



SARAH NAKIITO

LIISA-IRMELEN  
LIWATA

# Still | Rise

6.9.2025 – 7.2.2026

KUNSTHALLE  
SEINÄJOKI

Exhibition Guide

# Still | Rise

Taking its title from **Maya Angelou's** iconic poem *And Still I Rise* (1978), this exhibition by **Sarah Nakiito** and **Liisa-Irmelen Liwata** weaves together two practices rooted in resilience, ancestral memory, and the ever-evolving act of self-definition. Their works navigate the emotional and political terrain of survival, where defiant hope, tactile materiality, and deeply personal mythologies converge.

Sarah Nakiito's practice is shaped by the duality of her lived experience between Sweden and Uganda. Her works examine contrasting cultural responses to crisis, drawing attention to the instinctive collectivism in migrant and diasporic communities versus the individualism often present in Western contexts. This tension is embodied through her use of bark cloth: Olubugo, a traditional Ugandan material, is interwoven with the inner bark of the linden tree—once vital in Swedish pre-industrial society. This fusion creates a living, breathing textile—one that charts the convergence of Nakiito's layered identities and histories. Her work resists erasure, not only honoring tradition but actively sustaining it as a contemporary, evolving practice.

Liisa-Irmelen Liwata's work turns inward and skyward. Rooted in the concept of *napa*—the Finnish word for “belly button”—her practice explores the navel as both physical origin and central point of orientation. This duality becomes a metaphorical compass, guiding an exploration of cultural identity, bodily memory, and belonging. Through symbolic instruments of navigation—compasses, celestial charts, and “belly button stars”—Liwata constructs a personal cartography. Her work traces constellations in the Northern and Southern sky, whose polar stars guide you in the right direction. At the same time Liwata maps parallel cosmic landscapes that reflect her own hybridity.

Together, Nakiito and Liwata create a space of open inquiry and assertive presence. Nakiito's practice channels collective empowerment—an urgent act of rising and reclaiming space in the world. Liwata, by contrast, invites slow introspection, valuing the questions that emerge over any singular conclusion. As their practices intersect, viewers are drawn into a dynamic space: one of witnessing, reflection, and quiet rebellion.

Text by Elham Rahmati and Vidha Saumya

**SARAH NAKIITO**, a former migration scholar turned artist, utilizes textiles and performance to navigate the experience of being a black woman in a diaspora. Her practice operates in the borderlands of textiles, installation, costume design, performance and video, where Nakiito explores corporeality, memory and resistance in relation to colonial and inherited structures.

The practice is interdisciplinary and moves between traditional craft techniques and spatial expressions such as scent, sound and ritual gesture – the personal is intertwined with historical, political and social layers through an exploration of storytelling techniques and narrative structures.

**LIISA-IRMELEN LIWATA** is a Finnish-Congolese visual artist based in Helsinki, Finland. Liwata uses sculpture and writing to explore the relationship people have with land from nationalistic and geographical perspectives. Her pieces feature lyricism between the body, land and language and the liminal nature of being.

She works mostly with ceramics using a painterly technique, creating images on clay surfaces by pressing and sliding different coloured clays. The method is a combination of printmaking, collage work and finger painting.

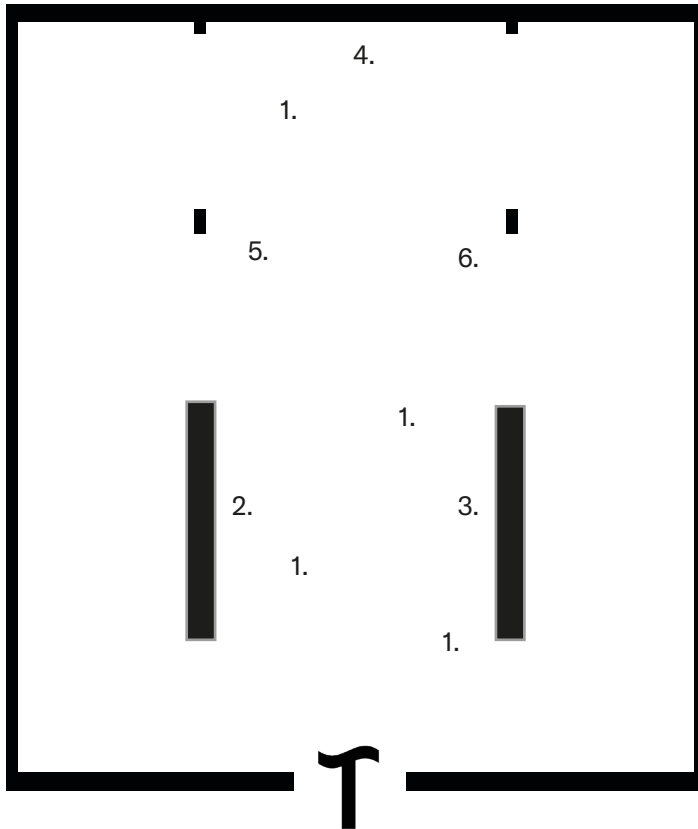
Liwata has graduated from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in 2024. She has a BA degree from Aalto University School of Art. She is the recipient of the Outi and Jan Vapaavuori Foundation's award for The Young Visual Artist in 2024.

## CURATORS

**ELHAM RAHMATI** (b. 1989, Tehran) is a visual artist and independent curator based in Helsinki. She is the co-founder and co-editor of NO NIIN, an independent online monthly magazine at the cusp of art, criticality, and love.

**VIDHA SAUMYA** (b. 1984, Patna) is an artist-poet based in Helsinki. She is the co-founder and co-editor of NO NIIN Magazine and a founding member of the Museum of Impossible Forms.

# Exhibition space Vintti



## THANKS

Elina Teitti  
Fred Mutebi  
Jose Hendo  
Tomas & Karin Auran Frankenstein  
Annelie Nilsson  
Anita & Lars Larsby  
Elizabeth Nasimbwa  
Saba Nakibingye Olsson  
Miriam Nabunya  
James Weere  
Ali Akbar Mehta  
Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen  
Meri Hallenberg  
Emilia Niskasaari  
Paulo Foundation  
Art Promotion Centre Finland  
Finnish Heritage Agency

## KUNSTHALLE SEINÄJOKI

Art curator Laura Laukkanen  
Art producer Pii Anttila  
Technician Miika Vainionkulma  
Technician assistant Alan Bulfin  
Producer for public programmes  
Ruu Kumpulainen  
Art Educator Heidi Katajamäki

## LIISA-IRMELEN LIWATA

1. Napa-alueet | Pole areas  
2025  
ceramics, bronze, brass  
installation  
size varies

2. Napatähdistö | Pole Star (Octavius)  
2025  
bronze  
installation  
size varies

3. Napatähdistö | Shooting Star  
(Southern Cross)  
2025  
bronze  
installation  
size varies

4. Kompassi osoittaa navan suunnan  
| Compass pointing to the pole  
2025  
video

The installation consists of two constellations, Octavius and the Southern Cross, also known as the Pole Stars. They show the position of the North and South celestial poles, which helps you to find the right direction. In the video above, the compass alternates between pointing to the right pole. The poles in the stars also appear in an installation spread across the floor, referring to earthly bases.

## SARAH NAKIITO

5. & 6. SECOND SKIN  
Primordial Ties part VI-VIII  
2025  
Installation  
Ugandan fig tree (barkcloth "olubugo"),  
steel wire, repurposed textile scraps,  
cotton yarn, glue

on the hallway wall:

Making of Olubugo  
video  
8.20 min

In Lukaya, near Masaka in Uganda, Baganda fig tree farmers and craftsmen harvest bark cloth (olubugo), an indigenous material deeply embedded in the region's cultural heritage. The video captures the full process, from the sustainable stripping of the bark to the meticulous crafting of the finished textile.

## Events

[seinajoentaidehalli.fi/en](https://seinajoentaidehalli.fi/en) → events

Tickets: [netticket.fi/seinajoen-taidehalli](https://netticket.fi/seinajoen-taidehalli)

### FREE ADMISSION TO THE KUNSTHALLE

The first Friday of the month is always free to visit the Kunsthalle.

### GUIDE AT THE EXHIBITION

On free days from 12-15, the Kunsthalle guide will introduce the exhibition. The guide will be happy to answer any questions about the exhibition and Kaleva Navetta.

### AFRICA AFTERWORK ART

Fri 3.10.2025 at 16-19 | Kammio

Seinäjoki's African Community brings an event full of art and culture to Kalevan Navetta. All welcome & free entry!

### ARTISTS' TALK & GUIDED TOUR

Fri 3.10.2025 at 17.30-18.30 | Vintti

Liisa-Irmelen Liwata, the artist of the exhibition Still I Rise, will talk about her works exhibited at Vintti. The guided tour will last 1 hour. The event is in Finnish and admission is free.

### PERFORMANCE CLUB: AUDIENCE BODY

Fri 7.11.2025 at 18-20 | Hugo event space, free admission

Audience Body, by Tuomas Laitinen, is a performance without performers, like a book misplaced into the space and time of theatre. There is a codex. A scroll. A love letter. Place. Time. Immersion. Destruction. Order. Mess. Practice. Theory. Produced in cooperation with the Art University Seinäjoki Unit and Reality Research Centre.

Secure your place in advance! Booking starts 22.9.2025 on the Kunsthalle homepage. This magnificent performance for max 50 people.

### BABY DAY 2024

Fri 26.9. at 10-19, Kaleva Navetta.

Free admission to the exhibitions at Seinäjoki Kunsthalle in the company of children under 2 years old.

10-12 a.m. Baby-friendly exhibition visit together with a guide. Lights and sounds adjusted to suit babies. The Baby Day programme is a joint event of the Kaleva Navetta operators on International Baby Day. On the day of the event, there will be plenty of activities for families.

### MUU-MAU'S FALL DAY

Sat 18.10.2025 at 11-15

Kaleva Navetta's barn cat Muu-Mau invites children and families to spend a free autumn day full of art, culture and craft activities!

### PARSI ART WKND

Fri-Sat 21-22.11.2025 | Vintti | free entry.

Fri at 15-19 and Sat 10-16

The Art WKND will feature a wide range of works by local professional artists, including paintings, prints, sculptures and other visual art. The event is organised by the Seinäjoki Artists' Association. On Saturday 22.11. from 10 am to 3 pm, free admission to Kunsthalle Seinäjoki exhibitions and Kaleva Navetta's MUU Christmas event.

### BOOK YOUR GROUP

Guided tour of the exhibitions, tour of the building in Kalevan Navetta, Creative Evening workshop or organise Children's art birthday party.

[seinajoentaidehalli.fi/en](https://seinajoentaidehalli.fi/en) → services



## KUNSTHALLE SEINÄJOKI

Customer service is open on opening hours.

Mon-Fri at 11am-7pm

Sat at 11am-3pm

Tel. 050 514 3407

[taidehalli@seinajoki.fi](mailto:taidehalli@seinajoki.fi)

Art and Culture Centre Kalevan Navetta  
Nyykoolinkatu 25, 60100 Seinäjoki

Tickets:

Adults 10 €

Students, pensioners

conscripts, unemployed 4 €

Free admission for children under 18 years.

Free admission to assistants of persons with sensory and physical disabilities during the visit.

Free admission for everyone on the first

Friday of the month.

Free admission with Museum Card.

Tickets for the Kunsthalle Seinäjoki can be purchased from the Taito Shop Seinäjoki located on the first floor of the Kalevan Navetta during the opening hours.

Tickets can also be booked in advance from the online store. Kunsthalle also offers various service packages in cooperation with the restaurant Äärellä.

[kalevannavetta.fi](https://kalevannavetta.fi)

[seinajoentaidehalli.fi](https://seinajoentaidehalli.fi)



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Taidehalli Seinäjoki

