

ANNA TUORI

Calling for the Future to Return

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Anna Tuori's works are a stream of meanings and observations, of the imagined and the real, the here and the elsewhere. In an uncertain world, uncertain figures seek answers from a crystal ball, a friend's skull, a reflecting surface, encounter profound mysteries, conjure tricks and dogs from the past. The exhibition's title suggests an impossibility, but that does not make the wish any less real. Somewhere, a door will open, perhaps allowing someone to return.

Composition, colours and rhythm are important to Tuori. They are paramount. Unspoken, beyond words. She strives towards them, tasting the combinations in her mind. Her works masterfully carry a radiant sky blue to the red glow of burning earth. Lush green is balanced by an ambiguous "band-aid" hue. A stain is not a stain, it is a trace left by someone. Eyes in the backside look into the past and a cloudy head stoops towards the ground. The sharp, luminous lines of delicate paperwork ripple on a velvety surface as if about to change shape at any moment. The subtle arch of an eyebrow, bent in concern, conveys a sense of gravity.

Space dividers crossing the gallery and concrete block benches invite us to pause and trust the artworks. The windows in Tuori's previous exhibition allowed the eye to wander through. Now, the walls in the paintings give rise to ever more constrained views. We catch sight of peeking ears, perhaps feel a step, sense someone waiting their turn or peeling off their layers behind a stage. Tuori is captivated by the human capacity and incapacity to imagine, see, believe – how our minds carry, reject and construct realities, filling gaps into the past and into the future. The theatricality and themes of her works recall the endless waiting in **Samuel Beckett's** play *Waiting for Godot* and the hilarious, sad, absurd and existential dialogue of its characters.

The human figure in Tuori's work is both gentle and aggressive, funny and sorrowful, full of tension and contradiction, fickleness and constant changeability. The series *Claus & Lucas* is named after the twins in **Ágota Kristóf's** *The Notebook* trilogy. The figures are an anagram, two together, merging into one. As the letters in the names change places, unity is broken in the books and in the paintings alike. The broken world in Kristóf's story can also be read in Tuori's works. The series of small paintings is a collection of lost things, extinct species and libraries destroyed in bombings.

From beyond the frames, resolute hands enter the paintings, pointing fingers, masters of ceremonies, magicians, devil's advocates. Or perhaps they are like gods of antiquity, flawed, mischievous, lustful, relentless forces whose turmoil leaves us bewildered. At least the two-faced Janus, looking both to the past and the future, and Narkissos (Cat) regarding itself in the mirror, are familiar presences.

– Oona Latto

Anna Tuori (b. 1976) lives and works in Helsinki. She graduated from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki in 2003, and also studied at L'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1999 to 2000. She has recently displayed her work in solo exhibitions at Galerie Anhava and Galerie Suzanne Tarasieve in Paris. Tuori has participated in numerous international group exhibitions, including at the Busan Museum of Art (2019), Efremidis Gallery, Berlin (2018); Norrköping Art Museum (2017) and Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City (2015). Tuori has been nominated for the Ars Fennica and the Carnegie Art Awards. She has work in private and public collections, including those of the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, the Saastamoinen Foundation, the Sara Hildén Art Museum, and the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art.