

# LARS HOLMSTRÖM

01.02.2014

**Visual artist;** paintings, graphics, tectons and mixed media works  
(b. 1949 Tampere) Lives and works in Tampere, Finland

## **CURRICULUM VITAE (selected)**

- 1949** Born in Tampere, Finland
- 1973** Graduated from the Lahti Art School, painter, City of Lahti, Finland
- 1977** A member of the Association of Finnish Printmakers, Finland
- 1980** A member of the Finnish Painters' Union, Finland
- 1980-90, 82-90** Teacher and director of the Kankaanpää Art School, Kankaanpää, Finland
- 1992-05** Chairman of the Tampere Artists' Association, Finland
- 1991-92** Director of the Art Department in the Tampere School of Art and Media, Tampere, Finland
- 1997** Prize in The International Mini Print, Cadaques, Spain
- 2005** Third prize in the 10<sup>th</sup> European Biennial Competition for Graphic Art, Brügge, Belgium
- 2012** Prize in the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Biennale of Graphic Digital Arts – Gdynia, Poland

**Several scholarships from Finnish State and foundations.**

## **SOLO EXHIBITIONS IN FINLAND (selected)**

- 2013** Gallery G12Helsinki, Helsinki, Gallery Saskia, Tampere
- 2012** "I.X.", Tampere Hall, Winter Garden, Tampere
- 2011** "spatial functions", Alvar Aalto Museum, Gallery, Jyväskylä
- 2010** "Hommage á Nordgren", Tampere Hall, Winter Garden, Tampere
- 2009** "LX", Mältinranta Art Center, Tampere, Varkaus Art Museum, Varkaus
- 2008** "Tempo", Tampere Hall, Winter Garden, Tampere
- 2007** Willa Mac, Finnish Modern Art Museum, Tampere, Finland
- 2006** Werstas, Central Museum of Labour in Finland, Tampere
- 2005** Art Salon Husa, Tampere
- 2004** Gallery Uusitalo, Helsinki
- 2002** "...evol...", Bang&Olufsen Gallery, Tampere, (L. Holmström, S. Syrjänen)
- 2001** Gallery G, Helsinki
- 2000** Photographic Centre Nykyaika, Tampere

## **SOLO EXHIBITIONS ABROAD (selected)**

- 2010** "Atelier – Ausstellung", Künstlerhaus Schloss Wiepersdorf, Germany
- 2009** Galleri Kronan, (L. Holmström, S. Syrjänen), Norrköping, Sweden
- 2004** Kim Nae Hyun Art Gallery, Kuyngki-Do, Seoul, Korea

## **INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS (selected)**

- 2013** Land-Art "insomnia", Ignis and Satra Mountain, Maramures, Romania  
3. KurzfilmForum–Kreuzberg, Berlin, Germany
- 2012** 3<sup>rd</sup> International Biennale of Graphic Digital Arts – Gdynia, Poland  
7<sup>th</sup> International Print Triennale Colour in Graphic Art, Torun, Poland  
International Print Exhibition Yunnan 2012, Kunming City, China
- 2011** ART EDITION 2011, Seoul International Art Fair, Seoul, Korea  
8<sup>th</sup> Kochi International Triennial Exhibition of Prints, Kochi, Japan  
Interbifep XIV, International Biennial Festival of Portrait, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 2010** 2<sup>nd</sup> International Biennale of Graphic Digital Arts – Gdynia, Poland
- 2009** 12<sup>th</sup> European Biennial Competition for Graphic Art, Brügge, Belgium  
SIPA 2009, Seoul International Print Art Fair, Seoul, Korea  
6<sup>th</sup> International Print Triennale Colour in Graphic Art, Torun, Poland  
7<sup>th</sup> British International Miniature Print Exhibition, London, UK
- 2008** International Print Exhibition Yunnan 2008, Kunming City, China  
BIMPE V, 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition, Vancouver, Canada  
International Art Exhibition, "Nord Art 2008", Búdelsdorf, Germany  
Naestved International Exhibition of Contemporary Mini Square Prints, Naestved, Denmark
- 2007** Gyeongnam International Art Festival 2007, Gyeong Nam State Museum, Masan, Korea  
International Art Exhibition, "Nord Art 2007", Búdelsdorf, Germany
- 2006** 5<sup>th</sup> International Print Triennale Colour in Graphic Art: Now! Torun, Poland  
6<sup>th</sup> British International Miniature Print Exhibition, Dumfries, UK  
International Art Exhibition, "Nord Art 2006", Búdelsdorf, Germany
- 2005** Kochi International Triennial Exhibition of Prints, Kochi, Japan  
International Art Exhibition, Nord Art 2005, "Art of Mystery", Búdelsdorf, Germany  
Corpus05 – European Biennial for Graphic Art, Brügge, Belgium
- 2004** 13<sup>th</sup> Tallinn Print Triennial, Tallinn, Estonia

- 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of "Premio Citta' di Laives-2004, Laives, Italy  
 10<sup>th</sup> Seoul Print Art Fair, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, Korea  
 International Print Exhibition, Horst Janssen Museum, Oldenburg, Germany  
**2003** 4<sup>th</sup> International Print Triennale, "Colour in Graphic Art", Torun, Poland  
 International Print Triennial, Krakow 2003, Cracow, Poland  
 "European Culture Integration Bridge", Lavra Gallery, Kiev, Ukraina  
**2002** "Intergrafia - 2000", Torun City Museum, Torun, Poland  
 International Contemporary Print Arts Exhibition, Sungsan Art Hall, Changwon, South Korea  
 The 12<sup>th</sup> Space International Print Biennial, Sungkok Museum, Seoul, South Korea  
**2001** "Triennial Continents", Ksiaz Castle Gallery, Wabrzzych, Poland  
 Triennial 100 Cities Suwalki 2001, Art and Culture Regional Center, Poland  
 "The European Contemporary Prints", Kim Nae Hyun Art Gallery, Goyang-city, South Korea  
**2000** International Print Exhibition, "Colour in Graphic Art", Torun, Poland  
 International Print Triennial, Krakow 2000, "Bridge to the Future", Cracow, Poland  
 "Intergrafia - 2000", World Awards Winners Gallery, Katowice, Poland  
 International Print Triennial, Krakow 2000, Nürnberg, Germany

#### **GROUP EXHIBITIONS ABROAD (selected)**

- 2011** Festivals Übereck-Art 2011, Kurzfilm-Forum, Berlin, Germany  
**2010** "Salonausstellung", Künstlerhaus Schloss Wiepersdorf, Wiepersdorf, Germany  
**2008** "love without boundaries", Galerie kritiku, Prague, Czech Republic  
**2007** "CHEM-Gruppe", (10 artists from Tampere) New Saxon Gallery, Chemnitz, Germany  
**2006** "OM", (J. Arffman, L. Holmström, P. Nuutinen, M. Pirilä), Gallery Caesar, Olomouc, Czech Republic  
**2006** "Fragile", Nordiska Konstförbundet, Konsträrshuset, Stockholm, Sweden  
**2004** Contemporary Finnish Graphic Art, NordicHouse Gallery, Cracow, Poland  
**2002** "koemieskoe", (L. Holmström, R. Mörö, H. Riskula), Tartu Art Museum, Tartu, Estonia

#### **WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS (selected)**

##### **In Finland:**

The State of Finland  
 The Collections of The Parliament House of Finland, Helsinki  
 Kiasma, Modern Art Museum, Helsinki  
 Amos Anderson Art Museum, Helsinki  
 Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki  
 Sara Hildén Art Museum, Tampere  
 Tampere Art Museum, Tampere  
 Tampere Contemporary Art Museum, Tampere  
 Wäinö Aaltonen Art Museum, Turku  
 Turku Art Museum, Turku  
 Hämeenlinna Art Museum, Hämeenlinna  
 Alvar Aalto Museum, Jyväskylä  
 Aine Art Museum, Tornio  
 Pori Art Museum, Pori  
 Varkaus Art Museum, Varkaus  
 Kerava Art Museum, Kerava  
 Kuopio Art Museum, Kuopio

##### **Abroad:**

Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Skärhamn, Sweden  
 Capo Frio Empragel, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
 Howard Miller Collection, USA  
 Matti Milius Collection, Tartu, Estonia  
 Västerbottens läns landsting, Sweden  
 City of Linköpingin, Linköping, Sweden  
 Landstinget Västernorrland, Sweden  
 Kanagawa Arts Foundation, Kanagawa, Japan  
 Arvika Art Museum, Arvika, Sweden  
 Tartu Art Museum, Tartu, Estonia

##### **Commissioned works (selected):**

- 2008** "J", iron construction / relief, Junttan, Kuopio, Finland  
**2002** "Dynamis", relief painting / sculpture, Foster Wheeler Energy, Varkaus, Finland

# LARS HOLMSTRÖM

## The Unseen for us does not Exist

In his essay *In Praise of Shadows* Japanese author Junichiro Tanizaki contemplates visible and shrouded beauty. He writes: "The unseen for us does not exist".

For Tanizaki shadows that dim the light and blur the contours have their own special quality. They allow the ones in the shadow to remain there and retain their inherent beauty. An artwork contains a hidden quality, an essence withdrawn in shadows, and it must be accepted as such. The intentions of an artist do not necessarily, if ever, meet with the expectations of a viewer. It is not even important, if we deny the existence of the invisible, as Tanizaki does.

It is difficult to empty an artwork of its meaning and contents, its position and relation to the traditions of art as well as to its social existence. Everything being connected to everything else calls for the exposure of all these connections.

Nevertheless, each artwork contains the unseen, which does not exist for us, unless it is handed to us in interpretations, analyses and theoretic concepts.

When Lars Holmström, painter and graphic artist, names one of his artworks *Sarkofagos* (2009), the viewer must believe that the name bears a meaning and that the medium, the work itself, carries a message. None the less, there remains also the invisible in the work, something that does not exist for us.

Holmström does us a favour by interpreting his work. The initial impulse came from a Chinese aphorism: "The best gift for a 60-year-old man is a coffin." He found it in an exhibition in Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere and realized that soon he himself would turn 60.

*Sarkofagos* is both a constructivist artwork and an object suitable for mass production. He has used his own measurements to make it a fathom long (about 183 cm) and wide enough to fit a person, but from inside it is barely spacious enough to hold a corpse. The rectangular object is open from both ends in order to facilitate the placement of a corpse and to secure its tight closure.

The surface of *Sarkofagos* has a two-layered structure, and it has been painted with black and grey metallic paints. Energetic colour areas of white and empire red radiate from the depths. Mirror image of the viewer is reflected from the metal bolts on the surface.

It is permitted to laugh at Death.

*Sarkofagos*, however, is not merely an object with an imaginable practical function. It is also an artwork, in which culminate the various stages of development and change in Lars Holmström's expression. After he refined his style under Concrete art and Constructivism he has gradually detached himself from the geometric lyrics of his paintings and serigraphies. He has moved towards three-dimensional, sculptural pieces, the plasticity of which is completely different from the surface-bound, three-dimensionally unfolding paintings and prints.

The work *XXIII* from 2006 is a relief painting, which already demonstrates the spatial and material solutions brought further in *Sarkofagos*.

The work is massive but light. By its structure it reminds us of an old elementary school handicraft where you pass lengths of material over and under one another. In *XXIII* the passing is done with solid vertical masses and thin horizontal arrow-like rods. Although the work may bring to mind school memories from decades back, it does not mean that they are visible or perceivable by everybody. They are associations demonstrating how the recipient may confront the work and enable the unseen to exist.

Tying the work in with the viewer's, i.e. interpreter's own history does not make it more "real" than when it is allowed to be a physical object an sich, without any connotation.

Lars Holmström is known as a consistent serigrapher with a clearly recognizable expression.

Digital technology and new means of image processing have opened new dimensions for him to do his graphic work. He has named his recent prints digital graphics. In his works he has used various graphics programs and three different methods. Constructivist works follow the line of his serigraphies. At the moment, synthetic methods combining originals and photographs offer him the most interesting options. They open up the best means of expressing various visual goals.

The three works in Ritualis G –series demonstrate how rich is the outcome achieved by this method. The starting point of each work has been a commonplace object, which has been scanned onto a computer screen, a kind of an operating table. He then has played the part of a surgeon or an instrument nurse and cultivated his materials further. Tools and incisions are carefully deliberated and the result is surprisingly aesthetic.

Although the works in the Ritualis-series do not intentionally seek to create optical illusions, they still open up fascinating depth dimensions for a focused viewer.

The series of digital graphics called C from 2004 appear to be a logical follow-up for his strictly geometric serigraphies. The works test the eyes of the viewer. They act as stereoscopic pictures, where movements of the eyes make three-dimensional forms pop into view. Forms can emerge towards the viewer or recede into the background.

The works in C-series test the recipient's stereoscopic vision, the very image how the work is perceived. With these particular works Tanizaki's sentence becomes true: the unseen for us does not exist.

But supposing the viewer actually sees what does not exist?

It results in a genuine heureka experience, the one that reveals the deep, gratifying force of the art itself.

### **Maila-Katriina Tuominen**

Journalist, Culture and Human rights  
Tampere, May 2009

Quotation: Junichiro Tanizaki: Inei raisan (1933-34), translated in English by Thomas J. Harper and Edward G. Seidensticker: In Praise of Shadows (1977)

Jyrki Siukonen: Varjojen ylistys, Taide Publishers, Helsinki 1997

Eduard Klopfenstein: Lob des Schatten

Julia Escobar: El elogio de la sombra