

# Helsinki Biennial 2025 celebrates art on land and at sea

The third edition of Helsinki Biennial will showcase the work of around 35 artists and artist groups across three distinct venues this summer: Vallisaari Island, Esplanade Park, and HAM Helsinki Art Museum. A preview list of the first eleven participating artists has now been announced. Taking *Shelter* as its theme, this major art event brings a summer-long celebration of art to the Finnish capital from June 8 to September 21, 2025.

Helsinki Biennial 2025 will present the work of around 35 artists and artist groups from Finland and around the world. Roughly half the featured works will be site-specific new commissions premiering in Helsinki. The first eleven participants announced to date are **Band of Weeds** (FI), **Ana Teresa Barboza** (PE), **Sara Bjarland** (FI/NL), **Tania Candiani** (MX), **Olafur Eliasson** (DK/IS), **Geraldine Javier** (PH), **LOCUS / Thale Blix Fastvold & Tanja Thorjussen** (NO), **nabbteeri** (FI), **Ernesto Neto** (BR), **Otobong Nkanga** (NG/BE), and **Hans Rosenström** (FI).

“Inviting one and all, Helsinki Biennial is a summer-long celebration of art hosted with a big heart. We look forward to offering the public a memorable experience by presenting the work of world-class artists across three venues extending from the heart of the city to the unique maritime setting of Vallisaari Island,” says **Arja Miller**, Director of HAM and Helsinki Biennial.

## Art as a source of shelter and compassion

Curated by **Blanca de la Torre** and **Kati Kivinen**, Helsinki Biennial 2025 explores the fragile relationship between humanity and the natural world. Moving beyond human-centric perspectives, the curators foreground non-human actors such as plants, animals, fungi, chemical elements and minerals. They believe this shift in perspective can foster new empathy for other living beings. A further curatorial touchpoint is the exploration of alternative ways of gathering and imparting knowledge about the world.

The theme of the third edition, *Shelter*, is inspired by Vallisaari’s island habitat. Surrounded by sea, this rich ecosystem has been preserved from human habitation for decades, providing a perfect shelter for diverse life forms to flourish. This undisturbed refuge also offers visitors a rare opportunity to imagine what unfolds when humans step back and non-human actors take prominence.

“Helsinki Biennial 2025 envisions art as a source of shelter and compassion. The artworks do not center on humans but instead highlight other life forms, exploring their significance to the wellbeing of our shared planet through a variety of perspectives. Also highlighted are Indigenous narratives, which convey knowledge that can foster a more sustainable way of life. Our vision is to forge new spaces of protection and to inspire positive environmental action,” describe the curators Blanca de la Torre and Kati Kivinen.

## **Helsinki Biennial commits to further improving accessibility and sustainability**

Welcoming a broad public audience, Helsinki Biennial will offer improved accessibility by adding a new venue to its roster in 2025. The addition of Esplanade Park as a new biennial venue will enable audiences to enjoy world-class contemporary art free of charge in the heart of Helsinki. In preparing for the 2025 biennial, the organizers are committed not only to outstanding artistic content but also to improving the overall visitor experience.

Helsinki Biennial is committed to the principles of responsibility, inclusivity, and sustainability. The biennial's systemic sustainability plan is designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice by laying down guidelines for both environmental actions and social sustainability performance.

"We want to ensure that each biennial edition leaves a lasting legacy, not only by enriching the city's cultural capital through public art commissions but also through our ongoing commitment to more sustainable practices. We embrace a vision of maximizing the presence of art throughout the city for many generations to come," says Arja Miller, Director of HAM and Helsinki Biennial.

## **Expanding network of partners and sponsors**

Helsinki Biennial is a city-wide initiative launched as part of Helsinki's urban strategy. This ambitious event aims to transform Helsinki into an art capital with wide appeal as a cultural destination and also to strengthen the international recognition of the entire Finnish art scene. The biennial's main partner in 2025 is Metsähallitus, the organization responsible for managing Vallisaari Island.

The upcoming biennial is supported by the Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation, Tiftö Foundation, Saastamoinen Foundation, and the John Nurminen Foundation. The Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation has awarded HAM Helsinki Art Museum a EUR 900,000 grant for 2025-2027 for the purpose of supporting the biennial's internationalization, strengthening its global networks, and raising the visibility of Finnish contemporary art.

The Tiftö Foundation enables Hans Rosenström's new work, the Saastamoinen Foundation enables Ana Teresa Barboza's new work, and the John Nurminen Foundation supports the production of LOCUS / Thale Blix Fastvold & Tanja Thorjussen's work.

The full biennial programme and list of artists, artworks, and sponsors will be announced in spring 2025.

## **Helsinki Biennial 2025**

**Shelter: Below and Beyond, Becoming and Belonging**

June 8-September 21, 2025

Vallisaari Island, Esplanade Park, and HAM Helsinki Art Museum

[helsinkibiennial.fi](https://helsinkibiennial.fi)