

LÖNNSTRÖM project

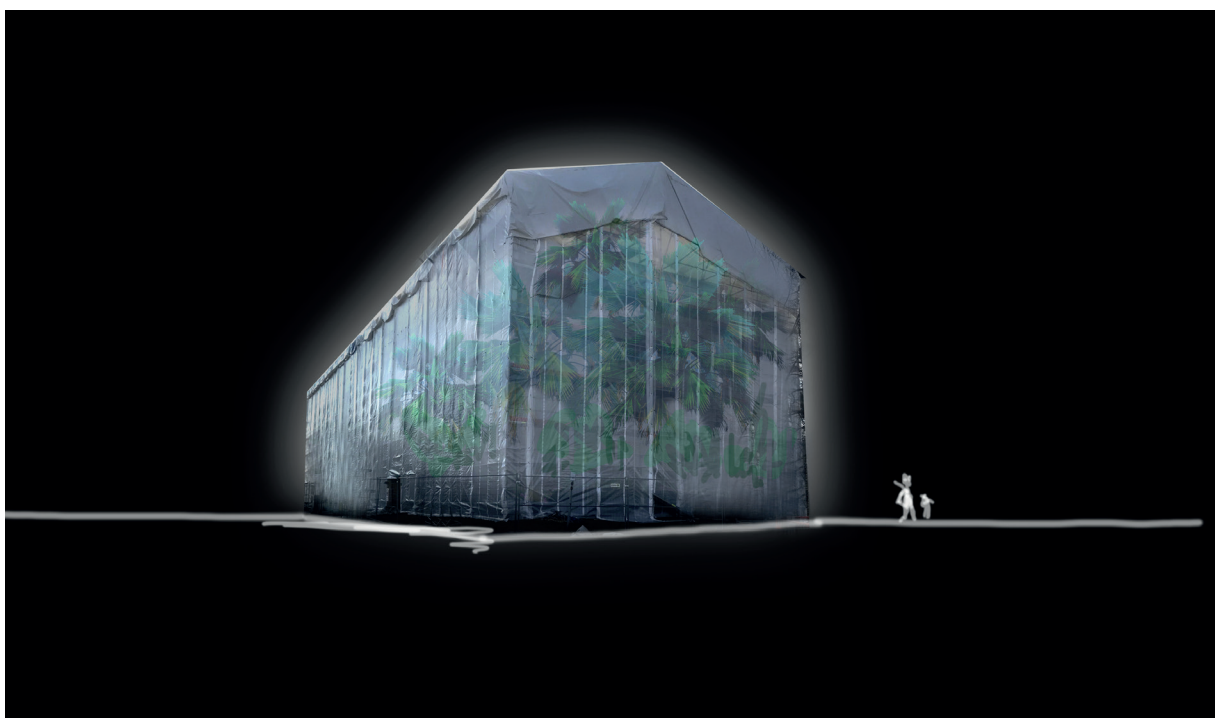


THE SEVENTH LÖNNSTRÖM PROJECT IS BIG BOTANIC BY PIA SIRÉN

The seventh contemporary art project commissioned by Rauma-based Lönnström Art Museum is a temporary public sculpture, *Big Botanic* (working title), by sculptor **Pia Sirén**. The work will be produced during 2024–2025 and will be presented in Rauma in autumn 2025. The foundation that runs the museum, Lönnström Art Museum sr, has earmarked 100,000 euros for the production of the work.

Big Botanic is a very large participatory artwork that the audience can enter and interact with. Covering an area of several hundred square metres, it is a space open for all, where people can spend time and participate in events. It will be constructed in or near the centre of Rauma in autumn 2025. Like a travelling circus, the work will delight visitors for a fixed period of time, about two months.

Big Botanic will be constructed from weather protection scaffolding and transparent sheet covering. Using tarpaulins, plastic sheets, ropes and timber, Pia Sirén will create a unique tropical garden inside the structure where the public can move around freely and attend events such as concerts and workshops. The sculpture will be a living and active place where visitors can admire the abundance of artificial plants built from low-grade materials and participate in a programme planned specifically for the installation.



Pia Sirén, Big Botanic. Sketch 2023.

Big Botanic is an exploration of the built environment, nature and naturalness. Plastic is commonly regarded an ugly and artificial material that clutters and suffocates the environment, yet in Sirén's work it is used to create an aesthetically interesting, attractive and thought-provoking world of plants. Reminiscent of a botanical garden, the work explores our contemporary relationship with nature and the longing for faraway places that is evoked in us by exotic plants.

Big Botanic was selected as the next Lönnström Project from among 79 applications. The jury consisted of museum director **Silja Lehtonen** and curator **Arja Roivainen** from Lönnström Art Museum and head of exhibitions **Kati Kivinen** from HAM Helsinki Art Museum. The jury was impressed by the boldness and lavish visuality of the winning proposal. The artist's approach to materials and permanence was also considered interesting as well as topical: while eminently physical and material, *Big Botanic* is an ephemeral performance rather than a sculpture. After a period of a couple of months, the work will be dismantled and ceases to exist as such. The scaffolding will be returned to serve its original purpose, and other materials will be recycled for reuse in the artist's future works.

Pia Sirén (b. 1982) received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in 2012. She is known for spatial sculptures that are like theatrical sets or artificial landscapes constructed from materials seldom used in art: scaffolding, tarpaulins and other building materials. Sirén has held several solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group exhibitions in Finland and internationally. She lives and works in Loviisa.



Lönnström Art Museum sr is a foundation established under the will of Honorary Councillor **Teresia Lönnström**. Since 2015 it has produced extensive art projects commissioned from artists based in Finland. Lönnström Art Museum finances the ambitious projects and is a partner for the artists. The museum has completed five projects to date. The sixth Lönnström Project, **Milja Viita's** experimental film *Fata Morgana*, will be completed and have its premiere in Rauma in spring 2024.

Press photos: www.lonnstromintaidemuseo.fi/lehdistokuvat, password: 1942Kaivopuisto

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