

### **TIINA ITKONEN/ Statement**

Since the beginning of the 1990s, I have been searching for my own Ultima Thule, my place in the Far North. I was enchanted with the story of the Mother of the Sea, and in 1995 it inspired me to set off for the place where the story originated from, Greenland. The lack of haste and the peace of the landscape compelled me to return there many times.

The landscape in Greenland is barren, cold and limitless. The silence is never far away. When there are no trees or buildings in front of you, you can see so far into the distance that the space has a calming, hypnotic effect. This huge space is difficult to capture within the limits of a photograph. The picture doesn't tell us what is close by and what is far away, what is big and what is small. Icebergs are as big as apartment blocks; an island that seems within easy reach is in fact 20 kilometers away. Nor do my eyes make clear distinctions between objects. I am not used to seeing so far.

The landscapes I have photographed are in places where I have spent time, returning to them again and again. I explore these landscapes at dawn, in the moonlight and when snow is falling. I wait, sometimes for hours, sometimes for days, for the right moment to take photographs. I gradually detect the subtle changes. What I see today does no longer exist tomorrow.

My photographing project in Greenland is a kind of longing to be away in a faraway remote place. I wanted to find out how to exist in such a barren and cold environment. As I became more used to the villagers lifestyle I realized that people always have time for each other and nobody is ever in a rush. There I learned to be a vagabond – the freedom of not accomplishing anything. This northern place, its people and their way of life fascinated me.