



Objekt 14, Väder, 1973, oil on canvas.  
Photo Johannes Wietn.

# ESKO TIRRONEN

Lönnström Art Museum, 18 January – 27 April 2014

Join us for a press preview of the exhibition on Friday, 17 January 2014, at 1 pm in the Lönnström Art Museum. The exhibition will be presented by Dr Johanna Vuolasto, Special Adviser at Art Promotion Centre Finland.

The Lönnström Art Museum in Rauma organises an exhibition of work by **Esko Tirronen** (1934–2011) from 18 January to 27 April 2014. From the very start of his career in the 1960s Tirronen was a notorious artist whose work was frequently seen in international exhibitions. His paintings were praised and vilified, because they always contained something new and unprecedented in Finland. Tirronen's painting style was a sensitive barometer of the times, indicating emerging trends in the art world. The Informalism of Tirronen's early work changed into Photorealism, famous examples being spray-painted sensual pictures of women.

This exhibition of work by Esko Tirronen, who was one of the most influential artists in the Kymenlaakso region, is produced by the Kouvola Art Museum Poikilo. It will be on show at the Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art in Vaasa in summer 2014 and at the Amos Anderson Art Museum in Helsinki in autumn 2014. A book is published in conjunction with the show. In addition to a foreword by Soili Sinisalo, it includes essays by Lumimarja Tirronen, Anna-Kaarina Kippola and Johanna Vuolasto, all shedding light on the art and life of Esko Tirronen.

The exhibition at the Lönnström Art Museum showcases the entire arc of Esko Tirronen's career as an artist. The show also includes works that are on public display for the first time as well as five of the six works that were on show in the 1962 Venice Biennale. The exhibition tour is the first time these paintings are on show in Finland simultaneously.

The exhibition highlights two periods in the artist's career that were crucial for the internationalisation and development of Finnish contemporary art. The first was Informalism in the early 1960s, the other Photorealism or Hyperrealism in the 1970s, to both of which Esko Tirronen made crucial contributions.

The beginning of Informalism in Finland is marked by the exhibition of Esko Tirronen's works at the Venice Biennale in 1962. The same works had almost created a scandal when they were shown in the first ARS exhibition in Helsinki in 1961. Painted in the photorealist style, the public best remembers the so-called 'Esko's women' – female figures dressed in silk or in shorts, the subject of heated public discussion at the time. These works were on show in the 1974 ARS exhibition.

The exhibition includes a rare interview that the Finnish Broadcasting Company made with Tirronen in 1966, with reporter **Jouko Rissa** interviewing Esko Tirronen and his artist wife, **Ulla Rantanen**, in their home in Voikkaa. Esko Tirronen talks about himself, his studies and work process. Ulla Rantanen talks about the demands of being an artist, her work methods and the relationship between the work of art and the viewer.

A later documentary of the artist's life is an interview produced by the South-Karelia Art Museum in 1989 (duration 10 min.). The documentary was part of the first extensive review of Tirronen's work that was on show in the Kouvola Art Museum. In the documentary, Tirronen talks about his methods and the subjects of his works and their background.

#### More information:

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Review copies of the exhibition book can be ordered from:  
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