

'We Are All Made of Stardust' - Elsa Salonen at Ama Gallery, Helsinki

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Study of Eternal Cycle A bleached rose and its distilled colours, glass, metal, light 2014, dimensions variable

(Courtesy: Elsa Salonen/Ama Gallery, Helsinki)

Science, both theoretical research for inspiration and active experiments in practice, is the backbone to Elsa Salonen's art. Meddling with colors and pondering about stardust, have led to Salonen's latest collection of works on display in Helsinki. The Ama Gallery presents 'Study of the Eternal Cycle' this November.

Almost all of the elements of living organisms are known to have originated from ancient, dead stars. According to the best scientific estimations, our atoms will also, in the distant future, return to space and possibly form new stars. This research is the background for Elsa Salonen's new series 'We Are All Made of Stardust,' which is painted solely with pigments made of stone and iron meteorites. Salonen has used the 17th-century-star atlas illustrations of constellations with their various animal, plant, and human figures. In addition to the paintings, the exhibition offers further points of view on the theme of endless life cycles in the form of two installations, created with bleached flowers and the colors distilled from them.

Stone and iron meteorites, certified by IMCA (International Meteorite Collector Association), were minced into finely ground powders. From stone meteorites, achondrites and chondrites, an ochre brownish pigment was ground. From iron meteorites, pallasites and mesosiderites, a dark gray pigment was ground. With the colors created here, the artist paints animal, plant, and human figures from various constellations on the glass.

Salonen distils the colors from a red rose. After that the flower is bleached, and she uses the red and yellow pigments from leaves and petals to color the laboratory glasses. A spotlight brightens the painted glasses and reflects the light to make the flower appear bright red again. Elsa Salonen experiments with a range of poetic materials - from volcanic ash to pigments distilled from plants - to create works that destabilize the order of science over magic.

This exhibition opens on November 3 and runs through November 26, 2017, at Ama Gallery, Rikhardinkatu 1, FI-00130 Helsinki, Finland.

For details, visit: www.ama.fi (<http://www.ama.fi/>)

Click on the slideshow for a sneak peek at the exhibition.

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