

JAANA KOKKO
SALLA TYKKÄ

Places We Look At

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The new works in the exhibition by **Jaana Kokko** and **Salla Tykkä** were produced between 2017 and 2024. Works of moving image and photographs stem from existing geographical locations, where the events of our time intensify and expand. The shared foundation in both artists' practices is a strong personal perspective. The artists explore place and transgenerational heritage through a documentary approach. The works feature durational filming processes, archival sources, interviews, and the presence of the artists themselves, all of which can be seen and heard.

Since 2000, Salla Tykkä has been documenting in images and sounds the surroundings of her studio located in an industrial area in eastern Helsinki: industrial yards, patches of forest, roads, and roadsides. Based on these notes and observations she has created the moving image piece entitled *The Will* (30 min, 2024) and the photographic works *Contact 1-3* (2024) and *Sheet 1-3* (2024). In her works, Tykkä explores both places and the technologies of recording and image production. Neither the human gaze nor the image can ever be neutral. The multiple exposed frames of film in deconstruct the notion of random observation by highlighting the subjective and ideological nature of the gaze. The large contact prints reveal the artist's choices and decisions embodied in the moment of taking the photograph, in repetition and return.

Alongside the photographic works, the film *The Will* illuminates the process of value formation by tracing the paths that connect family and home, entrepreneurship and work. At the back of industrial sites and along the fringes of wooded groves and streets lie goods rejected by the market economy. This physical matter, like the human labour that produced it, loses its monetary value when it is no longer used. As artisan workshops and small-scale industries give way to big companies and new housing estates, these histories remain unwritten.

In Jaana Kokko's works in moving image *East* (30 min, 2024) and *Green Land* (30 min, 2024) fragmentary events are brought together into a whole by the underlying forces of overlapping time and multiple histories of place. Kokko's working method is to collect image material over several years and return to the same place to unearth its history and varying aspects. With each filming the script takes a step forward leaving room for a chance. Forgetfulness and gaps create disorder in established patterns of how stories progress.

East takes the viewer to the North Karelian village of Potoskavaara on the shore of Lake Heinäjärvi, the birthplace of families, the borderland. Trees and waters of the remote region, past and present generations, Ukrainian seasonal workers, a goddaughter's summer wedding. The summer's light in the east, where **Elias Lönnrot** visited in 1828, collecting poems for the Finnish national epic. The written history of the region came from Lönnrot's pen, and has been memorialised.

Green Land takes place in rural Latvia. Its key image – the *gestalt* of history – is a concrete sculpture by **Rasma Bruzīte** from 1952. Depicting a collective farm worker, it personifies both personal as well as state memory, in different ways. The main characters, former collective farm workers **Irēna**, **Vera** and **Lūcije**, recount their experiences, offering us a glimpse of a bygone era and openly participating in the performance offered to them. The title of the film comes from the concept of a green, verdant land. It is also the title of a classic book by Latvian writer **Andrejs Upīts**, a Soviet-era epic to which the young literary scholar **Arnīs**, has devoted his life to. *Green Land* is the second part of Kokko's *Baltic* trilogy.

Jaana Kokko
Salla Tykkä

Jaana Kokko is an artist based in Helsinki. She has presented her works in solo and group exhibitions and film festivals both in Finland and internationally. Her group exhibitions have included Tallinn Art Hall (2024, 2016); Lappeenranta Art Museum (2022); National Gallery of Art, Vilnius (2022); Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga (2022); Botkyrka Konsthall, Sweden (2023, 2012, 2011). Her solo exhibitions have included Valka Museum of Local History, Latvia (2022); Galleria Oksasenkatu 11 (2017); Joensuu Art Museum (2017); Center for Contemporary Art 'Optica', Montréal (2009 and 2016); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2012); University Galleries in Rovaniemi and Tartu (2015); and the Finnish Institute in Stockholm (2015). Jaana Kokko has works in the Finnish State Art Collection and the Botkyrka Konsthall Collection. In addition to her creative work, Kokko has lectured and taught at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, the Turku Academy of Arts, the Latvian Academy of Arts, the Estonian Academy of Arts, and the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg.

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Salla Tykkä works with photography and the moving image. She has held several solo exhibitions and her work has featured in group exhibitions in Finland and abroad. Her most recent solo exhibitions include venues such as Södertälje Konsthall (2022); Galerie Anhava (2020); Wäinö Aaltonen Museum (2019); Ludvig Museum, Budapest (2019); and M – Museum Leuven (2016). Tykkä has exhibited her work in numerous group exhibitions, most recently at Artspace Boan, Seoul (2023); Kunstmuseum St. Gallen (2022); Momentum Kunsthalle, Moss (2019); Denver Art Museum (2017); Kunsthalle Stavanger (2017); and Museum of Contemporary Art, Marseille (2017). Her films have been screened at numerous film festivals. In 2016, Tykkä received the AVEK Award for media art. Her work Lasso was selected for the 2001 Venice Biennale main exhibition State of Mankind. In 2014, her piece Giant won the Canon Tiger Award at the 43rd Rotterdam International Film Festival. Works by Salla Tykkä are held in several Finnish and international collections, including those of the Art Institute of Chicago; Helsinki Art Museum HAM; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, New York; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Collection Lambert, Avignon; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki; Jumex Collection, Mexico City; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca, NY; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art; National Gallery of Australia; Saastamoinen Foundation; Finnish Museum of Photography; and FMAC, Geneva.

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