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Ari Saarto **CIRCLES**

March 14 (Sat) - April 8 (Weds), 2015

Venue: Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku

*No opening reception will be held.

Yumiko Chiba Associates is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Ari Saarto from March 14, 2015.

Ari Saarto, born 1961 in Finland, has participated many exhibitions mainly in Europe. He is a member of the Helsinki School group, which consists lecturers, students and graduates of the Aalto University, former University of Art and Design. Mr. Saarto is one of the leading photographers presently based in Helsinki.

Saarto's works, which have been taken in homeless people's residencies or at a scene of a murder, remind you, at first sight, of a documentary photography and journalism. However, his theme is something else. This is visible in his way of applying a traditional landscape technique in his images in which unreality is also depicted.

Saarto has mentioned, "I am interested in the historical layers of landscape and particularly in the values associated with landscape and space. A picture of space can also be seen as a picture of human psyche". When looking at his images, the viewer can notice some signs and recognize that they indicate an absence of somebody/something which previously had existed. The images can lead you to think of not just the present time but a transcendental viewpoint made with the accumulation of memories and time.

Saarto, being aware of superficial characteristics of photographs/projection which tend to be records of things happened, is attempting to extract "past - present - reality in the future" in his works with an air of tension. He will show us a new recognition of perception.

This is Saarto's solo show in Japan after an interval of 10 years.

There will be no opening reception, but Mr. Saarto will come to Japan with Ms. Riitta Päiväläinen in April at the time of of her exhibition.

Gallery Talk is scheduled to be held, with both Mr. Saarto and Ms. Päiväläinen.

Detailed will be informed in Ms. Päiväläinen's press release.



■ Artist Statement

"But the strange thing about the realization of existence is that like a train moving there is no real realization of it moving unless it moves against something"
(Gertrude Stein, Lecture 'Portraits & Repetition', 1934).

I wrote the above mentioned quotation into my sketchbook about two years ago. The question about moving and the background seemed very interesting to me and - of course - very existential. How can one comprehend existence and its movement, and against what? My answer to the question is: against things which contain traces of our presence, such as handcrafts and old clothes. Against works of art, like photographs and videos.

My exhibition at the Yumiko Chiba Associates includes two new video works: the Pain Project (2010-2013) and Portraits, Conversations (2015). In both of the works time has a very special character: they are moving images with multiple layers and they both deal with existence and movement. Third, an ongoing body of work, is called Forest (2015).

Portraits, Conversations consists of video portraits of three women. During the shooting sessions we have been talking about life, death, burden and big changes.

In the Forest series I have used a ring flash, often used in fashion photography, to capture the shapes of the trees and the depth of the seemingly endless sea of branches. Night, space, depth and sleep have been my themes when making this series. Was I looking down into depths of something, or up to the sky?

The Pain Project comprises of video portraits of women suffering from depression, and undergoing periods of treatment and rehabilitation. I met them weekly and shot several 10-second long video portraits. Each final portrait includes tens of transparent video layers from these sessions – one of the portraits has already 49 layers.

The final images are portraits of time, pain, depression and finally, of recovering, which can take months, even several years. For their protection, each person remains anonymous and distribution of the video work is strictly limited. The Pain Project has been accomplished together with the registered association of Mother and Child Homes, Helsinki, and it's Varvara Support Groups, which I am supporting financially with this series.

Besides personal or relatives' experiences of depression or anxiety, a great source of inspiration to me has been the medical photography of the 1800's: images of mental patients (Hugh Welch Diamond, 1809 – 1886), photographs of women suffering from hysteria and experimental medical photography of the Salpêtrière hospital in France (among others, Albert Londe, 1858 –1917). Those fascinating photographs reveal much about the general attitude towards women, and theories concerning psyche and the treatment of mental disorder. Are some of those presumptions still alive? Is it possible to measure pain? If yes, how one can measure psychic pain?

Going back in time, I remember a lecture, which I gave in 2004 at the Aomori Contemporary Art Centre during AIR Program. In that lecture I assumed that an artist circles around his or her main theme – or themes – like a moth circles a bright and hot lamp at the night-time: circling, going endless rounds, going away and returning. Finding this theme might take me a full life time, with its ups and downs. Thus the name: Circles. I am still there, doing it.

■ Related Information

On the occasion of the exhibition as well as Riitta Päiväläinen's exhibition held from April 11, a study booklet of Ari Saarto and Riitta Päiväläinen written by Kati Kivinen, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art KIASMA in Helsinki is scheduled to be published in April. Detail will be informed later.



■ Profile

Ari Saarto

- 1961 Born in Finland
- 1988 MA in art education, University of Art and Design, Helsinki
- 1994 MA in photography, University of Art and Design, Helsinki

[Works in Collections]

- collections of Kiasma the Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki
- collections of the State of Finland
- collections of the Museum of Photography, Helsinki
- collections of the Wihuri Foundation (Rovaniemi Art Museum)
- collections of the town of Kotka
- private collections in Finland, Japan and USA

[Recent]

- 2015 Circles (solo) Yumiko Chiba Associates, Tokyo, Japan
- 2014-15 Parallele Welt (group, curated, November 2014-February 2015)
Stadtgalerie Kiel, Germany
- 2015 Parallele Welt (October 2015) Stadtgalerie Bietigheim-Bissing, Germany

[Solo Shows]

- 2008 Wanderings and Imaginary Meetings (avec Riitta Päiväläinen), the Kemi Art Museum, Finland
- 2008 Wanderings and Imaginary Meetings (avec Riitta Päiväläinen), the Kerava Art Museum, Finland
- 2008 Sites and Departures, Gallery Hippolyte, Helsinki, Finland
- 2007 Wanderings and Imaginary Meetings (avec Riitta Päiväläinen), Muzeum Narodowew Szczecinie/
the National Museum, Szczecin, Poland
- 2005 IN SITU Early Gallery, Osaka Japan
- 2005 Vestige/Topography of Fear (avec Riitta Päiväläinen) Spaziodellavolta, Studio Archifax, Genoa, Italy
- 2004 IN SITU Gallery Hippolyte, Helsinki, Finland
- 2002 Topography of Fear Galerie Lichtblick, Cologne, Germany
- 2002 Topography of Fear UNN Squires Gallery Newcastle, United Kingdom
- 2002 Topography of Murder Photographic Centre Peri Turku, Finland
- 2002 Vestige/Topography of Fear (avec Riitta Päiväläinen) gallery Romfeia, International Meetings of Photography,
Plovdiv, Bulgaria
- 2001 Topography of Fear Gallery Hippolyte, Helsinki, Finland
- 2001 Topography of Murder Nordic Photographic Centre, Oulu, Finland
- 1996 Kryptomnesia gallery Workshop, Helsinki, Finland
- 1993 Seen Through Senses the Kluuvi gallery (Helsinki City Art Museum), Finland
- 1992 Concert Hall Gallery Kotka, Finland
- 1992 Point of Pain gallery Hippolyte Helsinki, Finland

[Selected Group Shows]

- 2013 Ingredients (curated) Riga Art Space, Riga, Latvia
- 2012 Feel It! – Photographs of Emotion and States of Mind (curated), Oulu Art Museum
- 2011 Landscape Experienced (curated), Jyväskylä Art Museum
- 2010 Close to Nature – Zeitgenössische Finnische Kunst (curated), Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg Germany
- 2010 Images from the North Countries (curated), Espace François-Mitterand, Guingamp, France
- 2010 Tales from the Forest (curated, group), Virserums Konsthall, Virserum, Sweden
- 2010 Pain (curated, group), the Kerava Art Museum, Finland
- 2009 Great Expectations – Contemporary photography looks at today's Bitter Years, (curated) Casino Luxembourg,
Luxembourg
- 2009 Artworks from the Collections of the Kuntsi Art Museum and Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art (curated),
Kuntsi Art Museum, Finland
- 2008 The Art of Humanity (curated), XII Mänttä Festival Weeks, Finland
- 2007 Contemporary Finnish Art from the Wihuri Foundation Collections (curated), Jyväskylä Art Museum, Finland
- 2006 Finlandia (avec Jouko Lehtola, Joakim Eskildsen, curated), Frans Hals Museum/ De Hallen, Haarlem, Netherlands



- 2006 MENS. The Story of a Wound (curated), the Centre for Religious Art and Culture and Municipal Museum for Contemporary Art (S.M.A.K. in Ghent), Leuven, Belgium
- 2006 Vad är Fotografi? The Helsinki School (curated), Borås Art Museum, Sweden
- 2006 The Helsinki School, Finnish Photography from the 21st Century (curated), Hotel de Ville de Bruxelles, Grand-Place, Bruxelles, Belgium
- 2006 Nordic Cut – The Helsinki School of Photography (curated), Art Pavillion, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2005 Fractures of Life (curated) Kiasma, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland
- 2005 Metropolis (curated) Mare Articum at the National Museum, Szczecin, Poland
- 2005 the Helsinki School (curated) Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin
- 2005 Personligt, fotografier från the Helsinki School (curated) Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2005 The Taik Gallery Sollentuna Art Fair, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2004 30byTaiK (curated) Museum of Finnish Photography, Helsinki, Finland
- 2004 Gokann The Fourth Triennale of Contemporary Finnish Art (curated) the Kunsthalle of Helsinki (the Helsinki Art Hall), Finland
- 2004 Conversation with Nature (curated) Aomori Contemporary Art Center, Japan
- 2004 Views, the Rovaniemi Art Museum, Finland
- 2004 Images Against War, Photokina, Cologne, Germany
- 2003 Gokann The Fourth Triennale of Contemporary Finnish Art (curated) Kyoto Art Center, Seika University Gallery, Voice Gallery, Kyoto, Japan
- 2003 Blue Horizon (avec Pertti Kekarainen, Jan Kaila, curated) Spiral Gallery, Wacoal Art Center, Tokyo, Japan
- 2003 Exposure 2003 (curated) Hereford Art Gallery, United Kingdom
- 2003 Images Against War Galerie Lichtblick, Cologne, Germany
- 2003 Images Against War, L'Usine Galerie, Brussels, Belgium
- 2002 Korrelaatioita (curated) Fotogalerie Wien, Vienna, Austria
- 2002 Korrelaatioita (curated) FotoForum West, Innsbrück, Austria
- 1997 The Drum and the Camera (curated), Gallén-Kalela Museum, Helsinki, Finland
- 1997 Mother's Heart an installation, the 7th Biennale of Audiovisual Design (curated), Lahti, Finland
- 1996 Momentum - The 90's of the Finnish Photography (curated), Museum of Photography, Helsinki, Finland
- 1995 The Script the Second Biennale of Finnish Photography, (curated), the Kunsthalle of Helsinki (the Helsinki Art Hall), Finland
- 1994 Male Anxiety (curated), Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, Berlin, Germany
- 1993 The Night of Photography a curated group exhibition in the Park of Vuorimiehenkatu during the Night of Arts, Helsinki Festival, Finland
- 1993 Young Photographers a group exhibition in Helsinki City Theatre, Finland
- 1993 There and Back a group exhibition with five painters, gallery Allinna, Riihimäki, Finland
- 1992 The Young Roosters (curated), Sveaborg Fortress, Helsinki Photography Festival, Finland
- 1991 Planket Festival, Stockholm, Sweden
- 1989 Focus (curated), Museum of Photography, Helsinki (touring exhibition in Latvia, Estonia and Finland)
- 1989 The Young (curated), Old Studenthouse of the Helsinki University, Helsinki Photography Festival, Finland

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■■ For further information or images, please contact Yumiko Chiba Associates.

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Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku URL: <http://www.ycassociates.co.jp>

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Opening Hours: 12:00 - 19:00 (Closed on Sunday, Monday, National Holiday)