



15:45



# The Helsinki School

16:00

# Gallery Taik Persons

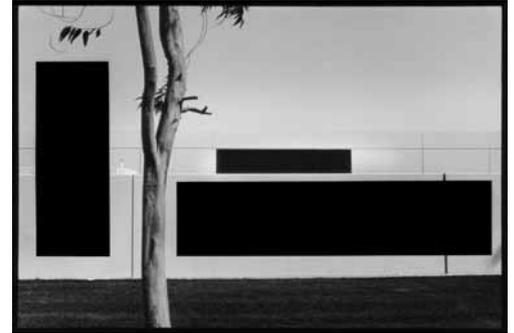
Lindenstr. 34, 10969 Berlin  
tel. +49 30 2888 3370  
[berlin@gallerytaikpersons.com](mailto:berlin@gallerytaikpersons.com)

## Grey Crawford

Born in Inglewood, California. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

"I am a visual bilingual, I see in Abstract, and Image. Combining the language of painting and the language of photography one has left the territory of clear distinctions. My experience of growing up in Southern California with the work of Karl Benjamin, and John McLaughlin among others was a rich introduction to the abstract painting of this time." Crawford's *Umbra* series are black and white gelatin prints—photographed throughout the early 1970's in Southern California and just recently rediscovered after being archived for the past 40 years. Drawing upon his classical training from his studies at the Rochester Institution of Technology, Crawford stands out as a unique figure from that time period. His darkroom experiments with paper masks, distinguish him from the day's topographers such as Lewis Baltz. Crawford incorporates these basic geometric shapes and lines into his photographs, creating his own landscapes, almost like a stage for an undefined play.

*Umbra #07, 1975, silver gelatin print, 31 × 45,6 cm*



## Joakim Eskildsen

Born in Copenhagen in 1971. He lives and works in Berlin.

In his photography, Eskildsen achieves an overwhelming closeness to his subjects. With his unique sense for natural light, he creates translucent settings in which certain aspects appear especially exposed to the viewer, while others remain hidden. The warmth of the compositions harmonizes with the subjects' meaningful, direct eye contact. Eskildsen only uses existing light—almost Renaissance-like in its painterly softness—and a tripod. Neither forcing situations nor overstating the grim, "one main condition is that you have the feeling that you want to photograph this thing," he says. "The idea is to get into people's homes, see how they live in their spaces." He continues: "I wanted it to be a very humanistic portrait." His comprehensive work series have taken him to numerous places around the world.

*Eric Ramirez, Firebaugh, California, 2011, pigment print, 89 × 107 cm*





## Adam Jeppesen

Born in Kalunborg, Denmark, in 1978. He lives and works in Buenos Aires.

His works are rooted in classic documentary photography. But he doesn't leave it at that and instead takes this starting point further to a very experimental approach. Jeppesen undertook numerous travels all over the world throughout the past years in which his camera has always been a very steady and trustworthy travel companion. His works therefore bear witness to the most impressive and awe-inspiring landscapes that can be found on the globe. After taking the picture, he doesn't digitally touch his photographs; he leaves in eventual flaws like scratches and dust-marks and rather manually intervenes with the printed image. His final works live from the choice of paper, the choice of printing technique, from interventions like folding the print similar to a map like in the *Folded* series or repetitively pinning needles into the prints. Every step in his production process being another step of his journeys—resembling musical notes of the unusual and imperfect symphony that Jeppesen's oeuvre represent: the vivid proof of life, the lived journey.

*Incahuasi II*, 2016, photo copy, pins, acidfree paper, 164 × 131 cm



## Ulla Jokisalo

Born in Kannus, Finland, in 1955. She lives and works in Helsinki.

Jokisalo has creatively challenged how society portrays stereotypes throughout her career. Using her own personal history as the backdrop for her study, Jokisalo follows her lineage, tracing how one generation of women pass on their inherited knowledge to one another. Her weapons of choice are the tools of her mothers' trade—pins, needles, and thread—combined with an assemblage of cutout images originating from 1960s fashion magazines or photographs from her own childhood. Thus, sewing the memories of her becoming into the unique pieces as a means to create her own world of understanding.

Jokisalo's strong interest in the history and medium of photography may be seen essentially reflected in her emphasis on the creative acts of seeing, cutting, and framing. Continuing the tradition of surrealism through her objects, photographs, drawings, and notebooks she created her own, recognisable style and her own iconography. Her work has consistently confronted those stereotypes of both men and women that still plague our prejudices today.

*Puff*, 2015, cutout pigment print and pins, 60 × 41 cm

## Jaakko Kahilaniemi

Born in Toijala, Finland, in 1989. He lives and works in Helsinki.

Jaakko Kahilaniemi's series *100 Hectares of Understanding* is a conceptual body of work focussing on his personal family history of forestry. Using his own inherited property as his experimental grounds, Kahilaniemi explores the numerous ways in how to interpret its meaning to himself. By abstracting the notion of weight, size, growth, and history, he weaves together a visual anthology of objects, all depicting various means of dimensioning. Finland's forests have played a central role in how the country has historically created its national identity. Kahilaniemi alludes upon this romanticism dating back to the beginning of the 20th century, superimposing the country's most notable paintings from that time period as back drops for his own photographs of his property. Kahilaniemi uses his forest as his language and the objects within it as his words.

*Property Weight*, 2016, pigment print, 59 × 45 cm



## Sandra Kantanen

Born in Helsinki in 1974. She lives and works in Hanko, Finland.

Her photographs are seductively beautiful. They reference the idylls of traditional Chinese and Japanese worlds. This clash of old and new times stem from her studies in China. As she explains, "I studied Chinese landscape painting and became completely obsessed with the idea of trying to understand their way of looking at nature. I found out, that most of the holy mountains they had been depicting for thousands of years were almost destroyed by pollution or otherwise turned into tourist spots. It became for me a search for a landscape that doesn't really exist, an idealised picture." Kantanen's sense of scale is neither Eastern nor Western. She never allows us to get lost in the idyllic mountains. In line with the philosophy of Chinese architecture everything works on a human scale, but for her the most important thing is what is happening in the mind. "I was trying to understand the nature of photography. I was interested in how the three dimensional world transforms into two dimensions in a photograph. I figured light was all there was in this medium." Kantanen appears to literally be painting with light. It becomes as much a spiritual as a physical tool for her.

*Untitled (Yellow Leaves)*, 2013, pigment print, 128 × 108 cm





## Elina Brotherus

Born in Helsinki in 1972. She lives and works in Helsinki and Avallon, France.

Many of Brotherus' photos and videos are self-portraits investigating the relationship between individual and space, questioning man's place amongst nature. She uses her personal story to create powerful photographs. Her artistic work follows her life. "I made autobiographical self-portraits in the very beginning, when still in art school. At that time I simultaneously finished my previous university studies of chemistry and my first marriage. It was a major liberation on all fronts and it had to become visible in my photography. I was interested in painting, the way artists look at their models and how to represent this in a picture. I was using myself as a model but the photos didn't talk about what was going on in my life. I was an image-maker, dealing with formal, visual and art-historical issues. Then I approached 40 and life got complicated and the autobiography sneaked in again. It wasn't anything I planned but I didn't push it back either. This is my strategy as an artist: to accept the pictures that need to happen."

*Model Study 2, 2003, pigment print, 80 × 102 cm*

## Sanna Kannisto

Born in Hämeenlinna, Finland, in 1974. She lives and works in Helsinki.

In her works, Sanna Kannisto explores the relationship between nature and science. Using irony and humor to investigate the concept of truth in photography and to ask how we actually want to view nature. During numerous stays in Peru, French Guiana, Brazil, and Finland she became a visual researcher, borrowing working methods from natural sciences, anthropological practices, and from still-life painting tradition. She stages portable "field studios." As soon as the object is removed from its original context—nature, in this case—our attention is directed toward specific characteristics and movements. Though her work strongly refers to the quasi-scientific methods of conceptual art, it represents an overall sensual, poetic view of the natural phenomenon especially dedicated to the birds: "I like the fact that in the act of flying the bird's stopped motion is so sculptural. The speed of the bird is really challenging to frame and I'm able to rotate it in space by means of photography."

*Considerable Darkness, 2010, pigment print, 98 × 125 cm*



## Milja Laurila

Born in Helsinki in 1982. She lives and works in Helsinki.

Memory, the relationship between knowledge and unconsciousness, and issues of femininity are recurring themes in Laurila's work. She is interested in how the concept of knowledge is constructed through images. The dialogue between a context and a photograph, how it adjusts and directs our perception. By detaching the images taken from old medical books or families' archive from their original context, she lets them speak in their own voice.

The half-naked bodies are printed on transparent acrylic glass, which makes the figures translucent, almost weightless or arranged as installations. The vitreous prints, which can be associated with the glass plates used in photography, work as a metaphor for the fragility of the portrayed subjects.

*In Their Own Voice*, 2016, 3 UV prints, shelfe, 64 × 130 cm



## Tanja Koljonen

Born in Muonio, Finland, in 1981. She lives and works in Helsinki.

The bearers of human traces—found objects, and fragments of text—are prominent features in Tanja Koljonen's work. Her relocation of these objects detaches them from their original function and meaning. Sometimes they are deconstructed, cut up, and rearranged. Instead of conventional, representational functions of preserving memories, Koljonen's work is marked by a distinct, self-contained present tense that essentially deals with the impossibility of complete thoughts. In Koljonen's words: "Photographing shifts the emphasis from the thing itself to the idea behind an object transmuting the object itself into a metaphor. These metaphors are archived thoughts in an endless and curious process of expanding our understanding of human nature. They are emerged results of texts and objects, delicately sealed by the act of photographing." The work draws attention to the ways in which language and reason are tied to one another—the truths and realities in things spoken and written, we can never be sure of.

*Gleam*, 1975, pigment print, masked glass, 135 × 105 cm





## Pertti Kekarainen

Born in Oulu, Finland, in 1965. He lives and works in Helsinki, Finland.

His series *TILA* has been evolving during the past ten years and consists of more than 130 works by now. The Finnish word *tila* has multiple meanings and describes an architectural space, a room, or the interior space of an object; moreover a space or distance between different objects. At the same time, it refers to a conditional state of a thing as well as a certain state of mind. Its connotations reach into various life spheres of social, cultural, and political significance.

Just as meanings of words always construe a new relative to the things they signify, so do Kekarainen's works remain in a constant state of flux. Testifying to his initial training as a sculptor, his works of the series *TILA* illustrate Kekarainen's objective to carve out spatial depths by means of overlapping semi-transparent surfaces, and incorporating graphic elements such as lines, blurred dots, and circular or rectangular "holes," as well as effects of color, reflection, and shadow.

*Spatial Changes #51*, 2016, pigment print, 190 × 158 cm



## Ola Kolehmainen

Born in Helsinki in 1964. He lives and works in Berlin.

For the past two decades, Ola Kolehmainen is well known for his large format color photographs originating from his fascination with architecture and how he interprets it through his personal minimalistic filter. He challenges his selected sites by questioning the intent of their architect as well as abstracting the bits and pieces that make them whole, leaving his mark on an unmovable object. Nothing is staged and what we see in his photographs is not about him intellectualizing, but more about how he personalizes a specific moment. Kolehmainen draws our attention to the yet unperceived materialities, surfaces, patterns, and convolutions, asking the question "what in fact are we really looking at?" Through his work he constantly pushes upon our modes and categories for how we see, using both the exterior and the interior as a mirror of one another. This method of assemblage enables Kolehmainen to expand the magnitude of the space without forfeiting the intimacy of the details. Whether it be a mosque, synagogue, cathedral, or a modern piece of architecture, Kolehmainen explores how to capture and measure the density of a given space.

*Villa 1*, 2014, c-print, 210 × 150 cm

## Hilla Kurki

Born in Anjalankoski, Finland, in 1985. She lives and works in Helsinki.

In living a life there are very few guarantees, but experiencing loss is one emotional hurdle we all will face at some given point. How we handle it depends upon its nature, but the death of a loved one carries its own signature. It is a fundamental human experience that can bring solace for some and the loss of self for others. This is the starting point in understanding Hilla Kurki series *Fallen Feathers* (from the *Phoenix series*). It begins with her sister's death at the early age of 28 and how Kurki incorporates this personal tragedy into her own story, using her grief as stepping-stones towards a New Becoming. She transforms her sister's forgotten black dresses into a bridge to link us through to her memories in hope of self-recovery. Kurki's photographs have a familiar feel to Yoko Ono's early performances from the 1960s. By cutting, sewing and weaving, Kurki works through all her sister's collected garments to reshape her personal story. Thus, enabling her to regain the authority of determining her own fate.

*Covers*, 2017, pigment print, 40 × 40 cm

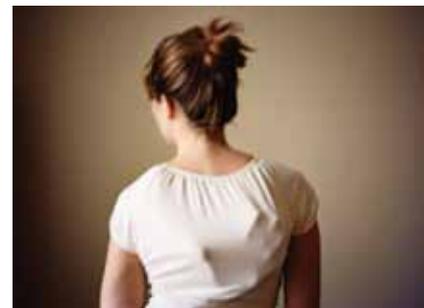


## Anni Leppälä

Born in Helsinki in 1981. She lives and works in Helsinki.

Anni Leppälä explores the relationship between the past and the present. Underlying her still lifes is the desire to freeze and isolate a single moment in time; essentially, an impossible desire. She is drawn to the “possibility of being able to make a moment motionless, to make something stand still.” Leppälä's subjects are mostly objects that have been dislodged from their original context, places that have been abandoned or forgotten, human figures caught in the seclusion of their own presence, and antique paintings. The spaces of rooms, living quarters, and natural landscapes are portrayed as representational realms of human emotions, memories, and dreams. Anni Leppälä's finely tuned sense of staging together with her acute sensitivity to color and composition endow her photographs with powerful symbolism. In them, everyone will be able to discover a trace of themselves.

*Shirt (hand)*, 2010, c-print, 31,5 × 42,5 cm



## Kira Leskinen

Born in Helsinki in 1987. She lives and works in Helsinki.

Inspired by Wassily Kandinsky's theories about the relationship between visual abstract art and music, Leskinen combines words with images. She seeks clear forms, vivid color combinations and specific words for her titles. These act as a phonetic correspondence for the visual works and originate in different languages such as Spanish, Turkish, and Estonian. Instead of emphasizing meaning, she concentrates on the sound of the word—the way it feels in the ears and on the tongue. In order to create the images, she placed different materials directly on the glass plate of a scanner. From this point of view, it resembles the process of creating a photogram on a photographic paper. However, instead of a single exposure, the image created by a flatbed scanner is formed one line at a time as the scanner's scanning head moves through the picture plane. The technique is known as scanography. "In my work process," says the artist, "I rely greatly on play, improvisation and chance. Before beginning to work with the scanner, I block all additional noise and dim the lights. The choice of working in a dark and quiet space is my way of distinguishing the process from an ordinary day-to-day cycle."

*Mañana*, 2017, pigment print, 42 × 30 cm



## Niko Luoma

Born in Helsinki in 1970. He lives and works in Helsinki.

Luoma has continually worked with entirely abstract visual contents through the medium of photography. "I find my inspiration in mathematics and geometry; symmetry and chaos, both imagined and found in nature." His method involves a calculated, analogue technique of exposing a single negative to lines and shapes of light, sometimes up to thousands of times, thus generating what has been denoted as "abstract photographs of time." When the light rays repeatedly hit the sensitive surface, his number sequences determined prior to the exposures and intricately systemized parameters, lead to serendipities (pleasant surprises). Luoma's works are constituted by their inherent tension of order and chance. Looking at the works from his most recent series *Adaptations* (since 2015), we may be surprised to learn that they are abstracted from works by Vincent Van Gogh, Claude Monet or David Hockney.

*Self titled adaptation of A Bigger Splash* (1967), 2017, pigment print, 173 × 155 cm



## Juuso Noronkoski

Born in Helsinki in 1983. He lives and works in Helsinki.

Noronkoski's works combine the mediums of photography, video, sculpture, and text. They explore the line, or rather the space, in-between the visual and the written language, in-between a thought or an idea and reality: "How each individual means of expression, with differing temporal and material qualities, contributes to the common conversational space." as the artist puts it. Many of his works are accompanied by short stories, that seem to shed more light on and create a clearer image of the thought process behind the physical artwork. In his works, photography is both, a window to another time and space as well as a mirror reflecting the here and now back to the spectator. "If my artistic practice would impose a question, it would be: what, or rather, where is an image? Where is an image that exists between the actual and the imaginary—at the feet, and in unknown atmospheres."

*This Place Is Nowhere*, 2016, pigment print, 31 × 45,5 cm



## Nelli Palomäki

Born in Forssa, Finland, in 1981. She lives and works in Helsinki.

In Palomäki's portraits, a timeless quality is revealed. She is one of those rare photographers who has inherently found the ability to emotionally merge with the subject she is observing. She combines her fiery spirit with her charm to create an environment of trust. It is through this bond that Palomäki is able to portray the innocence of her subject. These portraits seemingly emerge from the shadows in which they rest, pulling themselves to us through the gaze in their eyes. Diane Arbus and Francesca Woodman are all good examples of artists who, like Palomäki, have used their internal compass to navigate through the human spirit. Palomäki's portraits are self-portraits—reflections of momentary yet intense relationships that the photographer herself has constructed and nurtured. "Every portrait I have taken is a photograph of me too. What I decide to see, how I confront the things that I see, inevitably determines the final image."

*Dora and Vera*, 2017, pigment print, 99 × 85 cm





## Jorma Puranen

Born in Pyhäjoki, Finland, in 1951. He lives and works in Helsinki.

Jorma Puranen has become known for his works that arouse considerations spanning the past and the present. His subject matter has ranged from illustrations of scholarly works and ethnographic photographs to historical portraiture and landscape paintings. With points of departure often found in archives or museums and a rather undisciplined approach to archives—fragmentary rather than systematic. In Puranen's work, the photograph becomes a place for readdressing a fluid past. His photographs are both of the past and the present. The reflection of light serves to mediate the images and functions as their metaphor. It has often covered or blurred our access to images, thus adding layers of uncertainty to the motives. It could be said that reflection as such is Puranen's theme. In fact, he appears to be saying that light is the only reality the photograph has access to.

*Icy Prospects #17*, 2005, c-print, 160 × 198 cm

## Riitta Päiväläinen

Born in Maaninka, Finland, in 1969. She lives and works in Helsinki.

Päiväläinen's site-specific installations are mostly set in natural landscapes and composed from second-hand clothes or aged fabrics, suggesting a sense of the untold, similarly to the feeling that an old photo can evoke. It's the unwritten stories, the unofficial existences that slip in front of us without being noticed, the seduction of forgotten things as the silent witness of something that does not exist anymore. It's the quiet presence of the shell, reminding us of the absence of the core. "For me, a piece of clothing represents, above all, its former wearer. It tells you that somebody has been present. The faded colors and tears in the fabric show the signs of the time passed. By freezing the garment or letting the wind fill it with air, I am able to create a sculptural space, which reminds me of its former user. This "Imaginary Meeting" represents, for me, the subtle distinction between absence and presence."

*Serene*, 2013, c-print, 140 × 195 cm



## Anna Reivilä

Born in Helsinki in 1988. She lives and works in Helsinki.

According to Japanese religious ceremonies, ropes and ties symbolize the connections among people and the divine, as a means to identify sacred space and time. Anna Reivilä bridges the gap between Japanese rituals and Scandinavian nature. Inspired by Nobuyoshi Araki's images, the nature of bondage, and a mix of raw violence and beauty. Her photographs explore the relationship between man and nature. It is a delicate balance between being held together and being on the verge of breaking. In 1969, Robert Smithson installed 12-inch-square mirrors, which reflected the surrounding environment. "My lines show how the shapes of the elements and the connections between them become visible when something alien is added. I'm not only changing their essence, but also my own point of view," the artist says. "I'm interested how the volume of any given site can be stretched by the use of several simple lines." Her lines create interactions, making connections between the elements—a reinterpretation of the landscape.

*Bond #30, 2017, pigment print, 100 × 72 cm*



## Mikko Rikala

Born in Tampere, Finland, in 1977. He lives and works in Helsinki.

Mikko Rikala's works represent a research into spatiality and temporality that emerges from both philosophical as well as scientific, nature-related thoughts. If one is to condense the themes that the artist is submerged in, it would come down to something as complex as the cyclical and interstitial passage of time and the traces it leaves on our surroundings. Many times we will find works where Rikala observes a certain temporal phenomena taking it as a starting point for his further research. He reflects on and compares philosophical thoughts of the East and concepts related to minimal art, to the experiences of the relativity of time, speed, distance, presence, and absence. Repetition as a working method, with its voiding effect, challenges the fundamental notion of time and space. It offers new perspectives on how to perceive the nature of distance. What we see, in the end, are not only the traces that time leaves behind but—with an equal importance—the voids, the unsaid, the silence in-between.

*Note on Visibility (transparent/opaque), 2017, pigment print, 40 × 30 cm*





## Jari Silomäki

Born in Parkano, Finland, in 1975. He lives and works in Helsinki.

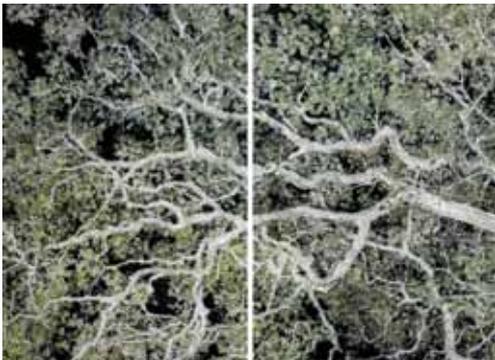
Rooted in classical documentary and narrative photography, Jari Silomäki has developed a unique way of story-telling, by constantly finding new ways of exploring the realms of fact and fiction, documentation and imagination. Throughout his numerous long-term and ongoing projects, he joins the art of photography with written narrative elements, thus creating a gateway between the familiar and the unknown. Investigating everyday life from all its angles, he manages to interconnect his private thoughts with the outside world, merging the local with the global—slowly and meticulously. Instead of the clichéd „decisive moment,“ the diary-like sequences of his photographs serve as telling interludes in a personal narrative, moments that imply what came before and what is to follow. Such sequences are Silomäki’s way of visualising his ideas.

*Red River, 1975, c-print, 28 × 28 cm*

## Santeri Tuori

Born in Espoo, Finland, in 1970. He lives and works in Helsinki.

Santeri Tuori has a special relationship to nature similarly to an impressionist painter in the 18th century. He records his chosen site by what his eyes see. He then observes and measures its ever changing growth by its lights and colors one season after another. By capturing the same motives from the same spot at different times of the year, Tuori conceptualizes the passage of time by layering one photo negative upon another, creating his own imaginary landscape. In his videos and photographs, the interlude of one moment to the next cannot be counted in years or split seconds, but more so as an acculturation, or a time scape. His subjects have their roots in traditional landscape painting and drawing as seen in the watercolors of William Turner or the biblical paintings of El Greco. Tuori’s photographs abstract from the real, capturing nature’s infinite power of change from one frame to another. His images blur the lines between what we know as a photograph and what we feel to be a painting.



*Forest #34, 2017, pigment print, diptych, 189 × 250 cm*

## Helsinki School

The Helsinki School represents far more than a selected group of photographers who have either taught or graduated from Aalto University since the early 1990s until today. What began as an educational experiment eventually evolved into an artistic platform, representing five generations of artists who use the photographic process as a tool for conceptual thinking. Conceptually, there is a red thread connecting one generation to another by how they perceive and present their ideas but not necessarily in how they apply them. Sticking to a combination of many subjects, from landscape photography to a documentary-like style to purely abstract constructions. With over 140 books accredited to artists growing out of this school of thought, and an additional 5 volumes dedicated to its history, The Helsinki School represents one of the most unique photographic positions to evolve since the Düsseldorf School.

*Timothy Persons*

Exhibition view *Marked Sites* at Gallery Taik Persons, Berlin, 2017



Gallery  
Taik  
Persons

Lindenstr. 34, 10969 Berlin  
tel. +49 30 2888 3370  
[berlin@gallerytaikpersons.com](mailto:berlin@gallerytaikpersons.com)



Gallery  
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15:15



15:30