

The 25th Mänttä Art Festival gives visitors permission to get lost and make mistakes

Because of human errors that took place in far-away China, last summer's Mänttä Art Festival had to be postponed by a year. However, there have been no changes to the exhibiting artists, the curator, or the theme. After a year's hiatus, the art festival – celebrating its 25th anniversary this summer – will be open for visitors from **13 June 2021**. The theme of the exhibition is, fittingly, *Erehtyminen | To Err Is Human*.

With curator **Anna Ruth** in the lead, we have selected 47 artists or groups of artists who will showcase at the XXV Mänttä Art Festival the richness and diversity of modern Finnish art – the gamut of artistic methods, styles, perspectives, languages, and nationalities. The artists have now had an additional year to delve deeper into the theme of human error.

'The COVID-19 situation has spurred us to come up with entirely new solutions that we wouldn't have thought of otherwise. Because the majority of the complementary events won't be held this year, we decided to offer the opportunity to watch introductions of the pieces safely online on our YouTube channel. These are offered in the various languages spoken by the artists – such as Arabic, Persian, German, Japanese, Russian, Mandarin, Turkmen, Urdu, and sign language – and have Finnish and English subtitles', says Anna Ruth.

Several of the works of art exhibited at the festival are installations and location-bound pieces designed for Pekilo specifically. These include *Canopy*, a forest scene created by **Pia Sirén** out of construction materials, as well as **Landys Roimola's** *Floor is Lava*, which will dominate Pekilo's facade. **Timo Kokko** has constructed a greenhouse outside the exhibition centre and filled it with a real forest with trees, plants, and streams. **Egle Oddo** has created a vegetable patch near Pekilo where herbs and vegetables, weeds, and ornamental plants are allowed to grow side by side.

The dialogue between humans, nature, and state-of-the-art technology is another theme running through the exhibition. The interactive piece *Dream Humans*, by **Sami Lukkarinen** and **Roope Mokka**, encourages people to take selfies and highlights the errors made by artificial intelligence. **Emma Fält** and **Roberto Fusco** have programmed a magically moving industrial robot to serve an artistic purpose.

'Together with the artists, our aim has been to put together an exhibition that has a touching ambience, leaves the visitors with a lasting emotional response, and encourages them to visit the pieces more than once. I even wanted to encourage our visitors to get a bit lost in Pekilo, even if many of them come here every year', Anna Ruth explains.

Executive Director Tiina Nyrhinen stresses that the safety of the visitors, staff, and artists comes first and foremost at the Art Festival. To ensure a safe and smooth visit you can now, for the first time ever, pre-book your ticket in advance.

The Mänttä Art Festival is the largest modern art event in Finland, and its merits have been recognised by the Ministry of Education and Culture in the form of the Finland Award (Suomi-palkinto). The XXV Mänttä Art Festival will be open daily from 13 June to 31 August 2021.

Further information

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