

Physical elegies on femininity

Choreographer and dancer of international renown, Sanna Kekäläinen is a performing artist on a mission to communicate and invite reflection on themes that touch upon femininity and human nature, universally, ranging from human trafficking to globalisation. In her newest piece, *Queer Elegies*, Kekäläinen explores identity – feminine, northern, weird, multiple or whatever identity.

By Nia Kajastie | Photo: Robert Hoge



Since the 1980s, Sanna Kekäläinen has had a strong influence on the development of Finnish performing arts. After completing her studies at the London Contemporary Dance School and the Theatre School of Amsterdam, she returned to Finland and established ZODIAK, a centre for new dance, which today forms Finland's largest contemporary dance centre. In 1996, following an urge to create an ensemble-type community within the dance scene, Kekäläinen established K&C Kekäläinen & Company, based at Cable Factory in Helsinki.

Her mission, which has acted as a motivator for Kekäläinen long before forming

the company, is to bring forward and get more recognition for feminist art. K&C Kekäläinen & Company also stands for dance as an intellectual art form with strong emotional and political connections.

Her new work *Queer Elegies* will be premiering on 18 September at Kiasma Theatre, in honour of the contemporary art museum's 15th anniversary. "The piece continues along the same thematic lines of my previous works, pushing them a bit further. It's distinctively a piece on identity and gender. It puts forward questions about the nature of gender, which is a bewildering and emotive subject in to-

day's world. I also look at northern identity, which has its own stereotypes; it's interesting to figure out how to express it," explains Kekäläinen.

For more information, please visit:
www.kekalainencompany.net

Love & Anarchy in Helsinki

Baz Luhrmann, Danny Boyle, John Woo and Tilda Swinton: the Helsinki International Film Festival – Love & Anarchy has had its fair share of notable guests. The annual event, which initially focused heavily on Asian film, is today known for picking the cream of the cinematic crop from all continents.

The very first HIFF took place in 1988 as part of the Finnish culture organisation Image's roster of culture events. It turned out to be a great success, and a group of film experts and enthusiasts was put together to develop the festival further.

"Once the festival became its own event, it has continued to grow and attract more visitors, even without huge marketing campaigns; it's been a natural

development," explains the festival's artistic director Pekka Lanerva.

The festival programme caters to film fanatics as well as people with a specific interest in different cultures, whether it is Japanese, Latin American, Indian or North American. The festival has naturally also attracted many famous names, from John Woo, who visited the festival with his first American movie, to Baz

Luhrmann in 2001 with *Moulin Rouge*. Finnish director Jalmari Helander, who showcased his short films at the event, is today one of the most talked about Finns on the scene, with the international hit *Rare Exports* under his belt.

The 2013 festival programme promises to be yet again full of exciting films from around the world, from Cannes favourites, including winner *La Vie d'Adele*, to Wong Kar-Wai's long-awaited martial art epic *The Grandmaster*. Nowadays the festival also organises the country's leading industry showcase Finnish Film Affair (24-26/9). The full programme, which will be announced at the beginning of September, will include around 160 full-length films and 140 short films in 450 screenings.



Photo: Pirita Särnä

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Helsinki International Film Festival
– Love & Anarchy (19.-29.9.2013)

For more information, please visit:
hiff.fi