

Purdy Hicks Gallery

ANNI LEPPÄLÄ and SUSANNA MAJURI

28 APRIL – 22 MAY 2010

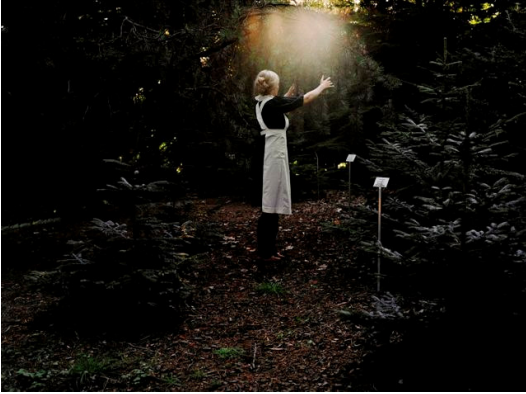
PRIVATE VIEW TUESDAY 27 APRIL

Anni Leppälä has just been voted Artist of the Year in Finland. Purdy Hicks Gallery is delighted to announce an exhibition of works by her and another of Finland's most promising young artists, **Susanna Majuri**. Both are recent students of the prestigious **Helsinki School of Art and Design**.

Winner of the *Gras Savoye* Award at *Les Rencontres d'Arles* in 2005, Susanna Majuri is a photographer whose work is centred on the concept of observing reality in an unconventional manner. Her works have a cinematic sense of narrative: she deftly sheds a new and disturbing light on scenes of apparent familiarity. While Majuri's protagonists have a disturbingly familiarity they are often in situations that slip one step beyond reality. They can seem at a loss. Often alone, their faces obscured or distorted by elements such as water, they appear almost dissolved in stark isolation. This heightened sense of narrative, of a story that remains unknown despite being captured on camera, is a conscious decision. Majuri states, "I want to narrate feelings like in novels".



In contrast Anni Leppälä stills time. She explores the relationship between the past and present. She is drawn towards the 'possibility of being able to make a moment motionless, to make something stand still'. Like stylised postcards or snapshots, her works each take on an aura of frozen time, records of both fleeting moments and the small glimpses of larger tales from which they are taken. While acknowledging that the act of observing photographs can highlight the 'certain aspect of lost moments and a feeling of letting go', Leppälä still aims to capture something of the point in time itself, even if all we are left with is an image that chronicles its passing. Her series, *Possibility of Constancy*, gives a clue to the paradox in the artist's struggle to retain both consistency and immediacy: As she points out, "When you try to conserve or protect a moment by stopping it, by photographing it, you inevitably lose it at the same time". In the face of this problem, Leppälä has aimed to create images that not only depict suspension within time, but also present them in a way that provides them with a sense of longevity.



Susanna Majuri's exhibition **The Water Researcher's Daughter** continues at the Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki until 23 May 2010. A major exhibition of Anni Leppala's work has just opened at the Tampere Museum, Finland. Both artists are currently showing work at the Meilahti Art Museum in Helsinki. Monographs will be published on Anni Leppälä (Tampere Art Museum) and Suzanna Majuri (Hatje Cantz) shortly.

The term **Helsinki School** refers to a select group of students and graduates of photography from the Aalto University School of Art and Design (formerly the University of Art and Design Helsinki). The distinguishing feature of the photographers of the Helsinki School is artistic independence that combines with practical collectivity. The Helsinki School began 15 years ago from a teaching project created by **Timothy Persons**. Many of its artists are famous internationally and participate in exhibitions globally.

www.purdyhicks.com