

## With Plants – abstracts and bios

### Essi Kausalainen: Lovers & other

Kuluneen vuoden aikana olen valmistanut teoksia mykorritsan inspiroimana. Näissä teoksissa olen tarkastellut erilaisia vuorovaikutussuhteita, intiimiä kanssakäymistä erilajisten ruumiiden välillä: etsinyt muotoja kunnioittavalle kanssaolemiselle ja rakastamiselle. Olen tehnyt performansseja ja näyttelyitä, olen kirjoittanut laulun. Kasviruumis on johdattanut minut mykorritsan äärelle ja mykorritsasta on avautunut maiseman laajuiset ekologiit. Näiden ekologioiden ajattelu palauttaa minut nyt toistuvasti omaan ruumiiseeni ja sitä kannatteleviin tukirakenteisiin. Mitä tekemistä tällä kaikella on kasvin kanssa? Kaikki ja ei mitään. Tämä katkelma Inger Christensenin runoteoksesta *alphabet* artikuloi sen paremmin kuin minä osaan:

[...]

think; like a leaf on a tree  
thinks; like shadow and light,  
like shining bark thinks,  
like the grubs beneath  
the barkskin think, like lichen  
on a stone and a bit of dry rot  
think [...]

Inger Christensen, 1981/2001

Essi Kausalainen (s.1979) on helsinkiläinen kuvataiteilija jonka työskentelyn lähtökohtana on ruumiin aistimellisuus, ja siihen kytkeytyvät filosofiset ja materiaaliset kysymykset. Ruumista tarkastellaan prosessina, joka muovautuu loputtoman monimutkaisissa vuorovaikutus- ja valtasuhteissa erilajisten olentojen ja ympäristöjen kanssa. Kausalaisen praktiikan perustana on mielikuvittelu ja leikki, joiden avulla hän pyrkii purkamaan lineaarisia ja hierarkisia ajattelu- ja toimintatapoja. Essi Kausalaisen teoksia on ollut esillä näyttelyiden ja performanssien muodossa muun muassa Somerset Housessa (Lontoo), Bildmuseetissa (Uumaja), Malmö Moderna Museetissa, Frankfurter Kunstvereinissä, Roskilden Nykyaiteen museossa, Nikolaj Kunsthallissa (Kööpenhamina), sekä Kunstraum Bethanienissa (Berliini).

### Titta Kotilainen: Plant light metrics: keeping time and tracking ratios

#### Abstract

Our research group has vast experience in measuring, modelling and analysing solar irradiance in forests. We are applying these methods to identify spectral signals that plants may use as cues providing information about surrounding vegetation, time of the day and season. In addition, we apply and transfer this knowledge to plant production environments; bringing technical expertise in sampling, decomposing and comparing spectral irradiance. Optimization of light quality can be used to modify plant morphology, manage flowering and increase production in horticultural applications.

#### Short bio

Plant photobiology has been my field of research for the past 13 years. I started with experiments related to my PhD thesis, manipulating light conditions around tree branches and trying to understand some of the

effects caused by stratospheric ozone depletion. After completing my thesis, I studied how LED lights can be used in horticultural applications. I continue trying to deepen my understanding how plants perceive varying light environments and how they use the information provided by changes in light conditions and how this knowledge can be used in plant production.

### **Christina Stadlbauer: Veget:Ability**

#### **Introduction to the art / science project by Christina Stadlbauer**

The amount of scientific papers on plant behaviour and consciousness is increasing steadily. However, most plant signaling and communication research is focusing on stress induced reactions in vegetal life.

My interest in this field lies in exploring the relation and communication between vegetal life and other species, like fungi, insects, humans, animals.

My approach dwells between artistic research and practice and includes notions of cognition, individuality and relation both through tangible and conceptual ways of working, often resulting in practical participatory experiments.

During the seminar, I will share 2 aspects of this work that have to do with 1. plant – human interactions and 2. with plant – insect interaction.

#### **Bio**

Christina Stadlbauer

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<http://apiary.be>, <http://melliferopolis.net>

Christina obtained a PhD in chemistry from the University of Natural Life Sciences in Vienna in 2006. After working as expert for the Austrian government (Ministry of Innovation, BMVIT) and in several non governmental organizations, she has been mostly working at the interstices of arts and sciences, in particular with honeybees, their ecologies and environments.

Christina has been practicing Shiatsu and Yoga for over 12 years, she speaks German, Italian, English, French, Dutch and basic Finnish.

Christina is especially interested in the complexity of processes - in nature (ecosystems), groups (socio-systems), or the human body and she likes to work with the immediate environment, be it the physical space or immaterial contexts, to create site specific interventions. In her art work, Christina Stadlbauer engages with topics that are inspired by nature- especially plants and insects. Amongst the pieces that she created in the last few years, tangible objects can be found alongside outdoor installations, as well as ephemeral actions or rituals. Christina particularly likes to address the senses; many of her pieces can be experienced by touch or smell. The possibility for the audience to actively engage or participate in the art piece or intervention is crucial. The spectator and his reaction become part of the piece and make it kaleidoscopic and open ended. Recent artistic work of Christina revolves around bees and beekeeping, especially in urban settings, and topics around plants, their communication abilities and their ecosystems.

#### **Experience in Cultural Projects and Institutions**

Between 2010 and 2013, Christina worked at the trans-disciplinary laboratory FoAM vzw, in Brussels. In 2010 / 2011, she had a position as creative and artistic co-director and she

coordinated projects, lectures, workshops and residencies, related to urban resilience initiatives. From 2011 - 2013, FoAM was partner in the European Project EITC (European Initiative of Transformative Cultures), a project with 5 European organisations and a consortium of partners in Mexico. As coordinator Christina was responsible for artistic contents as well as overall organization and implementation of the project. In these years, various workshops, seminars and events were realized both in Oaxaca, Mexico and in Europe.

Initiating and leading longer term projects In May 2012, Christina launched the long term project Melliferopolis –Honeybees in Urban Environments – together with Ulla Taipale in Helsinki, Finland. In 2012 & 2013, this independent project was affiliated to Future Art Base / Biofilia (Aalto University). Since then, collaborations with Helsinki City, Kaisaniemi Botanic Garden (University of Helsinki) and Luomos have rooted Melliferopolis in Helsinki.

Christina is a member and co-founder of the collective r-Ohm vzw, in Brussels.

Christina is affiliated to the trans-disciplinary artistic laboratory FoAM (Brussels, <http://fo.am>) and the University of Applied Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna.

She is in the board of the Finnish BioArt Society (<https://bioartsociety.fi>).

### **Maija Salemaa: Striped Berry Rug - art and Science combined**

Woody dwarf shrubs like bilberry (in Finnish: mustikka), cowberry (puolukka) and crowberry (variksenmarja) are common plants in forests, peatlands and northern fells in Finland. They are important landscape elements and their colour, structure and growth follow the change of seasons. Although these plants are found everywhere, often we don't notice them at all. However, in the northern habitats they offer many important ecosystem services by producing berries and regulating nutrient cycling and the water budget of the soil. Their belowground rhizome networks serve as long-term carbon reserves and their litter (dead leaves and roots) form an important carbon flux to the soil. By protecting and feeding a large number of animals, dwarf shrubs provide a basis for ecosystem biodiversity.

Dwarf shrubs have been used in revegetation of bare, disturbed or polluted soil because of their good regrowth potential and resistance to toxic elements. They can form large clonal patches with extensive rhizomes which facilitates rapid spreading and coverage of the bare soil. We started a revegetation experiment in the northernmost Finland, Kilpisjärvi, in 2013. The project combines the approaches of scientific methods with environmental art. We studied the survival, growth and flowering of northern and southern dwarf shrubs and their use in ecological restoration of bare soil (2013 – 2016). The cuttings of cowberry and crowberry were planted in two sectors in the shape of "striped berry rugs". The varying growth architecture of the plants representing different origin created aesthetic pleasure and scientific curiosity that increased our understanding on the plant adaptation to extreme conditions under changing climate. Researcher Maija Salemaa, artist Leena Valkeapää and biologist-artist Nijole Kalinauskaite formed the project group. The study was partly granted by the Finnish Bioart Society and Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke). The study was part of the Kilpisjärvi Village Environment project (2011-2013).

Bio:

Dr. Maija Salemaa is a senior scientist in the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke). She is plant ecologist, specialized in nutrient and carbon dynamics of forest ecosystems and functional biodiversity.

### **Angela Jerardi: Characters in a forest telling stories musically**

Abstract:

As the slow violence of ecological crisis in the 21st century unfolds, we must find imaginative approaches of storytelling for earthly survival and flourishing. If the means to capture inequality often escaped via topographic displacement in the last century, always exiting to new climes of greater deregulation and cheaper labor, it's now clear that it also escapes through time and rhythm. Seemingly invisible stories of human labor, commodity dynamics, and the matter of living in capitalist ruins creeps underfoot slowly and indeterminately – eluding the tidy closure and gripping spectacle of conventional narrative, and with no Hero in sight (Nixon 2009, Le Guin 1989).

In this story, the protagonist is a fruiting bush, the wild blueberry, perhaps difficult for us to grasp as an actor, and also, an unexpected, lowly, but nonetheless centripetal force, around which precarious life with capitalism in the Anthropocene unfolds. This ongoing research takes the boreal forests of Sweden and Finland as history-makers, places for listening and noticing, and “as sites for more-than-human dramas”, which can act as “radical tools for decentering human hubris.” (Tsing 2015). The stories of blueberries and the actors around them amidst the Nordic boreal forests reveal the intersectional overlays of a complex assemblage of a many-charactered space, and the urgent need for new hybrid paradigms of knowledge able to hold multiple cosmologies in concert (and discordance) with one another. Unsurprisingly, just as this place reveals particular histories, it also lays bare bigger stories too: the exploitation of social relations and difference through the lenses of race and gender and the colonial, and the extension of these same logics into the landscape; the persistence and hubris of the logics of extraction, accumulation and enclosure as they have developed and manifest in Western philosophical and scientific traditions; and the cohabitation of capitalist supply chains with patches and assemblages of other structures of exchange and meaning.

*This research is ongoing, so a presentation would necessarily be more process-based and would present a handful of observations I am developing while working on these ideas.*

Bio:

angela jerardi is a writer and curator living in Amsterdam. Her work aims to materialize and rehearse possible models and narratives for cohabitation, in collaboration with artists and thinkers of all stripes. Recurring concerns include: experimenting with means for complex publics to gather, privileging of divergent ways of knowing and collective models of working, and the exploration of play and humor as exhibition-making methodologies. Through these activities, she hopes to enact care and hospitality, encourage nuance, and foster spaces to make discomfort more comfortable. She completed the de Appel Curatorial Programme in 2013, and has an academic background in cultural anthropology. Recent curatorial projects include: *As far as anyone could recall*, Fridericianum, Kassel (2016), *Neither here nor there, neither fish nor fowl* at Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Siegen and Schloss Ringenberg, Hamminkeln (2015), and *Game Theory*, in the 2nd CAFA Museum Biennale, Beijing (2014). Alongside her curatorial work, she lectures at the

Gerrit Rietveld Academie and writes for contemporary art publications and catalogues, contributing to, among others, *Metropolis M* and *C Magazine*.

## **Bart Vandeput: 'Rapchiy'**

### Abstract

Since 2009 the Aronia m. Babe berry and the author are in a process of increasing inter-special entanglement. The artist's role herein is to consciously and unconsciously operate as the agency that facilitates the artistic expression of the berry-essence as well as its intra-action with its environments. The often hybrid art forms include public labs, performative happenings -and talks, interventions, etc. The presenter will introduce the main strands of the human-'appleberrian' artistic research. He will zoom in on the most active strand, 'Rapchiy': a comment on brain sensing devices and the tradition of cognitive science on which it is based.

"Wanderer, the road is your footsteps, nothing else; you lay down a path in walking."  
F. Varela, based on a poem by A. Machado. - E. Thompson (2017)<sup>1</sup>

Rapchiy process documentation >

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/phoef/sets/72157675919871880/with/31306902466/>

### Bio

Bartaku (Bart Vandeput) - Artist researcher, Doctoral studies at the School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University, Finland. - Email: [bart.vandeput@aalto.fi](mailto:bart.vandeput@aalto.fi)

Bartaku practices the art of enquiry with main interest in cognitive ecology, consciousness studies, neurobiology, energy and the philosophy of knowing and becoming. His work is often process-based, collaborative, transversal and situated in the folds and cracks of formal classifications. Since March 2016 he develops the deepening of the entanglement with the Aronia m. BaBe appleberry as a Doctoral candidate at the Department of Arts, Design and Architecture of Aalto University (Fin). He is participating artist in arts ecology project [frontiersinretreat.org](http://frontiersinretreat.org) and member of both cultural lab FoAM (Bru) and the Finnish Bioart Society. - <https://people.aalto.fi/new/bart.vandeput>

## **Lilli Haapala: Kasvien merkitys taiteessani [The meaning of plants in my art]**

Miten kasvit ovat läsnä omassa taiteellisessa työskentelyssäni ja elämässäni? Esittelen kasveihin liittyviä teoksiani vuosilta 2012- 2017 (Venuksen piirre, Circle, Ipomoea (elämänlangat) ja The language of the body. Teosten kautta käyn läpi myös omaa suhdettani kasveihin, niiden aiheuttaman (jopa) kammon kautta, niiden ihannointiin. Mitä kasvit minulle merkitsevät taiteilijana ja miksi ne ovat muodostuneet osaksi taiteellista ilmaisuani, ja jopa tärkeimmäksi taiteeni välineeksi?

*Kasvit, keho, liike, muoto, näkymätön, aistit*

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson, E. (2007). *Mind in Life. Biology, Phenomenology, and the sciences of mind*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England. p.13.

## Bio

Lilli Haapala (synt. 1984 Salossa) on turkulainen kuvataiteilija joka työskentelee installaatioiden; valokuvan, videon ja kasvien parissa. Haapala pohtii teostensa kautta ihmisen suhdetta ympäristöön ja työt ilmentävät usein eri todellisuuksien välisiä rajapintoja. Haapala viimeistelee opintojaan Helsingin Kuvataideakatemia tila-aikataiteiden osastolla (valmistuu Kuvataiteen maisteriksi joulukuussa 2017) ja on valmistunut Turun AMK:n Turun taideakatemia valokuvataiteen linjalta kuvataiteilijaksi 2015. Haapala on Valokuvakeskus Perin ja Suomen Biotaitteen seuran jäsen.

## Artist statement

Pyrin teoksillani usein ilmentämään jotain meille näkymätöntä ja piilossa olevaa. Operoin eri alueiden rajoilla ja usein esiin nousevat asioiden vastakohtat tai yhteydet kuten inhimillinen ja ei-inhimillinen, havainto ja illuusiot, todellinen ja epätodellinen. Erityisesti suhde luontoon ja kasveihin ovat olleet taiteeni aiheina jo pitkään. Käytän usein kasveja teosteni osana tai lähtökontana ja ne toimivatkin usein vertauskuvana ihmisyydelle, keholle tai toiseudelle.

## **Lauri Linna: PORK KANA edition #001 – The First Seed**

PORK KANA on tutkielma ihmisen ja porkkanan symbioosista. Mitä porkkana haluaa tai tarvitsee meiltä? Mitä me haluamme tai tarvitsemme siltä? Projekti tähtää rakentamaan porkkanoiden suojelualueen, jossa niiden lisääntymiseltä ja kasvulle ei aseteta paineita satomääristä, ulkonäöstä tai täydellisten jälkeläisten tuottamisesta. Projekti pohtii myös porkkanoiden lisääntymisoikeuksia ja tähtää mahdollistamaan porkkanoiden ”vapaan” lisääntymisen.

Pääsääntöisesti porkkana tuntuu asetetun teollisen ruokatuotannon tarpeiden armoille. Miten hyvin porkkana yksilöt kestävät kuljetusta, miten ne säilyvät ja miten hyvältä ne kuluttajalle näyttävät ovat merkittävämpiä kysymyksiä päätettäessä porkkanan lisääntymisestä. Mutta miten porkkana lajina voi ihmisen käsittelyssä? Onko siitä kehittymässä seuraava mopsi tai jokin muu ihmisen muokkaama organismi jonka elämä on voimakasta kärsimystä ihmisen kauneusihanteiden takia.

PORK KANA projektin yhtenä päämääränä on myös tuottaa ”epäjalostettuja” (vaihtoehtona jalostustoiminnalle) porkkanan siemeniä, vapauttaa porkkana lajina edes pienimuotoisesti ihmisten tarpeiden säätelemästä lisääntymisestä. Ensimmäiset tämän vapaan lisääntymisen tuottamat siemenet valmistuivat syksyllä 2017.

Kasvien kanssa –seminaarissa haluaisin jakaa ensimmäisiä PORK KANA –projektin siemeniä osallistujille.

## Bio

Lauri Linna (s. 1981) on helsinkiläinen kuvataiteilija, joka työskentelee laaja-alaisesti mm. liikkuvan kuvan ja muiden tekniikoiden parissa. Toistuvia teemoja hänen työssään ovat porkkana ja muiden merkityksettöminä pidettyjen asioiden tutkimus. Linna suorittaa taiteen maisterin tutkintoa Visual Culture and Contemporary Art (VICCA) koulutusohjelmassa Aalto-yliopistossa.

## **Paula Kramer: Picking cooking eadible plants as part of performative practices – a talking circle with food samples**

## Abstract

As an outdoor performer, movement practitioner and artistic researcher I often collaborate with plants. Plants populate, mark, configure and sometimes “make” the sites I work in. Whenever I find edible ones on site, I eat them (in passing), but also preserve them to be shared during performative event. Chestnut soup, elderberry punch, sloe vodka, sle juice, purslane – and so on. The edibles have up to this point been collateral happenings, something I engage with and through, without being fully able to contextualise and ‘meaning-make’ this doing. This day, “with plants”, could be a step towards a clarification of intention.

I will bring some edible plant samples that have been foraged on the sites I currently work on. In a talking circle (30 -45 min??) I could share some engagements with edibles in the past as well as discuss a current conundrum that has to do with sloes.

Bio

Paula Kramer

### **Henna Laininen: WRITING WITH PLANTS**

In my exposition, I reflect on the possibility and impossibility of writing with plants. What does it mean to *write with* a plant? Can writing with a plant deepen the sense of the interdependence between humans and plants? What are the potential misinterpretations related to an attempt to write with a plant?

I also exhibit my recent writing experiments with plants in Mustarinda residence, Paljakanvaara. The experiments are related to my artistic research project *Guide to Experimental Life – Communal Creative Writing as an Answer to the Environmental Crisis* in the Academy of Fine Arts. My research question is how to support the process of learning a sustainable lifestyle by the means of *communal creative writing* in the context of contemporary art. By *communal creative writing* I mean making fiction by interacting with both the human and the non-human. I suggest that in the age of environmental crises we should understand *community* as an interdependent network of both humans and non-humans.

Bio

Henna Laininen (born 1980) is a visual artist who is studying sustainable lifestyle by the means of community art, media art and creative writing. She often works with researchers from other disciplines to compose polyphonic stories. In *The Future Village* project (2011) she built up an ecological village scene together with researchers, artists and activists in the central square of the city of Tampere. The village served as a meeting point for people of all ages to learn and discuss about sustainable future. In *The Human Story* video installation (2015) experts from different fields tell their own versions of the story of the human race around a campfire. Laininen is also teaching and practicing creative writing. She has studied comparative literature and her poems have been published in several anthologies. At the moment she is beginning her doctoral studies in the Academy of Fine Arts. For more information, see [www.hennalaininen.net](http://www.hennalaininen.net).

### **Annette Arlander: Resting with Pines in Nida**

During a residency at Nidat Art Colony in Lithuania in September 2017 I experimented with ways of performing with the pine trees in the area, mainly by posing with them for a video camera on tripod, as part of the research project Performing with plants. In this presentation, I will show some of the material and reflect on the problematic legacy of romantic landscape representations as well as possible ways of utilising it for contemporary purposes. For more information of the project, see <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/316550/316551>

#### Bio

Annette Kristina Arlander, born 1956 in Helsinki, where she lives and works. Artist, researcher and a pedagogue, one of the pioneers of Finnish performance art and a trailblazer of artistic research. Graduated from the department of directing at the Theatre Academy 1981, Doctor of Arts (Theatre and Drama) 1999. Professor of Performance Art and Theory at Theatre Academy 2001-2013. Professor of artistic research at University of the Arts Helsinki 2015-16. At present postdoctoral fellow in the arts at Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. For publications, see <https://annettearlander.com>

#### **Kirsi Heimonen: Still**

The presentation is about silence, simplicity and trees. I will open up a process that has been about approaching and encountering trees by attuning to the silence of the corporeality that has brought simplicity into the movements. Through that process a short video, *Still* (2017), has emerged and it will be shown.

#### Bio

Kirsi Heimonen is a dancer-scholar who currently works as a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Artistic Research at the University of the Arts Helsinki.