

Grim Solo Presents

**Elsa Salonen**

**I WALK IN THE FOREST AS IN A TEMPLE part I**

**At Grimmuseum**

01.06. - 17.06.2012, Opening Reception 31.05.2012 7 pm

"I often experience human life as a voyage towards some kind of understanding, spirituality or holiness. I consider my work as intimate stills from this never ending journey. They are reminiscences of a yearning for understanding, as well as sacred manifestations of what it can mean to be human."

'I Walk in the Forest as in a Temple' is the first part of a twofold exhibition series from Finnish artist Elsa Salonen (b. 1984 in Turku). For this solo show Salonen presents a geometric patterning on the floor that is made mainly with flour, pigments and partly with brass bowls, lichen and animal bones. The floor piece is accompanied by paintings created directly on the gallery windows.

"The organic elements represent Finnish heritage. Our folk religion knew the forest as a sacred place that taught people the immense value of nature, and the sense of being one with it. A bear skull rests in the middle of the installation; the most important of our sacred feasts, Karhunpeijaiset, was held in honour of a hunted bear." The installation brings Finnish folk beliefs together with the foreign influences that have been significant for the artist herself. The shape of the floor piece could be seen as a kind of mandala, a sacred diagram used in different religions. "While the traditional mandala guides to enlightenment, the incomplete patterns and inconsistencies of my installation represent a personal, ongoing research."

Elsa Salonen graduated from Bologna Fine Arts Academy in 2008, since then she has been living and working in Berlin. Salonen has collaborated with Helsinki based gallery Ama for the last four years, in Germany she will make her debut with the two upcoming shows.

The release of the catalogue and the second part of the exhibition series will be held in Galerie Suvi Lehtinen, Berlin Mitte, during July. The exhibition will show oil paintings on acrylic glass and found-object sculptures. More info at [www.galerielehtinen.com](http://www.galerielehtinen.com) and [www.elsasalonen.com](http://www.elsasalonen.com)

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