

Andrzej Tarasiuk, who works in Rauma, seeks a different future through art - Artist shares his thoughts on two current crises (Translated with Google Translate)

In Finland, Andrzej Tarasiuk was impressed by the use of time. In addition to work, people have a lot of energy left for cultural and nature activities.

(under photo: Andrzej Tarasiuk prepared for workshops for children at the Rauma School of Fine Arts. He has made paints from natural materials and created text and image templates related to the history of Rauma)

Rauma

What does the future of children in Satakunta look like? Visual artist Andrzej Tarasiuk asks the children about it in Rauma and asks them to create a picture or write about it.

Although the workshops are short and include works related to the history of Rauma, the artist has a deeper idea about the future.

“The future just doesn’t happen to us. It is something we create ourselves. From both an environmental and a political point of view, we need new ideas on how to act, because we are currently repeating the same old story and our solutions are not working,” says Tarasiuk.

He is from Poland, lives in Canada and works at the RaumArs artist residency in Rauma during the spring. Next week, he will run workshops for children as part of Children’s Culture Weeks.

With a Polish background, he follows current events in Europe from a different perspective than, for example, Canadians. As an artist, however, he deals with another current state of emergency.

Technology to replace forests

In his artistic work, Tarasiuk considers the replacement of nature with technology. Humans are developing techniques for capturing carbon dioxide, for example, in the same way that trees sequester carbon dioxide.

Tarasiuk is particularly interested in another important function of trees: the ability to bind and transfer moisture. He has played with the idea of what kind of machines would be used to replace trees. In Rauma, he may make an installation on the subject.

“The whole ecosystem is hugely complex. The idea that nature could be replaced by technology is absurd. Still, people seem to focus on finding technical solutions to replace the functions of nature,” Tarasiuk points out.

To show the absurdity of the idea, Tarasiuk imagines in artist residencies around the world what a place would look like if nature were replaced by technology.

A recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is alarming: The climate has changed faster than even predicted.

“This is not reflected in the general debate or in the actions of governments and societies. We either don’t believe or understand how important this is.”

Chernobyl memories came to mind

The catastrophic climate news was overshadowed by the war news last week. Tarasiuk commented on the news from Ukraine as shocking.

“The events did not come as a surprise. I’m just really sad about this trend where no one is winning. It is an absurd human tragedy that should not have happened.”

Tarasiuk is interested in combining researched knowledge and art. He had planned to travel from Rauma to Poland to a research station in a unique conservation area in Białowieża near the Belarusian border. He suspects the trip may not be successful now. In any case, he plans to spend two months in Poland, either doing research or volunteering in a refugee camp, for example.

Born in 1980, Tarasiuk remembers well from his childhood the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, which had a profound effect on his life. He lived in Gdynia but spent summers in the eastern part of Poland with his grandmother in Białystok and near Lublin. When the information about the radiation was finally obtained, he had to stay indoors for the summer. Fresh milk was not allowed to drink until.

(Photo: Tarasiuk expects the bike paths to melt and make it easier to explore Rauma's surroundings. He plans to visit at least the traditional sauna, Sammallahdenmäki and the archipelago.)

Life is not just a job

Tarasiuk has lived in Rauma since the beginning of February. In addition to environmental issues, he is interested in history. He lives in Old Rauma, whose inhabitants actually live as part of cultural history and actively maintain old buildings.

Tarasiuk is has been particularly impressed by how active the people of Rauma have always been and still are. In Finland, in addition to work, people have the energy to engage in, for example, music or art and to move around in nature.

"In North America, many live to work instead of working to live."

Tarasiuk will be working with students at the Department of Teacher Education during the spring. He also plans to visit the traditional sauna, the Bronze Age tombs of Sammallahdenmäki and the protected islands of the Bothnian Sea National Park.

In an artist residency, it is important for him not only to have peace in his artistic work but also to be in a new environment and culture, and especially to connect with other people.

"This is like the opposite of an artist working alone in a studio hoping that someone will sometimes see a work of art he or she has created. Here I work with others and everyone is interested in what I do. It motivates."

RaumArs

Rauma has operated the artists' international RaumArs residency program for 25 years.

The artist residency is one of the oldest in Finland and operates on public funding.

173 artists have worked in Rauma through the program.

In the international artist residency, professionals conduct participatory workshops and community art events, exhibitions and performances. Artists often work with children and young people, the elderly or different professional groups.

This year, eleven artists from different fields will arrive in Rauma: visual artists, dancers, a film composer and a theater maker.

Dancer Lotta Halinen is currently touring the Tenho dance solo in service centers in Satakunta, and Andrzej Tarasiuk works in Rauma with children and students of the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Turku and works independently as an artist.

Hannele Kolsio is the executive director of the artist guest program.



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