Development in recent years shows how contemporary art is open-mindedly crossing all kinds of borders, for example between fine art and performance art. This development is based on the events and

ENGCA / HENRI TUOMI









# IT'S A SET-UP

**3rd floor**  
**26.3.2010 – 20.2.2011**

Jacob DAHLGREN, Hanna HAASLAHTI, Eeva-Mari HAIKALA, Sasha HUBER, Meta ISAEUS-BERLIN, Anssi KASITONNI, Joachim KOESTER, Tellervo KALLEINEN & Oliver KOCHTA-KALLEINEN, Hilda KOZÁRI, KULTU, Mikko KUORINKI, Raakel KUUKKA, Antti LAITINEN, Johanna LECKLIN, Golan LEVIN, Bjarne LÖNNROOS, Susanna MAJURI, Walter MARTIN & Paloma MUÑOZ, Ursula MAYER, Elina MERENMIES, Arttu MERIMAA, Tiina MIELONEN, Marja MIKKONEN, Kristina NORMAN, Tero PUHA, Hannele RANTALA, Aurora REINHARD, Seppo RENVALL, Anna RETULAINEN, Maiju SALMENKIVI, Minna SUONIEMI, Pekka SYRJÄLÄ, Sara TOIVONEN, Santeri TUORI, Salla TYKKÄ, UNSWORN INDUSTRIES, Marko VUOKOLA, Jeff WALL, Ahmet ÖGÜT, PIXELACHE, RADIOTHEATRE, /theatre.now

**KIASMA** COLLECTIONS

JOHANNA LECKLIN



performances in the 1960s. In the 1990s, the concept of Relational Art became more common. The French curator **Nicolas Bourriaud** uses the term to refer to art that draws from the relations and events between people. This means that the works of art are born in a specific historical time and place, and that they also produce new relations. An example of this is the artist **Johanna Lecklin** and her *Story Café*, where she invites people for a cup of coffee in exchange for a story."

"The exhibition observes events from different viewpoints. For example, we see the significance of artist **Antti Laitinen's** work process in the piece *It's my Island*. It tells of an extremely slow and physical event."





SIRO MICHEROLI © SASHA HUBER

Sasha Huber's work *Rentyhorn* (2008) takes a stand. You can sign the petition for renaming the Swiss Agassizhorn Mountain at [www.rentyhorn.ch](http://www.rentyhorn.ch).

Johanna Lecklin's work *Story Café* (2004-) presents café stories from different parts of Europe.

Siitari describes the artist's work: "First the artist drags sand for the foundation of the island. Finally, after nearly two hundred sandbags, he has created an island. The artist has written and created a performance that has also been videotaped. The whole thing – physicality, use of time, and landscape – is a well-planned set-up."

**How is the event present in a painting?**

"For example, it can be present in the process of creating a work. Artist **Tiina Mielonen** usually finishes her paintings in one go. She paints landscapes onto plexiglas surfaces. The works emphasise extreme confidence and abstract

styling. She receives ideas for the landscapes from postcards. A finished work can feel familiar and peculiar at the same time."

**What is there for the viewer to see and experience?**

"We also deliberate on the role of the spectator. An example of this viewpoint is **Jacob Dahlgren's** work *The Wonderful World of Abstraction*. The artist had seen a cartoon in which the viewer had disappeared into the stripes of a painting. Therefore, Dahlgren decided to try out a sculpture based on a similar idea. He created a striped wall that was constructed of ribbons within which you could disappear. A perfect experience comes from

diving into the colourful sea, walking through the ribbon waves and letting the ribbons touch you," Pirkko Siitari inspires. "An art experience is born, and the work binds the viewer to the work itself through a sensory experience."

**The viewer has a role in creating the exhibition. What happens when the role of the viewer changes?**

"**Salla Tykkä's** work *ZOO* presents two different worlds. In one, a stylish woman walks around a zoo with her camera. The other one takes place in the intense world of underwater rugby. The artist creates a tension between these two worlds, one between surface



Salla Tykkä constructs tingly tension in her video ZOO (2006).

and depth, and the other between watching and being watched. Things are not what they seem. In a zoo, we look at the animals, but in Tykkä's Zoo, the viewer becomes the object."

**Does each visitor have his or her own event?**

"Hilda Kozári's work *AIR, scent of Helsinki, Paris, and Budapest* invites the viewer to use senses other than just vision. The artist has used scents to create her memories of three cities inside three acrylic bubbles. An expert in scents, a Parisian perfumer **Bertrand Duchaufour** took part in creating the work. Kozári described things to him that

she thought were typical of the scent of each city. Each visitor can have his or her own interpretation of what Helsinki smells like and create his or her own notion of the work."

□ Merja Kukkonen

*The Kiasma Store sells the exhibition catalogue, and a guide booklet can be purchased, from the Kiasma Info.*

## It's a Set-up

### THE COLLECTION EXHIBITION

The collection exhibition presents around 70 works. Some of the works will be switched in the autumn. Artist meetings, lecture series, and workshops will take place during the exhibition.

The exhibition presents contemporary art that has shifted from a single object into an event. The exhibition highlights the viewer as experiencing a work and the artist as arranging an event. The focus is on participatory art and artworks that include a performance or staged situation by the artist.

Curators: Eija Aarnio, Leevi Haapala, Saara Hacklin, and Pirkko Siitari. □



## Common things

© GALERI CHARLOTTE LUND



KRISTINA MÜNTZING



The installation *New Swedes* comprises hundreds of dolls that the artist has made by combining souvenirs and figures from popular culture. Kristina Müntzing's work handles themes related to immigration and cultural identity.

Ulrika Minami Wärmeling finds her inspiration from the portrait paintings of the 19th century. Instead of the affluent in society, she depicts the subculture of the goths. The artist's gothic friends from different parts of the world are depicted in the paintings. Left the work *Johan and Sebastian*.

# Art is all about us

**THE COMMON THINGS** exhibition depicts the spirit of the age. It reflects this world in the works made by seven artists. They are **Anna Ekman, Tellervo Kalleinen & Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen, Kristina Müntzing, Jari Silomäki, Astrid Svangren, and Ulrika Minami Wärmeling.**

The exhibition comments on what is happening today, with bold moves. The current phenomena and their realities are brought into view. The works comment on the challenges of work, identities, and exclusion. It is an interaction between the private and public, aesthetic and political.

The works are presented at the Hanasaari Cultural Centre Gallery and at Kiasma as a part of the 50th jubilee year programme of the Swedish-Finnish Culture Foundation.

□ Merja Kukkonen



YTM/KKKA / PIIRI MYKKÄNEN

## Kiasma Theatre

Irma Luhta in the year 2010.

“We have to go back to the 1970s and my school days in Vaasa. I was interested in fine art back then. The school had its own arts club and my grades for art were always the best. I applied to study architecture, but I did not get in. I ended up in the University of Oulu studying mathematics.”

In 1973, **Irma Luhta** was one of the founders of the Oulu Film Centre. “My interest in movies can easily be seen as a route towards my interest for live art.”

In the student circles of the 1970s, politics was the main focus, and the powerful left-wingers were not always friendly with the culture circles. However, Irma balanced as a culture representative in the student politics, as well as being a part of the administration and degree renewal.

### 1980s – AWARENESS

The time for performance came in the 1980s. Irma saw the domestic groups Homo\$ and Jack Helen Brut perform at the Provinssirock Festival and the Vasa Festival – and she was sold. First and foremost, she saw the performances as a development of visual art. Throughout the 1980s, she went to see as many performances as possible. In 1989, Irma performed for the first time with the *Hopeataivas* performance at a gallery in the exhibition opening of her husband **Pekka Luhta**.

### 1990s – PERFORMANCE AND SCIENCE

In 1991, the artist association Muu and the Vapauden aukio Gallery invited all performance artists to a performance cavalcade for the Helsinki Festival. Irma



# Irma becomes Optimisti

Irma was not born Optimisti, but the development towards being an artist was winding, and it divided into two. The story takes form in clear decades.



LARI LUHTA

Irma Optimisti in the year 2005.

heard of the event from Pekka and took part. This made her one of Finland's performance artists. "I had the spark and I decided to be serious about it. As a Feminist artist I wanted to be in charge of the situation - here **Irma Optimisti** was born."

The same year, she moved with her family to Turku, and Irma Luhta started on her doctoral thesis on the chaos theory. Female mathematicians were uncommon, but her academic career proceeded well. Turku was also a good breeding ground for Irma Optimisti. People were interested in performance art and there were plenty of spectators. Turun Sanomat and Helsingin Sanomat newspapers featured her and museums provided her with performance opportunities.

A decade was spent in Turku and working from there. In April 1999, the moving truck arrived in Helsinki, and already in May, Irma Optimisti had a workspace at the Cable Factory. "The dusty space in the cellar, however, was not ideal for working and **Lauri Luhta** asked if the space could be used for something more useful. This was the start of Là-bas, a performance space for performance, video, and sound pieces and events."

## 00s – LÀ-BAS FOR PERFORMANCE ART

Just as Irma Optimisti's (feminist) performance art had a demand in the 1990s, in the 2000s, there was a clear need for a space for performance art. "You could say that all domestic performance artists have performed in Là-bas in the past ten years. At least we have invited them from their lairs. In addition, we have seen a great number of international performers."

Irma feels that Là-bas is an easy and flexible organisation as it is not a company or an association

It is formed by people loosely tied to each other without a hierarchy, but it aims to not be personified. Artists are important, as is their willpower. There has been practically no money for the activity. Networks and internationality have been central in the operations.

Là-bas events have been organised in museums and other art institutions. Indeed, Là-bas always operates in relation to the situation and location. "To celebrate our ten years, Kiasma is an ideal location for our Là-bas Biennale. The focus is on contemporary art: in new names and also on renowned international guests who have never been to Finland before."

And it's likely that Irma Optimisti will also perform. It remains to be seen as to whether it has affected her, in that the roles of the mathematician Irma Luhta and the performance artist Irma Optimisti have nearly been mixed up, as she was invited to the Åbo Akademi Science Days as Irma Optimisti. Maybe we will see some chaos art?

□ Jonna Strandberg

*Irma Optimisti is a performance artist and curator. Together with her son Lauri Luhta, she established the Là-bas performance art forum ten years ago.*

*Là-bas jubilee year is celebrated with Biennale 22–25 April in the Kiasma Theatre. The programme includes international and domestic performance art, sound poetry, and art as well as video installations. The performance art photographic archive is also on show for the first time.*

## The way to ARS



The National Museum of Mali and the surrounding park are the locations of the Bamako Biennale.

## Searching for ideas

**In Bamako, the first thing that greets you is the warmth. The unbelievable heat. Then, the sounds and thereafter the colours. This was the first ARS 11 planning trip to Africa.**

The plane landed bouncingly along the uneven runway in Bamako on a night in November. We got our first taste of the bumpy streets in the plane, though we did not understand it yet.

Everyone was interested in us. Where are you from? Finland? Europe du Nord, OK, somewhere thereabouts. The taxi drivers burst into laughter when they heard that the first snow had already fallen in Finland.

### **Laughter, noise, and music**

Suddenly, the world was full of sounds. Constant noise of the traffic, honking of the horns, and lots of talking, shouting, laughter, and music. I can still hear the rhythm of the local dominant language *Bambara* in my ears. Everybody seemed to be on his or her way to sell something somewhere. An endless flow of people, mopeds, cars, and buses covered the bridge leading to the city from the early morning.

Women carried enormous banana clusters on their heads in their colourful clothing. Children travelled along on a sling. I was amazed at how the locals managed to keep their clothes so perfectly smooth and creaseless in the heat.

### **Electric atmosphere**

The National Museum of Mali was the central location of the Bamako Photography Biennale. The official opening of the event and the *Frontiers* exhibition took place in the museum park. The key speaker in the prestigious event was the Prime Minister of Mali. As he arrived, the orchestra and the choir broke into a celebratory song.

The next big opening took place in the Culture Palace and the following ones at the Art School's Gallery, the City Museum of Bamako, and the French Cultural Centre. It was crucial to meet the artists in person. The best conversations took place in the charming bars of Bamako.

### **Unforgettable encounters**

The following night, I met a local cultural producer **Igo**, who invited me to a party held in the yard of a famous outsider artist **Ansel**

from Bamako. Just finding the place was an adventure in itself.

Naturally, there was music and dance. We also saw the dancers of the world-famous choreographer/dancer **Kettly Noël**. Their movement was awe-inspiring. A simple, improvised piece was the most interesting contemporary dance.

The next day, Igo took us guests to see Noël's dance academy. The roots of the school are in Western contemporary dance, but the African reality is present in the choreographies.

### **A possible world**

The last day and time to head home. I take a taxi towards the National Museum of Mali. On the wall there is a writing: *un autre monde est possible*, another world is possible. I bring hope home with me.

□ Arja Miller

*The visit took place in November 2009. Bamako Biennale is one of the most important contemporary art events in Africa. Another biennale dedicated to contemporary art is the Dak'Art in Senegal. [www.rencontres-bamako.com](http://www.rencontres-bamako.com) [www.biennaledakar.org](http://www.biennaledakar.org)*



# Kiasma Comic Strip

AND MY EYES STARTED TO ITCH  
- Say WHAT?

MY MOUTH WENT DRY

MY STOMACH MADE A U-TURN  
- I'm on the rag by the way.

MY KNEES FELT WEAK



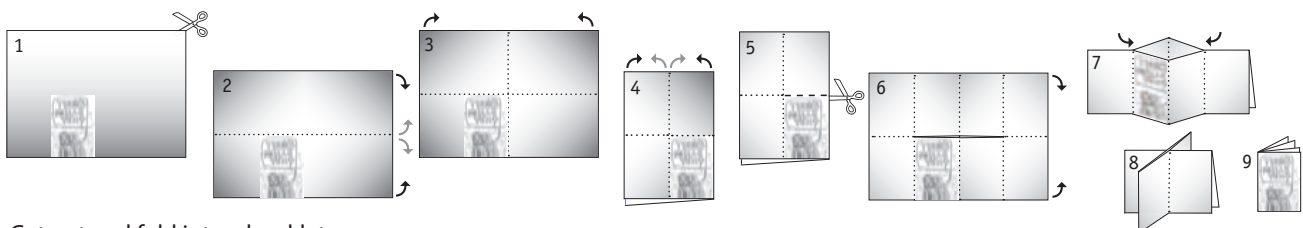
- Now what the hell is THIS?!

WANNA STAY THE NIGHT  
AT OUR PLACE?

THE SECOND I MET TIMO  
- Maybe...

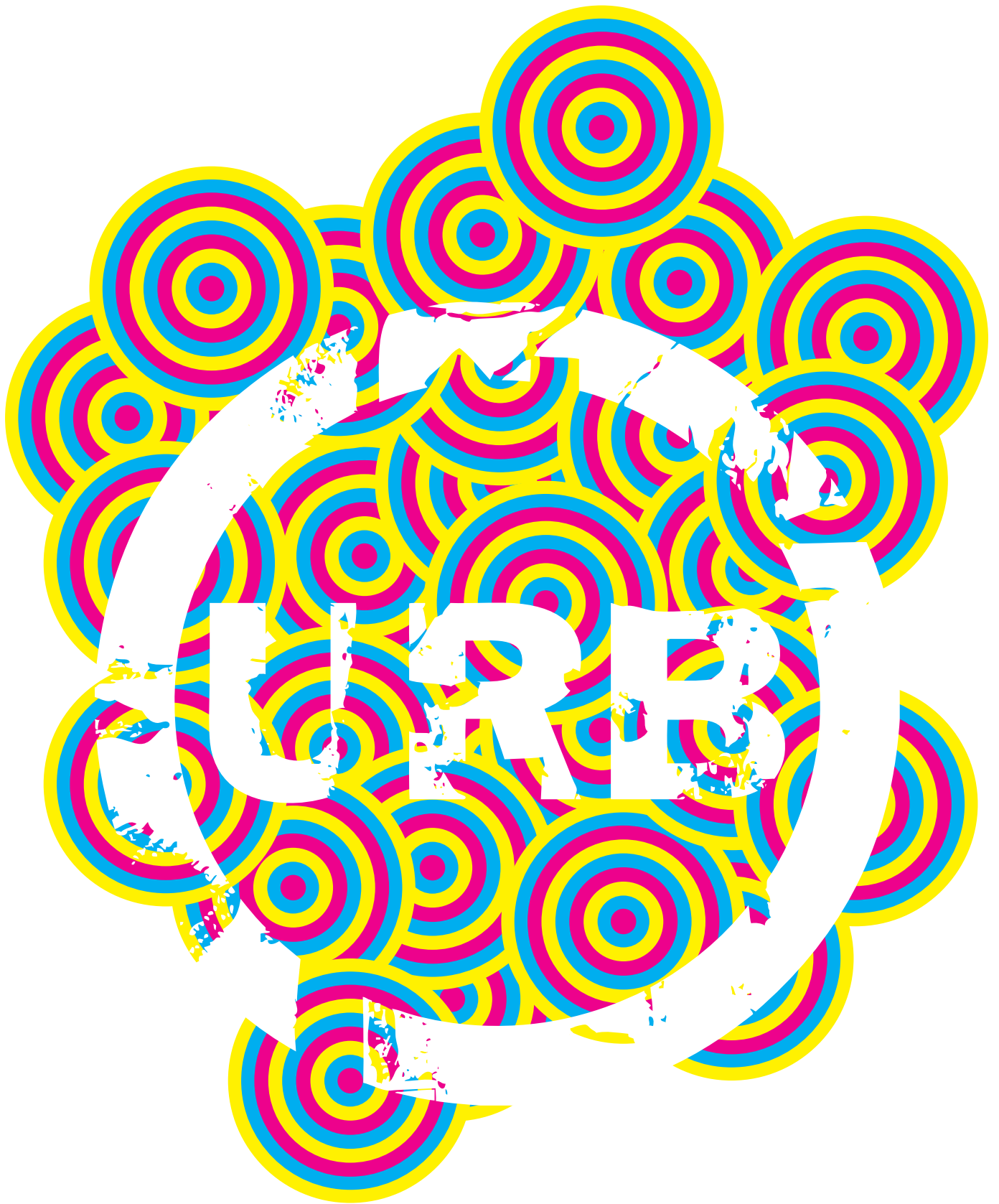
MY HEART STARTED POUNDING  
- What do you mean MAYBE?!

Visual artist Kaija Papu from Tampere is the author of the new comic strip in Kiasma Magazine. Kaija Papu's comics are available e.g. in Kiasma Store. [www.kaijapapu.com](http://www.kaijapapu.com), [www.kaino-kustanne.com](http://www.kaino-kustanne.com) □



Cut out and fold into a booklet.





# URB10

URBAANIN TAITEEN FESTIVAALI - URBAN ART FESTIVAL  
KIASMA, HELSINKI, FINLAND | 30.7.-8.8. 2010  
[WWW.URB.FI](http://WWW.URB.FI)

# Kiasma calendar

## exhibitions

---

**until 25 Apr**  
**Adel Abidin**  
4th floor

The works of the Iraqi-Finnish artist Adel Abidin (b. 1973) speak to you through irony and humour, although covering painful themes of war, environment, and sexuality.

**14 Apr – 12 Sep**  
**Common things**  
**Swedish and Finnish**  
**contemporary art**  
2nd floor

The artists depict our age through work, identity, exclusion, and selfishness. They include Anna Ekman, Tellervo Kalleinen & Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen, Kristina Müntzing, Jari Silomäki, Astrid Svangren, and Ulrika Minami Wärmling. The exhibition is a part of the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Foundation 50th anniversary program.

**30 Apr – 15 Aug**  
**Denise Grünstein**  
**Figure Out**  
5th floor

Stockholm-based Finnish photography artist Denise Grünstein's (b. 1950) first broad exhibition in Finland is a cross-section of the artist's surrealist photography series from the 2000s. In the centre of the works is a person depicted in a landscape in a subtly dramatic way.

**21 May – 29 Aug**  
**Ilya Glazunov and Finland**  
4th floor

The exhibition is about Finland in the era of President Urho Kekkonen seen through an interesting art phenomenon. The role of the Russian artist Ilya Glazunov as a favourite of the political elite was a sensational issue in the 1970s.

Studio K (2nd floor)

---

**until 16 May**  
**Jussi Kivi**  
**Fire & Rescue Museum**

The exhibition presents a fire station themed collection created through the hobby of the artist Jussi Kivi. The exhibition was shown at Finland's Aalto Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2009.

## collections

---

**26 Mar 2010 – 20 Feb 2011**  
**It's a Set-up**  
**collection exhibition**  
3rd floor  
Mediatheque (2nd floor)

What kind of an event is a set-up? Generally, it means that something is pre-determined, engineered, or even staged. The line between staged and natural, spontaneous and scripted, is a shifting one.

This Kiasma collection exhibition focuses on the event nature of contemporary art: how the pieces are constructed or how the art is viewed at an exhibition. The focus is on participatory art and artworks that include a performance or a staged situation by the artist.

## meet the artist!

---

**Wed 7 Apr 5–8pm**  
**Night of the Artists**

5 pm Jussi Kivi presents his work Fire & Rescue Museum in Studio K (2. krs).  
5.30–7.30pm Artists of the exhibition It's a Set-up are present at 3rd floor.  
Hanna Haaslahti, Hilda Kozári, Tiina Mielonen and Maiju Salmenkivi.  
6–7.30pm Discussion on obsessive collecting and art.  
Artists Jussi Kivi, Outi Turpeinen and Veli Granö discuss the borders of obsessive collecting and art. Seminar room (1st floor). Free admission.

**Tue–Sun 6–11 Apr**  
**Story Café**

Tell a story for a cup of coffee! Artist Johanna Lecklin's Story Café in front of Kiasma. Tue 2–5pm, Wed–Fri 2–6pm, Sat–Sun 12 noon–4pm.

**Sat 12 noon–3pm**  
**Decorated city**  
27 Mar, 10, 17, and 24 Apr

Artist Maiju Salmenkivi holds nonstop workshops for children over 4 years of age, children under 10 with an adult. Museum ticket. No advance booking.

**Wed 7–8pm**  
**Discussions in peace**

The artists of the exhibition It's a Set-up talk of their works and their working process at 3rd floor. Museum ticket.  
Wed 21 Apr, Salla Tykkä as a guest of Eidos ry.  
Wed 5 May, Hilda Kozári as a guest of Eidos ry.  
Wed 19 May, Elina Merenmies as a guest of Aistimus ry.

## talks and seminars

---

**Fri 12 Mar, 10 Sep, 12 Nov**  
**The Curator**

Seminar series on the work of an independent curator.  
In co-operation with the Finnish Society for Curators SKY. Seminar room.  
Free admission, no advance bookings, programme [www.kiasma.fi/peda](http://www.kiasma.fi/peda)  
7 May Professional opportunities, rights, and responsibilities.  
10 Sep Phases of an exhibition project. From an idea to a project plan.  
12 Nov International activity. Global job opportunities.

**Fri 28 May 5–6.30pm**  
**What's in a Name? – Louis Agassiz, his mountain and the politics of remembrance.**

Swiss historian and activist, founder of the Demounting Louis Agassiz committee Hans Fässler lectures (in English). The committee wants to rename the Agassizhorn Mountain in Switzerland, which was named after the scientist Louis Agassiz who supported racial segregation. Sasha Huber's Rentyhorn work in the It's a Set-up exhibition is a part of the committee's work. At the lecture, a book on the Rentyhorn project is launched. Seminar room. Free admission.

## workshops

---

**Families**

Decorated city Sat 27 Mar, 10, 17, and 24 Apr 12 noon – 3pm. Nonstop workshops for children over 4 years of age, children under 10 with an adult. Museum ticket. No advance booking.

**Adult groups**

Groups of friends, work communities, therapy, and other adult groups.  
Information and bookings: Mon–Fri 9am–12 noon, +358 (0)9 1733 6509. Read more at [www.kiasma.fi](http://www.kiasma.fi). Workshops for companies tel. +358 (0)9 1733 6668.

**Schools and nurseries**

Current information and tips for schools: [www.kiasma.fi/kouluille](http://www.kiasma.fi/kouluille)



# Kiasma Theatre

**Wed 7 Apr 7pm Demo** **Wednesday**

**Premier Fri 9 Apr 7pm Sanna Kekäläinen:  
Onni-Bonheur-Happiness 2**

**Sat 10 Apr 2pm  
Merce Cunningham Seminar**

**Wed 14 Apr Jean-Luc Nancy  
1 – 1.45pm book launch  
2 – 4.30pm lecture Body as Theatre**

**22 – 25 Apr  
Là-bas Biennale**

**Wed 28 Apr 6pm  
Philip Hoffman: All Fall Down**

**10 – 12 May Cirko  
– Helsinki Contemporary Circus Festival**

**Sat 22 May 1pm  
Documentary  
The artist Ilya Glazunov**

**30 July – 8 Aug URB 10**

Open dress rehearsal for Onni-Bonheur-Happiness 2. Free admission.

A new interpretation of the work that was first shown in 2009.  
11 Apr 3pm, 14 Apr 7pm, 16 Apr 7pm, 8 Apr 3pm. Tickets 15/10 e.

The significance of Merce Cunningham and his effect on Finnish dance.  
Led by Ulla Koivisto. Free admission.

Lecture by the French philosopher with host Esa Kirkkopelto. Organised by the research project Figures of Touch, Aalto University/Department of Art and Media in Pori, with: Kiasma and Gaudeamus. Free admission.

Là-bas 10th anniversary: performances, sound art, action poetry, and panel discussions. The new digital archive of performance art. Free admission.

All Fall Down (2009, 94 min) is the latest movie by the Canadian experimental moviemaker. Free admission.

Cirko's programme in Kiasma focuses on seminars this year.  
[www.sirkusfestivaali.net](http://www.sirkusfestivaali.net)

Time travel to the Soviet Union of the 1970s! Pavel Rusanov's Russian documentary has Finnish commentary. The movie premiered in Finland on 12 Apr 1977 in Capitol cinema. Duration 40 min. Museum ticket.

Kiasma Theatre's urban art festival.

## info

**Address**  
**Opening hours**  
**Tickets**  
**Free evening**  
**Info**

**Guided tours in Finnish**  
**Guided tours in Swedish**  
**Tour bookings**

[www.kiasma.fi](http://www.kiasma.fi)

**Café Kiasma, Kiasma Store**

**Friends of Kiasma**



Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Mannerheiminaukio 2, 00100 Helsinki  
Tue 10am–5pm, Wed–Fri 10am–8.30pm, Sat–Sun 10am–6pm. Mon closed.  
Museum ticket EUR 8/6, free for under 18-year-olds.  
Every first Wednesday of the month 5pm–8.30pm  
Tel. +358 (0)9 1733 6501, [info@kiasma.fi](mailto:info@kiasma.fi)

Wed and Fri 6pm., Sun 3pm. Museum ticket.  
On the first Sunday of each month at 12 noon. Museum ticket.  
Tours are tailored according to the needs of the group. Bookings Mon–Fri,  
9am–12noon, +358 (0)9 1733 6509 or [opasvaraus@kiasma.fi](mailto:opasvaraus@kiasma.fi). Prices on  
weekdays EUR 65, Sundays EUR 80. In English, Swedish, and Finnish.

Read more about the current programme, join the free mailing list.  
Drop in to shop at Kiasma's online store for catalogues and Kiasma items.

Tue 10am–5pm, Wed–Fri 10am–8.30pm, Sat–Sun 10am–6 pm.  
Café tel. +358 (0)9 1733 6504. Store tel. +358 (0)9 1733 6505.

[www.kiasma.fi/kiasmanystavat](http://www.kiasma.fi/kiasmanystavat), tel. +358 (0)9 1733 6595.

Kiasma is fully accessible. Guide dogs are welcome. The ticket sales and Kiasma Theatre are equipped with tele / induction loop systems.

all information is subject to change



Denise Grünstein's photographs are dreamlike stories p. 2



Point of View p. 6

Kiasma in brief: news, events, forthcoming programme... p. 8



It's a Set-up collection exhibition gives the viewer the main role. p. 14  
Common things about us. p. 19



Irma was not born Optimisti p. 20



ARS and Bamako p. 22  
Kiasma comic strip p. 23



Kiasma calendar p. 25

CILLA AULEN IN THE IT'S A SET-UP COLLECTION EXHIBITION. WORK: JACOB DAHLGREN: THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF ABSTRACTION. PHOTO: FINOCCA / PIRELLE GÖTTSCHE LOWE

