

GALERIE FORSBLOM

Raili Tang

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Raili Tang's latest paintings literally capture interwoven layers of time. Originally created in 1996 for an exhibition at Lahti Art Museum, the first iterations were inspired by train rides between Helsinki and Lahti, as Tang gazed out the window at passing fields, barns, and forests. Now, thirty years later, she has returned to these same canvases, using them as the foundation for new artistic explorations. For Tang, the painted surface—built up through countless layers of color and intricate detail—remains her enduring source of inspiration.

In this renewed body of work, expressive floral motifs once again emerge from Tang's abstract backgrounds. Some of her blooms stand upright in vases; others sprout from the earth itself. Among them are radiant orchids, painted in the spirit of German Expressionist Emil Nolde (1867–1956), alongside humble dandelions pushing up through cracks in the pavement. The theme of time's passage is deeply embedded not only in the imagery, but in the very making of the works—some of the smaller floral compositions are built on backgrounds that Tang painted during her student years at the Academy of Fine Arts.

A master colorist, Tang weaves a universe of details born from the interplay of pigments. The best way to experience her work is slowly: the layers of paint are like quiet clues, scattered breadcrumbs that lead to small, meaningful revelations. Her droplets of paint, nuanced brushstrokes, and vibrant hues capture a wide emotional spectrum—mirroring life itself.

Raili Tang (b. 1950) has exhibited extensively both in Finland and abroad. Her work is held in several of Finland's most prestigious collections, including the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, the Sara Hildén Art Museum, the Wihuri and Saastamoinen Foundations, and HAM Helsinki Art Museum. Tang was awarded the Pro Finlandia Medal in 2015.