

Visit to EMMA - Espoo Museum Of Modern Art

Thursday 14 September

9-10:30 am: EMMA - the Rut Bryk & Tapio Wirkkala Collections (EMMA, Espoo)

Preview of EMMA - Espoo Museum of Modern Art's upcoming Design Space In November 2017 EMMA opens the remarkable collections and archive of Rut Bryk and Tapio Wirkkala as well as an exhibition space for design exhibitions.

Speakers:

Museum Director, **Pilvi Kalhama**, EMMA

Designer **Harri Koskinen**, Curator of *STILL / LIFE - Tapio Wirkkala Retrospective*

Chief Curator, **Henna Paunu**, Curator of the *Rut Bryk & Tapio Wirkkala Visible Storage*

Bryk & Wirkkala visible storage and exhibitions

EMMA will open a 1,000 square-metre extension to house the internationally significant Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk Foundation collection and archive, as well as exhibitions concentrating on contemporary design. Entitled *Aukio*, the space is designed by **Johanna Brummer** and **Heini-Emilia Saari** (Studio Wanderlust) and is divided between the visible storage and changing exhibitions.

The visible storage adds more than 5,000 new objects, models, drawings, sketches, prototypes and photographs to EMMA's collection and archives in order to reach a wider audience. In addition to **Rut Bryk** and **Tapio Wirkkala's** work and career, the exhibits also relate to the couple's travels and life in general. The visible storage works on three levels: as material objects placed on display in a space, spatially experienced digital content and as online content accessible from anywhere.

The space will open to the public in November and work on preparing the digital content will continue for several years.

Studio Wanderlust's Johanna Brummer and Heini-Emilia Saari comment on the project:

"Aukio is an extremely exciting concept. The visible storage enables the showcasing of Bryk and Wirkkala's life's work alongside the museum's other key functions, such as archiving and conservation. A key feature in the architecture is the display wall, which creates a space for changing exhibitions within the visible storage and which as a versatile mounting surface can serve as the museum's "desktop".

It is important for us as designers that we can create spatial solutions in collaboration with EMMA that adapt to different work methods and content in years to come. It is also a

privilege to be involved in a project that creates completely new ways for a museum to operate as a cultural institution. This type of archive, which focuses on design and art as well as its many ongoing functions, is a unique and topical assignment for an architect.”

STILL / LIFE – Tapio Wirkkala Retrospective

The changing exhibitions in the space focus on contemporary design and multidisciplinary design to instigate a dialogue between modern and contemporary design. The first temporary exhibition is *STILL / LIFE – Tapio Wirkkala Retrospective*, curated by designer **Harri Koskinen**, which showcases Tapio Wirkkala's life and work through the eyes of a contemporary designer and Wirkkala's colleague. Based largely on the Bryk and Wirkkala collection, the retrospective has also been on display at Rovaniemi Art Museum, the Sámi Museum Siida and Seinäjoki Art Hall.

Opening at the same time with the visible storage, *STILL / LIFE – Tapio Wirkkala Retrospective* is open until 22 April 2018.

Images: http://bit.ly/preview_emma

Password: emmamuseum

Inquiries and interview bookings:

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Attached:

Behind the Design: The International Concept Competition
Award Winning Entries

The designer-artist couple: Rut Bryk and Tapio Wirkkala
Rut Bryk Centenary Exhibition

EMMA – Espoo Museum of Modern Art is one of Finland's central art museums. Located in Tapiola, Espoo, EMMA's collection and exhibition programme profiles Finnish and international modernism, contemporary art as well as design. EMMA's exhibition spaces – the largest in Finland – are situated in the architecturally impressive WeeGee building designed by Professor Aarno Ruusuvuori. The modern architecture adds to the experience-focused presentation of the changing exhibitions and permanent collections of EMMA, the Saastamoinen Foundation and Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk Foundation.

The Tapio Wirkkala – Rut Bryk Foundation was established and registered in 2003 in accordance with the approved statutes. The artist-designer couple Tapio Wirkkala and Rut Bryk worked in many disciplines. They were always open to new technical developments, continuously trying to expand design through innovation. They were also passionately committed to furthering design education. The Foundation aims to maintain this spirit and to stimulate design development in collaboration with design departments at universities and related institutions.

Behind the Design: The International Concept Competition

The spatial design of *Aukio* is based on the five entries who shared the first prize of the *Sharing* concept competition organised by Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk Foundation: **Simon Örnberg** / The Give Collection (FI), **Johanna Brummer** and **Heini-Emilia Saari** / Trails (FI), **Chiara Montgomerie** and **María Jose Orihuela** / Map (UK), **Emmanuel Laux** and **Sebastian Weindauer** / Elävä Arkisto (DE), **Philip Tidwell** / Putting the depository on display (US).

The international concept competition sought ideas for a permanent showcase for the extensive collection of the Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk (TWRB) Foundation, and for the establishment of a new space for design at EMMA. Organised by EMMA, the TWRB Foundation, and the Finnish Association of Architects, SAFA, the international ideas competition attracted 91 entries from Finland and other European countries, as well as from Asia and North America. The award-winners were invited to a seminar on the centenary of the birth of Rut Bryk in October 2016 to discuss and develop their ideas further. Saari and Brummer were commissioned to design the spatial solution based on the winning concepts.

The international competition was launched in December 2015, with an aim of seeking ideas for the creation of a new type of interactive and international design center, to be part of EMMA. The competition sought innovative solutions for presenting and researching the collection maintained by the TWRB Foundation. In addition, the solutions should enable contemporary design to interact with the collection.

The collection of the TWRB Foundation includes more than 5000 items: models, drawings, sketches, prototypes and photographs. In addition to material related to the work and careers of Tapio Wirkkala and Rut Bryk, the collection features many personal items, including letters and photographs from the couple's travels and along their life's journey.

The competition sought ideas and conceptual presentations. No one idea or entry among the award-winning candidates was selected for implementation. EMMA and the TWRB Foundation, in cooperation with a variety of specialists, will continue to develop the future design center and the functional details of the foundation's archive. The competition served as a good starting point for further discussion and development.

Award Winning Entries

The Give Collection, Simon Örnberg (FI)

The proposal suggests a digital complementary “twin” collection. The main objective is in creating digital models of the archive articles containing metadata related to each object. The digital collection consists of AIMS (article information model) of every archive piece. Both the curators and the users participate in producing the information thus making the virtual collection ever evolving and enlarging. The Give Collection can be viewed with three different modes; virtual collection for inspiration seekers, browse collections for detail hungry researchers as well as physical visitors at EMMA.

The proposal concentrates in the act of sharing, as a shared online experience, sharing information and personal views, and in linking the archive to existing social media platforms. The Give Collection is targeted for different user-groups divided to virtual and physical experiences. The entry was created by Simon Örnberg from Finland.

Trails, Johanna Brummer and Heini-Emilia Saari (FI)

The proposal sees the archive as a "vast yet elusive landscape... where curatorial paths await discovery". A total of 1000 randomly selected objects are placed in a chequered shelf structure on the walls lining the space. The presentation is altered according to the situation: need for a loan, by request or arbitrarily. The shelves light up according to the visitor's wishes, illuminating a customized trail through the works of Wirkkala and Bryk. Compass screens implanted in the shelf structures on four different walls showcase exhibits or stored objects. The screens react according to the visitors' selections, and also connect to urban satellites in other locations outside EMMA, such as MoMA. The central part of the space can host forum workshops, discussions and other events. A frame composed of massive wooden tables, functions as a centerpiece for different gatherings. The entry was created by Johanna Brummer and Heini-Emilia Saari from Finland.

Map, Chiara Montgomerie and María Jose Orihuela (UK)

The concept concentrates in creating a parallel between the act of everyday-decision-making and curating. The project consists of a physical archive in EMMA and a digital platform that states to challenge the archive experience. The physical space is a container of the archive objects and serves as a place for workshops, cinemas and exhibitions. The project solves the prospective archive exhaustion with a digitally curated wayfinding. The experience in the archive will be supplemented with digital suggestions. The proposed app allows user to select images and based on the selection, suggests a route and a possible match with a previously curated exhibition. The physical museum concept for EMMA is compiled with the interplay of solid and void, preserving and sharing. The entry was created by Chiara Montgomerie and María Jose Orihuela from the United Kingdom.

Elävä Arkisto, Emmanuel Laux and Sebastian Weindauer (DE)

In this proposal, the archive itself is the exhibition. It is stated that due to the heterogeneous nature of the material, a toolkit is required. The challenge of the task is presented in a mechanical manner. The DNA of the project is a modular rail system that would permit archive shelves to be moved around, changing the structure of the space to fit different needs. The ceiling rails would make it possible to move the shelves and walls around, and the space could also be rearranged further with curtains. The shelf units would leave room for research desks, and events such as lectures, etc. The system comes integrated with full technical support and lighting structures. The exhibition items would be stored in containers that serve both storing and exhibiting purposes. The containers are placed on movable shelves. Parts of the exhibition could also be easily transplanted elsewhere in blocks. The entry was created by Emmanuel Laux and Sebastian Weindauer from Germany.

Putting the Depository on Display, Philip Tidwell (USA)

The entry boldly proposes a new method of navigation, searching and curating. The proposal suggests the archive to be a place for playfulness and observation. The idea is that a visitor of the archive can request certain items from a computer program which controls a robot arm handing the selected item to a rotating belt. The spatial organization is a simple layered model where circular shelves are enclosing protected items. The inner part contains selection of archived items and working space for researchers, curators, etc. The middle circle is reserved for the robotic arm moving and reorganizing items based on visitors' wishes. The outermost part serves as a space for larger objects and exhibition. The entry was created by Philip Tidwell from the United States.

The Competition Jury

Juhani Pallasmaa – Architect, Professor Emeritus, Chairman of the competition jury

Mikko Heikkinen – Architect, Professor, Heikkinen-Komonen Architects

Pilvi Kalhama – Museum Director, EMMA – the Espoo Museum of Modern Art

Emmi Keskisarja – Architect, jury member announced by SAFA – Finnish Association of Architects

Laura Sarvilinna – Programme Director, The Finnish Fair Corporation

Special Advisors

Eva Franch i Gilabert – Chief Curator and Executive Director of Storefront for Art and Architecture

Jaana Jalonen – Chairman, City of Espoo Board of Culture

The designer-artist couple

Rut Bryk (1916 –1999)

Rut Bryk is a ceramic artist who is primarily known for her ceramic art works. The works of her first figurative phase are ceramic wall pieces depicting still lifes, architectural motifs, mythological themes, plants and birds. In the late 1960s she began to produce large architectural ceramic wall pieces composed of numerous differently shaped and coloured modules.

Many of her monumental pieces are integrated with important architectural projects such as the Helsinki City Hall, the Finnish Embassy in New Delhi and the Residence of the President of the Republic of Finland.

In addition to her purely artistic work, she designed simple geometric and vividly coloured ceramic objects, exquisitely coloured textiles and graphic surface decoration for Tapio Wirkkala's industrial porcelain objects. Rut Bryk's work has been exhibited worldwide and is presented in the collections of major museums internationally.

Tapio Wirkkala (1915 –1985)

Tapio Wirkkala, who has become something of a legend, is the embodiment of modern Finnish design. He was an exceptionally versatile and prolific designer and artist who never felt constrained by limits imposed by materials, functions, or professional disciplines. The scale of his work extends from postage stamp size to futuristic cityscape, from jewellery to land art the size of an entire fjeld. He combined craft and industrial manufacturing, unique artistic form and anonymous mass production, tradition and innovation. Wirkkala produced designs for several factories in Finland, and also worked in Italy, Germany and Mexico.

Objects designed by Wirkkala as well as his artistic works are included in many leading museum collections around the world. As an indication of the continuing interest in Wirkkala's work, an extensive exhibition of his life's work based largely on items in the collection of the Foundation was shown from 2001 to 2004 in Helsinki, Tallinn, Gent, Toronto, Mexico City, Philadelphia, Washington, Sunderland, Lisbon, Madrid and Zagreb.

In 2009 the Espoo Museum of Modern Art showed an extensive and well received exhibition Tapio Wirkkala Sculptor , the first exhibition ever on Wirkkala's sculpture.

Rut Bryk Centenary Exhibition

EMMA - Espoo Museum of Modern Art has produced a large exhibition *Rut Bryk - The Magic Box* on the artist, a key reformer of modern Finnish ceramic art.

Choosing ceramics as her primary medium, **Rut Bryk** (1916 – 1999) spent over fifty years working in the Art Department at the Arabia porcelain factory. Bryk was a key modernizer of Finnish ceramic art and a boldly original artist of international acclaim. This exhibition and the accompanying extensive catalogue produced by EMMA celebrate the museum's 10th anniversary and the 100th anniversary of the birth of Rut Bryk and her husband Tapio Wirkkala.

A great admirer of the Italian Proto-Renaissance masters, Rut Bryk's love of art began in her childhood home. In her youth she dreamed of a career in architecture, but instead she studied printmaking, spending her early career working as an illustrator and graphic artist. Her artistic career began in earnest when she was offered a position at the Arabia porcelain factory, though she had no prior experience working with ceramics. At Arabia she perfected her skills with support from experienced colleagues and the professionals at the factory. Bryk studied, worked and experimented tirelessly. She became a master of her craft with a brilliant command of colours and glazes, yet she never wanted to call herself a ceramist. Her medium was above all a technique and material for creating unique works of art. Bryk never designed anything for mass production at the factory. Although she worked serially, she specialized in one-off art ware and objets d'art: reliefs, art plates, sculptures and installations.

Bryk's highly original art is infused with great sensitivity and intensity of mood. Her early works are colourful and narrative. She later abandoned narrativity in favour of compositions with a powerful spatial resonance and kinship to architecture, assembling monumental reliefs from myriad components. Bryk created numerous monumental ceramic reliefs for public venues including Helsinki's Town Hall and the Mäntyniemi Presidential Residence. Bryk's oeuvre remains intriguing and relevant today. Contemporary viewers continue to be touched by her radiantly refined colours, her moving characters and engaging narratives, yet no less by their powerful sense of materiality and spatiality.

Rut Bryk - The Magic Box is divided into five sections which chronologically and thematically chart the different stages of her career. Over 200 exhibits are featured, most of which are from the Tapio Wirkkala – Rut Bryk Foundation Collection. The exhibition also includes works on loan for example from private collections. It is curated by Adjunct Professor **Harri Kalha**, PhD, who also authored the catalogue.