



The First Year (and then some)

Annual report: 2009 - 2010



Annual report 2009-2010

Ptarmigan ry
Nilsiankatu 10 A
00510 Helsinki

T 040 466 1945
E info@ptarmigan.fi
W www.ptarmigan.fi

Board / Hallitus

Tara Pattenden
(Director / puheenjohtaja, Creative Director)

John W. Jäil
(Treasurer / rahastonhoitaja, Chief Cultural Strategist)

Juuso Paaso
(Sihteeri / secretary, Development Advisor)

Rekisterinumero 202.231
Y-Tunnus 2330507-7

From the director...



It's amazing to look back over how much has been accomplished over the past year at Ptarmigan. It feels like we've really created something special from our little corner of Vallila, and actually fulfilled a void in the Helsinki cultural sector.

Of course, the biggest accomplishment of the year is finding such a strong community of enthusiastic people. As a primarily event-driven space, Ptarmigan is only as good as the people who come and participate, and you've been like a dream come true.

Because we've had such a wide range of events over our short time, it's hard to single out any particular highlights. It feels like Ptarmigan offers something for everyone, and we're continuing to explore new directions and ideas for how we can use the space.

The fact that we have done all of this without ever charging fees to the creators is maybe what makes me the most proud. Though it gets difficult at times, we're able to make it keep happening. And this is no doubt due to the large numbers of volunteers and support we've had – too many to list here!

As 2011 approaches, we look forward to a new year with new opportunities. Our Nordic/Baltic residency programme (funded by KK Nord) has gotten off to a good start, and we will continue it through 2011. But we're also excited about smaller projects, one-off events, workshops, and our other existing projects.

The biggest challenge of 2011 is continuing to survive without compromising the non-commercial, artist-run nature of Ptarmigan. We must remain a place for art, cultural production, and other ideas, and avoid the pitfalls of economically-driven cultural models.

Here's to the future,

Tara Pattenden
Creative Director, Ptarmigan

Treasury

Statement of financial activities from 1.10.2009 – 30.9.2010

Incoming resources

Monthly studio/office rental	11000 €
Grant from KK Nord	10000 €
Donations	840 €
Grant from Central Station for Paleofutures show	675 €
Clip Kino support	1120 €
Pixelache support for 'Neanderthal Electronics' workshop	450 €
Total income / Tulot yhteensä	24085 €

Resources expended

Rental of premises	11238 €
Rental of apartment for 2 KK Nord residencies	2480 €
Travel costs for 2 KK Nord artists	300 €
Stipend paid to 2 KK Nord artists	2000 €
Materials for 2 KK Nord artists	720 €
Residency conference in Tallinn	100 €
Fee for 'Neanderthal Electronics' workshop	450 €
Fee for 'A louder performance would be better' workshop	150 €
General maintenance (lightbulbs, paper, etc.)	500 €
Clip Kino publicity	200 €
Clip Kino facilitator fees	720 €
Clip Kino curator fees	200 €
Artist fees for Paleofutures show	360 €
Materials fees for Paleofutures show	100 €
Presenter fee for Paleofutures show	40 €
Printing, advertising and food for Paleofutures show	125 €
Total expenditures / Menot yhteensä	19683 €

Total income	24085 €
Total expenses	19683 €
Balances carried forward 15 Oct 2010	4402 €

John W. Fail, Rahastonhoitaja 15 October 2010

Events

Here is the complete list of events held at Ptarmigan through 15 October 2010.

- 7 October 2010 'A louder performance would be better' concert, Ahonen
- 6-7 October 2010 'A louder performance would be better' workshop
- 25 September 2010 PALFUCON: Paleofuturist Trade Conference
- 24 September 2010 Lauhkeat Lampaat, Gail Priest, Lapin
- 19 September 2010 Lal Lal Lal Festival
- 9 September 2010 Dartington College performances and presentations
- 8 September 2010 Exhibition opening: *Muistakaa Espanjaa* by Amanda Vähämäki
- 5 September 2010 Labyrinths and Rings: Andrea Zalewski 'Cities of Preferences', Mack Cole-Edelsack (Pedalto Institute)
- 27 August 2010 Exhibition opening: Jonna Karanka *Shine Shrine* (with music from Boom Edan)
- 18 August 2010 Clip Kino: Rediscovering the Art of Digital Storytelling
- 12 August 2010 Selections from 'Talker Catalogue' by Giles Bailey; Maniacs Dream; Intro to Pterodactyl



Giles Bailey: Selections from *Talker Catalogue*
12 August 2010



Catherine Kuebel, exhibition opening for *Fragment #6*
11 June 2010

- 11 August 2010 Labyrinths and Rings: Giles Bailey and Caleb Waldorf
- 28 July 2010 Clip Kino: Forest 2.0
- 22 July 2010 Labyrinths and Rings: Ellen Friis & Henrik Vestergaard Friis
- 29 June 2010 Olympia Splendit and Cleavage
- 11 June 2010 Exhibition opening: *Fragment #6* by Catherine Kuebel
- 25 May 2010 Exhibition opening: *Satakieli* by Roope Eronen (with music from Kuupuu, Sala-Arhimo)
- 19 May 2010 Clip Kino: Copies of Copies

Events continued...



Team Usurper Workshop
5 May 2010

- 9 May 2010 Exhibition opening: *You're a Winner* by Usurper (with music from Reijo Pami, Team Usurper)
- 7 May 2010 Usurper open music workshop
- 6 May 2010 Usurper, Kuupuu, Malcy Duff: The Knuckleball, Ali Robertson motivational speech
- 5 May 2010 Comic workshop / Team Usurper workshop
- 5 May 2010 Helsinki Public School: Photography class
- 29 April 2010 Kemiälliset Ystävät -nauhakonsertti
- 28 April 2010 Helsinki Public School: Photography class



Ilia Belorukov
22 April 2010

- 24 April 2010 Helsinki Public School: Sculptural Workshop for Foodies
- 23 April 2010 Helsinki Public School: Drawing!
- 22 April 2010 Ilia Belorukov, Topias Tiheäsalo, Taneli Tuominen, Varropas; closing for Model Court
- 21 April 2010 Helsinki Public School: Photography class
- 8 April 2010 Model Court opening with music by Anthea Caddy and Felicity Mangan



Drawing! meeting #2
23 April 2010

- 7 April 2010 Clip Kino: Model Court
- 4 April 2010 An ecology of the courtroom seminar
- 3 April 2010 Ptarmiganin Kirpputori
- 28 March 2010 Pixelache Closing Event w/Invalid Robot Factory, Koelse, Nomo, Reijo Pami
- 21 March 2010 Hacklab Open Projects Day
- 20 March 2010 Joe McPhee/Chris Corsano duo
- 19 March 2010 Kasvitietotalkoot

Events continued...

- 19 March 2010 Helsinki Public School: Drawing!
- 17 March 2010 Clip Kino: Foraging!
- 15 March 2010 Neanderthal Electronics live performance
- 13-15 March 2010 Neanderthal Electronics with Derek Holzer workshop
- 8 March 2010 US Girls, Heteroskeleton, Kanttoripoika, Justin Vinson, Scott Andrew Elliott *Push/Pull* closing
- 7 March 2010 Svamp Maaliskuu 2010



Invalid Robot Factory + Koelse
28 March 2010



Neanderthal Electronics concert/presentation

- 28 February 2010 Hacklab Open Projects Day
- 24 February 2010 Exhibition opening: *Push/Pull* by Scott Andrew Elliott
- 12 February 2010 Public School Helsinki launch party: Kiila, Rank Ensemble, Sari TM Kivinen
- 7 February 2010 Helsinki Hacklabın Jäsenkokous
- 31 January 2010 Svamp Tammikuu 2010
- 30 January 2010 Hacklab Open Projects Day
- 23 January 2010 Art & Sustainability Workshop
- 21 January 2010 Helsinki Public School launch event
- 17 January 2010 Founding meeting of Helsinki Hacklab ry.

- 9 January 2010 C. Spencer Yeh, Tomutonttu, Shogun Kunitoki, Les Manures
- 7 January 2010 Improvisation and Concrete Composition Workshop
- 7 January 2010 Anla Courtis, Topias Tiheäsalo, Maniacs Dream
- 18 December 2009 Aalto University Laptop Orchestra
- 12 December 2009 Dinosauruxia, Dollface/Scraps, Simon Morris
- 8 December 2009 Open what? meeting
- 3 December 2009 Thembi Soddell / Anthea Caddy, Verhaverbeke Krzyzosiak, Svetlana Maraš
- 2 December 2009 Oorutaichi, Jaakko Eino Kalevi, Hermannin ja Juuso



Svamp workshop
7 March 2010

Events continued...



Kiila
12 February 2010

- 20-21 November 2009 It's All in Your Mind Festival
- 19 November 2009 Clip Kino: Cyberpunk
- 11 November 2009 Cartune Xprez, Schmelf-help, Avarus
- 24 October 2009 Lal Lal Lal Festival
- 10 October 2009 Ross Manning, Koelse & Nomo
- 4 October 2009 Fursaxa, Kuupuu, Kulkija
- 26 September 2009 Auk Theatre (matinée)



Oorutaichi
2 December 2009

performance) w/Lamprey and Vinegar,
Kutomo

- 25 September 2009 Auk Theatre (evening performance) w/Lamprey and Vinegar, Hermanni ja Juuso

- 21 September 2009 BioArte International, Marjatta, Spydery and the Cult of hide
- 16 September 2009 Blood Stereo, Lauhkeat Lampaat, Keränen
- 31 July 2009 Mental Alaska : Hallitus Lavalla 2009
- 26 July 2009 Dora Bleu, Hei, Samuel Meri
- 12 July 2009 Ilia Belorukov, Juuso Paaso



Art and Sustainability workshop
23 January 2010

Workshops and classes

Ptarmigan has specifically focused on workshops and other models for creative dissemination. Here are some highlights of these programmes.

Art and Sustainability

In January, Pixelache sponsored a workshop at Ptarmigan called 'Art and Sustainability'. This workshop was led by Taavet Jansen and Maike Lond from Estonia, and it brought together a group of local artists who later participated in the Pixelache festival. During the two day workshop, participants experimented with mechanical and electronic methods to construct energy-generating devices. The results were exhibited at the festival in the form of a "self-sustainable party container", placed in front of Kiasma, where windmills and exercise bikes generated the electricity needed for a party.



Art and Sustainability workshop
22 January 2010

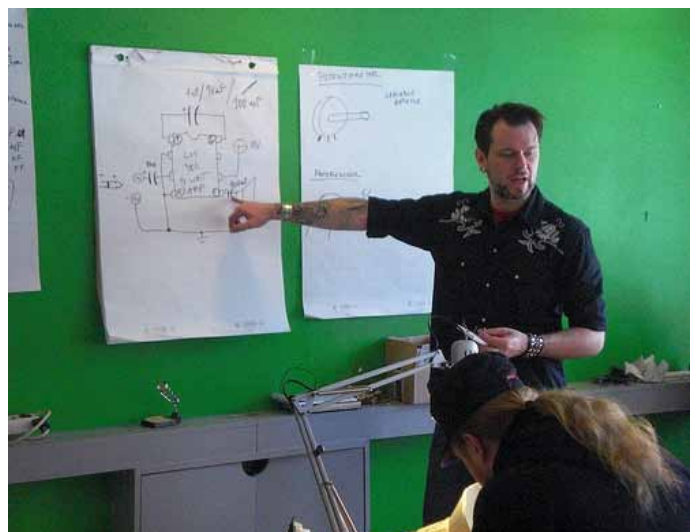


Self-sustainable party container, Pixelache festival
24 March 2010

Sound and electronics

During the year, two hands-on workshops were conducted involving electronics and sound. In March, Berlin-based sound artist Derek Holzer taught a 3-day course in DIY sound electronics. Ten participants learned how to construct new musical instruments, in turn learning the basics of electronics, soldering, circuit design, and more. On the evening of the third day, the students presented their constructions in the form of a concert. The Pixelache festival was gracious enough to pay Mr. Holzer's teaching fees, so we were able to offer the workshop for free.

Our most recent event followed a similar plan. 'A louder performance would be better' was the name of Natalia Borissova's two-day workshop, which explored the idea of generating sound from very low amounts of



Derek Holzer, Neanderthal Electronics workshop
13 March 2010

Workshops and classes continued...



'A louder performance would be better' workshop
6 October 2010

power. Specifically, batteries were built using fruits, vegetables, and other organic matter. The results were also presented in the form of a concert.

Svamp and improvised music

The Svamp project (originally based in Suomenlinna) relocated to Ptarmigan in 2010. Svamp is intended to be a regular meeting point for improvising musicians and non-musicians as well. These meetings are open to the public and encourage new ways of group improvisation, looking at games, exercises and other ideas. In January, Argentinian sound legend Alan Curtis led a one-day workshop on improvisation and musique concrete. In May, the Usurper artists (from Edinburgh, Scotland) offered a workshop on deconstructing broken musical instruments to create new ones.



Sculptural Food Workshop
24 April 2010

The Public School Helsinki

A Helsinki branch of the international project The Public School (www.thepublicschool.org) was launched in February 2010. The Public School is a framework for organising workshops and classes that anybody can teach or attend. Started in Los Angeles, The Public School is an art project that is now also happening in New York, Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Philadelphia, and Puerto Rico.

Ptarmigan has served as both a meeting place for Public School organisers as well as a classroom. In June, the Public School Helsinki was given a container at Kalasatama, part of a group of organisations hosting various events there. Though this container has functioned as The Public School Helsinki's primary "classroom", Ptarmigan remains closely linked to the project and will always be available as a classroom (particularly during the colder months).

Several classes have occurred at Ptarmigan throughout the year. Most notably was the 'Drawing!' class, which created huge collectively-drawn murals. Ptarmigan also hosted a memorable 'Sculptural food workshop', where visually compelling sculptures were made from edible ingredients (and then cooked down and eaten). Additionally, a photography critique group met regularly during the springtime.



Drawing! marathon
23 April 2010

Music

Music remains a focus of Ptarmigan's activities, not just through sound workshops but also in traditional concert formats. Ptarmigan specialises in experimental and avant-garde music, and because Ptarmigan does not profit from its events, many international artists are able to perform in Helsinki where it may not be economically feasible otherwise.

Among the many highlights were the two festivals organised by the Lal Lal Lal label, which brought influential underground artists such as Vom Grill and Neil Campbell to Helsinki for the first times. These festivals (and almost all of our concert) also incorporate Finnish artists who work on the fringes of sound culture, such as Pylon, Pekko Käppi, Lauhkeat Lampaat, Avarus, and Kiila.

The Mental Alaska organisation, who promotes the Lal Lal Lal festival, has regularly organised concerts at Ptarmigan throughout our existence. Besides the festival, they are also responsible for bringing US Girls, Blood Stereo, Alan Courtis, and jazz saxophone legend Joe McPhee with Chris Corsano. The latter event was held in Teatteri Ilmiö, a theatre space adjacent to Ptarmigan, and was so successful that tickets sold out.

Independently, Ptarmigan has organised concerts for artists as wide-ranging as Russia's Iliia Belorukov (who played our first ever event), Japanese electronica artist Oorutaichi, Australian sound artists Thembi Soddell and Anthea Caddy, and USA's C. Spencer Yeh. Finnish artist Kemiälliset Ystävät organised their record-release lecture event at Ptarmigan, which featured presentations on architecture and sound art. We usually try to have some live musical element at all of our exhibition openings, and we have quickly become the most important venue for underground and experimental music in Helsinki.



Chris Corsano with Joe McPhee
28 March 2010



Tomutonttu
9 January 2010



Anthea Caddy
8 April 2010

Other programmes



Henrik Vestergaard Friis + Ellen Friis
22 July 2010

Labyrinths and Rings

In Summer 2010, Ptarmigan began a programme called Labyrinths and Rings. This is a regularly scheduled series of presentations by artists, filmmakers, performers or other creative types. The evenings are structured so that two presenters will each give a 20 minutes presentation of their work, followed by a moderated question and answer group. The evenings are structured as social, casual events where people can relax and listen to music between the presentations. Labyrinths and Rings is designed to accommodate travelling artists who might only be visiting Helsinki for one evening, and thus cannot commit to a larger project here.

Though we've only had three L&R nights, all three have been successful and we've built a small but enthusiastic group of attendees.

Film and video

The Clip Kino project frequently hosts events at Ptarmigan. Clip Kino is a project (funded by Taiteen Keskustoimikunta) where a presenter curates a selection of video clips around a topic. These clips, all freely available on the Internet, are brought into the public sphere and discussed.

Ptarmigan has hosted Clip Kino events on a variety of topics – from forestry issues in Lapland (presented by Tampere's Hirvitalo group) to explorations of courtroom scenes in cinema (presented by Ptarmigan's resident artists at the time). Though the Clip Kino project is not exclusive to Ptarmigan, we are happy to host these events and look forward to future occurrences.

The Pixelache festival afterparty was hosted by Ptarmigan (also using Teatteri Ilmiö) and we are currently planning future film and video evenings. Ptarmigan also showcased the Cartune Xprez 2009 show, a travelling show of animation mixed in with live musical performance. There has also been much video content among Ptarmigan-created work (either through resident artists or other uses of the space) and many members of our audience are involved in the Helsinki media art scene.



Clip Kino: Forest 2.0
28 July 2010



Cartune Xprez / Hooliganship
11 November 2009

Artists

Our successful first year has brought a variety of travelling artists who have created work in the space, sometimes performing and sometimes relying on more standard exhibition formats. Ptarmigan also rents studio spaces (in the back) to artists who work here on an everyday basis. The following is a list of all artists who have created work specifically to be exhibited at Ptarmigan (all Finnish unless otherwise specified):

- Amanda Vähämäki
- Arturs Punte (Latvia)
- Cathérine Kuebel (Austria)
- Elsa Parkkari
- Irene Moon (USA)
- Jane Hughes (Ireland)
- Jonna Karanka
- Model Court: Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Lorenzo Pezzani and Oliver Rees (Denmark, UK, Italy)
- Roope Eronen
- Ross Manning (Australia)
- Scott Andrew Elliott (Canada)
- Usurper: Ali Robertson and Malcy Duff (Scotland)
- Wai-Yi Lai (Hong Kong)

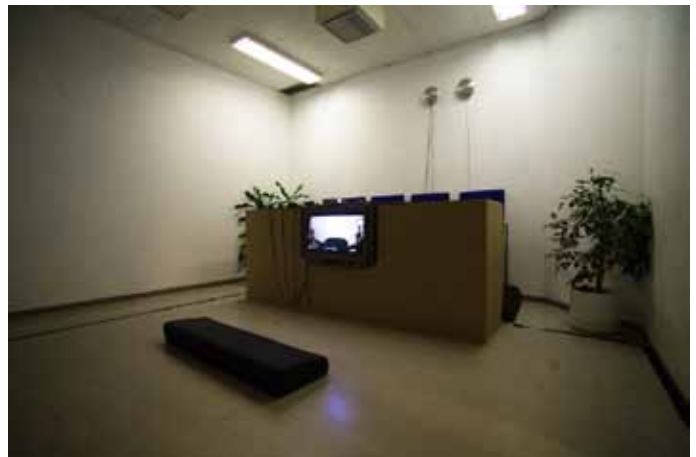
Visiting artists

While this report does not have the space to discuss all of the artists who have created work at Ptarmigan, we will survey a few. Because Ptarmigan is a volunteer effort, we were not able to offer support to any of these artists beyond our enthusiasm. Still, we are thrilled at how many people created such amazing work given the resources at their disposal.



Irene Moon/Auk Theatre
26 September 2009

Our first visiting artist was Irene Moon from Raleigh, USA, who in just under a week constructed an original theatre piece as part of her Auk Theatre project. This was an absurd, neo-Gothic pantomime using shadows and cardboard props. She was able to do two performances of the piece during her stay.



Model Court exhibition
7-22 April 2010

Model Court, a curatorial/research group of four artists from Goldsmiths College, London, came in April to work on their project in a Finnish context. Model Court looks at the space of the courtroom and explores how technology and other factors mediate justice. They were fortunate enough to gain access to the François Barazema trial occurring in Porvoo, and during their time they created some brilliant videos and constructed a replica of the Porvoo courtroom in Ptarmigan's project space.



Usurper You're A Winner exhibition
9-18 May 2010

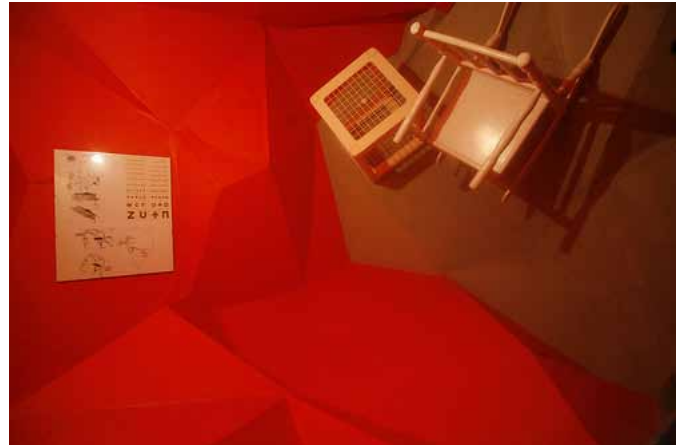
Another UK-based group, Usurper (comprising Malcy Duff and Ali Robertson) visited Helsinki in May and spent just under a week working on an exhibition. You're a Winner explored themes of motivation and optimism, primarily through the format of Duff's austere black and white comic drawings. During their time, they hosted a workshop on comic art, and a sound workshop on deconstructing musical instruments. At their exhibition opening, the participants in the sound workshop performed as Team Usurper, with a lively blend of bizarre sound experiments and comic behaviours.

Artists continued...

Helsinki-based artists

Ptarmigan is invested in the creative community of Helsinki and seeks to make the space available for interesting projects wherever possible. Among the visiting artists, we have almost always had somebody working in one form or another.

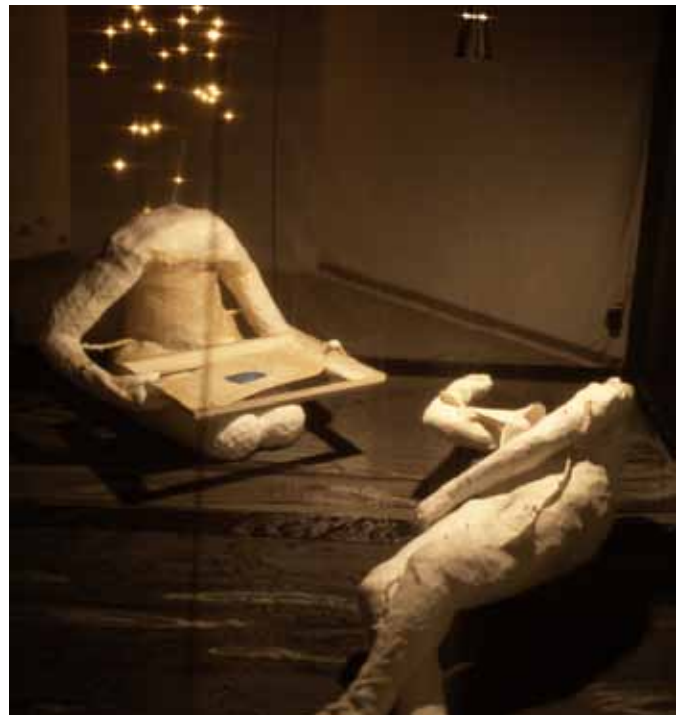
Helsinki-based Canadian **Scott Andrew Elliott** spent about six weeks constructing *Push/Pull*, an epic installation that consumed the entirety of our project space. Using all recycled materials, Elliott built a room-inside-a-room that challenged notions of balance, space and the body. Inspired by the work of Arakawa and Ginz, Elliott's brand of uncompromising construction was one of Ptarmigan's most memorable installations, and a seedbed for his next creation (built at the Oksasenkatu 11 gallery this summer).



Push/Pull by Scott Andrew Elliott
24 February - 7 March 2010

In 2009, **Elsa Parkkari** exhibited bizarre textile electronics, while **Jane Hughes** created a strangely decaying installation. In Summer 2010, **Amanda Vähämäki** and **Jonna Karanka** both exhibited work at Ptarmigan. Vähämäki's comic art has earned her many accolades internationally, and we were delighted to exhibit some of her work in a show entitled *Muistakaa Espanaja* (which was featured in the Helsinki Comics Festival). Karanka (who has performed music multiple times at Ptarmigan under the name **Kuupuu**) explored the ideas of celebrity and obsession in a show called *Shine Shrine*.

Cathérine Kuebel, an Austrian artist based in Helsinki, continued her *Sonnambulia Stories* series with *Fragment #6*, an installation that utilised video and light while encouraging interactivity and feedback. **Roope Eronen** created a mesmerizing array of 50 cheap cassette players, where visitors could start and stop them to create variation in the 100-channel electronic music composition that he recorded.



Fragment #6 by Cathérine Kuebel
11-23 June 2010

Nordic/Baltic Residency programme

The big news of the year was that Ptarmigan was awarded a grant by Kulturkontakt Nord as part of their Nordic/Baltic exchange programme. This is a two year fund to host six residencies for a period of two months each.

This fund does not cover Ptarmigan's operating costs, so Ptarmigan will still function primarily on volunteer efforts and community organising. But the funds allow us to invite artists and offer them support for travel, materials, accommodation and subsistence.

The first artist from this programme, **Arturs Punte**, is currently on residency at Ptarmigan. November will bring **Vigdis Haugtrø** (from Norway). We will seek four residents for 2011, which will occupy 2/3 of the year.



Satakieli by Roope Eronen
25 May - 2 June 2010

Other activities

PALFUCON

On 25 September, Ptarmigan hosted PALFUCON, a Paleofuturist Trade Conference. Supported by Central Station, this one-day show brought artists together to explore the idea of paleofuturism, as inspired by the Paleo-Future blog. Four artists presented their work, some travelling from Pori, Tallinn, and Oslo, representing different "companies" who were there to present their products. The show received favourable coverage in the local press, and the attendees were treated to presentations and demonstrations of the various products.

Performances

Ptarmigan has sought to collaborate with members of Helsinki's rich performance community. While many of our events are classified as performance (for lack of anything more clear to categorise them), we have begun to host regular reviews of performance art, beginning in September with a group of students from Dartington College in the UK.

Meetings

Ptarmigan has also been used as a meeting space for many of our affiliated projects, such as Mental Alaska and the Public School Helsinki. The Helsinki Hacklab group originally met in Ptarmigan and held several Open Days here before formalising their organisation and getting a space of their own (which is just upstairs from us).



PALFUCON
25 September 2010



Helsinki Hacklab open projects day
28 February 2010



Helsinki Hacklab open projects day
30 March 2010

The future ...?



What lies ahead for Ptarmigan? As we complete our second year, we hope to be able to expand the events that we offer. We hope to find a sustainable model to offer more workshops in the vein of 'Neanderthal electronics', and hope that our audience will continue to be interested in such offerings. We continue to seek out the most challenging, innovative and communicative work and to make it happen, to the best of our abilities.

It's hard to determine exact statistics, but there have been certainly hundreds of different people who have attended our events and many more who have expressed interest (our Facebook group currently has 638 fans). In the future, we must balance the day-to-day struggles of paying the rent with our goals. Our goals are to provide regular cultural events to the public; to enable unique opportunities for creation and presentation; and to offer a new logic for cultural and artistic production. Even creating an annual report is somewhat strange, because Ptarmigan is not a traditional institution, and we do not wish to become one.

But we are optimistic! Thanks to the tireless support of everyone who has made the first 14 months so wonderful, we are confident that we can achieve even more in 2011. Thanks again, everyone, and we'll see you soon.