

IMAGINARY GARDEN

Finnish design, art & craft

PRESS RELEASE

Exhibition open
from 1 December 2023
until 30 March 2024



© Hannakaisa Pekkala

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**Inauguration on Thursday 30 November 2023 from 6pm to 8pm
in the presence of the curator Hannakaisa Pekkala.**

Imaginary Garden brings together the enchanting works of nine emerging Finnish designers and artists. The mesmerising and playful pieces presented reflect the sculptural craft movement that is currently taking over the Finnish design scene.

Finnish design is often known for its ultra-functional and minimalistic approach. The new generation of creators are presenting a more colourful, fun and haptic way of doing things. Their creations embody current changes in the industry, as they reclaim the role of manufacturer, crafting their own small series and unique pieces. This results in works that are genuine in a new way, and blend together elements of crafts, design and artistic expression.

The exhibition showcases a variety of materials, such as shiny brass, bold and delicate glass pieces, tactile ceramics and soft textiles. Each creator works with their own primary materials using different techniques or combining other materials to come up with ever inspiring results.

Many of the creators featured in the exhibition are inspired by both the diversity of nature and the power of imagination. The use of natural materials and environment-friendly, artisanal production methods are at the heart of their work. In their hands, common objects become magical and bring beauty and playfulness into our everyday lives.

The exhibition is organised in cooperation with UU Market, a Finnish design collective and online gallery that promotes new Finnish design and art internationally. Together with its 30 members from different creative fields, UU Market produces events like fairs, pop up shops and exhibitions. They also represent Finnish design through retailers and other partners.

Imaginary Garden is curated by the co-founder of UU Market, Hannakaisa Pekkala.

Institut finlandais is an independent and multidisciplinary cultural institute between Finland and France, presenting modern gastronomy, design and visual arts in the heart of the Quartier Latin in Paris.

Institut finlandais

60, rue des Écoles
33, rue du Sommerard
75005 Paris

Opening hours:
Tuesday–Saturday
from 11am to 6pm.

For more information and requests concerning materials of the exhibition, please contact:

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CREATORS

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VILLE AUVINEN



Ville Auvinen is a designer and maker that moves effortlessly between sculptural expression and industrial production. Working on the quaint island of Lauttasaari in Helsinki, he seeks beauty and harmony through simple expression. Since starting his studio, Studio Ville Auvinen, in 2016 he has been busy designing new products for furniture brands and for his own collection of furniture, and most recently, unique sculptural works. His aim is to create objects that feel good to the user and honour the materials used.

Elisa Defossez is a textile and product designer based in Helsinki. She studied Industrial Design at ENSAV La Cambre in Belgium and got her Master in Textile Design from Aalto University in Finland. With a multidisciplinary approach, she seeks to bring a feeling of cosiness into life through subtle shades of colours and materials. After working for a few years as a designer at Hermès, she decided to carry on her quest for cosiness in design by establishing her studio in 2021. She currently works between Finland and Japan.



ELISA DEFO SSEZ

LAURA ITKONEN



Laura Itkonen is a designer and artist who mainly focuses on visually detailed, tactile architectural ceramics and on collectible, sculptural design. Itkonen finds the intersection of art and design to be the most compelling place to work, as it allows her to explore the potential of materials, to push boundaries creatively and experiment within the context of different projects. Her use of materials highlights their unique characteristics, while carefully crafted shapes and forms tie everything together. Contrasts are a unifying factor in her work, creating dynamic and visually striking pieces.

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Dylan Katz has been blowing glass since he was twelve years old. He met his partner Greta in the United States, and in 2013 they decided to move to Greta's homeland, Finland, where Katztudio was founded in 2016. Their aim is to deliver high end products to fit any budget, with the idea of making glass art more accessible. Dylan Katz is passionate about glass and the infinite possibilities it offers as a creative material.



DYLAN KATZ

PÄIVI KESKI-POMPPU



Päivi Keski-Pomppu is a designer, interior architect, and goldsmith. She is the founder and independent designer for the jewellery brand Keski-Pomppu and the co-founder of Studio Bom. Päivi Keski-Pomppu creates high-quality jewellery at her studio, using carefully chosen recycled precious metals and traditional working methods. To ensure the longevity and timelessness of the collections, the products are made in small series with attention to the smallest details. Inspiration and ideas come to her from experimentation and her everyday surroundings.

Viivi Lehto is an artist who mainly focuses on glass art and painting and has worked widely in the creative field from art to commercial projects. The Garden series she is currently working on consists of colourful and multidimensional glass sculptures and represents the themes of inner growth, importance of play, feelings and traditions. In addition to visual arts, she publishes her own music as a singer-songwriter.



VIIVI LEHTO

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KATI PELTOLA



Kati Peltola is a glass artist who mainly uses the flameworking technique to create jewellery and glass sculptures. Intuitive manipulation of material and curiosity towards the process form the basis of Kati Peltola's artistic work. She is still in the process of getting used to the untrustworthiness of glass, and its polarities: it is both mundane and luxurious, durable but sometimes brittle, soft when molten and hard when cooled down.

Paula Pääkkönen is a glassblower and a glass artist. Glass is her main material because it's such a challenging element – the glassblowing techniques are an endless source of inspiration for her. She is currently working around the theme of childhood, memories and imagination. In her work, she is chasing the moment, when common things still have a hint of magic and the proportions of the world may vary. She works as a freelance glassblower, blowing glass for other designers and artists, as well as working on her own art.



PAULA PÄÄKKÖNEN

MILLA VAAHTERA



Milla Vaahtera is a designer and an artist. The themes of her works extend from body image to intuition and dialogues in the creative process. She is most known for her Dialogue series, mobiles and stables, in which she combines bold glass parts with delicate brass. Vaahtera began to work on this series in May 2017 together with several glassblowers from Nuutajärvi Glassvillage. Vaahtera is passionate about reviving the Finnish heritage of glassblowing and giving the young generation of makers new opportunities to deepen their skills.

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CURATOR

Hannakaisa Pekkala, curator of Jardin Imaginaire, is a designer and the co-founder of UU Market. For the past six years, she's been passionately working to promote contemporary Finnish design and art internationally. She believes in the power of cooperation: one can't conquer the world alone. In her work, she seeks to bring talented people together, to form a network that brings out the best of Finnish design: the most relevant themes, techniques and aesthetics of the new generation.



HANNAKAISA PEKKALA

Portraits by: Teemu Heljo, Jef Claes, Aino Huhtaniemi, Katztudio, Lina Jelanski, Markus Peltomäki, Heikki Humberg, Hannakaisa Pekkala, Elina Simonen and Janne Naakka.

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