

The Listening Eye

24.5–15.9.2024



CHAPPE

GALLERI ELVERKET

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24.5–15.9.2024

FINNISH FINE ARTS
FOUNDATIONS

The exhibition brings together a varied selection of works
from the Finnish Fine Arts Foundations.

The exhibition is spread across Ekenäs culture quarter,
to Gallery Elverket and Chappe.

Opening hours

tue	11–17
wed	11–20
thu–sun	11–17
mon	closed

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The exhibition concept is based on Juhana Blomstedt's (1937–2010) *The Listening Eye* (1982). The painting is from the series by the same name, which Blomstedt exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1982. In 1986, he wrote about the series:

“In any event, the concept of infinity is our dearest friend, but at the same time the worst enemy of our peace of mind. Lurking behind all of this is the big question: Why? Things float around us and inside us, drifting in the ocean of our memories and our minds, unbeknown to ourselves or to each other, but with their own purpose. The eye listens.”

With poetic precision Juhana Blomstedt illustrated that when perception and its interpretation are occurring, the main thing is openness and uncertainty. What am I seeing, or am I seeing anything at all? The exhibition has been inspired by Blomstedt's works and ideas, and has its starting point in intersensoriness, in the relationship between outer and inner, and temporality. Blomstedt wrote about what he painted, in which case we should note that he usually dealt with continuity and infinity, space, perception, and the relationship between the figurative and non-figurative, using the means and mode of expression of painting.

Furthermore, the exhibition deals with how we are to depict our perceptions and experiences, and whether it is possible to share personal experience, and how?

The exhibition is split across two buildings, with Chappe predominantly showing works related to nature, the landscape and external observations, while Gallery Elverket has more inner visions and imaginary scenes.

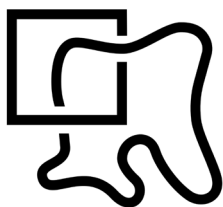
The exhibition has been curated by Pro Artibus' curator Juha-Heikki Tihinen and Chappe's exhibition curator Pia Hovi.

This is the first collaboration between Gallery Elverket / Pro Artibus Foundation and Chappe.

Themes

The show is structured around eight themes: correspondences; inner visions; natural phenomena; material sense; the link between music and the visual; memories and mental images; human images; and temporality. Every art work sign has a symbol that tells which theme the art work belongs to.

Correspondences



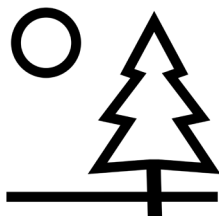
Linking the figurative and non-figurative can be seen as an attempt to connect the outer and inner worlds, with the continuities between these worlds taking a central position. In the 1940s and 1950s, Joseph Beuys (Elverket) concentrated on drawing. He was trying to recover from his war-time experiences and to find connections between the two realities, along with ways of healing his various mental and physical ailments. When facing Juhana Blomstedt's *The Listening Eye*, viewers can turn their gaze to a moment of confrontation between the visual and the auditory, and its meaning.

Inner visions



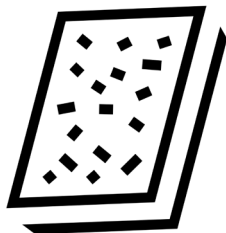
One way for artists to envisage their personal experiences is to depict their inner worlds. Starting from the Romantic Era, imagination became an important area of artistic inspiration, one that is equal and parallel to the real world. Artists have been fascinated by the personal nature of their inner visions, and by the idea of fantasizing freely and discovering something not previously experienced. Inner visions could be depicted in both abstract and figurative works, the latter possibly appearing to be surrealistic or metaphysical. Examples of this are Mirjam Tuominen's abstractions (*Elverket*) and Pentti Kaskipuro's compelling still lifes (*Elverket*).

Natural phenomena



What does rain look like or how is winter to be depicted? Since the end of the 18th century, i.e. since the Romantic period, the study of nature and natural phenomena has been a central subject of artistic renditions. The encounter between human and nature or the grandeur and sublimity of nature have captivated artists in numerous ways. The yellow in Rafael Wardi's paintings is like tangible solar energy.

Material sense



There is an abundant tradition in art history of diverse ways of creating the illusion of one material by using another. But materiality can also involve respecting the nature of the material or mixing different materials. Materiality in visual form speaks, for instance, to our sense of touch. In Zoltan Popovits' *Esker*, plywood takes the form of a ridge and raises questions about experiences of nature.

The link between music and the visual



In the 19th century, the notion of visual art as an autonomous, immaterial realm similar to music was a red connecting thread running through the birth of abstract art. Music's autonomy and independence appeals to abstract artists, who are also drawn to the idea of synaesthesia—the merging of different senses. How do we hear colours or see shapes in sounds?

Memories and mental images



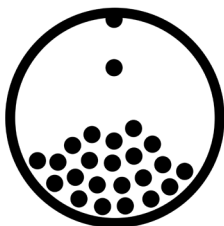
When depicting memories and mental images, artists deal with something that exists elsewhere, making it visible. Themes of longing and daydreaming have been a factor in wanderlust or a quest for paradise lost. Experiencing the absent as present or seeing a meaning in the past more generally have also underpinned the choice of subject for many artists' works. Magnus Enckell's *The Dying Adonis* (Chappe) feels like an amalgam of personal experience and classical mythology.

Human images



Besides portraits, artists have used the human figure as a means for interpreting symbolic motifs or, alternatively, they have both depicted and created ideals of beauty or the body. In images of humans, artists also deal with their own relationships with others or with the ideas and phenomena that they represent. The mirror theme in Marjatta Hanhijoki's watercolours (*Elverket*) is both an art-history reference and an introduction to the nature of the portrait or self-portrait.

Temporality



How can we experience the overlapping nature of time? How can we describe experiences? In their art, numerous artists have wondered what time looks like and how different layers of time overlay each other. Do different time planes coexist or overlap, and how can we describe these phenomena visually? The haziness of Nanna Hänninen's photograph (Chappe) evokes a sense of fog as a temporal element.

Programme

During the whole exhibition

Discussion guides at Chappe and Gallery Elverket

Wednesdays 17:00–19:00

Saturdays 13:00–15:00

Group Bookings

Chappe: museibokningar@raseborg.fi

At Gallery Elverket, all visitors receive an introduction to the exhibition by the exhibition hosts.

Guided tours with audio description

We offer free audio-described tours of *The Listening Eye*, with exhibition material also in Braille. The tour takes in the entire exhibition at both Chappe and Gallery Elverket. For more information and booking, please contact: museibokningar@raseborg.fi (Chappe) and proartibus@proartibus.fi (Gallery Elverket). Availability varies — please contact us well in advance to book your guided tour.

All events are included in Chappe admission fee.

Admission to Gallery Elverket is free.

More information: chappe.fi and proartibus.fi

Events

Wednesday
June 5 17:00

Curators' tour of the exhibition (FI + SWE)
start at Chappe 17.00

Saturday
June 8 13.00

Walking Bass—Ahti Lassila's improvised concert in the exhibition spaces at Chappe and Gallery Elverket
start at Chappe 13.00

Wednesday
July 10

Finnish Visual Arts Day and Helene Schjerfbeck's birthday
Plein air painting workshops and musical performances. In collaboration with Ekenäs Art Association and The Helene Schjerfbeck Society of Ekenäs

Saturday
August 24

Raseborg Pride
Discussion programme at 11 am. Soap-bubble workshop after the Pride-parade in Stall-örsparken

Wednesday
September 4 17:00

Meet the exhibition artists on Wednesday evenings in September
Artist's Talk I at Chappe / Gallery Elverket

Wednesday
September 11 17:00

Artist's Talk II at Chappe / Gallery Elverket

The exhibition is produced in collaboration with Association of Finnish Fine Arts Foundations. In the exhibition are shown 75 works from the association's members:

Alfred Kordelin Foundation, Fortum Art Foundation, Föreningen Konstsamfundet, Gösta Serlachius Fine Arts Foundation, Lönnström Art Museum, Nordea Art Foundation Finland, OP Art Foundation, Signe and Ane Gyllenberg Foundation, Pro Artibus Foundation, UPM-Kymmene Cultural Foundation, Åbo Akademi University Foundation

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