

Markus Kåhre to Curate the 2022 Mänttä Art Festival

Markus Kåhre (born in 1969) has been appointed curator of the XXVI Mänttä Art Festival, which will take place in the summer of 2022. Kåhre is an accomplished sculptor, who graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts at the turn of the millennium. His work has been recognised through awards such as the prestigious Ars Fennica. With roots in Åland and Helsinki, Kåhre's pieces have been exhibited both in Finland and abroad. His work is also included in important art collections. Since the 1990s, Kåhre has been one of the contributing artists at three Mänttä Art Festivals.

'For me, art is a means to examine interesting things', Kåhre says. 'My identity as an artist is not connected to a certain material or style – everything revolves around ideas. I also like to interpret things through space and form. How we conceive ourselves in a space and how we move in it fascinates me.'

'My journey as an artist is characterised by chance – in fact, I even became an artist kind of by accident', Kåhre reveals. 'At the Academy of Fine Arts, it came as a revelation to me that each piece of art should involve a challenge or a question that the artist is searching for an answer for. It is important for an artist to keep examining ideas and doing headwork. It could be said that I am an idealist who always strives to create the perfect work of art, which is, of course, impossible. I have failed numerous times, but it has been aiming towards something more that has mattered the most.'

'This view applies to the 2022 Art Festival, as well. I don't think we will be able to fully realise the ideal exhibition that we are aspiring to, but we can still attain something that we wouldn't if it wasn't for these aspirations. I have told the artists that I will be happiest if they pursue something that isn't guaranteed to succeed, as long as they come up with something new and surprising in the process.'

'In regard to how he picked the artists for next summer, Kåhre says, 'It started with a vision of creating a shared space in Pekilo, rather than defined spaces for each work of art. I then began considering artists who could provide pieces that would be interactive in different ways.'

'Another key criterion was that the artists should be prepared to step out of their comfort zones and challenge themselves. To create a dialogical connection, we got together with this highly diverse group of artists at a very early stage. The role of a curator is actually somewhat uncomfortable for me, and I don't wish to draw attention to myself', Kåhre says. 'After all, it is the artists who create the foundation for the exhibition, not the curator.'

'I hope that visitors to the XXVI Mänttä Art Festival will feel excitement and wonder at discovering a new way of presenting things. I also hope that each visitor will be personally touched by the exhibition in one way or another and that they will be left hungry for more artistic experiences.'

The Mänttä Art Festival is the largest summer exhibition of Finnish contemporary art. The award-winning Mänttä Art Festival is a destination regarded highly by art professionals and much loved by the general public. XXVI Mänttä Art Festival will be organized on 12 Jun-31 Aug 2022. The featured artists of the 2022 exhibition will be announced later.

Further Details:

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