

Press release 7 January 2021

Banksy. A Visual Protest to be shown at the Serlachius Museums in Finland

The exhibition *Banksy. A Visual Protest*, extensively presenting the art of Banksy, the most famous and enigmatic street artist, opens at Serlachius Museums in May 2021. The exhibition, implemented in cooperation with 24 Ore Cultura of Milan, is the first Banksy exhibition to be shown in Finland. Admission to the museum is free during the exhibition.

Banksy. A Visual Protest features, in particular, works belonging to Banksy's early output: graphics and record covers. The exhibition is complemented by multimedia of street art he has made around the world, some of which has already been lost. The exhibition will run at Museum Gösta from 15 May to 10 October 2021.

The exhibition has previously been seen in Milan and Rome and is curated by Gianni Mercurio, a curator specialising in pop and street art. This is not an official Banksy exhibition, as it has not been authorised by the artist himself. However, all the exhibition works are authenticated Banksy works from different collections.

The identity of Banksy (b. 1970s) – from Bristol, England – is unknown. Since the 1990s, he has produced street art, performances and artistic tricks around the world. Banksy has eluded the authorities for years, as attempts have been made to hold him accountable for, among other things, defacing public places.

Protected by his anonymity, Banksy makes street art in public places and has smuggled his own works into museums without the staff noticing. His stencil technique enables him to work quickly and to create visually skilful work with engaging content.

Underneath the humour, social protest is revealed

Banksy's art mocks commercialism and criticises consumer society. His themes are often anti-war and deeply humane, but at the same time contain warm humour. Animal rights, climate change, the exercise of power and hypocrisy are also important subjects – the multidimensionality of the themes are a hallmark of Banksy's art. His works first appear humorous, but on closer inspection they exude strong social protest.

"I am proud that it is possible for Serlachius, in this informal, expertly curated exhibition that magnificently covers the themes of Banksy's art, to present one of the world's most important contemporary artists," says Pauli Sivonen, Director of the Serlachius Museums.

Banksy has repeatedly expressed his resentment to the fact that street art is on show at museums charging an admission fee. For this reason, the Serlachius Museums will not charge an entrance fee for the duration of the Banksy exhibition and will not sell merchandise related to the exhibition.

Simon Patterson, Head to Toe, 6 Feb 2021–9 Jan 2022

In 2021, Serlachius Museums' first exhibition is British artist Simon Patterson's *Head to Toe*. Patterson uses maps, diagrams, lists and instruction manuals, which aid us as we try to manage and structure an increasingly complex world. In his insightful and often humorous works, he directs us to reflect on how and why we assume that what we know about the world is what we know. Timo Valjakka is the curator of the exhibition that will open at Museum Gustaf.

Santeri Tuori, Posing Time, 27 Mar 2021–6 Mar 2022

Two fundamentally different exhibitions open concurrently at Serlachius Museum Gösta at the end of March. In his exhibition *Posing Time*, Santeri Tuori depicts natural world, but is not content with merely observing the mysteries of

nature. His video and photographic works are constructed like collages by combining colour and black and white shots. Tuori's photographic works have been compared to classics of Romantic landscape art. The exhibition's curator is Tarja Talvitie.

Jani Leinonen, The Truth, 27 Mar–5 Sep 2021

Jani Leinonen's exhibition *Totuus – The Truth* is a magical installation implemented using centuries-old stained-glass techniques. It is also a plunge into the long history of propaganda and manipulation – and the colourful present. The exhibition was supposed to be opened at Art Museum Gösta already in autumn 2020 but was postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Banksy. A Visual Protest, 15 May–10 Oct 2021

The exhibition showcases the world's most famous street artist, whose visually skilful and biting works also incorporate humanity and warm humour. The exhibition, implemented in collaboration with 24 Ora Cultura of Milan, brings Banksy's production to Finland for the first time on such a scale. The exhibition is curated by Gianni Mercurio.

IC-98, Treasurelands, 25 Sep 2021–6 Mar 2022

The animation work of the artist group IC-98 is the story of a forest elf who, when he falls, leaves behind a trail of destruction. The work describes the humankind's search for direction in this world that resulted in a climate crisis. The journey across the "treasurelands" is a ritual during which ingredients are gathered for a new story that would oppose the present and enchant the world once again. Patrik Söderlund and Visa Suonpää form the artist group IC-98. The exhibition will be shown at Art Museum Gösta.

Art Odyssey 2021, 6 Nov 2021–17 Apr 2022

Art Odyssey 2021 is an exhibition inspired by science fiction. The exhibition presents works of eight contemporary artists in which influences from both literature and films can be discerned. The artists are Lauri Astala, Petri Eskelinen, Roland Persson, Joseph Popper, Tiina Raitanen, Kimmo Schroderus, Magnus Wallin and Charlotta Östlund. The exhibition is curated by Petri Eskelinen and Kimmo Schroderus. It will be shown at Art Museum Gösta's large exhibition hall.

For further information, please contact:

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Serlachius Museums are open:

wintertime 1 Sep–31 May from Tuesday to Sunday 11am–6pm

summertime 1 June–31 Aug daily 10am–6 pm

Visiting addresses:

Serlachius Museum Gösta, Joenniementie 47, Mänttä

Serlachius Museum Gustaf, R. Erik Serlachiuksen katu 2, Mänttä

Serlachius Museums in social media:

<https://facebook.com/serlachius>

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