



## HOMO LUDENS – PLAYFUL MAN

HARRI KIVI IS A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL PERSON, AN INNOVATOR IN THE FIELD OF ART AND ONE OF THE MOST ORIGINAL ARTISTS IN FINLAND. HIS STUNNING OPTICAL WORKS, SENSUOUS MICROUNIVERSES, ARE LIKE ALLUSIONS TO DISTANT SOLAR SYSTEMS. FREE FROM CANONIZATIONS OF ART, KIVI'S WORKS MOVE IN BETWEEN SCULPTURES AND PAINTINGS, AS IF TAKING THE VIEWER TO THE LAST ROOMS OF SPACELY WATERWAYS. TO HIM, THE OPTICAL UPSIDE-DOWN TURNED COSMOSES ARE SYMBOLS OF ENIGMATIC EXISTENCE.

LIGHT, TIME, SPACE, ENCHANTMENT, COMFORT AND MEDITATION ARE ALL ESSENTIAL FOR IDENTITY IN THE WORKS FULL OF VITALITY AND COLOR. KIVI ANSWERS TO THE WORLD THE SAME WAY AS FERNAND LÉGER: "WHEN LIFE IS AT ITS CRUELEST YOU NEED TO FIND HOW TO PLAY." THE PATH OF KIVI'S PRODUCTION IS UNCOMPROMISINGLY INIMITABLE AND SELF-MOTIVATED AND HAS NO EQUIVALENT IN FINLAND. HIS PRODUCTION HAS BEEN LINKED TO ESPECIALLY ARTISTS LIKE JEFF KOONS, YAYOI KUSAMA, AND ANISH KAPOOR.

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## SCULPTOR OF CLOUD SHIPS

THE VISUAL ARTIST HARRI KIVI HAS INFLUENCED THE ART LIFE IN A CHEERFUL AND ADDICTIVELY SHARP WAY ON A BROAD FRONT, AND FOR A LONG TIME. MANY OF HIS PROJECTS, SUCH AS A KAUPPALA, PUSKA, AND TERVETULOJA MEILLE, HAVE IN MANY WAYS BEEN FULL WEIGHT COMMUNITY ART. MYRSKY, IN PARTICULAR, A PROJECT OF HIS DESIGN, HAS HAD FAR-REACHING POSITIVE REFLECTIONS TO SOCIOCULTURAL LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

IN ADDITION TO EXPLICIT AND CONCRETE COMMUNITY ART, HARRI KIVI IS A PAINTER FIRST AND FOREMOST: IN THIS FIELD HIS WORK DIVIDES INTO TWO INTERESTING SECTIONS: HE HAS BROUGHT THE ORNAMENTS AND SMALL FORMS BACK TO THE VISUAL ARTS YET GIVING THEM ADDITIONAL "SHINE", WHICH HAS OFTEN BEEN, UNFORTUNATELY, INTERPRETED JUST "AS BEFORE". HIS PAINTING PRODUCTION, IN ADDITION TO THIS, HAS PURSUED FOR DIMENSIONS, WHICH DO NOT LOOK LIKE TRADITIONAL PAINTING, BUT BRING OUT THE MULTI-LAYERED REFLECTIONS OF SURFACES, THUS HEADING THE COLOR OUT OF THE MATTER – BETWEEN THE SURFACES. ELEGANTLY HE HAS CAPTURED THE POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSPARENT COLOR.

IN HARRI KIVI'S RECENT WORKS, PLASTIC DOMES HAVE OPENED UP, TURNING TOWARDS THE VIEWER. NOW THEY STARE AT THE RECIPIENT WITH GAPING REFLECTIONS. THE DARK LACE OF THE KARELIAN BYZANTINE MARKETPLACE HAS BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY ITS AMAZED AND UNENCRYPTED OPPOSITE. KIVI HAS EMPTIED THE SQUARE, REFLECTING THE COLOR IN ELLIPSES OF LIGHT TOWARDS THE VIEWER'S SPACE. THE CLOUD SHIPS' GAZE TURNS THE VIEWER INSIDE OUT, INSIDE A CORNER OF AN EYE OF A TRANSPARENT DOME.

THE INNER LIFE OF A CLOUD SHIP IS CLEAR AND FLOATING IN LIGHT. AT TIMES THE STOMACH OF THE SHINGING BUCKET IS EMPTY – AT TIMES IT BECOMES FILLED WITH BOUNCING METAMORPHOSES OF COLORS. IN THE EARLIER WORKS OF HARRI KIVI THE COSMOS CLOSED LAYER BY LAYER, TURNING THE PLASTIC DOME OF ARCHITECT ALVAR AALTO INTO ITS OPPOSITE, A DARK LACED MICROCOSMOS. NOW THE CONSTRUCTIVE AMAZEMENT BECOMES A DISH THAT DEMANDS REFLECTION. THE WANDERING EYE OF COLORS EXAMINES THE VIEWER IN AMPLE CURVES. THE REFLECTIONS ARE LOCATED SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE THE WORK – AND YET IN THE HERENESS OF THE GLARE.

BUT WHERE IS THE SURFACE, EXCLAIMS THE BEHOLDER OF KIVI'S WORK. "WE ONLY SEE DEPTH!" WHERE THE STRUCTURES TURN INTO GLARE, WE CANNOT PERCEIVE THE SURFACE FROM REFLECTIONS. SCHEIN, ILLUSION (LUME), IS AN INTENTIONAL GOAL. CONSTRUCTIVE ILLUSION, THE ILLUSION OF A SPHERICAL GOTHIC WINDOW, THE SHAPELESS ILLUSION OF ROMANTICISM, THE ILLUSION OF POMPEIAN RED, THE LUMEN (LIGHT, HOLE, CAVITY).

ALTTI KUUSAMO, PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY

## THE TASK OF THE ARTIST

I'VE OFTEN HEARD IT SAID THAT ARTISTS ARE EXTRAVAGANT AND CRAZY AND LACKING SENSE. IN HARRI KIVI THIS MADNESS CONNECTED TO ARTISTS TAKE PLACE EXACTLY AS I UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT IT, REFERRING TO GREAT SENSITIVITY, INTELLIGENCE, COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE TO TAKE THE RISK. IN ITS EXTREMITY, THESE ARE PRECISELY THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT FORCE SOME OF THE ARTISTS TO COMPLETE THEIR DEEPEST PERCEPTION. ART COMES INTO EXISTENCE THROUGH ONE'S MENTAL ACTIVITY, A COLLABORATION OF SENSE AND SENSIBILITY. CREATIVE WORK REQUIRES OBSERVING, COMPARING AND DETECTION OF DIFFERENCES. NEW ART MUST BE CREATED TO MEET THE NEW NEEDS: WHEN THE SOCIETY CHANGES, SO DOES THE MESSAGE AND THE IMPACT OF ART.

THE ARTIST'S TASK IS TO SPREAD THE MENTAL PLEASURE, TO DRIVE OUR CIVILIZATION FURTHER AND TO OPEN UP NEW AESTHETIC AND ETHICAL EXPERIENCES OF VALUES. AMONG HARRI KIVI'S PRODUCTION, EACH PIECE OF WORK IS AN INDIVIDUAL WITH ITS OWN EXCLUSIVE CHARACTERISTICS. CULTURE IS AN ACTIVITY WHERE THE QUALITIES ARE PUT AGAINST EACH OTHER, A FIELD WHERE ACTIVITY CAN BE SEEN AS A BATTLEFIELD OF VALUES. THE DILEMMA OF AN ARTIST IS A METAPHYSICAL ONE: HIS GOAL IS TO FIND THE TRUTH, WHICH HE CANNOT FIND, BUT ALONG THE JOURNEY HE WILL SEE SOMETHING THAT OTHERS DO NOT SEE. THE UNIVERSAL CAN ONLY BE TOUCHED THROUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. THE RECIPIENT OF ART MUST BE ABLE TO HAVE CONFIDENCE, THAT THE ARTIST DOESN'T FLIRT WITH THE PRESUMED GENERAL TASTE, BUT STAYS TRUE TO HIMSELF, PRESERVING HIS INDEPENDENCE.

JORMA UOTINEN, PROFESSOR

## A NEW ROUTE IN ART DISTRIBUTION

THE ARTIST'S HEADQUARTERS AND SHOWROOM ARE LOCATED IN HELSINKI, FINLAND.

HARRI KIVI SHOWROOM IS A NOVEL EXHIBITION PRACTICE – WARM AND WELCOMING MARRIAGE OF SALON AND GALLERY. THE WORKS CAN BE PURCHASED DIRECTLY FROM THE PRIMARY PRODUCER, THE ARTIST HIMSELF.

WELCOME!

TRANSLATED BY: MIKAEL BRYGGER, POET