

PRESS RELEASE

Kaarina Kaikkonen
Are We Still Going On?

26 February – 28 October 2012



Conceived specifically for the former factory of Max Mara fashion company, now housing the Collezione Maramotti, the large installation *Are We Still Going On?* by Kaarina Kaikkonen follows and accompanies the compositional structure of the building, an interesting example of brutalist and organicist architecture from the 1950's.

The old entrance to the factory – where the artwork was created – is ideally divided into two areas; the horizontal beams in reinforced concrete linking the pillars, not only provide the space with an architectural rhythm, but also become part of the artist's work.

The installation is composed of two symmetrical structures evoking the skeleton of a large boat. The plain hull is subdivided into two sections developing from the ceiling down to touching the floor, with the same half-circular compositional rhythm created with garments tied and knotted together. As for the colour choice marking the two complementary structures, the garments evoke a symbolic dialogue between the masculine and the feminine: lighter on one side; with colder hues on the other. The whole ensemble exudes a colour combination of harmonious beauty.

When stepping into the large room, one may perceive, through the large glass panes, the greenery of the outside landscape, but if turning either left or right, there is the immediate impression of plunging into the work, as a sort a territory to explore, another

landscape. When walking around the work along its perimeter, the precise point where the outdoor and indoor meet gets lost: the deep loops of the circular volumes seem to strike a different dialogue with the landscape now acting as a backdrop.

The garments, which seem to be holding hands, also speak of the history of an important production place, not only for clothes but also for ideas, where employees and staff have all contributed to create and make this reality grow as a collective project. As such, the icon of the boat collects in itself this tension towards discovery and progress.

In Kaikkonen's works, objects become alive and speak to us of stories, of people. They also – and specifically – talk of her. They evoke frailness, but also hope and regeneration. They seem to evoke in viewers an emotional, personal experience, and at the same time a sort of mirroring, an identification in the community. The big installations represent a community of passing-through voices, in a dialogue with nature and social spaces, in their being the story of each and every one; a story openly conveying a universal feeling each of us may identify with, and draw what is perceived most intensively.

Alongside the monumental features of her works – always strongly imbued with the environmental and architectural elements surrounding them – there is also a core linked to the impermanence and frailty of materials somewhat pointing back to the frailty of human beings.

The movement of “coming and going” from something is a recurrent formal element in the artist's work – as we can also see in the works' titles – thus contributing to create a time bridge between past memories and their tension towards the future.

During the preparation of her work, the artist will also hold a lecture titled *Memories*, about her installation and her work in general, with the participation of Italian and foreign educators and scholars in visual art education. The talk has been organized in collaboration with Reggio Children.

The project has also seen the cooperation between the Embassy of Finland in Italy and the Italian Embassy in Helsinki with the intent of promoting cultural exchange between the two countries.

The work created for Collezione Maramotti is the first step of a project that will see the creation of a second installation, *Towards Tomorrow*, for the MAXXI-Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, conceived for the square of the Museum, and opening on 14 April 2012. As a big sail, the artwork will move with the wind linking one of the empty spaces on the outside profile of the museum and thus reshaping the building designed by Zaha Hadid.

Moreover, her solo exhibition *Having Hope* will open at the Z₂O Gallery in Rome on 24 February 2012.

Private view (by invitation only): 25 February 2012, 6.00pm.
The artist will be present.

26 February – 28 October 2012

The exhibition is free and can be visited during the normal opening hours of the Collezione Maramotti:

Thursday and Friday 2.30pm - 6.30pm

Saturday and Sunday 10.30am - 6.30pm

Closed: 25 April, 1 May, from 1 to 25 August

Info

Collezione Maramotti

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Kaarina Kaikkonen

Biography

Born in 1952 in Iisalmi, Finland

Lives and works in Helsinki

Recent exhibitions and site-specific projects (selection)

2011

As A Tree I Can Feel The Wind, project for Art Miami, Miami
A Connection, United States of Europe, FabrySTREFA, Lodz
(Poland)

The Gate, installazione per IL CAOS #3- I conflitti, 54: Biennale
di Venezia, Isola San Servolo, Venezia

Life Paths, Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki

Is There A Better Future? Critical Mass, International Public Art
Project, St. Petersburg

Hiding Memories, Humanscape, Spazio Museale di Palazzo
Tornielli, Ameno (Italy)

Memory – new international sculpture, Rosenfeld Porcini,
London

I Would Have Wanted To Blossom Out, Galerie Forsblom,
Helsinki

2010

Growing Connections, Vancouver Biennale, Vancouver
Networking, Bologna Art First, Piazza de' Calderini, Bologna
Hanging on to Each Other, 6th Liverpool Biennial, FACT,
Liverpool

Hiding Memories, No Longer Empty, Governors Island, New
York

Memory Traces, Ludwig Museum, Koblenz

Cosmos, Silkeborgbad Art Center, Silkeborg

2009

Changes of Directions, Tampere Museum of Contemporary Art,
Tampere

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Oulu Art Museum, Oulu

From Generation to Generation: Kaarina Kaikkonen,
Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, Roma

From Generation to Generation: Kaarina Kaikkonen, Galleria
Z₂O, Roma

2008

And It Was Empty, Cairo 11th Biennale, El Cairo

My Space, Palazzo Delle Arti Napoli, Napoli

Kaarina Kaikkonen, l'Espal, Le Mans

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Norrtälje Konsthall, Norrtälje

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Konsthallen Trollhättan, Trollhättan

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki

Forget-Me-Not, Korjaamo Culture Factory, Helsinki

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Örebro Konsthall, Örebro

2007

And It Was Empty, Art Museum, University of Wyoming, Laramie

Inner Borders, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Institut Finlandais, Paris

OH MY GOD, Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Vestfossen

2006

Like A Bridge Over Troubled Water, Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial, Niigata

Across the Deep, Bass Museum of Art, Miami

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Charlottenborg, Copenhagen

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Jyväskylä Art Museum, Jyväskylä

Reaching Far, Rochester Cathedral, Rochester

The Presence of Absence, Remy Toledo Gallery, New York

2005

Kaarina Kaikkonen, Helsinki Kunsthalle, Helsinki

Queen of Night, Artina Gallery, Helsinki

And It Was Empty, Galleri Stefan Andersson, Umeå

Fogelfrei, Stadt Paradies, Darmstadt

Une certaine Finland, atelier340muzeum, Bruxelles

2004

It Was Empty, Omniart, Art Basel-Miami, Miami

A Path, Umedalen Skulptur, Umeå

In The Darkness, Den Haag Sculptuur, Den Haag (Netherlands)

Den Gylde, Charlottenborg, Copenhagen

Postcards from Cuba, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo

2003

Departure, 8th Havana Biennial, Fortaleza Cabana, La Havana

Beyond Reach, Fabrica, Brighton

Like a Bird of Passage, Artina Gallery, Helsinki

Night Train, Kiasma Museum for Contemporary Art, Helsinki