

Filtti's chairwoman's blog

Towards corona summer

The covid-19 which has existed through this spring has changed our life in many ways. We have been forced to quiet down our everyday life by keeping distances to each other. In this time staying home has felt like restriction and duty.

The physical isolation might be the solution to our survival. The period has woken up the handicraft hobby to its new prime. Handicraft is truly the means of life control. Handicraft brings joy to life, when physical exercise has been restricted. You may find joy of felt making in many facebook groups, where makers post pictures and experiences. Maybe we could develop similar fun.

Covid-19 restrictions have developed also Filtti's activity. With a speedy schedule we were able to change the Three-dimensionality into virtual form. Soon we will see our exhibition via our new webpages. There are about 25 felt makers signed up for the exhibition plus our invited guests from Estonia. We will have many felt experiences.

The covid-19 spring requested people to have meetings via remote login. Filtti has been really ahead because we have had board meeting via Skype already for years. Working has been efficient, flexible and with minimal costs. This year we had the annual meeting also via Skype, but we hope this was an exception. The possibility to arrange an annual meeting makes our association real.

This summer will surely be a handicrafts summer of all times. we have time of all cancelled summer events to do more challenging work. In felt making there are unlimited amount of challenges as we will see in our exhibition video.

Let's make felt!

Eija

DISAPPEARING NATURE FELT EXHIBITION THE ICELANDIC AND FINNISH ARTISTS HANDLE THE EXHIBITION THEME AND PRESENT WIDELY THE VERSATILITY OF FELT

Group exhibition

Disappearing Nature

Galleries 10-11

06.06.20 – 20.09.20

The exhibition is a collaboration between Icelandic and Finnish artists, showing felted works made out of wool. They started working together in 2017 by installing the exhibition Northern Landscape in Jämsä, Finland, on the occasion of the centenary of the country's

independence.

The theme of this exhibition is the effect of climate change. Landscape disappears and changes. Nature has already changed and we don't know what lies ahead for future generations regarding these matters.

Participants: Anna Þóra Karlsdóttir, Gerður Guðmundsdóttir, Hanna Pétursdóttir, Heidi Strand, Olga Bergljót Þorleifsdóttir, Sigríður Ólafsdóttir, Sigríður Elfa Sigurðardóttir, Aaltio Leena, Anne-Mari Ohra-aho, Eeva Piesala, Elina Saari, Kikka Jelisejeff. Leena Sipilä, Mari Hämäläinen, Mari Jalava, Marika Halme, Marjo Ritamäki. Rea Pelto-Uotila, Rutsuko Sakata, Sirpa Mäntylä, Tiina Mikkilä AND Tupu Mentu. Curator: Anna Gunnarsdóttir.

All artist statement are listed here.

Finnish:

Leena Aaltio: "Where are we going..."

I'm inspired by nature's forms and phenomena and handling them very freely with feelings in my works. In this work I am worried about slowly disappearing plants, berries and seeds. Are they going to have space, power, suitable environment to grow in the future?

I also decided to use my storage only and not to buy anything for this work because of the nature.

Marika Halme: "Last chance to feel"

The idea for my exhibition work was found from the notoriously long list of endangered species in Finland's nature. The concern of how the species vanish – do we have still a possibility to feel nature...

Mari Hämäläinen: "From the ground I-II"

The different sides of the work describe life and growth. Stuff at the bottom, which we will lean on even the part on the ground will die, roots and the seeds remain and will revive to a new start.

The repetitive themes in my works are life's haphazardness and frailty.

Kikka Jelisejeff: "Beard moss"

When designing my work for the exhibition my thoughts returned always back to forest and trees. Trees are important part of nature's diversity and the beard moss in the trees of the old forest indicate the quantity of air pollution. The forest has always been a place of calmness and silence for me. I have taken all my sorrows to the nature church.

With this felt work I want to respect and thank nature.

Tupu Mentu: "The laughing owl and others lost"

I have embroidered a gravestone for birds which are extinct. The everyday chatter of sparrows in hawthorn fence or sounds of whooper swans which are about to migrate in a moonlight October night, are very important to me. I would wish them to survive. I would wish that the birds would not disappear.

Tiina Mikkilä: "Edge of the road"

Roadsides are growing points of meadow flowers and naturally the species by the roadsides are large. When the lupin takes over space, the situation of the soil nutrient changes and the original species are not longer successful. The richness disappears. The lupin is beautiful, but its fast and efficient spread is the threat to Finland's endemic plants.

Sirpa Mäntylä: "Ice floe"

The climate is warming and that makes the icebergs melt, sea level rises, lots animals are under the threat being extinct. Some day we will have only pictures and memories of what we once had.

Anne-Mari Ohra-aho: "When ice melts I-II"

When I designed my felt works my thoughts wandered to Polar circle and mainly glaciers melting and melting of ice as repetitive natural phenomenon. The exhibition theme aroused me to think what actually vanishes of natural; animals, plants, ice , water... Ice itself is beautiful, strong and even fragile – it might have stages of crackling, changing of color to disappearing and finally into water. Although, melting is interesting and beautiful, it is not appealing to large glaciers. On the contrary. But how could I myself even a little affect the fact that the globe is not getting warmer any longer and that way the glaciers, which are important to nature's balance, could survive.

Mari Jalava: "The diamond is fading"

White frost snow glitters in sunshine. Slowly it darkens. Air pollution tarnished our treasure, clean nature. Polar bears are in distress. Climate is getting warmer. Glaciers are melting.

Plastic waste bothers people, nature, animals. It kills. It follows as gloomy burden reminding us for a long time of people's thoughtlessness and greed.

Rea Pelto-Uotila: "The ice is melting"

Nature is disappearing around us. Climate change affects the entire ecosystem, and do we have enough time to stop the total catastrophe?

Ice and snow are melting, the beautiful whiteness disappears – and the emptiness remains.

Eeva Piesala: "Ground crater"

Nature takes what belong to it.

When, what, because, how or will it give up.

Nature only knows.

Marjo Ritamäki: "Four seasons"

1 awakening 2 joy and growth 3 amplification 4 acclimatization

Winter is time to quieten and for contemplation, until spring wakes up for light. Spring changes into growth, warmth and beauty of summer. Autumn is a long time to settle when winter gives again small promises of silence.

Rutsuko Sakata: "Dock"

When I go for a ramble in nearby forest, I come across lots of forms which look similar to each other like a shape of a tree and its branches, a shape of human, a horn or antler of animals and many plants like lichen.

These forms fascinate me to make those forms and get them together.

Elina Saari: "Silent witnesses"

Due to climate change the coral reefs belong to the most endangered ecosystems on the globe.

The warming and the acidification of oceans and the stimulus generalization of the extreme weather take colors off the corals and starve them to death.

In danger to become extinct as well as corals are over thousand fish species and tens of marine mammals.

Icelandic:

Gerður Guðmundsdóttir: Diffusion I-II

As the sun hibernates, winter takes over and snow falls over the glaciers covering them in a soft white blanket. Life thrives even here in this harsh environment. This world belongs to "glacier mice". These glacier mice are small pebbles that over time, develop a thin layer of moss. Subsequently they are covered in snow as they hop, slide and slip on the glacier surface. Offering protection from the icy cold, some of the glacier mice contain miniature ecosystems. With tiny organisms forming world within a world. Indeed, Mother Nature always takes care of her own. With spring, the glaciers melt, making cracks and rivulets on the surface, making them crawl onwards. The landscape changes with every slow movement of the ice.

Sigríður Ólafsdóttir: Disappearing Nature

The artwork is based on fact that the glaciers are melting, it consists of four pieces. The main piece, the largest one, has the same shape as glacier Vatnajökull, as it is today. The smaller pieces represent the future of the glacier's reduction. The small piece that is at the top of the work represents the glacier Tungnafellsjökull.

The melting of the glaciers affects many things in nature, including birds. The idea was to embroider some of the birds that it affected. I chose three birds, Langvia (urial eagle), Lunda

(*Fratercula artica*) and Kría (*Sterna paradisaea*). On Tunгнаfellsjökull is an embroidered bee. I found it important to include it in the work because the bees are one of the most important of all for us humans, without bees we could not survive.

Life would change a lot if the glaciers disappear, but the consequences may not be entirely obvious.

Hanna Pétursdóttir: Stream dance

The freedom of water fascinates me. Water goes its own way and asks neither for permission nor guidance. The idea is inspired by the forces of Icelandic nature. Nature has a big influence on my textile work both directly and indirectly.

It is important to me that we take good care of nature and are able to enjoy it. This art piece is inspired by the colors, sounds and power that a glacier flood creates in my mind. I try to capture how the water dances vigorously and creates its own unique stream.

Sigriður Elfa Sigurðardóttir: Hat Hummocks

There is nothing grandiose about the landscape of the unassuming and humble earth hummocks, dotted with dandelions and buttercups and an occasional forget-me-not.

These cold climate landforms can be found all over Iceland and although they have been considered through the ages as nothing more than an insignificant and difficult passage, they have always enchanted me. Just the first flowering dandelion in spring will give me great joy and a bright yellow field of dandelions and buttercups will create a deep happiness despite being deemed weeds – they enchant me. Each hummock is also a hat, an unassuming and humble clothing.

Olga Bergljót Þorleifsdóttir: 89 years

Life begins and life ends. The life span: childhood, youth, adulthood, senior years and finally death.

The 89 circles get bigger and grow like the individual, past midlife and from there they start decreasing to their original smaller size as time goes on. One can imagine that the circle sizes are references to the work ethics of each individual but one can also see life as something linear that moves up and down in rhythm to the individual's dedication to their growth and health. Each individual shapes his own environment and influences the changes that take place.

This work is dedicated to my mother, Kristjana Kristjánsdóttir, who passed away shortly before her 90th birthday (1921-2011). The circles are eighty nine and remind me of tree rings in the sense that each circle represents one year of her life.

Heidi Strand: A tear

Big part of the land have been flooded. The title is from the Icelandic National anthem.

Anna Þora Karlsdóttir: Dulur

Dulur, the Icelandic title for this artwork refuses a simple translation. The material is airy – outer fleece of Icelandic wool, originally engineered to repel water from the sheep's back – now evoking

impressions on the walls of the exhibition space through the transparent colors of the gossamer. An air-born aura might come close to explaining the name; cloths of beauty and mystery.

Jessica Hemmings, Professor of Crafts, HDK, University of Gothenburg

“When our President Sauli Niinistö met felt”

President Sauli Niinistö visited Kaija and Heikki Paltto's reindeer farm and Studio Felt cottage in Lemmenjoki (in Lapland) in March 2020. Heikki has been the vice chair for Sami Parliament and he was acting as host in 2017 in Inari. Then he invited the President to visit and get acquainted with Sami culture and reindeer farming in Lemmenjoki. Kaija and Heikki plan the visit for weeks before it actually happened. The visit was executed exactly with the Sami Parliament and the President official chambers.

The President arrived by helicopter to Paltto's yard. He had reserved only 3,5 hours for the visit. Ski holiday and the beautiful sunny spring day gathered the entire Paltto family outside: the entrepreneur couple, children and grand children welcome the guest. The grand children were ready to give flower bouquet.

After the welcome, the party moved to the felt studio when Kaija told about her felt works, her job as a housewife of the reindeer farm and the village history. The President discussed of current affairs with the chairman of the Sami Parliament and the commissioner of Inari municipality. When the official discussions were over, the President wanted to know about felt and how it is made. Felt making was unknown to the President and also to media representative, but they were interested, so Kaija took some wood fibers and showed how to make felt.

The they went to the mountains without the media representatives by pulling the sleigh with snowmobiles. They saw reindeer herd on mountains surrounded Lemmenjoki digging stuff to eat. The President was able to see reindeer farming in its real environment. Heikki was telling about the Lemmenjoki national park. The weather was at its best. You were able to see all the way to Norwegian side.

In a teepee owned by the national board of forestry the group enjoyed sautéed reindeer soup made by Kaija together with her daughter. The schedule for the visit was really tight. When the group returned to the Studio the President gave them a gift, a glass bird made by Oiva Toikka. Kaija and Heikki gave him in return a felted reindeer picture, which seemed to please the President, he said he would take it to his private cottage. The visit was a success. Later we received a thankyou letter, in which the President said that the trip to the mountain was memorable and Kaija's studio was impressive.

Humble thanks to Kaija for the work of a felt ambassador – once again the joyful message of felt reached valuable ground!

article by Leena Sipilä

In the newsletter there is an article of the Filtti new website pages by Anne-Mari Ohra-aho, the lady who edits Filtti books, poster, newsletters etc. No translation made, sorry.

Also a page of pics of felt making tools etc on sales. If you are interested, kindly contact info@filtti.fi

Backpage: a poster of the exhibition Three-dimensionality.

Have a happy, sunny summer

Sirpa