



10.12.2020 - 6.3.2021

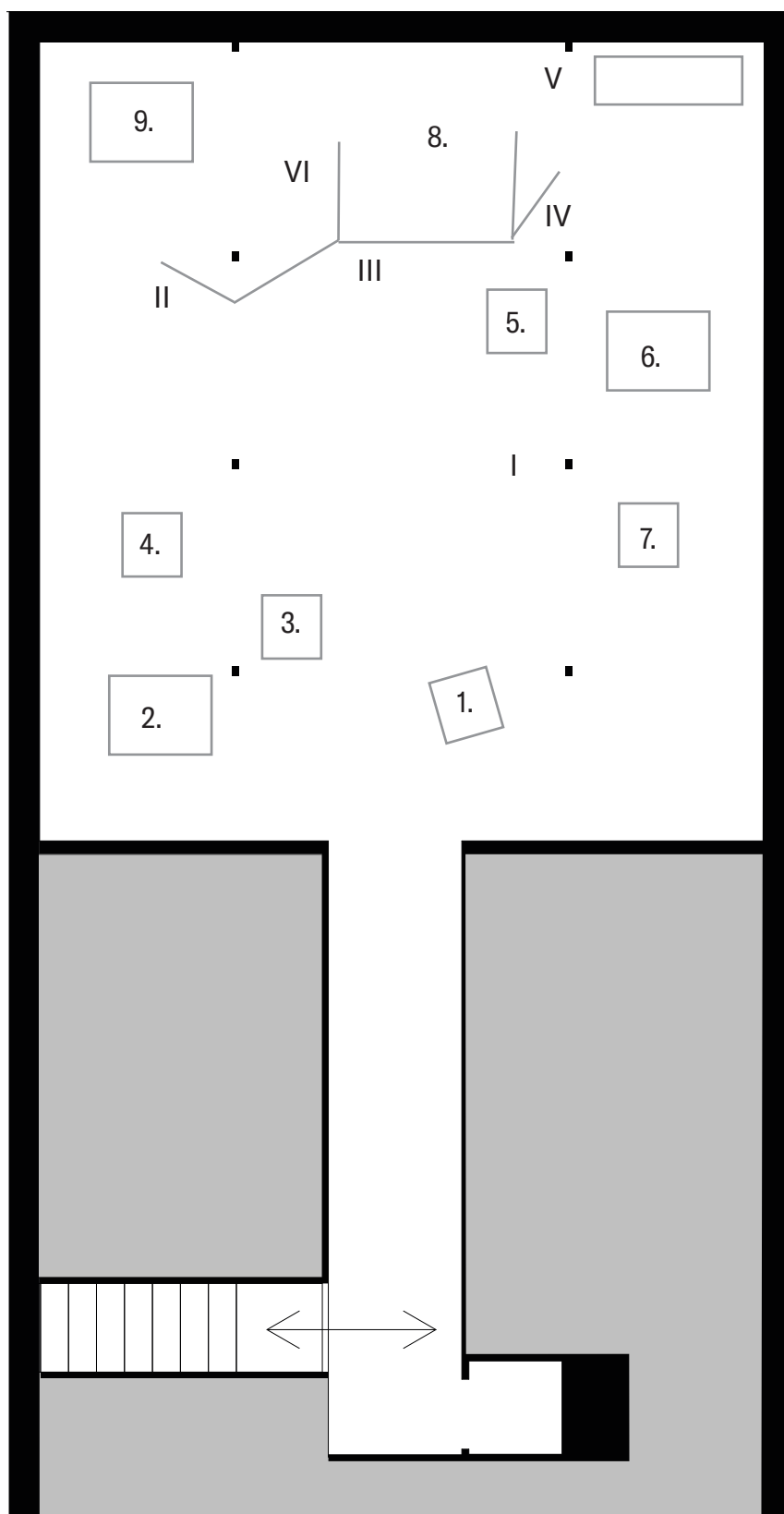
MATTHEW COWAN

**WILDNESS MAKES
THIS WORLD**

KUNSTHALLE SEINÄJOKI

Exhibition Guide

Exhibition space
VINTTI



More information: taidehalli@seinajoki.fi

#matthewcowan #kunsthalleseinajoki

Vintti

1. Stile

wood

2020

Constructed from original plans supplied by the
New Zealand Department of Conservation

Skijump

archive image by Eugen Uotila,

Seinäjäki Museums

framed pigment print

2020

Motorcycle

archive image, Seinäjäki Museums

framed pigment print

2020

2. Pink table

Reclaimed Art Collection Storage Rack
(from the City of Seinäjäki Art Collection,
previously held at the old Kunsthalle Seinäjäki,
Upankatu 3)

rat trap, beekeeper's smock, gloves and
beesmoker, flyswatters, feather dusters,
taphina betulina fungus and

branch, bear mask, bird's nest

and eggs, bones, skulls

and trident from

the Seinäjäki Museums

Mink from Mervi

Sprockets from Juha

Blue canister from

the Martikkala sand quarry

Duncan's sausage stick

from the Isovuori hut

Self-made drum sticks from Sanna

Incences and candle from Sanna

Motorcycle chain from Juha

Gear oil canister from Juha

3. Bear

bear costume, textiles, mannequin,

wooden stand

2020

4. Drummer

drum sticks, textiles, bellwires,

wooden stand

2020

5. Gentleman Striker

matchsticks, textiles, mannequin,

wooden stand

2020

6. Green Table

Reclaimed Collection Storage Racks

Pigeon decoy from Alpo

Cartridge shells from Alpo

Hat from Mauri

Sword from Tero

Sword, gloves, mask,

elbow pad and seax knife from Timo

Helmet, glasses and gloves from Juha

Handlebar from Juha

Bones collected and cleaned by Sanna

Rubber boots from Lauri

Birchbark boat from Miri

Rope broom for firefighting

from the Seinäjäki Museums

7. Wildman Who Walks

walking stick pantaloons, textiles,

mannequin, wooden stand

2020

8. Installation

Reclaimed Art Collection Storage Racks

(from the City of Seinäjäki Art Collection,
previously held at the old Kunsthalle Seinäjäki,
Upankatu 3)

Swan, atlantic cod, zander, pike, pheasant and

eagle-owl, fire hose, beehive, mice, eagle and

horse-shaped sled from the Seinäjäki Museums.

Mauri's ladder

Wrestling dummy from

the Tapaninlinna village association

Juha's motorbike armor and riding boots

Maryna's mirror

Haystake with Mauri's birth year

carved by Mauri's father

Rodonite stone of Ylistaro from Mervi

KTM 150 SX from Juha

Höyhennauha Kirsin kanojen höyhenistä

Maryna reflecting the Paukaneva
bird watching tower
colour textile banner
2020

Lauri's boots sinking into the surface of the
partially drained lake Lauttajärvi, Ilmajoki
colour textile banner
2020

Wrestling practice at the school center,
Ylistaro
colour textile banner
2020

Fencing practice at The Tapaninlinna village
hall, Ylistaro as.
colour textile banner
2020

Duncan grilling sausages at the Isovuori hut,
Jalasjärvi
colour textile banner
2020

Alpo's pigeon shooting decoys, Ilmajoki
colour textile banner
2020

Stuffed owl in Mervi's living room
colour textile banner
2020

Feather banner at the edge of the former
marshland that is now a peat mine at
Läntineva, Ylistaro
colour textile banner
2020

Wildness Makes This World
digital colour video with stereo sound in two parts
11, 28 mins & 10,39 mins, 2020

I Rust pigmented stream by the Millhouse,
Jalasjärvi
framed pigment print
2020

II Manar & Tuomas and their family in fancy
dress costumes at the Pyhalahti
Photography Studio Museum, Lapua
framed pigment print
2020

III Miri with birchbark mask
framed pigment print
2020

IV The Stone on Mauri's land that splits at
Midsummer to release the devil
framed pigment print
2020

V Stuffed hawk in Mervi's living room
framed pigment print
2020

VI Nella wearing feather costume
framed pigment print
2020

9. Feathered Wildman
chicken feathers, textiles,
mannequin, wooden stand
2014

Soundscape in the exhibition

Wildness Makes This World
exhibition soundscape in 12 tracks, recorded,
mixed and performed by the Laitakaupungin
Orkesteri and Matthew Cowan
33, 28 mins, 2020

At the stairway, 2nd floor

The Sound of the Culture
Services Seinäjoki
digital colour video with stereo sound,
approximately 6,33 mins
2020

Thanks to: Alan, Sanna, Piia, Petteri, Jenni,
Jussi, Maria, Annukka, Minna and Sari

Wildness Makes This World

Wildness Makes This World is a participatory project between visual artist Matthew Cowan, the Kunsthalle Seinäjoki, the orchestra Laitakaupungin Orkesteri and local people that explores wildness as a way of being.

The collaboration between the Kunsthalle and Matthew Cowan began in 2017, when exhibition coordinator Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen visited Cowan's exhibition 'para field notes' in Helsinki. The Kunsthalle was working on its program guidelines and Karimäki-Nuutinen found Cowan's art fitting for the program. Folk tradition and commentary on the local, humour and the scientific approach in Cowan's artistic practice felt fitting for the Kunsthalle that was about to move to an old barn. Cowan was invited to visit Seinäjoki for an artist talk as and planning of the project began together with the Kunsthalle's art educator Elina Teitti.

Wildness Makes This World is the result of artistic research that has been seeking wildness, environments and ways in which it manifests. Wildness has been the starting point for the artist. As a researcher, he has come up with the question of how wildness is present in our lives and our surroundings. Cowan is especially interested in the psychological geography of wildness, the connection between experience and place.

Matthew Cowan wanted to make the exhibition with local people who would introduce him to a wild place, a real location in the area. A place, where something wild was once experienced or a place that is somehow wild. Twelve local people, were asked to join the project by the Kunsthalle Seinäjoki. People of different ages and professions participated

and provided the artist with different kinds of experiences of wildness, but most of all different places of wildness around South Ostrobothnia. The art works in the exhibition - videos, photographs and installation - were created through interaction between the artist and the participants. Elina Teitti produced and organized the participatory part of the project.

In dialogue with each participant, Cowan has found a way to reproduce and research wildness and its meanings. Videos and photographs taken on location and visits to the places reflect these conversations and visits. In the exhibition there are also personal items borrowed from the participants. Each item has a connection to the place and theme of wildness. There is also a set of items borrowed from the Museums of Seinäjoki, that are interpretations of the theme made by the museum professionals and how wildness as a theme is seen in their museum collection. The way items are installed create new associations, ideas and different comparisons.

The soundscape by Matthew Cowan and the Laitakaupungin orkesteri is also produced in a similar way, in dialogue between the artist and the musicians. The Seinäjoki Unit of the University of Arts has supported the execution with project funding. Wildness Makes This World is not only a collaboration between Matthew Cowan and the University of Arts, but also a collaboration of the Kunsthalle Seinäjoki and the Seinäjoki unit that both operate under the same roof at the art and culture centre Kalevan Navetta.

The video, 'The Sound of the Cultural Services Seinäjoki', is part of an ongoing series of videos Cowan has made with arts professionals in

cities where he is exhibiting his work. This video, was made with local art and cultural professionals in Seinäjoki, each performing 'screams' in front of the camera. The video acts as a meta-comment on the exhibition itself, interpreting wildness in a performative and abstract sense.

Thank you for wildness: Manar and family, Maryna, Kirsi, Anne, Lauri, Sanna, Juha, Mervi, Mauri, Alpo, Suvi, Duncan.

Also thanks to: Sanna, Marko, Tero, Timo, Annukka, Piia, Minna, Jenni, Petteri, Alan, Maria & Jussi.

Production

Exhibition production

by the Kunsthalle Seinäjoki program team :
Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen, Pii Anttila,
Elina Teitti, Miika Vainionkulma

Production of the participatory project
Elina Teitti

Video and photography

Tomi Salmela, Mika Rinta-Porkkunen,
Elina Teitti

Texts

Matthew Cowan, Elina Teitti,
Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen

Graphic design

Pii Anttila

Soundscape

Piia Kleemola-Välimäki, Sami Silén
Laitakaupungin orkesteri

In collaboration with Seinäjoki Museums,
Culture Centre Vanha Paukku / Culture
Office of City of Lapua, Tapaninlinna Village
Association, Ylistaron Kisa-veljet Sports
Association and the wrestling division.

The exhibition has been supported
by the University of Arts Helsinki

Making Wildness Makes This World

Text: Matthew Cowan

As an artist, my practice has observed wildness in the spirit of the carnivalesque and communal chaos at the centre of particular folk rituals across Europe. These rituals have often involved a central character – a 'wildman', bringing a sense of disorder and unpredictability to a community event. Traditional folk rituals such as these are interruptions in the normal communal social order that make clear our fascination with the thrill and nature of disorder.

Among other works related to these observations of folklore, my practice has reflected this interest in a series of 'wildman' costumes and sculptures, disguising and hiding the wearer. Sometimes these are materials from nature, but other times they are simply made of everyday materials. As a symbol of a kind of a human threshold between nature and culture, these mythical characters embody a particular human urge that psychologically straddles the normal everyday responsibilities of society and states of exhilaration, chaos, disorder and awe.

These costumes imply this intersection of the psychological experience of wildness as it has the potential to be enacted and performed, however in 'Wildness Makes This World' at Kunsthalle Seinäjoki, I have been interested to expand on this understanding through exchanges and speculations. The exhibition is the result of an artistic survey in collaboration with local people, museums and musicians, seeking traces and modes of wildness, environments and actions that can invoke an understanding of wildness as a mode of being.

Through these interactions, new artworks have been produced. The works cover a range of responses to the intangible idea of wildness, how it is experienced, what it might sound like, what it might look like, and how it is understood through historical sources.

I have been interested in the kinds of wildness that could be translated into Finnish as 'raivoisuus' (wildness in the sense of danger), as well as 'jylhyys' (wildness of nature), and discussing these translations has been a part of the artistic exchange that has occurred. The resulting artistic exchanges range from a family's portrait in fancy dress costumes, taken in the historical portrait studio at Lapua Museum to a video of a favourite motorbike track, a horse in a feather costume and many more that refer to places, senses, memories and experiences.

The new wildman costumes and works that I have produced for this exhibition, in response to these interactions and exchanges, reflect my interest in engaging carnivalesque wild characters, the use of disguise to inhabit this metaphor of wildness and an interest in how such an idea can be mediated through history and memory.

The exhibition as a whole is a collective installation of new artworks, artefacts and historical objects as an examination of an understanding of wildness, not just as it relates to nature, but more specifically as it relates to personal experiences and our senses. Whilst the idea of wildness is instinctively connected to the realm of nature and seems to oppose domesticity, my interest has been in a more psychological viewpoint.

Accordingly, an acceptance of psycho-geographic knowing and the connection of experience to place has been an important theme of the conversations that have guided the exhibition. Taken overall, the coordinates of the installation speculate that wildness is an essential mode for living and for generating meaningful experiences, and we return to re-performing and inhabiting it in numerous ways that are sometimes unexpected and certainly not always limited to the natural world.

Matthew Cowan would like to thank: Kunsthalle Seinäjoki, especially Elina Teitti and Sanna Karimäki-Nuutinen, Henni Mäntykä & Eeva Korvola from the Seinäjoki Museums, Charlotta Hagfors, Piia Kleemola-Välimäki, Antti Paalanen, Sami Silén, Teemu Vuorela and Petri Välimäki from the Laitakaupungin Orchestra, Mika Rinta-Porkkunen, Tomi Salminen, KONE Foundation, Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki.

Matthew Cowan

Matthew Cowan (b. 1974) is a New Zealand artist, based in Berlin and Helsinki, working in the realm of traditional European customs. His works are photographs, videos, installations and performances, which play with the inherent strangeness of the continued popularity of folk customs in a contemporary world.

www.matthewcowan.net

EVENTS

More information:

<https://www.seinajoentaidehalli.fi/en/program/#oheisohjelma>

CONVERSATION GUIDE PRESENT IN THE EXHIBITION

Check the timetable on the Kunsthalle website

AARG GATHERING

10.12.2020 at noon till 4 pm

Live Broadcast

Come and join the art and the rural gathering by watching the live broadcast!

Kunsthalle Seinäjoki hosts a gathering on the concept of art institutions developing and researching the rural areas and countryside. On the co-delivered program we will hear keynote speakers, case studies, artist talks and panel discussion about the current role of contemporary art in the countryside.

KUNSTHALLE SEINÄJOKI

Mon-Fri at 11am-7pm

Sat at 11am-3pm

Customer service is open on opening times.

Tel. 050 514 3407

taidehalli@seinajoki.fi

Art and Culture Centre Kalevan Navetta
Nyykoolinkatu 25, 60100 Seinäjoki

Tickets:

Adults 6 €

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.

CHAOS RESEARCH PERFORMING

30.1.2021 at 12.30, 13.00 and 13.30

Exhibition space Vintti

Chaos Research is a new classic darkwave duo, that combines experimental and cinema elements, with avantgarde influence. The singer Sanna Keltaniemi participated in Matthew Cowan's Wildness Makes This World exhibition. The song Kuivila was inspired by the place with the same name that is also one of the wild places in the exhibition.

MUU MAU BARN CAT'S WILD FAMILY TOUR

23.1.2021 at 11am to 15 am, non stop family tour

Exhibition space Vintti

Children are invited to join the Muu Mau barn cat's wild tour that is playful tour around Matthew Cowan's exhibition Wildness Makes This World. Muu Mau encourage kids and adults to learn about the exhibition together. Accompanying adults are needed with small kids, since the tour is design to experienced on your own phase.

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.

www.kalevannavetta.fi

seinajoentaidehalli.fi



@seinajoentaidehalli



seinäjoen taidehalli

