

## Sade Kamppila & Viivi Roiha: Metsä - The Forest Project

### A site-specific contemporary circus creation

*"As the years have gone by, the status of the forests has been changing with industrialization and urbanization, but the connection between the Finns and the forest has remained.*

*For the Finnish people, the forest has always been a place for spirituality, a sanctuary. In the sunlit forests the people of past generations worshipped nature gods, and dark spruce forests were avoided, because they were seen as the habitat of trolls and goblins. The pace of life was not governed by calendars, but by the harvest seasons of mushrooms and berries and the travel routes of wild game. The forest used to be our governor."*



*"Where there is a wound on the psyches and bodies of women, there is a corresponding wound at the same site in culture itself, and finally on Nature herself. In a true holistic psychology all worlds are understood as interdependent, not as separate entities. It is not amazing that in our culture there is an issue about carving up a woman's natural body, that there is a corresponding issue about carving up the landscape, and yet another about carving up the culture into fashionable parts as well. Although a woman may not be able to stop the dissection of culture and lands overnight, she can stop doing so to her own body."*

Webpage: [www.metsatheforestproject.info](http://www.metsatheforestproject.info)

Video: <http://vimeo.com/155670873>

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## The Project

*Metsä - The Forest Project* is an artistic research project initiated by two Finnish circus artists, Sade Kamppila and Viivi Roiha. The main focus of the project is to perform circus arts in a forest. *Metsä* is a site-specific touring performance, a platform to launch various photography series and short films portraying circus acrobatics in a forest environment.

*Metsä* is moving from one forest to another. The performance along a nature trail is designed so, that the artists can tour with it around Finland's and the world's villages and forests. The performance will adapt to each place it travels to, creating a unique experience where the nature plays the important role of the third performer.

*Metsä* is a proposition by the artists to take a collective step together with their audience towards a more balanced relationship with the nature. Kamppila and Roiha feel that many of the problems and unhappiness seen in our contemporary society stem from the human race having lost connection with the nature around us. The society often treats the environment solely as a source of goods and resources, and exploits it to gather all profit possible despite the consequences on the environment itself. Despite seeing the effect of our actions on the nature around us, a lot of people continue their lives as short-sighted, selfish consumers. The same process happens on the personal level, in one's relationship between the mind and the body, that is the nature of the individual. *Metsä* aims for a future where the dominating relationship of the mind and society towards the body and environment will evolve into balanced co-existence. By creating a performance into the forest, Kamppila and Roiha propose their audience a possibility to spend a few hours within the nature.





### The Performance

**On tour:** 2 artists

**Technical requirements:** A forest in its natural state, where there is a path (in walkable condition, length 500-1800m) going through the forest. Trees large enough to use for aerial acrobatics rigging required.

**Preparations:** The artists arrive 3 nights before the day of the performance. 2 days before the performance is the rigging day. The day before the performance the artists adapt their performance to fit the specific forest. Rigging is done independently by the artists themselves

**Duration of the performance:** 50-90 minutes, depending on the length of the trail

**Languages:** Performance can be performed in English, Finnish, French or Swedish

**Please note:** The audience will travel during the performance. The performance poses severe challenges for physically disabled people or people travelling with children in trolleys. The performance includes full nudity.

**Maximum audience per performance:** 70 people

**Possible performances per day:** 2 performances/one day. Minimum 90 minutes pause between performances.

**Provided by organizer:** 1 person to help with guiding the audience through the performance. 10 liter water bucket, a small mirror (about 30 cm)

The *Metsä*-performance is built along a path in the forest. Along the path there will be several scenes presented to the audience. The people will experience aerial acrobatics suspended between treetops, pair acrobatics with tree trunks, balancing on boulders, choreographic climbing, acrobatic dance in the shallow waters and soundscapes created by delicate instruments, voices and the nature. The inspiration for the scenes comes from Finno-Ugric folklore. Kamppila and Roiha share the stories of the Finnish people on forest spirits and traditional knowledge. The audience also has time to experience collectively shared calm and peace within the forest.



## **Metsä - The Forest Project**

**Finnish premiere:** 10.6.2016 at the Silence Festival, Kittilä, Lapland

**French premiere:** Festival International des Arts de Bordeaux 8.10.2016

**Artists:** Sade Kamppila & Viivi Roiha

**Co-producer:** Sirkus Aikamoinen

### **Residencies:**

Pyhä-Häkki national park, Finland 27.-30.5.2015

Silence Festival, Kaukonen, Finland 31.5.-3.6.2015

Uukuniemi, Finland 15.-21.6.2015

Festival Scenes de Rue Mulhouse, France 13.-16.7.2015

Saari Residence of Kone Foundation, Mietoinen, Finland 20.7.-2.8.2015

La Grave, France 31.8.-13.9.2015

Helsinki, Finland 28.3.-3.4

Cirkus Cirkör, Stockholm, Sweden 18.-26.4.2016

Saari Residence of Kone Foundation, Mietoinen, Finland 18.-20.5.2016

Silence Festival, Kaukonen, Finland 2.-6.6.2016

**Funded by:** Kone Foundation, Arts Promotion Center Finland, Finnish Cultural Foundation

**Photographers:** Isla Peura, Jouni Ihalainen, Ben Hopper

**Video filming:** Ben Hopper, Jouni Ihalainen, Christian Flores Aldama

### **Contact information**

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### **Viivi Roiha**

Viivi started circus as a hobby in Pukinmäki youth circus in 1997, and later this hobby transformed into her profession. Viivi graduated from Salpaus Further Education as a circus artist in 2009. She continued her studies in the famous circus school of Centre National des Arts du Cirque in France, specializing in vertical rope. After graduating in 2012 Viivi has been working and performing around Europe.



In France Viivi has worked in Arpad Schilling's performance "Noëplanete" creating an aerial rope duo with Fragan Gehlker. She worked with cross-disciplinary performance group Le GdRA in their performance "Sujet", which portrayed the anthropology of sanity. During 2014-2015 Viivi toured with Mad In Finland, which was awarded the National Prize for Arts in Finland.

In Finland Viivi has been working with Circo Aereo's performances directed by Sanna Silvennoinen ("Ro-pu" in 2012, "Pienempiä paloja" in 2013, and "Mumbai Express" in 2013). Viivi works in the performance "Amber" by Norwegian Cirkus Xanti and Finnish Maracat Caravan. She plays the Finnish and French versions of the performance. Viivi and Sade created the Finnish version of Cirkus Xanti's and Maracat Caravan's "Red Fever Tree" in 2016.

Viivi continues to work with Chloé Moglia and her French company Rhizome. Moglia is known for creating an original approach to aerial acrobatics.

### **Sade Kamppila**

Sade graduated from Salpaus Further Education as a circus artist in 2009. After graduation, she founded together with her friends Co-operative Sirkus Aikamoinen. The strength of the group and Sade lies in a wide variety of circus skills mastered as well as instruments played. Sade is skilled in many circus disciplines and combines all her knowledge from acrobatics to fine arts in her artistic work. She has mostly specialized in dance acrobatics, banquine and hand to hand. In aerial acrobatics she is specialized in swinging trapeze.



Sade has made together with Sirkus Aikamoinen the performances "Skaala" (2009), "Aisti" (2011, a Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe -finalist in 2010), "Pluto Crazy" (2012, co-production with Cirkus Xanti), "Onnellisten Työmaa" (2013), "Duo Jag" (2014), "The Land of the Happy" (2014, a co-production with Circo Aereo and Maracat Caravan). The performances of Aikamoinen have toured around Scandinavia and Europe. Sade made together with the French acrobats Julien Auger (La Meute) and Benoît Fauchier (Kohz Productions) a circus concert titled "Dr. Natchez Trio" (2015). She worked in Circo Aereo's performances "Pienempiä paloja" (2013), and "Concerto Planos" (2016), in Mirva Mäkinen's contact improvisation performance "Spherical Space" (2015), in Cirkus Xanti's Finnish version of "Red Fever Tree" (2016), and Marie Andrée Robitaille's "Gynoïdes - Circus Female Intelligenza" (2016).