



# Pondering with Pines - At the limits of relating

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# Context : Pondering with Pines

“How to develop ways of recognizing and engaging with the subjectivity of life forms such as trees, which we tend to consider as wholly ‘other’?”  
or communicating with, or relating to plants, trees, in this case pine trees

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# Sources

Project presentation on Uniarts website

<https://www.uniarts.fi/en/projects/pondering-with-pines/>

Pondering with Pines – Miettii mäntyjen kanssa - Funderar med furor (blog)

<https://ponderingwithpines.wordpress.com/>

Pondering with Pines – Miettii mäntyjen kanssa - Funderar med furor (archive/portfolio)

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1323410/1589526>



# Main output: Talking with Trees

Podcast on Soundcloud (available also on other platforms)

<https://soundcloud.com/user-90370389>

Different playlists for English, Swedish and Finnish



# Recent publications

- *Performing and Thinking with Trees*, Art theoretical writings from the Academy of Fine Art 15, University of the Arts Helsinki. 2022.  
pdf: <https://taju.uniarts.fi/handle/10024/7666>
- “Writing with a Pine: Addressing a Tree as Audience.” *Näyttämö ja Tutkimus* [Stage and Research] 9, 2023, 103–120. (NB. Page in Finnish, pdf in English)  
<https://journal.fi/teats/article/view/127615>
- “Performing with Trees as Shifting Attention.” In *Figurations of Peripheries Through Arts and Visual Studies: Peripheries in Parallax*. Edited by Maiju Loukola, Mari Mäkiranta and Jonna Tolonen. Routledge 2023



# Example of an experiment: Tallar emellan (Between Pines)

(Exemplifies problems rather than success)

- Recorded messages between a pine in Nobelparken in Stockholm and a pine in Brunnsparken or Kaivopuisto park in Helsinki
- The medium of the messages is changing from written to spoken Swedish to humming to French harp or mouth organ to okarina (lergök or kukkopilli) and finally material pinecones.
- Each session is first recorded by one pine and then read or reproduced by the other pine. Then the reply is recorded, and so on.



# Documentation on the RC

Process in Stockholm (stills and transcripts)

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1323410/1905446>

Process in Helsinki (stills and transcripts)

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1323410/1927304>

Compilations (edited videos)

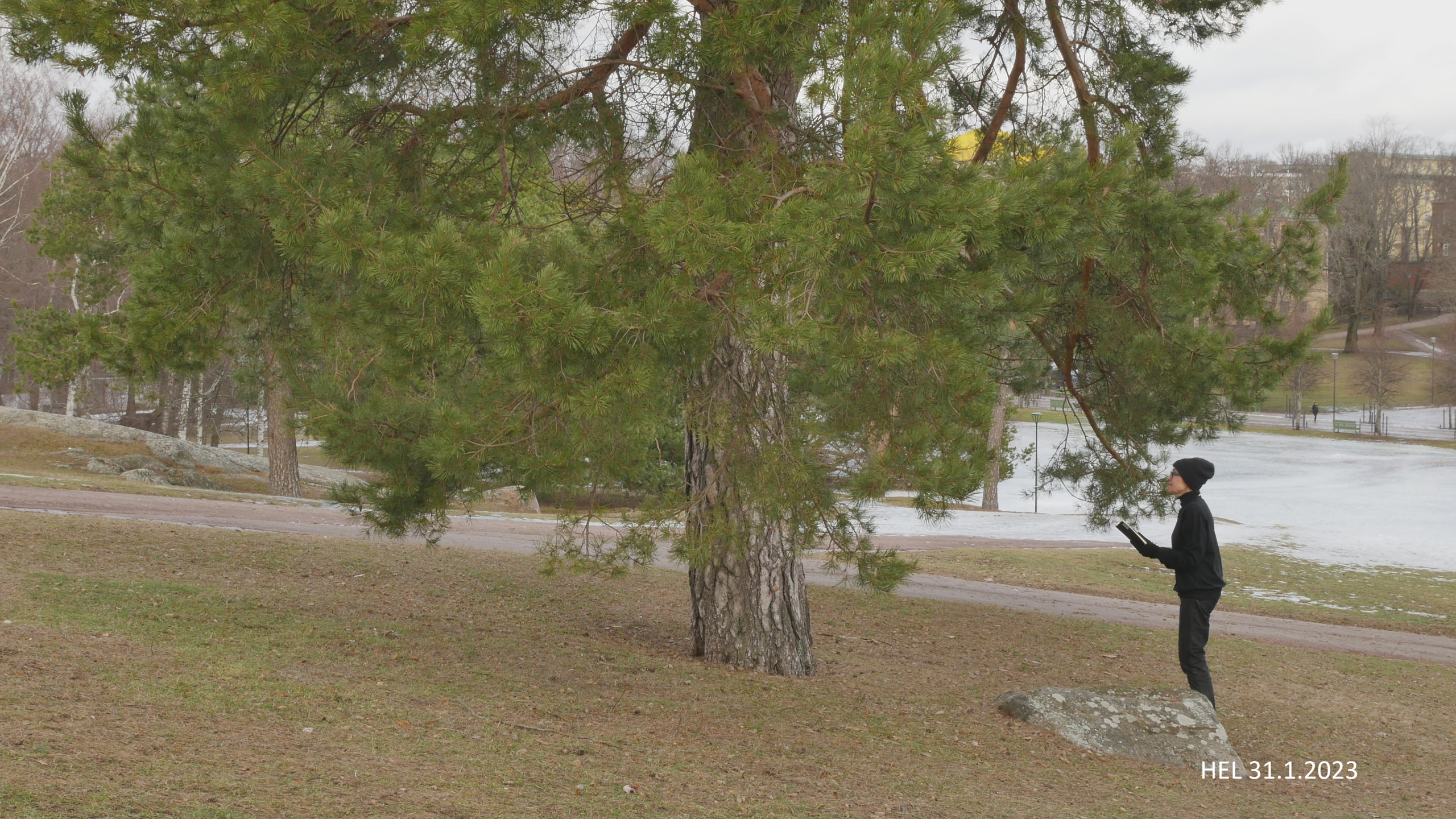
<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1323410/2337152>





STO 15.1.2023





HEL 31.1.2023





HEL 31.1.2023





STO 5.2.2023





STO 5.2.2023





HEL 22.2.2023





HEL 22.2.2023





STO 12.3.2023





STO 12.3.2023





HEL 29.3.2023





HEL 29.3.2023





STO 7.4.2023





STO 7.4.2023





HEL 5.5.2023





HEL 5.5.2023





STO 21.5.2023





STO 21.5.2023





HEL 2.6.2023





HEL 2.6.2023





STO 24.6.2023



# Edited videos

- *Tallar mellan (Between Pines)* 58 min. (all letters 'written' by the sender)
- *Tallar emellan (Between Pines)* 39 min 38 sec. (all letters 'read' by the receiver)

In the following: A = 'writing' by the sender, B = 'reading' to the receiver

- *Tallar emellan (Between Pines) Stockholm A* 31 min 43 sec.
- *Tallar emellan (Between Pines) Stockholm B* 18 min 48 sec.
- *Tallar emellan (Between Pines) Helsingfors A* 26 min 32 sec.
- *Tallar emellan (Between Pines) Helsingfors B* 21 min 4 sec.



# Problems

- Uncomfortable with the fiction, with speaking on behalf of or instead of a pine and thereby “pretending” or “inventing” (rather than simply addressing the pine, as I usually do)
- Trying to overcome fiction by using sound, and my awkwardness due to lack of skill in using any instruments
- This example is perhaps relevant in terms of the limits of relating? It is hard enough to relate to a tree by speaking, why try to serve as a messenger between trees...





Thank you for your attention – more in the discussion...