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Radical Ecological Art and NO Greenwash Exhibitions

Radical Ecological Art and NO Greenwash Exhibitions – seeding ideas through creative action will present a showcase of artists that bring together culture and sustainability and examine new models for action. Advanced forms of ecologically sustainable living models are being put on the spot.

The talk introduces into the fields of trans-disciplinary cultural practice, cooperative work between artists, researchers, scientists. Artists, inventing creative ways to protect our natural world and living cultures through applications of ecological systems theory and aesthetics; using cross-disciplinary tools (art, psychology, creativity, scientific knowledge, political savvy, marketing) to design new ways of living with the least negative impact, social and environmental responsibility. Artistic practice aims to offer interpretations and models of thinking about the natural world, suggesting an ecological and ethical perspective that help to promote a sustainable future. Furthermore, people in different disciplines are seeking ways to make what's good for our communities and ecosystems work better and resonate more effectively. All expressions of visual and living cultures can be part of Radical Ecological Art including storytelling, theatre, film, music, etc., limited only by it has to be art that matters.

For experts in this field well-known mostly longterm multi-annual process-based projects will be introduced. A shame very few which rarely reach a wider audience. In the last couple of years art and ecology exhibitions became trendy, a must, even few Biennales announced putting a focus on a label called eco-art. Arts linked to ecology still is not mainstream, more hidden, art of „outsiders for insiders“, Radical Ecological Art, art that matters; arts for a change towards future visions, utopian models, art that has an impact on the environment. More sophisticated artists may not be included in exhibitions which are mostly curated by curators who rarely took a chance to deepen their knowledge. Not having or taking the time to research properly too many are mixing up Landart, art in nature, art with nature, environmental art, and know little about what is the state of arts linked to ecology.



Fig. 1: Everyman's right 2003 Photo: Ritva Kovalainen and Sanni Seppo

After a brief introduction about my self-decomposing laboratories, self-decomposing architectural sculptures for cleaning up industrial soil contaminated by PCBs by oystermushroom cultures, all together sort of an „Architecture of Senses.“ I will present works from George Steinmann „KOMI – A Growing Sculpture Forum for Sustainable Forestry/Russia 1997-2006; Ritva Kovalainen /Sanni Seppo (FIN) “The end of the Rainbow – where did the forest disappear?” The End of the Rainbow is a visual research on the change in northern woodland scene and forest identity. In last 50 years intensive forestry has changed both the landscape and the relationship to the nature; Jackie Brookner „Magic Island the first process-based public art project in Finland, a bird nesting and water restoring Biosculpture cleaning a waste water pond“; Salo City/FIN supported by the Finnish Nessling Foundation. Peter Fend „OCEAN EARTH – ALGAE-PROJECT is about harvesting algae for bio-gas production“; Tim Collins/ReikoGoto „Nine Mile Run“ mult-annual community reclamation projects of the coal mine and steel production sites in Pittsburgh/PA landscape a bit similar to the Ruhr-Valley.

My presentation is meant to be more than an academic presentation as my Finnish colleague expressed in a wonderful, poetic way:

Art has the potential to awaken our feelings and move us. A love of nature and intelligent ideas can make people call for change and take action to protect our natural environment. Change requires giving up old ways, which can be painful. Art can provide relief and help with the birth of the new. I hope that the Green Art Halikonlahti exhibitions will have a definite impact on people's feelings. (Tuula Nikulainen) <http://www.halikonlahti.net>

A great source introducing green art is ecovention:
<http://www.greenmuseum.org/c/ecovention/>