

PRESS RELEASE

Esko Männikkö
Time Flies
A Highlight

17 May – 27 September 2015



Collezione Maramotti presents fifty photographs by Esko Männikkö, chosen to emphasize the similarities and consonance of his research with the Collection. Some of the works were exhibited in 2014 in the retrospective *Time Flies* at the Kunsthalle Helsinki, with which the Collection has cooperated for this exhibition project.

Time as presence/absence, crystallized in its images, is central to Männikkö's poetics, as well as his masterly use of light and the extreme attention to composition, bestowing a sort of metaphysical suspension to his work.

These substantial and formal elements have made several critics compare his work to Renaissance portraiture and the tonal, compositional and luministic qualities of Vermeer's paintings. The frames, found in local markets or made with reused wood, specifically for the exhibition, are an essential visual part of the work and not an ancillary component, as they link his work to painting tradition.

The favourite subjects of his photographs are objects, places, people and life styles, which are familiar to the artist, while at the same time reflecting humankind's universal traits.

His approach is full of deep respect and sensitivity, never focusing on documentation, but rather on the search for empathy, a real contact exalting the beauty of everyday

ordinary aspects. Even the humblest and weakest subjects are never victims, but are depicted in their full dignity.

The compositional rhythm of the artist's exhibitions is quite peculiar: although each picture is self-contained, they are often part of a series, which in their turn open a dialogue with other and constantly evolving series.

Here we present photographs shot from 1991 to 2013, and taken from several series.

Female Pike (1995–), which made him famous, focussing on portraits of bachelors in the remotest areas around Helsinki; *Organized Freedom* (late Nineties–), photographs of deserted places and traces of human presence between Finland, Texas and Reggio Emilia;

Flora & Fauna (2002–), where still lives reveal the inextricable relationship between the human being and nature, and between nature and culture;

Harmony Sisters (2004–), dedicated to details of stuffed and tamed animals;

Blues Brothers (2009–), homage to funerary sculptures eroded by time, mainly in Italian cemeteries.

Esko Männikkö, who taught himself photography, has lived in the north, and for a long time was considered an outsider in contrast with the research trends and traditional photography of the time. Despite that he has become one of Finland's most famous photographers at international level.

The artist continues to call himself “hunter, collector of pictures”, his approach shapes an endless self-portrait, a collection becoming a mirror and reflection of its creator, indissolubly linked to its author and, at the same time, interpreter of a universal human feeling.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication with a text by Maija Koskinen, an expert on Esko Männikkö's work and curator of the exhibition *Time Flies*.

Private view by invitation: 16 May 2014 h. 6.00pm, in the presence of the photographer.

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The exhibition, with free admission, can be visited in the opening hours of the permanent collection.

Thursday and Friday 2.30 – 6.30 pm

Saturday and Sunday 10.30 am – 6.30 pm

Closed: from 1 to 25 August

Info

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Biographical notes

Esko Männikkö (born in Pudasjärvi, Finland, in 1959) lives and works in Oulu (Finland), on the Finnish side of the Arctic Circle.

In 1995 he was chosen as “Young Artist of the Year” by the town of Tampere and Tampere Art Museum, and became well known at international level.

His recent solo exhibitions comprise: Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York (2015, 2011); Turku Art Museum (2014); Kunsthalle Helsinki (2014); Galerie Nordenhake, Berlin and Stockholm (2013, 2011, 2010). Of his latest group exhibitions: Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Stockholm (2014); Lens on Twelve, London (2012); Kunsthall Rotterdam (2010); Fotografia Europea, Reggio Emilia (2010); DESTE Foundation, Athens – Ellipse Foundation, Cascais – Maison Rouge, Paris – Magasin 3, Stockholm (2010).