

An abstract painting featuring a central, dark, shadowed face-like form. This central figure is composed of and surrounded by numerous overlapping, angular, and geometric shapes in a variety of colors including yellow, grey, blue, red, and white. The overall composition is dense and layered, with a dark, almost black background that makes the central and surrounding shapes stand out. The style is reminiscent of cubism or abstract expressionism.

JAM SESSIONS

Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val

APRIL 2020
Projectroom2020.org

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An Online Exhibition from Art North Magazine
as part of our Projectroom2020 initiative.

[Projectroom2020.org](https://projectroom2020.org)



Above: Installation view of *Raisa Raekallio/Misha del Val* exhibition at Torre de Ariz, Basauri, Bilbao. March 2020.
Upcoming: Korundi Art Museum, Rovaniemi, Finland. Artists' Association of Lapland. *Artist of the Month*, September 2020.
(Please check venue for details/opening times).

Finnish Lapland *Calling*

Ian McKay

In April 2020, following the closure of most galleries throughout those parts of the world affected by the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val began live streaming from their studio.

Located in the village of Sirkka, in Finnish Lapland, the two artists who collaborate on their work invited the world into their studio, their home – even their sauna! They discussed at length the motivation behind the work; the nature of the collaborative enterprise that they are engaged in; and generally educated viewers of their live-stream broadcasts to the *minutiae* of life making art in the far north on Finland today. Their generosity of spirit and the clear understanding of the need to connect at this time came through as a powerful message with regard what online technologies and a bit of Internet-savvy ingenuity can bring to a rapidly changing cultural environment. Over several days they broadcast not just in English but in Finnish and Spanish, also.

A few days previously, I had tentatively approached the artists to ask if they would agree to offer an international contribution to Projectroom2020.org – in the form of an online exhibition. Without doubt, I believed, their work would have some resonance with our audience, and in a great many ways I do think that it has overlaps in terms of the constraints artists are currently experiencing during the period of pandemic in the far north (something that they explain in the extracts from the live-stream broadcasts that accompany this exhibition on our Projectroom2020.org website). I am, therefore, hugely grateful that Raisa and Misha agreed to take part, and for the energy and generosity they have brought to this exhibition. I hope that you feel, as I do, that their contribution is as an important one.

Jam Session

Francisco Javier San Martín

According to a classic definition by critic George Frazier, Jam Session refers to ‘an informal get-together of musicians with temperamental affinity to play, for their own amusement, a music not written, nor rehearsed.’ It could be argued, that the music they play, which basks in the very desire of making it, is alien to the idea of an organised project. The activity becomes an opportunity, a mouthful of shared humility, that turns the individual ego a bit more transparent. To collaborate is to lower one’s own expectations for a particular outcome, to open up and learn from others. Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val have been making their pictures as a duet in Finnish Lapland for several years now, following similar principles to those of a jam session, in white quilted lands, like in the black Harlem.

I had a chance to enjoy a fruit of this collaboration, entrusted at my place for some months: it pictures, in a modest format, a wild beast, perhaps a dog or a bear, in a combination of golden ochres and blues; with that cold light that seems to come in through all the chinks, which reveal the painting has been created near snow. Beyond the animal appearance, the term that came into my mind, the first time I saw it in a bar in Bilbao, was incandescent; as if possessed by an emotional fever, like when the temperature of iron reaches such heights that the burning reds give way to an almost glacial white. And also the idea that painting is heated desire, even when practised in extreme temperatures: a longing to repeat what is loved, be it a feral creature that looks

straight at you, the mask of a red-lipped goddess, or bodies travelling through constellations with stars at their feet. I’ve returned the painting to its authors, now, so it can be can appreciated by others who may tremble before the animal they see in the image (or possibly within themselves, without even knowing it).

Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val’s creative process is generated by a three-sided love relationship: between the artists themselves, and between the couple and painting. The seduction processes, which occur in this fertile territory of exchange, crystallises in jointly made pictures. A palette to mix the colours, a table for food, a wooden house to live in and work.

As we know, love involves commitment: in this case, not only to the dainty mechanisms of the blossoming picture, but also to the shared thrust, force, and motivation that drives the artists to keep wanting to make paintings. In this mentally and physically shared space, the studio isn’t just a working place, it becomes a condominium for conspiratorial intimacy. Ray and Charles Eames had the privilege of building their own house, the place where they would live and produce all their work in collaboration for decades. Maybe that’s the highest an artist-couple can aspire to. Aino Marsio and her husband Alvar Aalto, in a closer context to where Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val make their paintings, opened the Artek shops in Helsinki to commercialise the outcome of their together: a rational, as much as emotional, collaboration.

Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val continue in this way, painting galactic refugees, figures belonging to no homeland, sheltered in golden space blankets, gently glowing like the Arctic midnight sun. Vulnerable and dignified, exposed and solemn, packed together with a stunned gaze that reflects their long journey. Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val may have an inkling it's them, lost in the immensity of the world and found again by the fireplace in a corner of their studio. Via Skype Raisa explains, while painting these beings she feels compassion and needs to nurture it and paint it only through improvisation, responding moment to moment to what crops up on the picture: if she feels bounded by the idea of a project, this energy of empathy with the characters gets blocked and the magic vanishes into thin air. Misha in turn, she adds, tends to be more reflective over each stage of the process, and she feels comfortable with this shared responsibilities. Indeed, a jam session does not imply the dissolution of the personalities involved, but precisely a sharper definition of the potentialities of each in the common flow and the destiny of the music they are making.

Francisco Javier San Martín

JAM SESSIONS

Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val

APRIL 2020

This morning, through the narrow opening of our kitchen window, we saw, walking pass our backyard, someone who had left everything behind. They didn't know their name (although they made up one in the spot to satisfy our immodest curiosity). They couldn't really tell whether they were a man, or a woman, or a girl, or a boy, or anything in between, or anything beyond. They didn't seem to recall belonging to any Homeland, nor having any other direction than gently moving forward; their steps leaving a graceful trace in the snow. They kept walking silently, looking pleasantly at the open sky, carrying nothing in their pockets, softly breathing in the crispy morning air, until they were lost, in the distance.

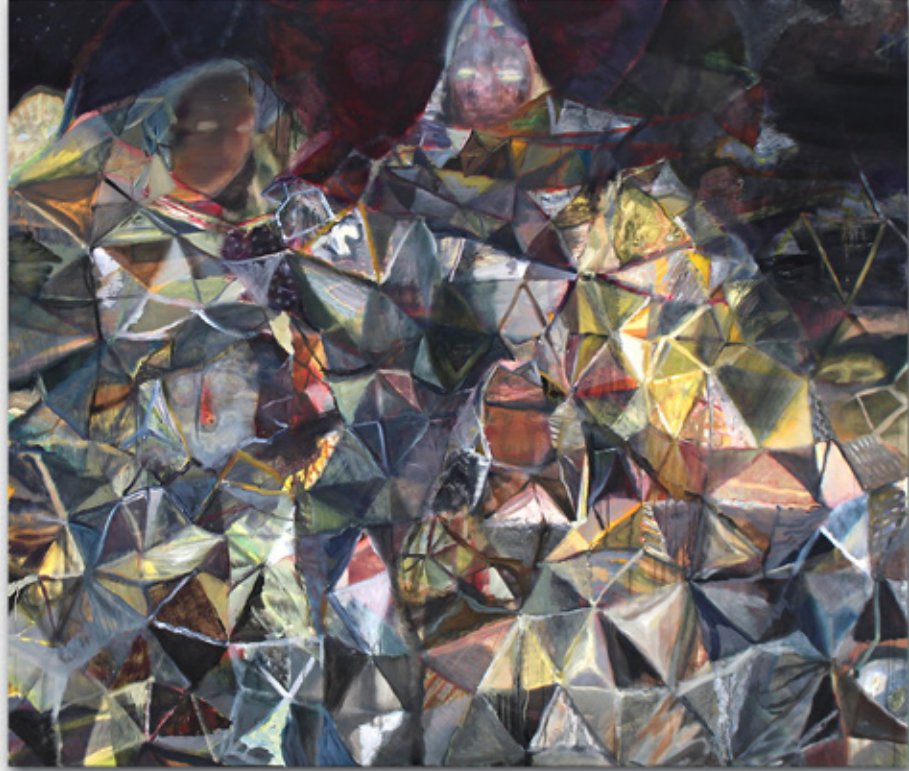
Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'The Committee' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 100 x 100 cm.
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled III' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 145 x 170 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled II' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
 Oil on linen, 145 x 170 cm.
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
 Oil on linen, 145 x 170 cm.
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Space refugees',
Oil on canvas, 30 x 80 cm.
2019.



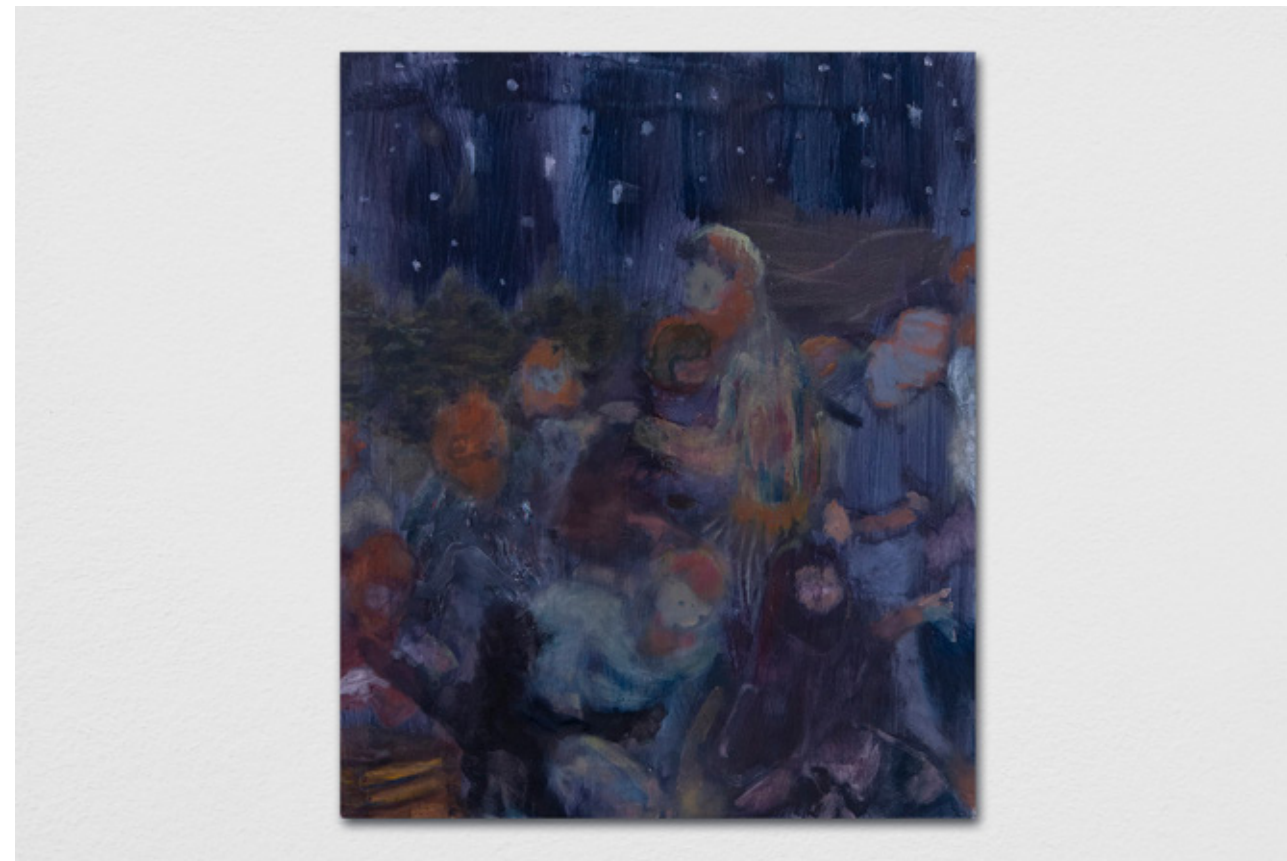
Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Captain Painting and Space Refugees in Space Blankets'
 Oil on linen, 145 x 170 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled VIII' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
 Oil on linen, 80 x 100 cm.
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled XII', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled XIII', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled XIX', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 70 x 60 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled XV', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 60 x 70 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled XVI' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 145 x 170 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled XVII' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 115 x 135 cm.
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled VII', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
 2019.



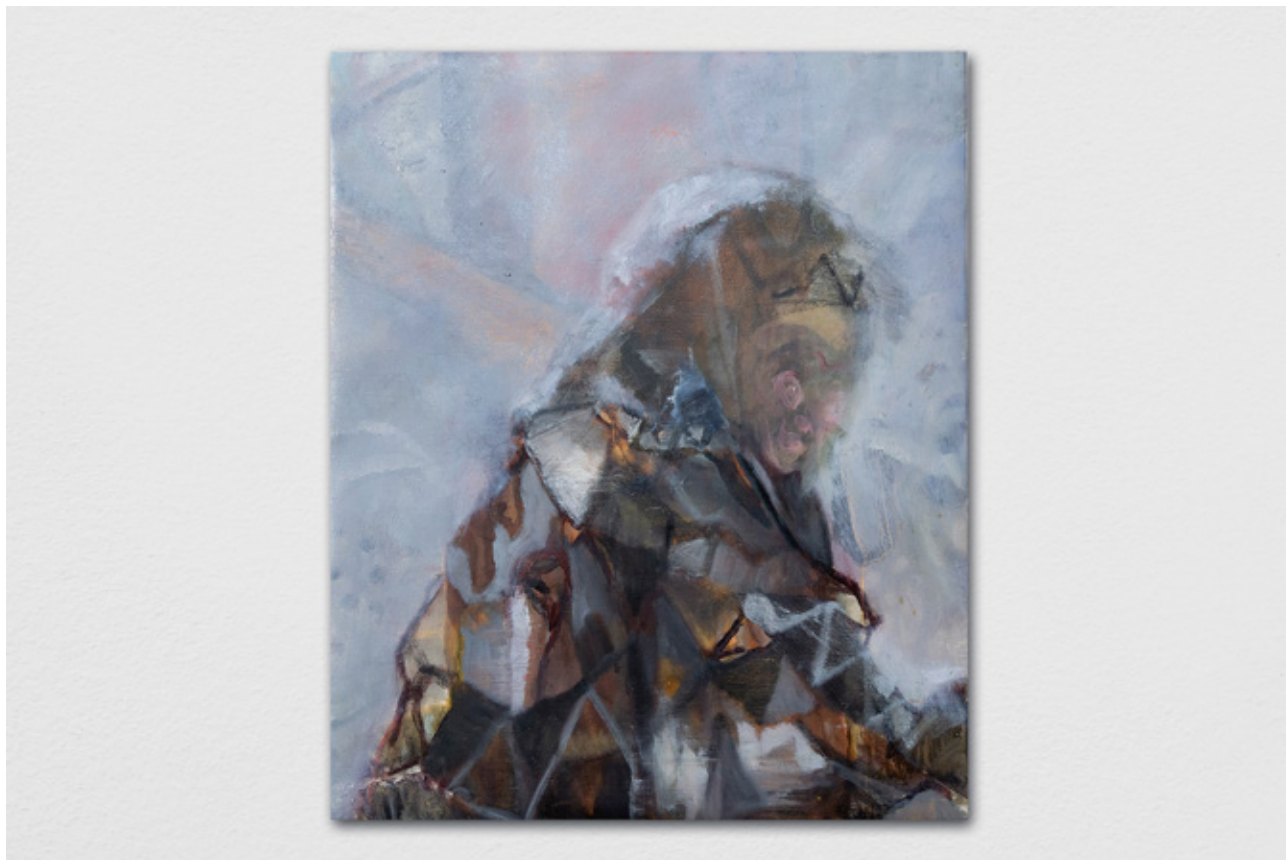
Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled X', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on paper, 80 x 100 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Y Ahora Qué?'
 Oil on linen, 162 x 138 cm.
 2018.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled IX', from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
 Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*'Untitled VI' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
 Refugees series.*
 Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
 2020.

Opposite Page:
Unknown. (Detail)
 Oil on Canvas
 2020.





Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled V' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
2019.

Opposite Page:
'Untitled V', (Detail)
Oil on linen, 60 x 50 cm.
2019.



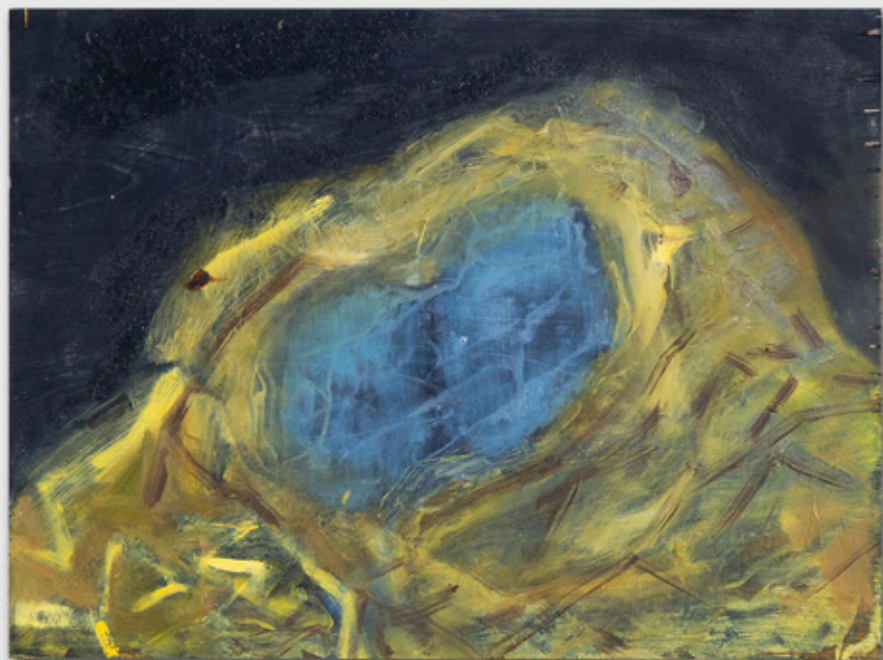
Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Unknown, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
Oil on Canvas
2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled XI' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
 Oil on board, 30.5 x 35 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
'Untitled XVIII' from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
Refugees series.
 Oil on paper, 72 x 48 cm.
 2019.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Untitled, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space Refugees
series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
Leipzig Wonder Child, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/
Space Refugees series.
 Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
 2020.



Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val,
*Methusalem, from the Kansalaisuudeton/Apátridas/Space
Refugees series.*
Oil on panel, 35 cm x 30.5 cm
2020.



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Raisa Raekallio & Misha del Val

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (as Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val)

- 2020 tm-galleria, Helsinki, Finland
- 2020 Torre de Ariz, Basauri, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain
- 2020 Lapin taiteilijaseuran Kuukauden taiteilija, Korundi Art Museum, Rovaniemi, Finland
- 2019 Sareston kahvilan kuukauden taiteilija, Särestöniemi-museo, Kaukonen, Finland
- 2018 Espacio Marzana - Cultural Projects, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain
- 2018 Kemi Art Museum, Finland
- 2018 Galleria Napa, Rovaniemi, Finland
- 2017 Galleria Valo, Arktikum, Rovaniemi, Finland (with photographer Juha Tolonen)
- 2016 Galerie Pleiku, Berlin, Germany
- 2015 Aitta-studio, Sirkka, Finland
- 2015 Buddhistisches Tor Berlin, Berlin, Germany
- 2014 Aitta-studio, Sirkka, Finland
- 2014 Kittilä library, Finland

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS (as Raisa Raekallio and Misha del Val)

- 2019 Ars Kärsämäki 2019, Finland
- 2019 MEM, Experimental Arts International Festival, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain
- 2019 Taidemaalariliiton juhluvuoden näyttely, galleria Napa, Rovaniemi, Finland
- 2019 ‘Kuvataideviikot’, galleria Napa, Rovaniemi, Finland
- 2018 ‘Echoes from the North / Kaikuja pohjoisesta’ Galleria Kaksilauttanen, Finland
- 2018 ‘Polte’ Galleria Kellokas, Ylläs, Finlnad
- 2017 Portrait Now, Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark and Ljungbergmuseum, Sweden

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

- Palsa-museo/Kauko Sorjonen Foundation
- Aine Art Museum, Tornio, Finland
- Särestöniemi museum, Kaukonen, Finland
- Kittilän Kunta, Finland
- Bilbaoarte Foundation, Bilbao, Spain (del Val)
- Gallivara Council, Sweden (Raekallio)

EDUCATION

Raisa Raekallio:
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Lahden Taideinstituutti, Finland, 2002

Misha (Enrique) del Val:
Master of Art studies, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, 2008-2009
Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Basque Country, Spain, 2003

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