

Press release

Saara Ekström

Mnemonic

PORI ART MUSEM | WING 3 September – 23 November 2003

Saara Ekström (born 1965) is renowned for her works made of organic materials. Her strongly symbolic videos, photographs, drawings and installations often deal with the relationship between the physical and the spiritual world. In her organic works Ekström has used hair, flowers, intestines, pork, gastropods and oysters to depict our exposure to life and death, and encounters with suffering and longing. In her exhibition at the Pori Art Museum she adds the themes of time and memories to this list.

Ekström glues wallpaper ornaments that resemble the inkblots of the Rorschach tests into the corners of a room. Innocently decorative wallpaper patterns become tensely hysterical as they roll and open up from the corners of the room. Unexpectedly added object forms – familiar from Ekström's recent production – like airplanes and birds expand and analyse the wallpaper ornaments.

Similar ornamental stains are produced also with milk and coffee on different surfaces: tables, chairs and the floor. It seems as the accidentally fallen content of a milk glass had by chance spread into patterns full of significance. She calls the blotches prophecies, auguries. These photographic works were born during Ekström's trip to Rome, where image prophecies and miracles are of common ground. Ekström's milk photographs are characterised by a sense of transience. The milk blotch's removable nature compares to milk's symbolical value as the first nourishment.

The thematic point of departure in the exhibition – even if distant – is in the artist's own childhood memories. More precisely in the summer cottage build by her grandfather and father: memories of the curtains swinging in the wind, light filtering through the curtains onto the opposite wall and light spots uniting to wallpaper patterns, arriving to the cottage in dark with flashlight and the light beam moving in familiar walls. Memories flood into mind, but what kind of memories? The exhibition's title MNEMONIC signifies a word, abbreviation, rhyme, or similar verbal device to aid memory.

For more information on the exhibition please contact curator Hannele Kolsio, tel +358 2 621 1083, fax +358 2 621 1091, email hannele.kolsio@pori.fi. A documentary publication of the exhibition will be published on week 38.