

ANTTI LAITINEN

Wanderer

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Antti Laitinen is known for artworks that are created in and with nature and involve a laborious physical process, clear thinking, and a beguilingly simple visual style. In addition to observing his own living environment, Laitinen also travels to other countries to work with nature. The photographs and the video featured in this exhibition were created over a period of several years and in various environments: forests, around the edges of fields, on ice, and at a French vineyard.

Begun in winter 2023, *Charcoal and Ice* is a series of photographs that play with scale. The works featured in this show are of two sizes. Their starting point is the grid of squared paper, which Laitinen sawed into the ice using an angle grinder. He then rubbed charcoal into the grooves, thus blending white with black, and hard with soft. The size of the grid was dictated by nature; a smaller format would have broken up the ice. The largest piece in the show is the same size as the work created on the ice, the smallest matches the size of the graph paper.

Laitinen watches, ruminates and observes. Over the past few years, his attention was drawn to a goat willow tree growing near his home. It seemed to have a rhythm of its own: every year, its foliage would turn autumn colour only after all the other trees in the forest had shed their leaves. Laitinen turned this event into a pair of works, *Autumn Act I* and *II*. *Autumn Act I* shows the willow itself in its autumn colours. *Autumn Act II* is the picture of a circular shape created by Laitinen from autumn leaves on the edge of a field. This is Laitinen's version of the annual display presented by the tree.

The title of the video *Wanderer* (2024) comes from the Ancient Greek word *πλανήτης* (*planētēs*), which has come to denote the planets of the solar system, wanderers in the sky. The sphere made of tree branches slowly rotates on its axis. It is like a lone wanderer, endlessly revolving around its pole – a planet and a rover. For Laitinen, the sphere represents a condensation of the forest. The audio track created for the work by sound designer **Salla Hämäläinen** establishes a lulling atmosphere. The forest takes the viewer in its embrace.

Laitinen has discovered his motifs both from his surroundings in southern Finland as well as under the vines in southwest France. The photographic piece *Broken Landscape (Lafite)* was shot at the Château Lafite Rothschild vineyard in France, where Laitinen was invited to work and be inspired. One of the results of the collaboration is the evocative photograph presented in this exhibition, which draws the viewer into the lush vineyard landscape. The water lily leaves floating on the surface of the water invite us to dream and pause. Look closely, and you will find a reflection revealing an opening made in the copse of trees beyond the pond.

Antti Laitinen (b. 1975, Raate, Finland) has attracted considerable attention both in Finland and internationally for many years. His practice ranges from photography to installation, from performance to moving image. Laitinen has presented his work in numerous solo and group exhibitions and festivals throughout Europe, the United States and China, most recently in solo shows at the Wäinö Aaltonen Museum in Turku and the GSA Gallery in Stockholm (2022), as well as the Wuhan Biennale (2023) and the Sequences Biennale in Reykjavik (2023). In 2013, Laitinen represented Finland at the Venice Biennale. Laitinen graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in 2004. He has work in the collections of Tangen, Saatchi Collection, Borås Museum of Modern Art, Saastamoinen Foundation, Helsinki Art Museum, Kiasma, and Wäinö Aaltonen Museum/Turku Art Museum.