

To SPRiNG PASTuRE

14.4.2023-14.1.2024



HAM

INTRODUCTION

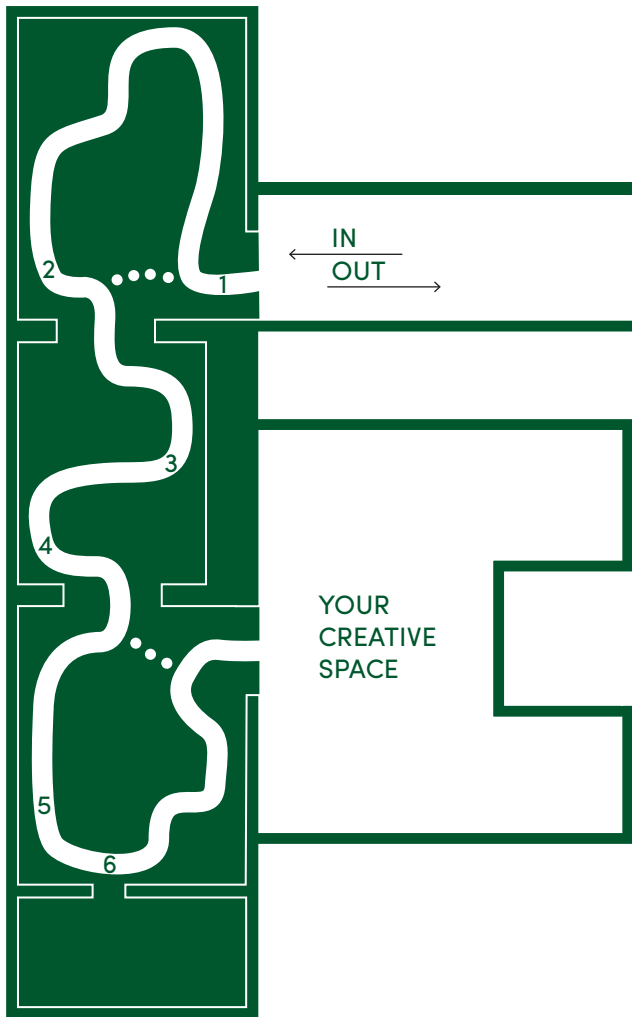
To Spring Pasture is an art exhibition that has been put together with consideration to 0–6-year-old visitors and their guardians at every stage. Our intention is to enable inspiring, relaxing and effortless exhibition visit with small children.

The artists represented in the exhibition are known for their naïvistic approach and a fiery passion for creating art.

The art works share aesthetics from the 1970s and its distinct undulating forms and strong colours. The art works flow organically between fairy tale and day-to-day reality: visitors gain the opportunity to get a glimpse of the lives of both realistic and imaginary characters.

With a few exceptions, the art works belong to HAM's Bäcksbäcka collections, the donations made by Leonard and Katarina Bäcksbäcka in 1976, which form the core of the City of Helsinki's art collections, and the donations made by Ingjald Bäcksbäcka and Christina Bäcksbäcka in 2018.

In terms of the family that maintained the Taidesalonki gallery, the collections represent the traditions and their link to present day as well as the artistic preferences that hinge on colour and expressive painting.



In this exhibition booklet you will find information on the artists and exercises related to their art works.

LOOK FOR THESE PIECES ALONG THE PATH:

- 1 - Veikko Hirvimäki:
Marketplace I (1972)
- 2 - Antti Vuori:
To Spring Pasture (1975)
- 3 - Tuomas Mäntynen:
Master Builder (1972)
Hairy Memory (1970)
- 4 - Alice Kaira:
Self-portrait (1972)
- 5 - Pirkko Lepistö:
Evening Moment (1975)
- 6 - Michael Schilkin:
Pan (undated)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VISITING THE EXHIBITION

FOR THE SAKE OF COMFORT and cleanliness visit the exhibition without shoes. Please leave your shoes in the designated racks. Alternatively, you can put on shoe covers.

ENJOY and spend time. You can explore as you like and rest on the seats. You can breastfeed at the exhibition, but eating snacks is not allowed. You can eat outside the museum in the lounge area next to the cash desks.

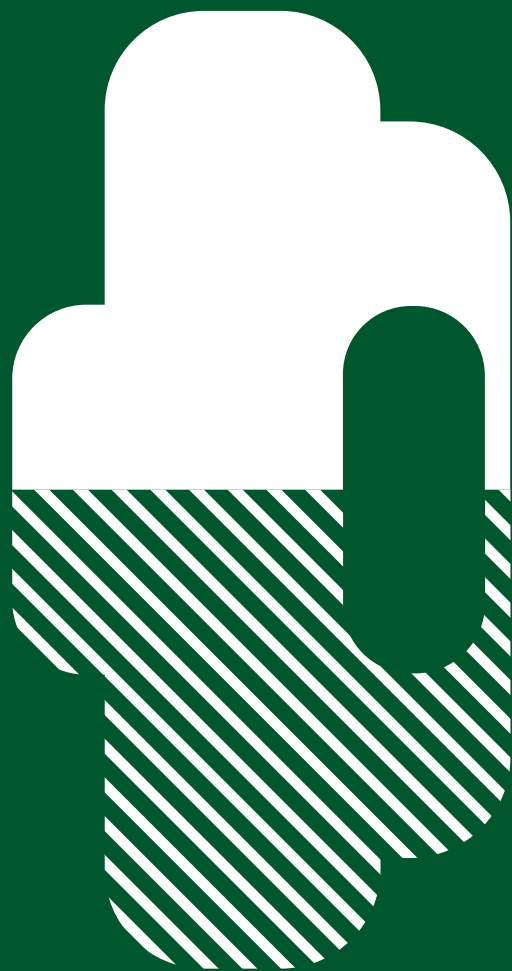
THE ART WORKS can be damaged by touch. They are protected by a glass pane or display case but avoid touching the pieces or their frames entirely.

YOU CAN crawl and walk at the exhibition. You can also sit on the floor, but please don't run.

THE LAST exhibition room is for the visitors to express their own creativity. The room features coloured crayons, panels intended for drawing and building blocks. You can use the space freely, with due consideration to other guests.

TO EXIT the exhibition, go back to the beginning and follow the same path as before.

WE ENCOURAGE examining the art works carefully. You can try to identify colours, creatures or seasons, for example. The works can be freely used as fuel for the imagination; you can make interpretations and come up with stories of your own. This exhibition booklet is also available on our website.



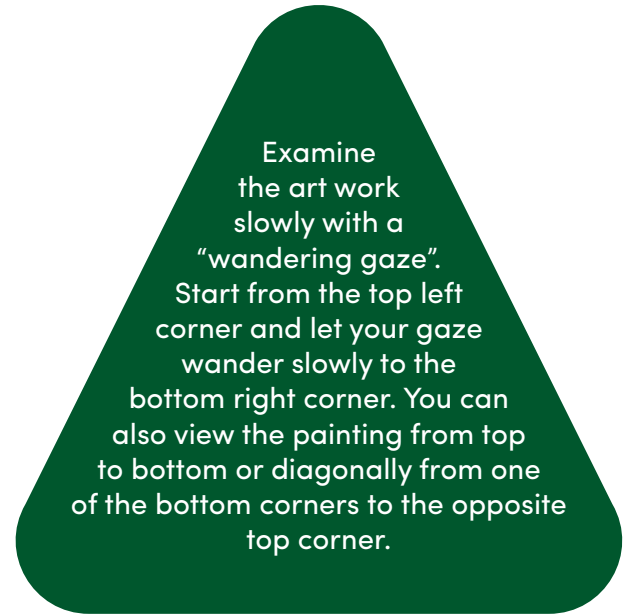
ARTISTS AND EXERCISES

VEIKKO HIRVIMÄKI (1941-)

Veikko Hirvimäki, a farm boy from Central Finland who now lives in Switzerland, was drawn to creating art at a young age. The self-taught artist boldly took influences from international art trends and developed a strong form of expression of his own. Coming into the 1980s, painting made way for sculpting. Today, Hirvimäki is, among other things, known for his public sculptures.

The paintings displayed in the exhibition, *Marketplace I* and *Marketplace II* (1972), exist somewhere between reality and fantasy in a colourful and festive realm with both identifiable and quite extraordinary characters. The thick layers of colour and distinct brush strokes intermingle making the two-dimensional illustrations seem three-dimensional.

Wandering gaze VEIKKO HIRVIMÄKI: *MARKETPLACE I*



What kinds of details can you spot? What kinds of colours? Did this help you find something in the painting that you did not notice at first glance?



Photo: HAM / Anna Taival

Veikko Hirvimäki: *Marketplace I* (1972)
oil and metallic paint on canvas

HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Ingjald Bäcksbacka and Christina Bäcksbacka Collections

ANTTI VUORI (1935–2014)

Antti Vuori, the son of painter Ilmari Vuori and textile and fashion designer Kerttu Johnsson, lived his childhood in a semi-rural seaside environment in Lauttasaari, Helsinki. Vuori inherited the career of an artist from his family, and the undersea motifs stemmed from the environment in which he grew up.

Vuori studied in the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts and was a member of the informalist artist group Maaliskuulaiset. He trusted in the power of his imagination in his surrealist-tinged art that are set in a variety of locales from vast grass fields to the deep sea and depict mythology and mythical creatures. The vibrant colours lend the paintings with a unique inner glow.

ANTTI VUORI: *TO SPRING PASTURE* *Draw a springtime landscape!*

Antti Vuori's paintings often feature recognisable things, but the shapes can be contorted and blended in fun and exciting ways.

Draw your own version of the *To Spring Pasture* landscape on the free space three pages ahead.

It can be a place where you would like to go to in the summer, for example. Or it can be a favourite place that makes you happy. You can draw people, characters, creatures or yourself. The drawing can also be non-representational, featuring your favourite colours and atmospheres.



Photo: HAM / Yehia Eweis

Antti Vuori: *To Spring Pasture* (1975)
mixed media on paper

HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Leonard and Katarina Bäcksbäck Collection

TUOMAS MÄNTYNYEN (1932-)

Tuomas Mäntynen has studied art in both Finnish and foreign schools, and his works have been widely displayed in domestic and international exhibitions. The Kymijoki River of the artist's childhood landscape can be seen flowing in many of his paintings.

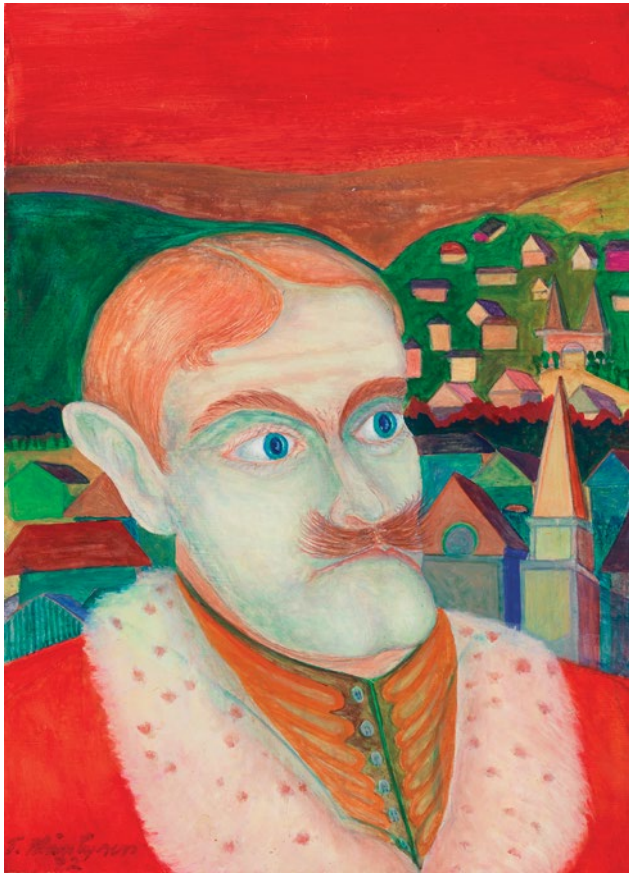
The strong forms and colours transform Mäntynen's realistic motifs and landscapes into something reminiscent of a fairy tale. The emotionally evocative paintings often depict evening or night and feature a barren landscape illuminated by the moon. Mäntynen was granted the Pro Finlandia medal in 1986.

TUOMAS MÄNTYNYEN: *MASTER BUILDER* and *HAIRY MEMORY*

Write a letter!

In the exhibition, the paintings *Master Builder* and *Hairy Memory* have been hung next to each other as a pair. Examine the paintings carefully. Who could the characters be? Are they acquaintances, relatives or lovers? What can you see in the background of the characters, and what do these things say about them? What kind of letter would the characters write to each other.

Write a letter on the next opening.

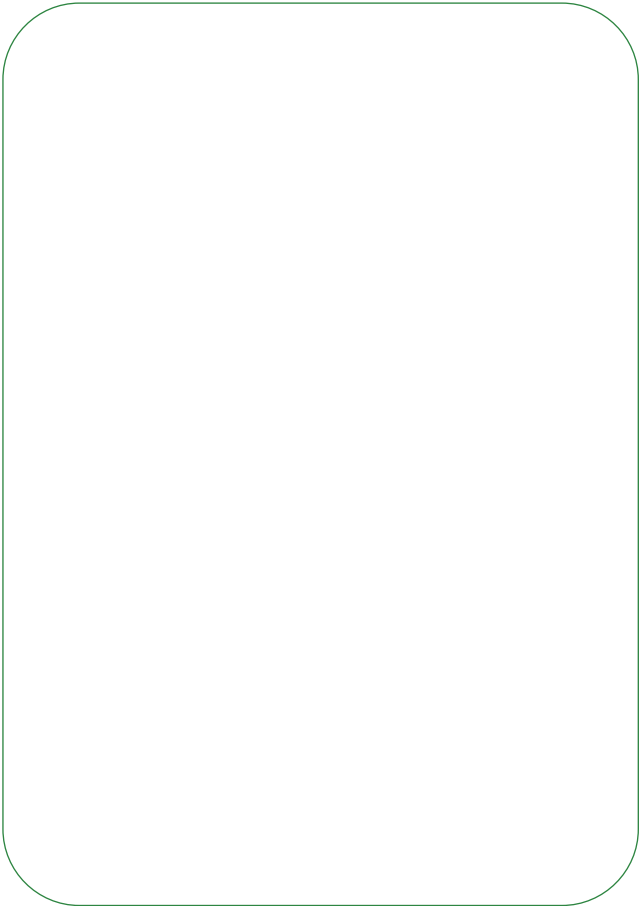


Photos: HAM / Anna Taival

Tuomas Mäntynen: *Master Builder* (1972) and *Hairy Memory* (1970)
oil on wood

HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Ingjald Bäcksbäcka and Christina Bäcksbäcka Collections

Draw a springtime landscape!



Write a letter!

A letter-writing template with a decorative, irregular border. The word "Dear," is written in a green, italicized font at the top left. Below it are four horizontal lines for the recipient's name and address. Further down are three more horizontal lines for the body of the letter. At the bottom right, the word "Yours," is written in a green, italicized font, with a small arch-shaped cutout below it. The entire template is enclosed in a thin black outline.

Alice Kaira (1913–2006)

Alice Kaira is best known for her clown paintings, which often blend the naïvistic style with melancholy and which have interpreted as self-portraits. The artist drew and painted her life and experiences, and the loneliness felt by the illegitimate child permeates her entire body of work. She studied in art schools both in Finland and abroad.

Kaira's third husband was medical director Johan Runeberg. The exhibited painting *Self-Portrait in J. L. Runeberg's home* (1971) is a reference to his ancestor. Kaira is known to have said that she adds bright red, the symbol of life, to all of her paintings. In *Self-Portrait* (1972), a yellow bird is sitting on the artist's shoulder and an open sea churns in the background – both are core motifs in Alice Kaira's works.

Alice Kaira: *SELF-PORTRAIT* *Whispering bird*

Alice Kaira's paintings radiate quiet gentleness, sorrow and melancholy. Kaira experienced profound loneliness in childhood, and she has said that impacted everything she painted as an adult. Yet in the self-portrait the character has a little friend on her shoulder. What could the bird be whispering in the character's ear?

What else do you see in the painting which indicates that the character is no longer as alone?



Photo: HAM / Yehia Eweis

Alice Kaira: Self-portrait (1972)
oil on canvas

HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Leonard and Katarina Bäcksbäck Collection

PIRKKO LEPISTÖ (1922–2005)

Pirkko Lepistö studied painting first at the Central School of Art and Design and then at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ateneum. Starting a family after the studies and taking care of children prevented Lepistö from creating art as intensively as before until she began to gain recognition for her work in middle age.

In the exhibited gouache paintings, nature flows in through the windows and seasons and times of day change but the calm and lingering atmosphere remains. The paintings often depict the artist's close family, two daughters and beloved pets, along with the idyllic home environment in the Koivukylä district of Vantaa. Lepistö received the state art award in 1972 and the artist pension in 1982.

PIRKKO LEPISTÖ: *EVENING MOMENT* *Step inside!*

Imagine stepping inside *The Evening Moment* painting. What kind of room is shown in the painting? What is the atmosphere in the room like? Who lives in the house, whose home are you in? What are the characters doing? Is there sound in the room or is it quiet?

Discuss with your companion.



Photo: HAM / Yehia Eweis

Pirkko Lepistö: *Evening Moment* (1975)
oil on canvas

HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Leonard and Katarina Bäcksbäcka Collection

MICHAEL SCHILKIN (1900–1962)

In the wake of the revolution, the Russian-born Michael Schilkin ended up in Finland where he worked as a farmhand and sailor, for example. Schilkin studied in the Central School of Art and Design in Helsinki and, after his studies in 1935, got a job in the art department of Arabia, eventually building a life-long career working for the company.

Schilkin is known for both massive public relief works and delicate small sculptures that capture the emotive and distinctive qualities of various animal species. The exhibited pan sculpture, which represents a mythical creature, demonstrates the artist's skill in creating strongly expressive forms and illustrating materiality through the properties of ceramics and glazing.

MICHAEL SCHILKIN: *PAN* *Listen!*

Schilkin's sculpture features the small Pan figure playing the flute. In Greek mythology, Pan is the god of the forest, shepherds, livestock and fertility. His identifying features are the cloven hoofs and horns of a goat. Music is strongly linked to the character of Pan, and he is often depicted holding or playing a flute. The mythological texts say that Pan fell madly in love with the nymph Syrinx. She ran from him to a river and turned into a reed. Pan was unable to find the nymph but fashioned a flute from the river reeds. The instrument is called the pan flute.

Listen! What kind of melody is Pan playing? Think up a melody of our own. Hum, whistle or sing it with your companion!



Photo: HAM / Hanna Kukorelli

Michael Schilkin: *Pan* (undated)
ceramics

HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Leonard and Katarina Bäcksbäcka Collection

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