

OUTI HEISKANEN IN THE ATENEUM 8.10.2021–9.1.2022

MATERIALS FOR SCHOOLS

TARGET GROUP: all school grades

For use at school and/or at the Ateneum Art Museum



Outi Heiskanen on a raft at Syysjärvi, 1988. Photo: Sakari Viika.



OUTI HEISKANEN: *The Widow (Sorrow and Old Woman)*, 1981, aquatint and line etching, 24.5 x 30 cm, Ateneum Art Museum. Photo: Jenni Nurminen.

Welcome to Outi Heiskanen's art!

The exhibition at the Ateneum showcases the entire spectrum of art created by academic Outi Heiskanen (b. 1937). Over a career spanning several decades, Heiskanen has been not only a masterful graphic artist but also a pioneer of performance, land and environmental art. She started as an art teacher and taught at the Academy of Fine Arts for several years.

Outi Heiskanen's art is full of wonderful flights of the imagination but also more serious undertones, even sadness – everything life has to offer. The exhibition was curated by Dr Tuula Karjalainen, a long-time friend of Heiskanen's and an expert on her art, together with Ateneum curator Sointu Fritze. This information package offers a few activities that can be combined with a visit to the exhibition at the Ateneum or with an online distance-learning tour, which can be booked separately. The purpose of the activities is to promote the joy of discovery and to feed the imagination, both when exploring

the works in the exhibition and when making art oneself. More information about the exhibition and photos of the artworks is available online at <https://ateneum.fi/en/exhibitions/outi-heiskanen/>

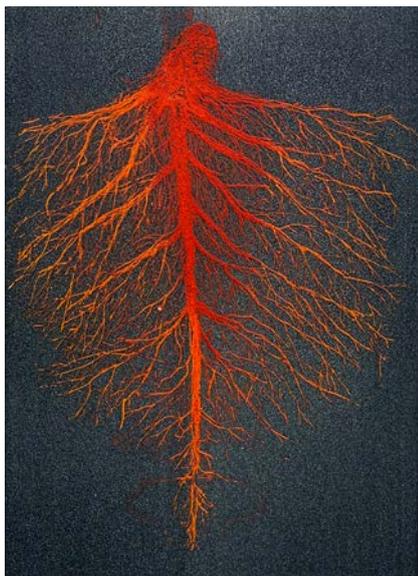
School groups are welcome to visit the museum. While a group and their teacher can explore the exhibition independently, we recommend booking a guided tour, an exhibition introduction in the Ateneum auditorium or a virtual online tour. All these are live events with our expert guides. The museum complies with current coronavirus restrictions and regulations. Please follow the guidelines for visits on the Ateneum website. More information: <https://ateneum.fi/en/for-schools/>

ATENEUM

THE LIVING LINE



OUTI HEISKANEN:
Foreparents, 1979, line etching, 10.5 x 7.5 cm, Sara Hildén Art Museum. Photo: Janne Laine.



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Blood Root, 1992, open bite etching inked with colours, 32.5 x 23.5 cm, private collection. Photo: Janne Laine.*



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Maija, 2003, drypoint and line etching, 24 x 20 cm, Ateneum Art Museum, Tuomo Seppo Collection. Photo: Jenni Nurminen.*

The birth of an image was an intimate experience for Outi Heiskanen, an almost mystical event – something she has often wondered about herself. Already as a young, aspiring artist, she realised the beauty of the living line – she called it a twig line. It is changeable, like blood vessels, veins on a leaf or a twig, of course.

In class: Draw a self-portrait

YOU WILL NEED: A MIRROR OR A MOBILE PHONE, PAPER AND A PENCIL OR OTHER DRAWING INSTRUMENT

Position the mirror so you can see your face, or take a picture of your face with your mobile phone. Consider whether you want to see yourself directly from the front or more from the side. Look at the picture – what shape is your face? What does your hair look like?

Take hold of the pencil with just a few fingers right at the top, not near the tip like you're used to, and start drawing a portrait of yourself. The pen will jump and bounce around and the line will refuse to obey you, but that's the point. When you can't fully control the movement of the pen, it traces a living twig-like line. Continue drawing and add more lines in places where you see darker areas. This creates shadows that give shape to your face.

Alternatively, you can do the exercise in pairs by drawing a portrait of each other in turn.

In class: A forest of lines in my hand

YOU WILL NEED: A SOFT PENCIL (6B OR SIMILAR) AND PAPER

Open your hand and look at the lines on your palm. Take the pencil in one hand and draw lines on the paper one by one without looking down at the paper. Start with the strongest line on your palm: look at it carefully and draw slowly. If the line is clear and thick, press the pencil more firmly into the paper. This makes the line come alive – it becomes darker and lighter in turn.

Continue drawing for about ten minutes, examining the lines on your palm carefully. Then look at the picture you have made: What does it look like? You can develop the drawing further with the pencil, filling in the spaces between the lines and creating different shades. Finally, give a title to the picture.

A WORLD OF CREATURES



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Keen Eared*, 2001, line etching and drypoint, 10 x 7 cm, HAM Helsinki Art Museum.
Photo: Kirsi Halkola.

Throughout her career, Outi Heiskanen studied and drew animals, people and hybrid creatures: lady beaver, donkey woman, cat-paw baby and many others. Ever since her childhood, she has had a close and natural relationship with animals, and it has remained with her since and taken on new forms.



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Bow I*, 1984, line etching and aquatint, 20 x 23.5 cm, Ateneum Art Museum.
Photo: Jenni Nurminen.

In class: Create art from a magic stain

YOU WILL NEED: WATERCOLOURS AND/OR LIQUID INK, WATERCOLOUR PAPER OR OTHER STURDY, ABSORBENT, GOOD-QUALITY PAPER AND DRAWING INSTRUMENTS

Take out your painting materials and begin by wetting the paper thinly with a wet brush. Using just one or two colours, paint on the wet paper with large, bold strokes. Observe how the colour spreads on the wet paper by dripping and dabbing some colour here and there with the tip of the brush.

Once the paper has dried for a while and you are able to turn it without the colours running, look at the painting from different directions: turn it upside down and study it from the right and left. Can you see a resemblance to an animal, a person, some creature or a landscape, a map or something else? You can continue working by either painting or drawing. Add lines and surfaces with the tip of a brush or a pencil. Let the figure and its surroundings develop from the paper so that the stains create a new image.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Beauty and the Beholder*, 1979, line etching and aquatint, 10.5 x 17 cm, Ateneum Art Museum.
Photo: Jenni Nurminen.



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Swing*, 1980, line etching and aquatint, 16.5 x 23.5 cm, Ateneum Art Museum.
Photo: Jenni Nurminen.



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Red Haired Girl*, 1974, line etching, aquatint and drypoint, 14 x 14 cm, Ateneum Art Museum.
Photo: Jenni Nurminen.

In Outi Heiskanen's art, we meet her family and figures from her wide circle of friends. She drew the subjects from the folds of her mind and from everyday life, from everything she saw.

Outi Heiskanen's images revolve around the fundamental elements of life: sadness, love, joy, death and fear, as well as longing, birth and pregnancy. They are common to us all yet utterly private.

At the Ateneum: A new friend

YOU WILL NEED: PAPER AND PENCIL (YOU CAN BORROW A WRITING PAD FROM THE MUSEUM, BUT REMEMBER THAT IT IS FORBIDDEN TO DRAW AGAINST THE WALL)

Tour a gallery chosen by the group and look at the artworks. From the pictures, choose a figure that seems most interesting to you. Consider the expression on the figure's face and its posture. Imitate the expression and the posture yourself and see how it feels.

Use your imagination: What is the figure's name? What are they feeling and thinking? Where is the figure? Introduce your figure to the others in the group. Tell them why you would like to be friends with them. You can tell the story on the spot or write it down first.

You can do this exercise at school: write a story about the figure. Prepare for the exercise by visiting the Ateneum: take a picture of your chosen figure with your phone. Remember that you are allowed to take photos in the museum, but you cannot use a flash. You can also use the images of artworks available on the Ateneum website.

HUTS AND INSTALLATIONS



OUTI HEISKANEN: *Small Yurt, 1974, drypoint and line etching, 6 x 9 cm, Ateneum Art Museum. Photo: Jenni Nurminen.*



Outi Heiskanen, *Movable Tuonela, 1983. Photo: Sakari Viika.*

Twigs and branches have always been a material close to Outi Heiskanen's heart. For decades she would build huts from them wherever she lived. She also encouraged people to build huts of their own in conjunction with her exhibitions.

Outside: Tiny play hut

YOU WILL NEED: TWIGS, STICKS, TREE LEAVES AND SNOW FROM OUTDOORS

Build a small shelter or a tiny hut from materials you find in the schoolyard or a park (respect nature and use only materials that have fallen to the ground). You can build the hut on your own, in pairs or in a small group. If there is snow on the ground, you can use snow in addition to twigs and plant parts to make the hut.

Who or what do you think could live in the hut? How would they live and what would they do for a living? Invent a name for the occupant.

Take a tour and see all the huts that you've made. What do you think – do the huts form a village together? Are the huts similar, or are they different? How would you go about moving between the huts?

Extra activity at school or home: Take a picture of your tiny hut with your mobile phone. Look at the picture later. How do the branches bend? What do the twigs or dry leaves look like? When you look closely, what details do you see? Draw or paint your hut on paper. Add an inhabitant to the hut if you'd like. Finally, write a story about the hut's inhabitant, starting with "Once upon a time..."



A tiny play hut built at a playground. Photo: Erica Othman.

TEXTS:

Satu Itkonen, Erica Othman, Katariina Salmijärvi.
Some of the texts are based on wall texts in the
exhibition written by Tuula Karjalainen.

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