



Rachel Kneebone, *The language of the body is yet to be explored (detail)*, 2017, porcelain, Corian and adhesive, private collection. Courtesy of the artist and White Cube

Press release 11 May 2022

## **Rachel Kneebone's exhibition Punoutua opens at Serlachius Museums in Finland**

**Sculptor Rachel Kneebone, who lives and works in London, is known for her enigmatic sculptures, which she makes from white porcelain. This exceptional material supports her themes, which are based on movement. Currently one of the most interesting contemporary artists, Kneebone opens her exhibition *Punoutua* at Serlachius Museums on 14 May. It is also her first solo exhibition in Finland.**

Rachel Kneebone's (b. 1973) exhibition was originally intended to come to Serlachius Museums two years ago. However, the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the museum's exhibition programme, and finally, the exhibition of this esteemed artist now opens at Serlachius Museums.

Kneebone has been working in porcelain since her study days, for around twenty years. She is fascinated by the colourlessness and formlessness of white porcelain, which presents opportunities for the countless meanings and interpretations of the works. The light shining on the surface of the glossy glazed porcelain and the shadows it creates are combined in the works into living, changing forms.

Highly significant for the sculptor is also the process of working the white clay mass and transforming it in the kiln into porcelain through certain work stages. Some of them are beyond her control. According to Kneebone, when working it is

possible to advance into new areas if one moderates the need to dominate the material and accepts that cracks and fissures will arise in the works during the firing stage.

“At first I thought I needed to take control of the material, but today I think I have to understand the material in order to lose control. This observation, which arose while I was working, made everything all the more interesting,” she says.

Kneebone creates from porcelain up to metres high sculptures that completely break old perceptions of porcelain. Recently, she has increasingly created suspended works, among the first examples of which can be seen in the Serlachius Museums exhibition.

### **Extensive references to art history**

Rachel Kneebone’s sculptures convey a strong impression of movement; they seem to be in a constant state of change. Intermittently, body parts emerging from the ensemble multiply and mix both with each other and with unidentified organic forms.

The artist views the language of gestures and forms as part of the deepest foundation of our humanity. She feels we understand this language directly and subconsciously because as humans we are corporeal. “The human body has a sensitivity similar to porcelain. It can infinitely convey different signs, movements and emotions,” she says.

In her works, Kneebone explores humanity, the cycle of life, metamorphosis and renewal. Her works are located in the zone between the conscious and the unconscious and the real and the imagined. A stream of diverse contrasts pervading and intertwined with each other is mixed with extensive references to literature and art history. The lightness and sensuality of European Rococo are mixed into the problems of the world, and the fears of the future blended with the Renaissance optimism that emerged from the Middle Ages.

The name of the exhibition in all languages is the Finnish word *Punoutua* (meaning to become intertwined). It is a direct reference to the essence of Kneebone’s art, how physical and mental meanings and interpretations meet and become entangled. The informally hung exhibition includes a dozen sculptures and related drawings.

The exhibition is a collaboration with White Cube Gallery, and it is curated by Timo Valjakka. The exhibition is accompanied by a book with the same title, which has been published earlier by Parvs Publishing Ltd. The texts of the book are in Finnish and English.

**The exhibition *Punoutua* is open at Serlachius Museum Gösta from 14 May to 9 October 2022.**

Press releases and photographs: <https://serlachius.fi/en/for-media/>

### **For further information and image requests, please contact:**

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### **The Serlachius Museums are open:**

in the winter season, 1 September–31 May, from Tuesday to Sunday, 11 am–6 pm.

in the summer season, 1 June–31 August, every day 10 am–6 pm

### **Visiting addresses:**

Serlachius Museum Gösta, Joenniementie 47, Mänttä

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

### **Serlachius Museums in the social media:**

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