

# RELATE NORTH

ART, HERITAGE & IDENTITY 2014

7-27 November Riddo Duottar Museum  
Sámi University College, Kautokeino, Norway

© University of Lapland and Authors 2014

**Edited by**

Elina Härkönen

Timo Jokela

**Graphic Design**

Elina Härkönen

**Cover image**

Maria Huhmarniemi

**Financier**

Nordic Council of Ministries

**Publisher**

University of Lapland; Rovaniemi 2014

Publications of the Faculty of Art and Design of the University of Lapland

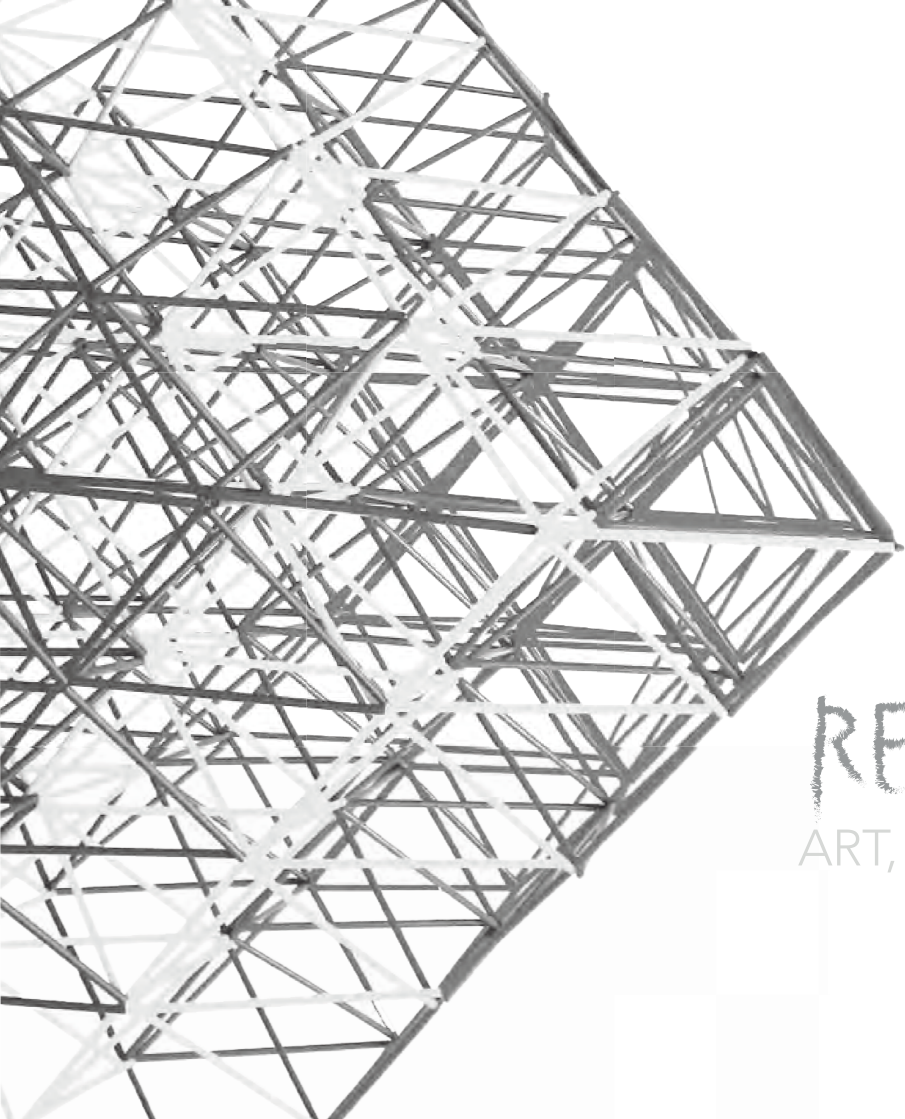
Series C. Overviews and discussion 47

ISSN 1236-9616

[www.ulapland.fi](http://www.ulapland.fi)

ISBN 978-952-484-783-4

ISBN 978-952-484-784-1 (pdf)



RELATE NORTH  
ART, HERITAGE & IDENTITY 2014



**R**ELATE NORTH 2014 *Art, Heritage and Identity* is a third annual exhibition of University of the Arctic's thematic network Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design (ASAD). This time the exhibition is combined together with thematic network on Indigenous Arts and Crafts. Both networks respect northern cultural diversity and heritage, and share the common aim to identify and share contemporary and innovative practices and knowledge exchange in field of art and design teaching, learning and research.

The North has no exact limits. We know that it is there, but disagree about where it begins. North could be a home, a faraway location, a political arena, an icon of wilderness or a mental mind-scape. Thus the issues of North are simultaneously global, huge in scale but highly personal. The central topic of the exhibition is the role of art in the representations of North. The exhibition is searching artistic ways in chronicling issues important to places and people in the North. The diverse art works stimulate debate about questions of indigenous and other northern and Arctic ways of living in harsh or challenging environments. The blend-

ing of indigenous cultures and other lifestyles of the people of the arctic is typical to the whole circumpolar area. It is richness but at the same time multinational and multicultural compositions create elusive socio-cultural challenges that are sometimes even politicized in the neo-colonial settings of the North and the Arctic. The questions are tightly connected to cultural identities, which in turn are often constructed through art.

The exhibition consists views from the member countries of the network: Canada, Finland, Norway, Russia, Scotland and the United States. It is not about static preservation of cultural heritage of the North but about understanding and supporting cultural change according to the guidelines of sustainable development.

**Rovaniemi and Kautokeino 21th October 2014**

*Timo Jokela and Gunvor Guttorm*

Curators

Britta Marakatt Labba

## CRACKLED

During the Second World War, Swedish Sámi people continued to be allowed to migrate with their reindeers to summer grazing pastures in Troms County. There were of course restrictions, because everyone needed to have a passport. It was absolutely forbidden to give assistance to Norwegian refugees in crossing the border.

My work *Crackled* looks into my family's migration paths between the summer grazing pastures in Norway and the autumn/winter grazing pastures in Sweden.

The migration paths leading to different parts of Troms County changed with the Second World War. Many families were unable to move to their previous areas, the pastures were crowded and then forced migrations occurred from the Karesuando area to southern parts of Sweden.



Mixed Media



Gunvor Guttorm

# MY WAY TO IEŠVUOĐAT & IEŠDOVDDUT II

My background is in duodji (Sámi craft) and I use duodji as a basis for my ideas. For many people duodji is one aspect of a person's whole life. Duodji has its origins in everyday Sámi life.

In my work I have been interested in exploring how our mothers and grandmothers created an existence in which where they were able to exist in the centre of life while at the same time being able to find the peace and quiet to create things, often to cover a necessity.

I have chosen knitting as a technique in my own work. I have combined knitting with prefabricated elements such as bottles that I have been given, found or purchased at jumble sales. These bottles are pre-defined, but I have wanted to give them a new identity, a transition from being a bottle to being something else.



Carafes with knitted cover and reindeer horn lid

# RIEKKO

## Willow Grouse

*Met kuljima riekon ansoila Eeron  
kansa lapsena kaiket talvet  
umpihangessa isot nutukhat ja  
sarkahousut jalassa.*



Clay, Wood, Audio 2014

Willow grouses are suffering from the climate change especially in autumn. Snow is covering the landscape later than normal. Willow grouse's white camouflage turns against it in the snowless nature. Along its declined population an unique and valuable part of lifestyle in northern villages is disappearing. The hunting of willow grouses has been a profession, additional income and livelihood security for families. Later it has also become an important leisure activity.

*Riekko* is created as a community art. Each resident of the small village of Peltovuoma in Finnish Lapland has modelled one grouse using clay and shared their personal experiences and thoughts related the bird. The local school pupils have assisted by bringing the clay to the villagers and recording the stories told about the bird. Stories told by the generations appear to be expressions of the Northern environmental culture and its transformation.



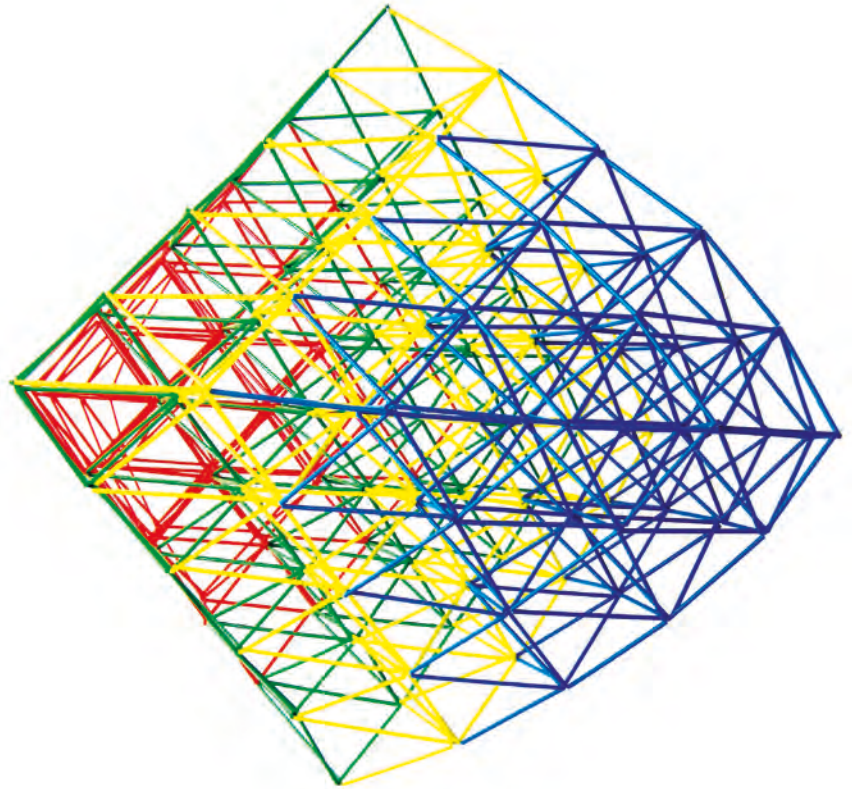
Maria Huhmarniemi

# MOND, SONNE UND REGENBOGEN, 2013

---

I started making the series of Himmeli-sculptures in reaction to a comment in 2011 by the True Finns Party, proposing that only Finnish nationalistic fine arts should be supported by the Finnish state.

Himmeli is a traditional Finnish decorative mobile. It is made from short strips of rye straw tied together with string to form a complex and symmetrical three-dimensional structure. The word *himmeli* has origins in the Swedish and German language: 'himmel' means 'sky and heaven'. I morphed these symmetric forms into free and wild sculptures using coloured plastic drinking straws. In the series "Mond, Sonne und Regenbogen" I play with these Sámi colors and figures of the moon and sun.



Series of sculptures (plastic drinking straws, cotton thread), various size

Glen Coutts

## CLYDE MUSINGS



The series of images explore the ideas of place, belonging and identity. The journey started with an exhibition and installation of works entitled 'Knowing my Place' in Rovaniemi, October 2010. The works consider the idea of 'Notherness' from the perspective of someone born in Glasgow, Scotland. The United Kingdom consists of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Scotland is situated at the North of the island that contains England, Wales and Scotland. The images explore, from a deeply personal and sometimes idiosyncratic perspective what it means to be Scottish

– a Northerner in the United Kingdom.

Original Digital Print 4 x framed size 42.5cm x 32.5cm

Annamari Manninen

## MINDSCAPES

The place you grow-up and the places you live in leave a trace, like a foot print to your identity. Creating the inner mindscape with layers of memories, times and places. The Northern landscape continues in the minds of the habitants of it's region. The rivers, the lakes, the springs – the water plays an active role in drawing the outlines. The mindscape we carry with us makes us sub-consciously to long for the open space, for the sense of the bark of the birch trees, for the cover of the forest.



Serie of etching & aquatint prints, 5x 60cm x 50cm – 35cm x 42cm





Woodcut 24 x 80 cm, 10 x 15 cm (several smaller ones as prints)

Silja Nikula

## GREETINGS FROM MY LAPLAND

---

Visual narratives from Northern Norway and Finland. Artwork based on my travel experiences, historical facts, mythic stories and imagination.

Tom Engblom

# LIGHT BARRICADE

---

Lighten up our ways  
against the autumn darkness.  
Rise up on the light barricades  
because all is well.



Wood, steel, ready-made, light, size variable. 2014



Installation 20x 200x200 cm

Antti Stöckell  
**SPRING**

The SPRING project tells through art the experiences visiting clean groundwater springs. I have visited springs in the Rovaniemi area and made two birch bark cups at every spring. I've always left one to the site. The other cups are present in the exhibition as well as the bottles with water from the springs. The birch bark cups refer to traditional handicraft skills and heritage from generation to generation. How can we convey our cultural heritage? How do we build our identity in a dialogue between other people and places? Could art create this kind of space for dialogue, where heritage had a vital dimension of identity and life of younger generation?



Co-PaceArt team

## SAME JOURNEY

---

The art educators group from the University of Lapland, Faculty of Art and design, have explored their Northern environment and the levels of the place by walking together in the autumn forest. The goal of the process has been to open the senses and bring together the working community through art. The notions, emotions and multi-sensual experiences of art, heritage and identity were entwined with the rhythm and pace of walking.

Authors: "Co-PaceArt-team": *Mirja Hiltunen, Anniina Koivurova, Annamari Manninen, Antti Stöckell, Tuula Vanhatapio*



Photo installation 21cmx15m



Lithograph: Roots 2013, 78x112cm

Elina Sipilä  
**ROOTS**

---

The rugged nature in the north and life there has made an indelible mark on me. I reflect the influences from these surroundings also when working elsewhere. With the historical printing technique I travel backwards in time when painting on a stone from the Jurassic period. It is like the northern nature: warm and living in its silence and coldness. My works picture journeys in places, cultures, time and inner landscape. Longing and experiencing, seen and imagined, connection and separation, lost and found are present in the works in which nature is a part of a human, and human part of the nature.

Suvi Autio

## NORTHERN SPIRITS

---

These artworks consist of an identity exploration during a period of time spent in Alaska. It shows a way of connecting the alaskan environment, identity and tradition with my identity of a part nomad part northerner. The artworks show the perplexed feeling of human identity that can be found among us. Being a northerner and influenced by all other latitudes and longitudes. The sculptures are made with traditional alaskan carving tools such as adzes and crooked knives and influenced by alaskan native masks and native dance. I believe there exists a longing for the nature and animistic approach to world that's been found in the native arts.



Serie of three wooden sculptures. 30x25x10– 40x20x35

Ruth Beer & Ingrid Olauson

## OIL/WATER 2014



Video with sound (edited by Pascale Theoret-Groulx)

Oil and Water video/artwork highlights the complex conditions regarding overlapping and contested terrain where cultural heritage including historic and aboriginal trade routes, and the development of natural resource extraction industries including proposed crude oil pipelines, share the geography of remote northwest regions of Canada. The video poetically interweaves images and sounds of water and oil, fishing and refineries, rivers and tar sand pits that are intermeshed with sounds of people talking to suggest the need to reconsider a national identity based on the imaginary of empty wilderness. It emphasizes the dilemmas facing the nation with regards to petroculture and sustainability; to the risks and benefits to the environment, culture and the economy and a future imaginary.

Oil and Water by Ruth Beer (assisted by Pascale Theoret-Groulx) is a component of Trading Routes: Grease Trails, Oil Pipelines, a research/creation project supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Charles Licka & Jeanne Ilgen

## SIREN SURGE I, II, III



*Siren Surge 2: Alchemical Admonition (Pendant Top)* focuses on arsenic transmission by through oil spills. Using medieval alchemical symbols for arsenic is an ironic connection to an alchemical process that was originally transformative in nature involving a spiritual pursuit having curative properties accompanying poisonous attributes. Mine waste dumping of toxic materials into our oceans such as arsenic land atmospheric arsenic emissions impact on marine life and is hazardous to human health in the food chain. The wavelike series of medieval arsenic alchemical symbols graphs a past that is no longer curative in its purpose. As a substance it no longer serves the alchemist's spiritual quest. Where is our philosopher's stone for today and the future? How do we combat the increasing arsenic pollution in our oceans? The reference to the mythical sirens is a cautionary tale metaphorically phrased in alchemical symbols. Wave photo credit: John E. Lester/Flickr CC



Digital prints 3x 2' x 9' (61cm x 274cm)





Etchings

Mikhail Starostin  
**HUNTER  
RUNNER**

As a native of Khandiga, Sakha (Yakutia), Russian Mikhail Starostin blends imagination with reality in his art to create colourful, whimsical portrayals of northern life utilizing his classic art training but incorporating the region's traditions.

Mikhail Starostin, known to be the only pupil of famed artist Yuriy Votyakov, is recognized for his etchings, oil paintings, and book illustrations.



K. Mamontov

## LUCKY FISHING

---

Mammoth ivory carving is a traditional Yakutian art form. The carved statuettes have usually a warm and humorous perspective to Northernness and they capture rich mythology typical to the Arctic peoples everyday life.



Mammoth ivory, three-dimensional fretwork 2013

Mette Gårdvik

## AESTHETICS OF DECAY



Digital Prints

Almost at 19 years of age, I moved away from Helgeland with the belief that the world outside of my home was a better place. My feelings of connection to northern Norway increased after some years and I longed to go home to family, friends and the Northern seascape. 15 years later and back home again, I noticed that the landscape had changed with many abandoned and dilapidated houses. The houses had wood paneling and many superb details of craftsmanship. The project Aesthetics of Decay is a result of me reconsidering my childhood landscape with new eyes. It's about place, identity, belonging and the tension between tradition and change. Maturity, aesthetics and melancholy is reflected in images and shows that something abandoned from our past can be beautiful. The work promotes dialogue between childhood history, identity and belonging related to landscape, houses and people in a small coastal community in Helgeland.



## Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design Network

Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design (ASAD) is a Thematic Network (of University of the Arctic) that aims to identify and share contemporary and innovative practices in teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange in the fields of arts, design and visual culture education. In summary, the network seeks to promote cooperation between academic institutions and communities; advance art education amongst members and share both traditional and contemporary practices in art, teaching, learning and research.

ASAD currently has 26 member institutions in 8 countries around the Arctic and Northern regions; the lead institution is the University of Lapland.

