

PRESS KIT



VIAPORI DOCKYARD A BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

A photographic exhibition by Jacopo Brancati
at the Suomenlinna Museum, Finland
23rd April 2014 - 1st March 2015

The Viapori Dockyard

Suomenlinna, or Viapori (in old Finnish), is a fortress built in the 18th century to protect the city of Helsinki, nowadays a UNESCO World Heritage site.

It is a shrine containing a dockyard whose main activity consists today in the maintenance and restoration of traditional wooden sailing ships.

It boasts almost three centuries of uninterrupted activity: where once galleys and war frigates were built, today ships with historical significance are repaired or restored.

The Viapori dockyard is a place where the future is built on historical foundations and the cultural heritage is kept alive for the next generations. It is a unique meeting point of different human and professional experiences with a common goal: preserving the Finnish maritime heritage and transmitting knowledge to the forthcoming generations.

Every winter the dockyard shelters what is left of a fleet of wooden sailing ships built in the aftermath of WWII for the coastal trade.

Those sailing vessels are a precious but very fragile part of Finland's cultural heritage. They played a humble but no less fundamental role in the country's reconstruction. Meant to work hard and to live no more than 15 years, they sailed mostly from the East Coast to Helsinki, overloaded with sand, stone and other bulk, ensuring the supply of building materials to rebuild the capital.

Thanks to the tenacity and passion of two generations of people who sailed and lovingly preserved them, some ships survive to the present day.



The Exhibition

From April 23, 2014 through March 1, 2015 the Suomenlinna Museum will present a photographic exhibition by Jacopo Brancati, a photographer and journalist specialized in maritime heritage, telling about the passion, skill and friendship that keep these ships alive.

The focus of Brancati reportage is the work, the knowledge and its transmission from one generation to the next. The goal of the exhibition is to arouse the interest on the dockyard, the ships and help preserving them.

The exhibition idea and layout is by Infine Arts, France. All the photos are by Jacopo Brancati.

Arja Kastinen is the author of the music and soundtrack; it is a journey into the pictures, the feeling inside them turned into tunes through the evocative notes of Arja's kantele, the traditional Finnish instrument.

The texts are by Sonia Olcese. The sound installation is made, and the music composed and performed by Arja Kastinen.

The exhibition has been produced by Viaporin Telakka Association, and has the support of Suomenlinna Governing Body, Merikeskus Vellamo (The Maritime Museum of Finland), The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland, the European Maritime Heritage Association, the French magazine Chasse-Marée.

70 photos by Jacopo Brancati, introduced by 3 historical panels with texts and archive images.

The fine-art prints are made by the master printer Siim Vahur from ArtProof, Tallinn.

The Exhibition Path

The exhibition leads the public to the discovery of the dockyard, telling about both men and ships. Sounds and music create the atmosphere of the place.

The historical introduction to the exhibition presents the history of traditional wooden sailing ships from the 19th century to the present day, through texts and images from public and private archives.

The exhibition path then invites the visitor to follow the development of work in the dockyard through the seasons, from the "in docking" at the end of the sailing season, to springtime, when the ships can return to the sea again.

Woodwork, ironwork, rig-fitting... Each season sees the proper activity carried out

with patience, strength, spotless skill.

The mature and the young work side by side, the ones showing, the others learning. They share fatigue and laughter, far below zero temperatures and warm sunny days, until the moment comes for the ships to slip out of their winter cocoons and set sails again.

Jacopo Brancati and Infine Arts art group

Infine Arts is a pool of artists coming from different countries and disciplines, but all share the same passion for cultural heritage and the desire to enhance and keep it alive. Visual arts, writing and music are their domains.

Jacopo Brancati

Born in 1966 in Italy, he is a professional photographer and journalist who lives and works in France since 1992. After graduating in political science at the University of Genoa he turns to photography as a means of ethnological study. In 2002 Brancati devotes himself entirely to photography and in cooperation with various European maritime museums he participates in several projects for the safeguard and enhancement of the maritime cultural heritage. He explores the world of ports and navigation, describing the everyday reality of maritime and harbour workers, from the coasts of Italy to those of Northern Europe; he focuses on their maritime traditions, on the restoration or reconstruction of historic ships.

Jacopo Brancati is also correspondent of the French magazine of maritime history and ethnology the *Chasse-Marée* and of the Italian magazine *Arte Navale*.

His photographic reportages have been commissioned and exhibited at the Musée Portuaire of Dunkirk (France), the Museo del Mare in Genoa (Italy) and at the Suomen Merimuseo, which holds in its photographic collection the complete series of fine-art prints from Brancati's reportage "Jäinen matka Suomeen" (2008).

Arja Kastinen

Kantele player, she was the first folk musician to take the doctor of music examination in the artistic study programme at the Sibelius Academy. She released several albums, published two books on kantele history and playing techniques, she performs her music in Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Russia...

For more information about her works visit www.temps.fi

Sonia Olcese

Guide lecturer and interpreter, in 2004 she co-founded Infine Arts with Jacopo Brancati. She writes articles and develops historical researches for the group's cultural projects.

Viaporin Telakka Ry

The association was established in 1987 with the purpose of maintaining and developing knowledge and skills needed in restoration, reparation and operation of old or culturally significant ships.

The association arranges training and informs the public about the activities of the dockyard. The most visible event is the yearly race of the traditional sailing vessels, Tervasaaren tynnyri, which has been arranged since 1992.

Practical information

Suomenlinna Museum

Suomenlinna Museum, located in the Suomenlinna Centre, showcases the eventful history of the island fortress from the 18th century to the present day.

The museum also hosts various historical exhibitions.

For detailed information on opening hours, entrance fees, guided visits etc. visit the website <http://www.suomenlinna.fi>

or contact

Ehrensvärd Society, tel. +358(0) 9 684 1850

Contact Infine Arts

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Check out for the catalogue of the exhibition, it will be available on the website soon!

Press Images

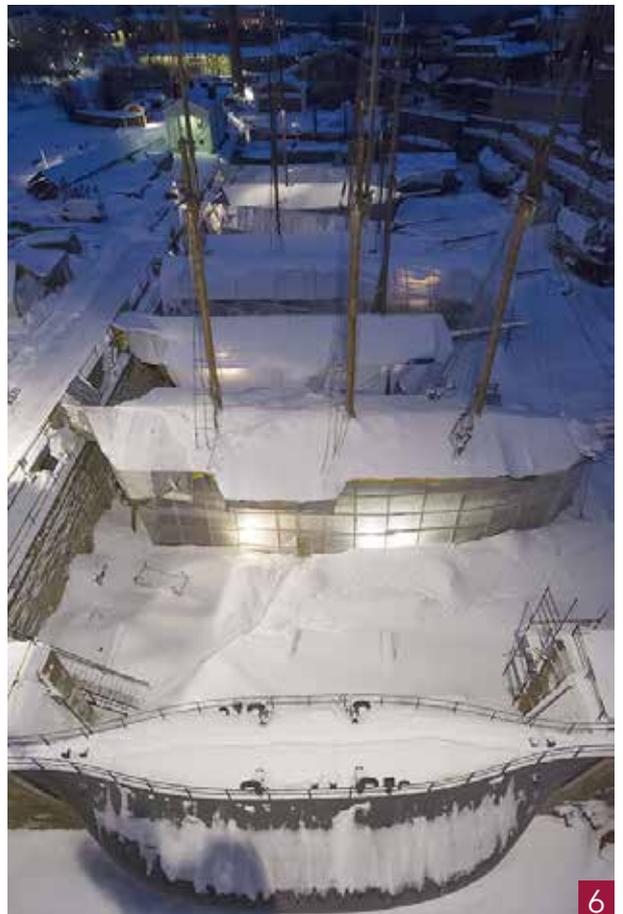
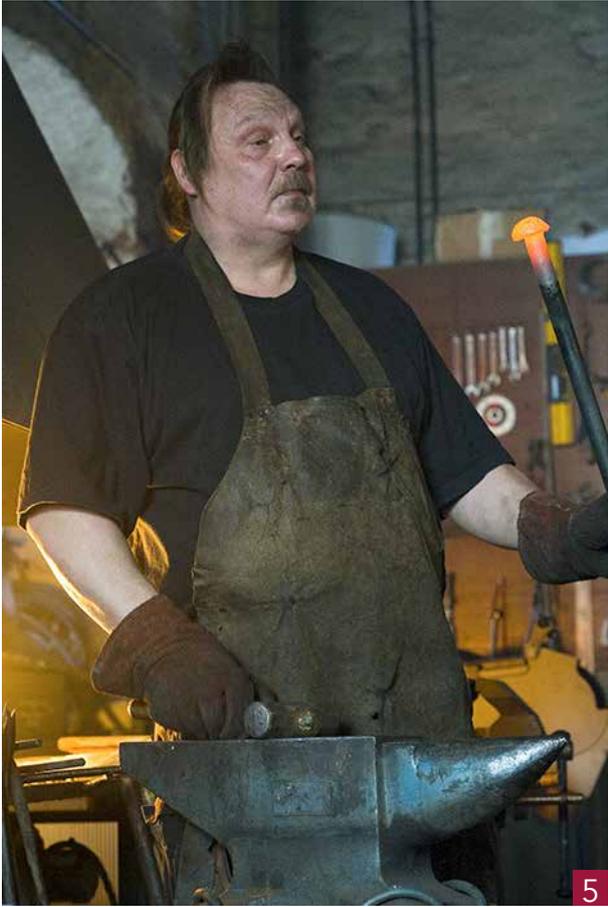
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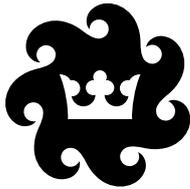
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VIAPORIN TELAKKA RY



SUOMENLINNA
SVEABORG



MARITIME CENTRE VELLAMO



SLS SVENSKA LITTERATURSÄLLSKAPET I FINLAND
Society of Swedish Literature in Finland



chasse-marée

DES BATEAUX ET DES HOMMES

