



# From Private to Public Yksityisestä julkiseksi

**Galleria GAo ShAn**

**12. 05. – 11. 07. 2023**

Welcome to experience at homelike settings works from well-known Finnish culture person, art collector, movie director and producer and author of some 70 books, **Jörn Donner's** (1933-2020) home in Helsinki. Donner was collecting art for around half a century.

The artist names you encounter here are **Ahti Lavonen**, **Maija Lavonen**, **Stefan Lindfors**, **Jorma Vennola** and **Mikael Fagerlund**. Many were personal friends or acquaintances. There is also on display selected furniture from Donner's home by Alvar Aalto. Some of the many books written by him can be browsed under Donner's reading lamps designed by **Ben af Schulten** for Artek and **Lisa Johansson-Pape** for Orno.

The visitor may wonder why Donner chose the exhibited artworks for his home. In a documentary on his art choices (Sattumien taide, 2019) he surprisingly evasive on his taste for art. "I only react intuitively. I just like something. That's it," he said. We do know that friendship could influence his choices." The constantly penniless artist Ahti Lavonen was a good friend of mine. When I had money, I always used to buy his paintings," Donner described the relationship he had with the well-known experimental informalist in the 1960s. Sculptor Stefan Lindfors was also a good personal friend of Donner's. "Jörn likes abstract and gray works," says his widow **Bitte Westerlund**.

Donner and jewelry art may not sound like an obvious combination. Yet the word Oscar is common for both master goldsmith **Matti Hyvärinen** and Jörn Donner. Donner collected the gilded statue for Ingmar Bergman's film Fanny and Alexander while Hyvärinen is the only Finn to win an "Oscar of jewelry", the Diamonds International Award. Hyvärinen's work, the Rich and the Poor, which won the award in New York in 1967, is on display at the exhibition. You can also see a selection of his best, one-of-a-kind works.

The beginning of Donner's art collecting coincided with the era when Finnish art and design started to gain international recognition and acclaim in the 1950s and 1960s. One of the highlights was the presentation of the Finnish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 1956. The pavilion was designed by Alvar Aalto and received great attention and praise from the international audience. The exhibition gave Finnish artists and designers the opportunity to showcase their art and design skills internationally.

Jewelry deserves its place in Finnish art and design culture but it is not as widely known as Finnish ceramic art, glass art or textile art. Many famous names from the better-known fields such as Alvar Aalto, Tapio Wirkkala and Sara Hopea have also designed jewelry.

At this exhibition, you can see works of two current Finnish jewelry artists. One is a leading international jewelry artist **Terhi Tolvanen**. Her jewelry is included in the collections of Victoria & Albert Museum in London, Musée Des Arts in Paris and MAD in New York. Another is young artist **Wiebke Pandikow** who is rising across Europe and her works feature in the collections of several museums.

Feel at home at the exhibition. All three rooms have some art and furniture from Donner, mixed with other Finnish industrial art pieces from the past. Take your time to see the works for yourself.

There is something about yourself in each book, even in fictive ones, the Finlandia literature award winner Donner has described an author's work. "What will be left of me consists of words, phrases, movies and suchlike. For earthly possessions I don't give a damn," said Donner in a final movie recording of him (Privat, 2020).

**"Art speaks all languages. Or it is mute. The important thing is that it gives a lot to think about," Donner has said.**

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## **SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTISTS**

### **Ahti and Maija Lavonen**

Ahti Lavonen's (1928-1970) works as visual artist can be divided into 3 different periods, black, white and silver. The white period falls between years 1961-1964 and is followed by the silver period. Lavonen presented Finland at Venice Biennials twice, in 1962 and 1968 and at Sao Paolo Biennial in 1965.

At this exhibition you can see works from white and silver period. Two Lavonen paintings at this exhibition belonged to Jörn Donner. He bought the works directly from the artist, a family friend.

Lavonen stood out from other Finnish informalists for his use of muted colours in addition to being more international than his peers. He used unconventional materials for Finnish informal paintings, such as coarse plastered surface and sand. The expressive power of his works emanates from their fine surface structure, suited to the fact that Lavonen was especially interested in materialism in art.

Maija Lavonen (1931-) is a versatile artist in her own right both in the fields of visual arts and textile art. She is considered to have renewed Finnish rug art by her experimental approach. Her works are displayed in many prominent public spaces such as the Finnish Parliament, embassies, ministries and the Bank of Finland. She was chosen as the Finnish Textile artist of the Year in 1996.

**Stefan Lindfors** (1962-) is a Finnish sculptor, film-maker, industrial and interior designer. He was a personal friend of Jörn Donner, both shared an interest in film-making and writing while being Swedish speaking Finns. While serving as Consul General of Finland in Los Angeles in mid-1990s, Donner helped in finding an exhibition space (The Brewery) for the artist who has lived in the US for many years of his life in various stages. Donner and Lindfors were also bound together by a 2005 book project, Driven by Love and Fury - Conversations between Jörn Donner and the Artist Stefan Lindfors. Lindfors is a winner of various cultural awards and his works can be found in the collections of Vitra Design Museum, the Chicago Athenaeum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, among others.

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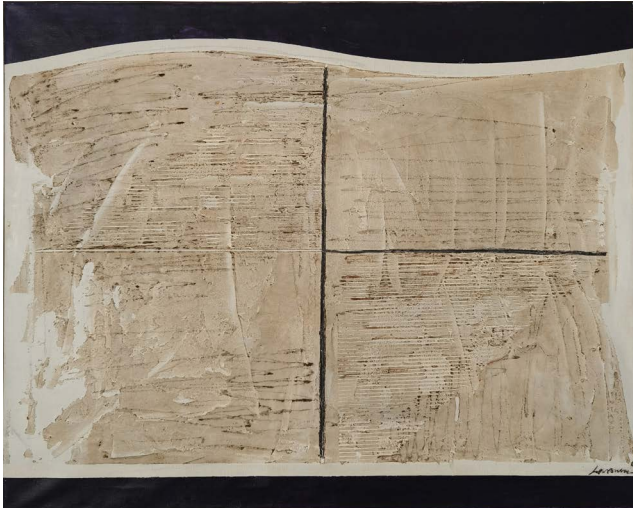
Mon by appointment  
Tue - Fri 12 - 18  
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## Jörn Donner home art collection



Ahti Lavonen (1928 - 1970)  
Oil painting on canvas, 1967  
81 x 76 cm

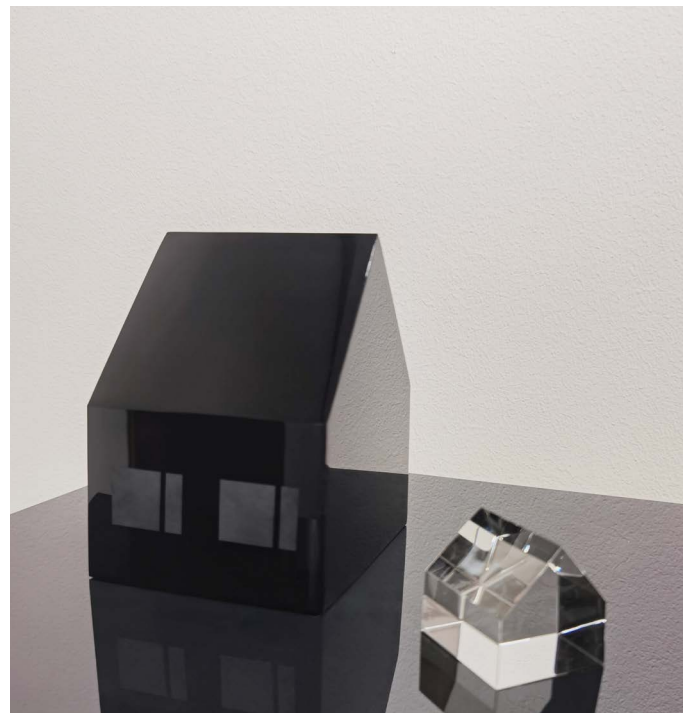


Ahti Lavonen (1928 - 1970)  
Ink on paper, 1963  
Without frame 70 x 56 cm  
With frame 74 x 65 cm

Christmas gift to Jörn Donner in 1966



Maija Lavonen (1931 - )  
"Pellon Laitaa" Ryijy, 1977  
Handwoven  
130 x 130 cm



Jorma Vennola (1943 - )  
"Hiljainen Kylä"/"Silent Village and "Veteraanin Koira"/  
"Veteran's Dog", Unique glass sculptures, 1985  
Big house 15.7 x 11.2 x 9.2 cm  
Small house 5 x 4.4 x 4 cm

This work was exhibited at Gallery Bronnda in May 1985 and at  
Iittala Museum June - November 1985

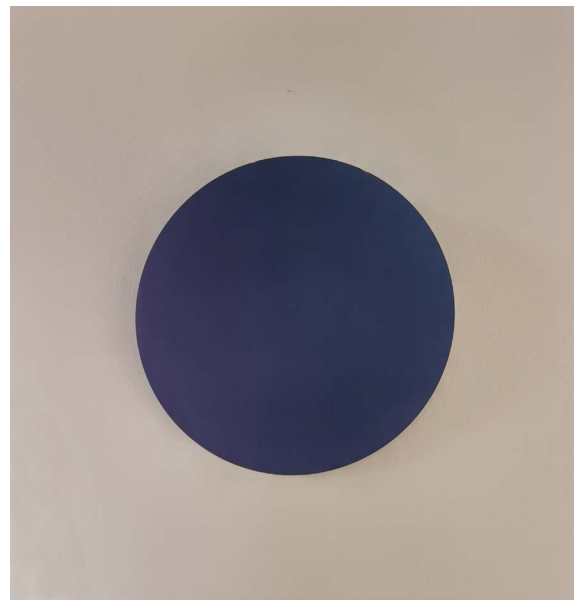


Stefan Lindfors (1962 - )

Left: "Apollo" sculpture, 2000 Steel, fiberglass  
140 x 27 x 27 cm

Right: "Nymph" sculpture, 2000 Steel, fiberglass  
130 x 37 x 28 cm

These works were exhibited at Gallery Uusitalo in year 2000



Mikael Fagerlund (1955 - )  
"Blue Circle", 2000  
MDF board vinyl  
34 x 5cm

Other Finnish design items for sale from Jörn Donner's home collection

1. Artek stools, model X601 designed by Alvar Aalto in 1954, made of birch and leather  
There are 2 black and 1 white on display in the exhibition.  
In 1968, Jörn Donner bought them for his Pohjoisranta office.

Size: 45 x 45 x 45 cm

2. Jorma Vennola, Hiljainen Kylä, glass sculpture  
Size: 7 x 6.5 x 7.5 cm

3. Jorma Vennola, Hiljainen Kylä (632/3000), Signed glass sculpture  
Wear in the bottom corner (Donner patina LA)  
Size: 7.5 x 8 x 5.5 cm  
Year: 1993

4. Jorma Vennola, Hiljainen Kylä, Signed glass sculpture  
Wear in the bottom corner (Donner patina LA)  
Size: 7.5 x 5.5 x 7 cm

Book:

Jörn Donner:  
Matkalla På Resa Travelling 1951-1968



Mika Manninen  
"Jörn Donner manifesti", Photography, 1993  
Without frame 32 x 25 cm  
with frame 57 x 52 cm





## Matti Hyvärinen art jewelry collection



**The Rich and The Poor** — unique brooch, 1967  
diamonds, gold, granite — 35 x 35 mm

Diamonds International Award 1967. Often called the Diamonds Oscar, Matti is the only Finn to win the prestigious award. The piece tapped into the growing consciousness about inequality, and mixed coarse and valuable materials which was unorthodox at its time.



**Frutti di Mare** — unique necklace, 1960s  
rose gold, pearls, granite — 50 x 70 mm

Winner of the 1983 International Pearl Design competition, organized by the Japanese Pearl Producers' Association. Matti's competition piece was a statement for coastal water protection. He received the prize from Emperor Shōwa's daughter, Princess Suga.



**Aladdin's Cave** — unique necklace, mid-1980s  
18K gold, rock quartz — 48 x 45 mm, 56 cm chain, 67.3 g  
Marked: MJH, 750, crown, Matti Hyvärinen signature

Matti created a series of heavy 18K gold jewellery for a boutique in Tokyo selling exclusively his works. The Japanese appreciated Matti's works as objects of art and status symbols rather than wearable jewellery. The necklace has a naturally formed rock quartz as the center piece.



**Rosebud** — unique ring, mid-1980s  
18K gold — 29 x 36 mm, height 25 mm, back 8 mm, slightly adjustable size,  
ø 17,3 mm, 31.3 g. Marked: MJH, 750, Matti Hyvärinen signature

Made for a gallery in Tokyo selling exclusively Matti Hyvärinen's works. Like Aladdin's Cave, Rosebud is a unique piece from the same era (1980's to early 1990's).



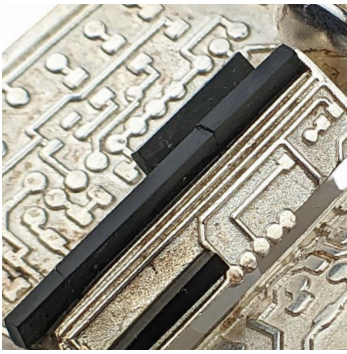
**Slates series** — unique brooch, 1963  
14K gold, tourmalines, Nilsjö quartzite — 36 x 36 mm  
Marked: MJH, 585, crown, Turku city mark, K7 (1963)

The limited series had slate and gold brooches with precious stones or pearls. The slate stone was obtained from the Savo province where Matti's family and ancestors come from. He first used the beautifully luminous stone to build his home in Kaarina. Matti found the combination of gold, precious stones, and natural stone interesting, so he transferred his love of the rough stone from building to jewellery. This invention eventually led to his winning the Diamonds International Award in 1967.



**Cuff bracelet** — unique  
925 sterling silver, green banded agate — ø 45 x 57 mm, 25 mm opening

Created as an experiment of reverse casting method over a carved gypsum model, Matti made a series of these one-off bracelets during the 1960's and 1970's. The challenge was to produce a bracelet that was thin enough but at the same time had the forms he wanted. Matti was a bit of a scientist – he wanted to study the possibilities and push the limits of the materials he used. He mastered the process of casting after having worked with it over 50 years. He has written a study book on lost wax casting that is used in schools of jewellery trade today.



Scifi I — unique brooch, 1980s  
sterling silver, onyx — 60 x 46 mm, 37.7 g  
Marked: MJH, 925, Matti Hyvärinen signature

Matti took part and was awarded in International Craft Competition, Itami in 2001 with his futuristic Scifi series combining silver, semi-precious stones and computer parts. This brooch he wanted to keep apart from the competition pieces for his private collection.



Nautilus — unique necklace, 1990s  
sterling silver, mother of pearl nautilus shell — 55 x 45 mm, ≈  
50 cm chain  
Marked: MJH, 925 S, Matti Hyvärinen signature

This piece has been created around the properties of the nautilus shell, and it delves into the same theme of ocean conservation as the award-winning Frutti di Mare necklace.

## Terhi Tolvanen (1968 - ) art jewelry collection



'Pearly Branch' — unique brooch, 2017  
Faceted dark pearls, cut white pearls, heather wood, silver —  
Length 135 mm



"Cloud House" — unique brooch, 2015  
Chrysocolla, cement, silver — 50 x 65 x 35 mm



Picknick Branch — unique brooch, 2007  
Birch wood, ceramics  
Length 135 mm

This earlier work by Terhi is about the interaction between man and nature. In her jewelry she focuses not on the damage caused by man on nature, but on the care and preservation. For instance, by the removal of dead trees and the pruning of branches, is it possible for nature to thrive and renew itself.



"Tree Pearls" — unique necklace, 2021  
Thorn wood, silver, paint

Diameter 170 mm



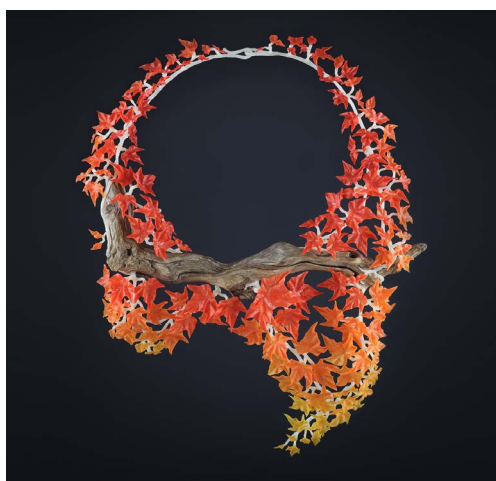
## Wiebke Pandikow (1986 - ) art jewelry collection



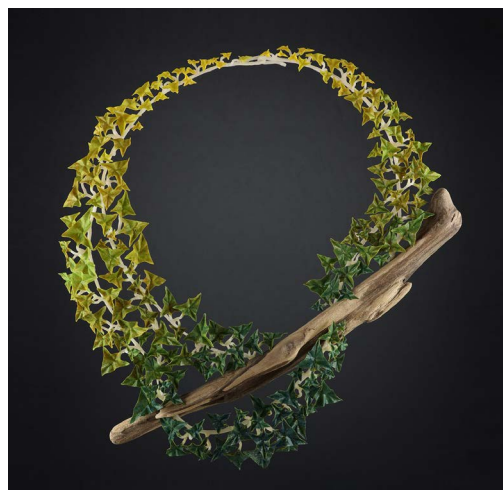
'Herbarium Chroma - Tropaeolum' — unique necklace, 2022  
Plastic bags, pigments, wood wooden hanging box included



"Kaurapaahito (Oat Toast)" — unique brooch, 2020  
plastig bags, wood, pigment mechanism from stainless steel



Herbarium Chroma - Hedera — unique necklace, 2022  
plastic bags, wood  
wooden hanging box included



"Herbarium Chroma - Fallopia" — unique necklace, 2022  
Plastic bags, pigments, wood  
Wooden hanging box included