

## JANI LEINONEN



***We Find Love in Hopeless Place* (2019), Hand painted ceramic melting colour on glass, 99 x 155 cm**

Jani Leinonen is known for his provocative, yet playful works criticizing capitalism and our self-centered consumerist society of today by subverting the symbols and systems of commodity exchange, politics and the marketing strategies through which they operate. In his practice, the artist often pinpoints timely issues and dares the viewer to think outside of one's comfort zone by taking the most saturated aspects of our modern world and re-presenting them in constantly thought-provoking ways. Inspired by popular culture, corporate brands, and marketing strategies, Leinonen shamelessly adapts the same tactics, turning his objects into articles of ridicule, clichéing our agreed marketing society and every-day economies. What is displayed, though, are not goods but an artistic allegorization that appropriates these marketing strategies only to unhinge their underlying assumptions about value and appropriateness. Leinonen's entire practice can be viewed as a form of resistance against the norms of the capitalist status quo.

## BIO

Jani Leinonen (b. 1978 lives and works in Helsinki) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki in 2002 and his works have been exhibited widely in Finland and internationally, i.e. at the Nordic Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennial, Galerie Gmurzynska, Wilhelm Hack Museum Ludwigshafen, Frankfurter Kunstverein and ARoS Aarhus Art Museum. In 2015 Leinonen had a successful retrospective exhibition at Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki called *The school of Disobedience*, which continued to ARoS

Aarhus in 2016. In December 2016 Leinonen was also awarded the Finland Prize by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is given in recognition of a significant career in arts, an exceptional artistic achievement, or a promising breakthrough. The artist's projects include releasing a series of commercial-like videos of Kellogg's character Tony the Tiger navigating a grown-up world of prostitution, police violence and suicide bombers (2015); opening a hoax fast food restaurant called Hunger King in Budapest, Hungary (2014) to fight against the anti-homeless acts of the Hungarian government; founding a fake terrorist organization called the Food Liberation Army who kidnapped and executed Ronald McDonald, the mascot of McDonald's fast food chain in 2011. In 2019 the artist made worldwide headlines when his artwork "McJesus", 2015 (depicting a crucified Ronald McDonald) caused violent protests outside the Haifa Museum in Israel, where the sculpture was included in an exhibition called "Sacred Goods". And in early 2019 he turned the Engadin gallery Stalla Madulain into a chapel with stained glass artworks.

## CV

Born 1978, lives and works in Helsinki, Finland.

## Education

1997-2002, Academy of Fine Art in Helsinki, MFA 2000

1999-2000, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh

2000 University of Helsinki, Department of Education

## Solo Exhibition

2016

*Art in the Park XIV*, Baur au Lac, Zürich, Switzerland

*School of Disobedience*, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark

2015

*School of Disobedience*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland *Sacrifices*,

Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

2014

*Hunger King*, Finnagora, Budapest, Hungary

2013

*Assassination*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

2012

*Seven Deadly Sins*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Zürich, Switzerland  
*Umpihanki*, Galleria Himmelblau, Tampere, Finland  
*Memorial Service*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
*House of Democracy*, World Village Festival, Helsinki, Finland  
Badruth's Palace Hotel, St Moritz, Switzerland

2011

*Funeral Notice*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Zürich, Switzerland  
*Food Liberation Army*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

2010

*Tony the Tiger*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

2009

*Retrospective*, Hyvinkää Art Museum, Hyvinkää, Finland  
*Free World*, collaboration with Riiko Sakkinen, Bourouina Gallery, Berlin, Germany  
*Jani and Riiko's Free World*, with Riiko Sakkinen, Amos Anderson Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland  
*Rejected Ideas for Cap'n Crunch Advertisements*, Gallery Moeller Snow, New York, USA

2008

*Coulrophobia*, Oulu Art Museum, Oulu, Finland  
*Rejected Ideas for Advertisements*, Gallery Krista Mikkola, Helsinki, Finland  
*Forbidden Advertisements*, Gallery Stoa, Helsinki, Finland

2007

*Rejected Ideas for Elovana Oatmeal Advertisements*, Gallery Huoltamo, Tampere, Finland  
*Pimp My Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland

2006

*Art Super Market Pikasso*, Helsinki, Finland

2005

*Pay-per-Art*, Platform, Vaasa, Finland

2004

*Uutuus! Nyhet!*, Gallery Krista Mikkola, Helsinki, Finland  
*Boz Ulu Delgin*, Testsite, Austin, USA  
*Earn Money without a Job*, with Riiko Sakkinen, San Antonio, USA

www.points-of-resistance.org

2003

*Cocktail*, Art Academy Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

2002

*Jani Leinonen vs. Riiko Sakkinen*, Gallery of the Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland

*Pay-per-View*, Plus Ultra Gallery, New York, USA

### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

2016

*No Man is an Island - The Satanic Verses*, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark

*Perpetual Spring*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Zürich, Switzerland

*Enslaved or Free?*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

2015

*Dismaland*, Weston-super-Mare, London, UK

*Action - Reaction*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Zurich, Switzerland

2014

*Boutique*, Spiral Art Space, Tokyo, Japan

*SuperPop!* Serlachius Museum Gösta, Mänttä, Finland

*This Is The Way*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

*The Politics and Pleasures of Food*, ACC Galerie Weimar, Germany *Utopian*

*Days x Freedom*, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea

2013

*Boutique - Where Art Meets Fashion*, Embassy of Finland in Washington DC, USA

*The Politics and Pleasures of Food*, Halle 14, Leipzig, Germany

*Promises*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

*Happy End?* Helsinki Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland

*Kipinä*, Fiskarsin ruukki, Fiskars, Finland

*Teaser*, Zetterberg Gallery at the Salon Dahmann, Berlin, Germany

2012

*Time Is A Luxury We Don't Have*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland

*Art in the Park*, Baur au Lac, Zürich, Switzerland

Retretti Art Center, Punkaharju, Finland

*Boutique*, Amos Anderson Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland

2011

*The Choice Is Yours*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
*Thank You For Your Hostility*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
*I love ALDI*, Wilhelm Hack Museum, Germany  
*Art in the Park*, Baur au Lac, Zürich, Switzerland

2010

*Pop*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
*Art in the Park*, Baur au Lac, Zürich, Switzerland  
*8140 KG*, Tampere TR1 kunsthalle, Tampere, Finland  
*I am Hungry for Art*, Äkkigalleria, Jyväskylä, Finland

2009

*The Man Who Fell to Earth*, curated by Raúl Zamudio, Beijing 798 Biennale, Beijing, China  
*Aspect of Pop*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Zürich, Switzerland  
*The Collectors*, Nordic and Danish Pavilion, Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy  
*Får ej överstäckas*, Eskilstuna Art Museum, Eskilstuna, Sweden  
*Trickle Down Theory*, Korjaamo Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
*Megalomania*, Huoltamo Gallery, Tampere, Finland  
*Tracking Traces*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland

2008

*Head Hunters*, Zetterberg Gallery, Helsinki, Finland  
*Sampo*, 4mula Gallery, St. Petersburg, Russia  
*Finnish Breakfast*, Larm Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark  
Purnu, Orivesi, Finland  
*Fennofolk*, Design Museum, Helsinki, Finland

2007

*Flag Show*, Lasipalatsin aukio, Helsinki, Finland

2006

*Unclassified*, Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland

2005

*Turku Shop*, Turku Art Museum, Turku, Finland  
*No Painting!*, Kunsthalle Tallinn, Tallinn, Estonia  
*Populism*, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany  
*Populism*, The Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania

*Populism*, Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

*Vasta maalattu*, Kerava Art Museum, Kerava, Finland

2004

*Untitled*, Galerie Mathias Kampl, München, Germany

*Peinture Fraiche*, Le Triage, Paris, France

Mäntän kuvataideviikot, Mänttä, Finland *Musta*

*tuntuu*, Rauma Art Museum, Rauma, Finland

2003

*Process*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland