

G A L E R I E F O R S B L O M

Marjatta Tapiola: Metamorphoses

Galerie Forsblom, 6.6.–17.8.2025

Marjatta Tapiola often takes inspiration for her paintings from literature, from sources such as the Greek Minotaur myth or the work of the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova. Rather than depicting these venerable literary sources literally, she uses them as a vehicle for dealing with themes such as the brutality of life and what it means to be human, exploring emotions, hopes and experiences familiar to everyone.

The exhibition provides a review of Tapiola's recent oil paintings and works on paper, this time drawing inspiration from selected extracts of poetry by the German-born writer W.G. Sebald (1944-2001) and *Autobiography of Red* (1998) by the Canadian novelist Anne Carson (b. 1950). Foremost among Tapiola's sources of literary inspiration are the epic myths of *Metamorphoses* originally published in Latin by the Roman poet Ovid (43 BCE-18 CE). The classic magnum opus is said to contain almost everything ever written in subsequent literature.

Ovid's imaginative, sometimes tragic and sometimes humorous tales have inspired countless artists ever since Classical Antiquity and the Renaissance. Tapiola is a contemporary artist who interprets Ovid's powerful verses from her own personal point of view. The task has been a challenging one, and the results are surprising, as always – even to those already familiar with Tapiola's art. Sebald and Carson both draw on art history and ancient mythology, and their evocatively visual writing has provided Tapiola with fresh inspiration in her exploration of new visual frontiers.

Marjatta Tapiola (b. 1951) ranks among the leading Finnish painters of her generation. Among the many accolades she has received are the Pro Finlandia Medal, the Finnish Cultural Foundation Award in 2004, and the State Prize for Fine Arts in 2006. Her work is held in the Ateneum Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, and numerous other major public collections in Finland. Tapiola is also an acclaimed portraitist.