

Mikko Rikala *Paradigms of Chance*

Opening: Friday, 20 November 2020, 12 – 9pm, Saturday, 21 November 2020, 12 – 6pm
Exhibition: 21 November 2020 – 6 March 2021



Mikko Rikala, *Merestone*
2020, pigment print
31,7 x 23 cm

We are pleased to present *Paradigms of Chance*, Mikko Rikala's second solo exhibition at Persons Projects that continues his research into spatiality and temporality emerging from both philosophical and scientific nature related thoughts and practices.

The exhibition's most prolific group of works *A Year in My Pocket*, features photographs that Rikala took over four seasons from specific places in the Finnish archipelago, where he focuses on the water in its various seasonal cycles.

He subsequently prints and folds one photograph for each season and places it in his pocket, which he then carries throughout that season. Every so often he would pull out the trousered photograph to document its transformation and condition, then place it back into his pocket. Like the memories we keep in our heads, the image is transformed over time through its everyday use of being transported and carried.

Mikko Rikala is an artist who uses the photographic process as tool for gathering and recording material to help him in his philosophical pursuit of finding different ways to explore what's behind the rational self. Rikala states, "I'm trying to uncover the relationship between what is seen as rational on one hand and what is perceived as irrational on the other." His work is a reflection that merges mystical and philosophical thoughts through the empirical process of observation. Unlike his previous works, where he used the photographic process to record the now and then, these new pieces focus on the mysteries that lie beneath the unseen. He asks, "What are the possibilities for a person to observe and understand the world beyond the rational mind?"

Rikala uses his camera as a means for monitoring through the meditative act of observation in drawing out the medicinal to the philosophical aspects inherent with the physical plane of what an object is, be it a plant, rock or bees hive. He creates visual dichotomies that contrast opposing world views in how we should be living with nature as opposed to using technology as a tool to overpower it.

The works presented in this exhibition are Rikala's attempt to remind us that we need to remember those essential qualities that lie within the natural world beyond their scientific definitions and within our collective memories. In Rikala's world a quartz stone is far more than a hard-crystalline mineral compound but a talisman for channeling emotions, healing, calming and cleansing one's thoughts. Collectively, these pieces function as psychological bridges joining the

conscious to the unconscious by looking at our surroundings through a mystical lens based upon innate sensibilities. Rikala concludes, "My artistic approach exercises methods of 'meditative repetition' and patterning, arrangement and decomposition; my work systematically juxtaposes and breaks up processual, relative movements of linear and circular time. Structures of disintegration and decay, as indicators of the inevitable, progressive passage of time and, likewise transitional phenomena of recurring, self-renewing characters, as signifiers of the cyclical and interstitial passage of time, are elementary themes in my works. Visual motifs are taken both from the natural and man-made world, man-made being physically built or conceptual. They coexist as fragments without structural hierarchy."

Mikko Rikala was born in 1977 in Tampere, Finland. He graduated from Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in 2015. His recent solo exhibitions include Gallery 3+1 Arte Contemporânea (Lisboa, 2019), *Overlapping Instants* with Juuso Noronkoski, Gallery Alarcon Criado (Sevilla, 2018) and *10 Weeks by the Sea*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin, 2015). Recent group shows include *Frischer Wind aus dem Norden*, Kunsthalle St. Annen (Lübeck, 2020), *Zeitspuren-The Power of Now*, Kunsthaus Pasquart (Biel, 2018), *Considering Finland*, Kunstverein Ludwigshafen (Ludwigshafen, 2018), and *A Meeting Point: Communication/Translation*, R/E Projects (Madrid, 2018).