

**Nästan svart vitt** photography series **Artist at Work (Konstnär i arbete)**, on display at Wågermanska Konsthallen November 12 – December 11 (open Tue – Su 1 – 5 pm); grand opening November 12, 2005, 1 pm. Free entrance.

*What is the essence of an artist?*

I have been the fortunate first Finnish photographer ever to get the Hôtel Cheillon residence grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation. I stayed six months in 2004 (February – July) in the idyllic village of Grez-sur-Loing, some 70 km south of Paris, where Nordic artists established a colony in the 1880s. Being so closely tied to many (Swedish) colleagues of fine art, i.e., oil & aquarelle painters, writers, draftsman and fine art printers (no other photographer), I got anew fascinated by the *forma*, or the *essence*, of an artist. That is, how each artist is unique in her/his own way but still *perhaps* — that is the key question — possesses characteristics that are common to all members of the field of fine art but not to its outsiders. In Grez, I studied behind the camera lens all the (willing) artists during my stay there and took several hundreds of frames of them, mostly using large (4\*5") and medium (6\*7 cm) format film.

In my exhibition series *Artist at work* I will study the life of artists. I wish to explore the world of artists, find similarities between different craftsman, regardless of age, gender, cultural background and line of work. I am not only interested in their professional work but also in their everyday life and surroundings, in finding the elements of art makers and of making art.

At Wågermanska Konsthallen I will exhibit images from Grez-sur-Loing / France, jointly with Yvonne Karlsson, fine art printer / graphical artist. Above all the artists during my stay in Hôtel Cheillon (more than ten of them), I got deeply fascinated on her motive of *wells*. The exacting process of making the impressions of so ordinary, yet highly individual and enchanting well covers is, I think, is well captured my the quadrotyp *Street worker*. The two panoramic photographs reflect the surroundings and atmosphere of Grez, where the people party on the streets whereas no living sole except for the lost photographer is enjoying the nocturnal beauty of the river bank.

I have taken all photographs with film cameras (24\*66 mm & 6\*7 cm format) in France during Summer 2004 and scanned them at the highest resolution, oil-mounted. All prints are (digitally) hand-made to best-quality rag-paper / canvas using Ultrachrome-pigmented inks. This brings out the finest details in an esthetic form and guarantees the best life-span (over a century, glass-framed and protected from direct sunlight).

<http://www.saunalahti.fi/~karphoto/NewExhibitions/ArtistAtWork>



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