



The **PLANETS** Venus The Bringer of Peace

10–12 September 2025
Sibelius Museum
Turku, Finland



Wednesday, 10 September

- 11:30 – Signing in & info
- 12:15 – 13:30 **OPENING CEREMONY**
- 13:45 – 15:15 **AGORA:** Linda Bondestam: In the Mind of a Picture Book Artist – Drawing a Better World 🏠
- 15:15 – 15:45 *Coffee*
- 15:45 – 17:15 **WORKSHOP:** Mapping Venus
- 17:15 – 18:00 *Coffee*
- 18:00 – 20:00 **EVENING SESSION**
Veni Vidi Voice
My Body the Earth



Thursday, 11 September

- 9:30 – 10:00 Signing in and morning coffee
- 10:00 – 11:30 **PANEL SESSION:** Repairing for Peace
- 11:30 – 13:00 *Lunch break*
- 13:00 – 14:30 **PANEL SESSION:** Whose Peace? Exploring Sites for Practicing Peace
- 14:30–15:00 *Coffee*
- 15:00 – 16:30 **AGORA:** Erkki Tuomioja: The Role of History in War and Peace 🏠



- 18:00 – 19:00 Spirit Land/Vuoïngalaš Eanadat in Turku Cathedral 🏠
- 19:00 – 20:00 **DIALOGUE SESSION:** Spirit Land/Vuoïngalaš Eanadat in Sibelius Museum 🏠

Friday, 12 September

- 9:30 – 10:00 Signing in and morning coffee
- 10:00 – 11:30 **PANEL SESSION:** Biodiversity & Peace
- 11:30 – 13:00 *Lunch break*
- 13:00 – 14:30 **PANEL SESSION:** Concealed in Plain Sight: Transcribing Transitional Justice Data Between Remembrance and Erasure
- 15:00 – 16:30 **AGORA:** Natalia Djandjgava: Values of Peace: Communicating Dialogue and Inclusion through Lived Experience 🏠
- ~17:00 – 19:00 **CLOSING RECEPTION**
Sallamari Keinänen: hope/ toivo
Greetings from the City of Turku: Suvi Innilä, Turku 800 Project Director, Turku 2029 Foundation



🏠 Free entry

Program takes place in Sibelius Museum, Piispankatu 17 / Biskopsgatan 17, unless stated otherwise.

We reserve the right to changes. Please follow www.aboagora.fi and our social media channels for updates on any possible changes.

What is ABOAGORA?

ABOAGORA questions and deconstructs the juxtapositions between the arts and sciences. We aim to establish new kinds of connections and develop experimental models for academic and artistic expression. By combining diverse artforms with multidisciplinary scholarly discourse, ABOAGORA acts as a catalyst for meaningful dialogue and ideas at the intersection of the humanities, arts, and sciences.

The name 'Aboagora' is a portmanteau of Turku ('Aboa' in Latin) and 'agora', the ancient Greek word for 'meeting place' or 'marketplace'.

ABOAGORA is a marketplace of open codes: it provides a forum for academics, artists, and the general public to openly share ideas across various borders. ABOAGORA aims to create a shared space for thinking and debate in the arts and academia. We encourage new research and art as well as novel encounters between the two.

ABOAGORA was first held in 2011 as a joint effort between the Turku Music Festival, the University of Turku, the Donner Institute, and Åbo Akademi University. Today, ABOAGORA consists of a three-day main event and an annual Research Retreat, as well as additional Avant Aboagora events leading up to the main event.

Why ABOAGORA?

The gap between the arts and sciences is a product of history, not an inherent given. In the early modern period, scientific and artistic activities were not quarantined from each other, but over the past two centuries, the two have become starkly separated.

Today, it is especially important to rethink the role of research in terms of artistic expression and, at the same

time, consider cross-disciplinary approaches to artistic activities. Contemporary research often emphasises the need for cooperation between academic fields when solving current social challenges. The idea behind ABOAGORA is based on the conviction that comprehensive problem-solving requires not only interdisciplinary elaboration but also the acknowledgment of artistic approaches in more concrete and imaginative ways.

Significant innovations often arise at the interface of disciplines. New ideas emerge from unexpected encounters: for this reason, scientific or artistic innovations cannot easily be predicted. The purpose of ABOAGORA is to encourage these kinds of encounters and promote scholarly dialogue that considers artistic forms of expression.

ABOAGORA is organised by the University of Turku, Åbo Akademi University, the Arts Academy of Turku University of Applied Sciences, the Åbo Akademi University Foundation, and the Turku University Foundation.



ABOAGORA 2024. Photos: Pekko Vasantola.

ABOAGORA 2024–2030: The Planets

In 2024, ABOAGORA kicked off a new thematic series, The Planets. This theme is based on the orchestral suite of the same name by the composer **Gustav Holst** (1874–1934), composed between 1914 and 1917. Each of the composition's seven movements represent a planet in our solar system, bringing forth various ideas, myths, and dreams connected to the celestial bodies and the astrological characters associated with them. Musically innovative at the time of its publication, Gustav Holst's suite still continues to capture modern audiences over 100 years after its debut, inspiring an endless stream of adaptations and influencing numerous musical and other works of art.

Each year, a different movement of the suite – a planet – will serve as the theme of ABOAGORA, functioning as an inspiration and setting the stage for exploring challenging current questions with the help of scientific and artistic creativity.

The parts of the suite and the annual themes for the upcoming seven ABOAGORA events are:

- Mars, the Bringer of War (2024)
- Venus, the Bringer of Peace (2025)
- Mercury, the Winged Messenger (2026)
- Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity (2027)
- Saturn, the bringer of old age (2028)
- Uranus, the Magician (2029)
- Neptune, the Mystic (2030)

The Planets: Venus

Venus, the Bringer of Peace, “has to try and bring the right answer” to its predecessor Mars, the Bringer of War, according to **Imogen Holst**, a composer and the daughter of Gustav Holst. Thus, the calm blue Venus follows the reddened fury of Mars. In Holst's piece, Venusian music is slower and beautifully eerie, complete with calming tunes

played on harps and flutes, shimmering strings, and ethereal solo violin passages.

ABOAGORA 2025 starts by exploring Venusian mythologies and sensual ways of knowing. Being the only planet named after a female god, the event aims to study our interactions with the more-than-human world through the planetary, mythological, and symbolic agency of Venus. Venus, the Roman goddess, was originally associated with gardens and cultivation, as well as with the concepts of charm, grace, and beauty. She became identified with the Greek goddess Aphrodite, and hence also personified love and fertility.

The rest of the event, ABOAGORA, explores various aspects of peace, détente, conflict resolution, and peaceful coexistence among peoples, different species, and the Earth. Venus is one of the brightest objects in the sky, known as the “Morning star” in Old English and by the ancient Greeks. Much like the planet Venus, ABOAGORA also strives to bring hope and light to our gloomy contemporary times.

Past events

- ABOAGORA 2024** The Planets: Mars, the Bringer of War
- ABOAGORA 2023** The Five Rings: Void
- ABOAGORA 2022** The Five Rings: Wind
- ABOAGORA 2021** The Five Rings: Fire
- ABOAGORA 2020** The Five Rings: Water
- ABOAGORA 2019** The Five Rings: Earth
- ABOAGORA 2018** The Threads of Fate: Burden/Skuld
- ABOAGORA 2017** The Threads of Fate: Becoming/Verðandi
- ABOAGORA 2016** The Threads of Fate: Fate/Urðr
- ABOAGORA 2015** Precious Moments, Extreme Events
- ABOAGORA 2014** Chaos and Cosmos
- ABOAGORA 2013** The Human Machine
- ABOAGORA 2012** The Power of the Sacred and the Secular
- ABOAGORA 2011** Rethinking Enlightenment

A Photographic Exhibition: Glimmers of Hope, Pieces of Peace

10–12 September 2025, The Sibelius Hall,
Sibelius Museum

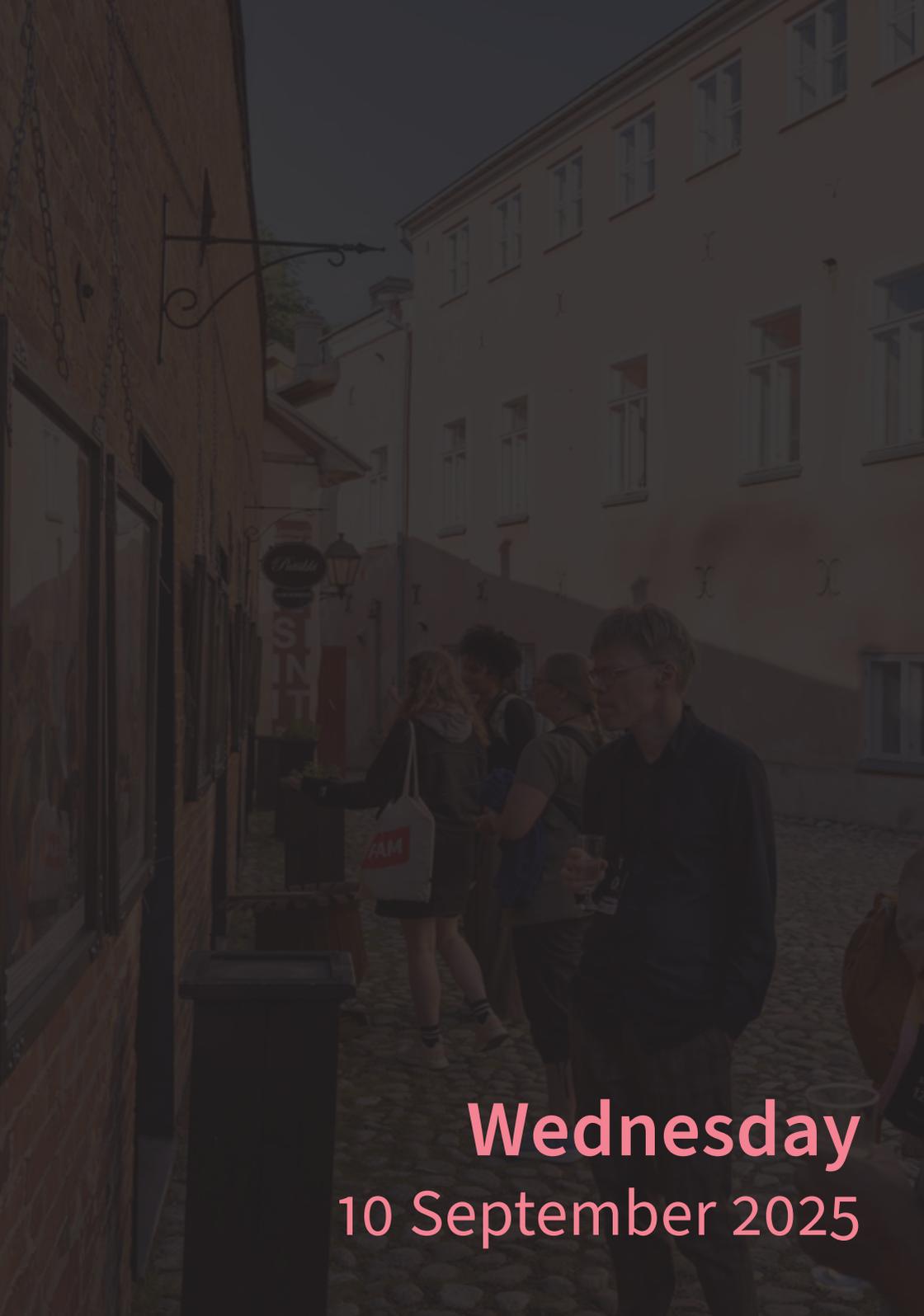
There is never only one story, but countless stories of lives that have been disrupted by war. The effects of war extend beyond battlefields, breaking families, communities, schools, water pipes, institutions, trust, and minds. Behind the political talks and propaganda, there are the experiences of individual people. Silenced stories, suppressed frustration, and unspoken anger. Other narratives of fear, escape, loss, but also of hope, solidarity and peace.

Glimmers of Hope, Pieces of Peace exhibits the other stories of peace and war in Ukraine. It reveals sites of life that do not occupy the media space: mundane, personal, and emotional experiences, spaces that are reserved for care and compassion, moments that break the dominance of war.

The images in the exhibition were taken by people living life under the shadow of war – in exile in Europe or Ukraine, as internally displaced citizens or returnees. Their photographs do not ask for pity or revenge, but recognition and the right to exist. Giving voice to these personal narratives, the exhibition also paves way to alternative images of war that do not just repeat messages of desperation, destruction, and loss, but show agency, stamina, and hope, and above all the unending desire for peace of the people most affected by the war.

The photographs in the exhibition are part of the “Finding Peace in Everyday – A Visual Exploration of the Narratives of Peace and War in Ukraine” dissertation research project by doctoral researcher **Juulia Niiniranta** at Tampere Peace Research Institute TAPRI, with funding from the Kone Foundation.

Juulia Niiniranta – see page 23



Wednesday
10 September 2025

Opening Ceremony

10 September 2025
12:15–13:30

Venusmusic – Giving Voice to Our Temperamental Sister Planet

Opening remarks

Marjo Kaartinen, Rector, University of Turku

The Layer of Sharing

Venusmusic – Giving Voice to Our Temperamental Sister Planet

Begin the day with Venusmusic – a 15-minute vocal performance powered by 100 female voices. Inspired by Venus, our only female-named planet, this piece challenges the “evil twin” narrative, reclaiming Venus as a symbol of powerful femininity and resistance. Through experimental vocal music informed by science, mythology, and feminist thought, women and female-identifying singers from Turku summon the planet’s voice – earthly, otherworldly, and unapologetically unique.



Dr. **Mareike Dobewall** is a Stockholm-based director, scenographer, composer, and educator whose interdisciplinary work bridges the arts and sciences. In *Musica Mundana* (2021), she collaborated with astrophysicists to create the music of the stars and the Jovian System for a vocal ensemble and percussion performance in

Stockholm’s Reactor Hall R1, a former nuclear reactor. Her current project, *Winter’s Silence*, supported by the KONE Foundation, explores the winter ecology in Finnish forests through sound, in collaboration with scientists from various fields. For the 2025 ABOAGORA event, she has developed a new vocal piece bringing singers from in and around Turku together to present a powerful experience of our only sister planet – highlighting the need for attuning ourselves to other voices, both planetary and human.

The Layer of Sharing

Vertti Luostarinen and **Iina Taijonlahti** from the Ekho Collective will showcase the virtual part of the “Layers in the Peace Machine” called “The Layer of Sharing”. “Layers in the Peace Machine” is part of the 2026 Cultural Capital Year programme and will be displayed in Oulu City Hall in 2026.

“The Layer of Sharing” participants are invited to share their peace-related memories and view them in relation to the memories shared by others. These memories will travel throughout the various layers of the work and transform through their interactions with visitors.

More information about the “Layers in the Peace Machine”:



About the Ekho Collective

The Ekho Collective is a Helsinki-based group of artists, designers, and technology professionals who specialise in immersive experiences. The group’s works include “Ahto”, an installation at the Lahti Museum of Visual Arts Malva that changes according to the flow of visitors. The Ekho Collective also created the interactive and award-winning piece “Laila” for the Finnish National Opera and Ballet.

www.ekho.fi



Photo: Pimpa Rauhiamäki

Vertti Luostarinen is a creative technologist and AI researcher with a background in screenwriting. He specialises in designing rhetorical and narrative systems.



Photo: Vesa-Pekka Grönlöf

Iina Taijonlahti is a choreographer who works in the field of dance and interactive art. She explores the relationship between technology, humanity, and corporeality in the era of posthumanism.

AGORA: In the Mind of a Picture Book Artist – Drawing a Better World

Linda Bondestam

10 September 2025
13:45–15:15

“ My art carries a desire to experiment with the picture book format, what kinds of stories can we tell? I believe that even young children have the right to understand and question what is happening in society. My books are characterised by humour, melancholy, and a keen interest in social commentary and activism. I am not afraid of touching on some of the most difficult issues of our time – the climate crisis, AI, war – with heart and mind. The reader’s gaze is shifted from the navel of humanity and given a broader perspective with an emphasis on small and innocent beings.

Linda Bondestam (1977) is a picture book artist from Helsinki. Since her debut in 2003, she has illustrated around 40 books with different writers and written four books by herself. Linda is often asked to lead workshops for children and adults in different parts of the world. When she is not busy with her books, she does animation and also performs with her theatre group, Teater Tapir.

Bondestam has been nominated for numerous prizes and, together with Ulf Stark, she was granted the Nordic Council’s Children and Young People’s Literature Prize



Photo: Linus Lindholm

in 2017 for their book *Animals that No One Has Seen Except Us*. Her own book *Chop Chop, en tapper jordbos berättelse* was granted the August Prize in 2024. Linda sits on chair number 11 in the Swedish Academy for Children’s Books.

WORKSHOP: Mapping Venus

Ida-Marie Corell

10 September 2025

15:45–17:15

Mapping Venus, through art and knowledge transfer, sensuous excursions, and embodied reclamations – an invitation.

Mapping Venus is an interdisciplinary art and knowledge workshop that centres on HERstory, Venusian mythologies and principles, matriarchal spirituality, and prehistoric artefacts.

Corell's workshop offers an artistic, sensuous, spiritual and mythological space to meet Venus and the Venusian principles, unlock hidden chambers of creativity, and tap into modern and ancient paths of perception.



Ida-Marie Corell studied Fine and Media Arts at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, where she earned her doctorate in Art and Knowledge Transfer in 2010. During her Erasmus studies at Kunsthøgskolen in Oslo, she further developed her interdisciplinary approach. Her artistic practice is also reflected in publications such as *Alltagsobjekt Plastiktüte* (Everydaylife Object Plastic Bag) (2011 Springer Wien New York) and *The Artist is Resident* (2013 The Torri Verlag).

With her concept of *Synaesthesia* – a term she coined to describe living with entangled senses, the interconnected perception of different sensory modalities – Corell creates artworks that dissolve disciplines and open new spaces for interaction and reflection.

Evening Session: Veni Vidi Voice & My Body the Earth

10 September 2025

18:00–20:00

Veni Vidi Voice

Ida-Marie Corell

Veni Vidi Voice is an audiovisual live performance that translates Ida-Marie Corell's research, artistic practice, and engagement with the Venusian archetypes into an acoustic dimension. As a synesthete, music plays a central role in her work, intertwining visual and auditory perception.

Corell views art as a medium of knowledge transfer that unfolds in social sculptures, as seen in her network project *Technologies of HER* – an interdisciplinary art, research, and knowledge initiative exploring cyclical, rhythmic, and matriarchal intelligences, as well as ancient linguistic perceptions such as synaesthesia.

← **Ida-Marie Corell** studied Fine and Media Arts at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, where she earned her doctorate in Art and Knowledge Transfer in 2010.



Photo: Kopf & Kragen Fotografie

My Body the Earth

Elie Halonen, Satu Hakamäki & Pia Palme

My Body the Earth is a ritual that brings together contemporary dance, shibari (rope bondage), sound, voice, and moving image. In ABOAGORA, the artists **Pia Palme**, **Satu Hakamäki**, and **Elie Halonen** will share their 30-minute performative ecology, followed by a discussion with the audience.

My Body the Earth explores possible interactions with the more-than-human world through the planetary, mythological, and symbolic agency of Venus. Venus invites us to rethink love as a generative force that can strike like lightning, flashing right through our entangled becomings, as bodies, sounds, and matter move together.

Through a posthuman prism, *My Body the Earth* creates a landscape where the intimate co-existence of pleasure and pain is embraced, as part of an ecology in which human and more-than-human bodies are constantly reshaping each other.

The Earth is a living, intimate presence, even within the body itself. Love, anchored in immanence, unfolds as an agency of connection and transformation. *My Body the Earth* offers an invitation to witness and to feel with – an invitation to enter a universe that composes a polyphony of becomings.

Content disclaimer: The performance includes shibari, also known as rope bondage, in which a person is bound and their movement restricted by rope. The rope bondage seen in the performance is consensual and executed with the utmost care.



Elie Halonen (they/them), based in Helsinki, Finland, works with mediums such as performance, moving image, and visual arts. They have a bachelor's degree in visual arts from Turku University of Applied Sciences (2019). Halonen is also a sex counsellor and has studied rope bondage with several international educators.

Halonen's background in shibari and sculpture studies merge to create an interdisciplinary, bodywork-based practice, where the body becomes the sculptural material. For them, rope bondage provides a space for unknowing and the exploration of intimacies. Throughout Halonen's body of work, they focus on creating ruptures in dominant social norms and queering our cultural relations to nature, intimacy, kink, and the body.



Satu Hakamäki (they/them), based in Turku, Finland, is a freelance artist in the field of performing arts. They work mainly as a performer, often mixing contemporary dance/circus and physical theatre. Their educational background is in the performing arts, communication & interaction studies, and

yoga. In making art, Hakamäki is interested in the relationship of humans with nature, power dynamics, and the creation of utopias. They also like to bring performance art to public places or other non-traditional performance spaces, to gently shake people's everyday routines and offer the possibility for changing one's way of being, feeling, or interacting.



Pia Palme (she/her), based in Vienna, Austria, is a composer, activist, and author in the field of contemporary and experimental music. At home in artistic as well as academic contexts, she is interested in ecology, feminism, posthuman thinking, and exploring speculative futures. As a performer, Palme plays bass recorders and

combines instrumental music with spoken voice and electronics. Her works and texts intra-act with the environment to invite a more-than-human way of listening. Currently, her focus is on developing the creative process across multiple species.

Thursday
11 September 2025

Panel Session: Repairing for Peace

11 September 2025

10:00–11:30

ABOAGORA Retreat VIII: Repairing for Peace
7–9 September 2025 @Seili/Själö

This year, ABOAGORA Retreat VIII: Repairing for Peace invites artists and researchers from a range of different disciplines to imagine peace at the time of accelerating militarisation. What kind of peace is promised by the securitisation of all aspects of everyday life? How can one repair the relations needed for peace as something other than a transactional, compromised, or predetermined contract?

In this session, the retreat participants, led by curator and researcher **Taru Elfving**, will discuss their academic and artistic work, imaginaries of peace, militarisation and securitisation, narratives of resistance to the languages and logics of war, collective practices that actively repair the ground for peace, and other related topics.



Photo: Pekko Vasanto

Taru Elfving is a curator and researcher focused on nurturing interdisciplinary and site-sensitive enquiries at the intersections of ecological, feminist, and decolonial practices. As artistic director of the CAA Contemporary Art Archipelago, she currently leads a research residency programme on the island of Seili in the Baltic Sea, in collaboration with the Archipelago Research Institute of the University of Turku. She is also affiliated as a curatorial researcher in the transdisciplinary Centre for Sustainable Ocean Science (SOS) at Åbo Akademi University.



Sami Ahonen is a PhD researcher in Economic Sociology at the University of Turku, where his work focuses on environmental policy attitudes involving economic trade-offs. Ahonen's research covers shifts and stability in environmental policy attitudes during crises, the impact of crisis-related messaging on climate policy support, and the role of political trust in Finland and across the globe.



Elisavet Antoniou is completing a master's degree in Peace, Mediation, and Conflict Research, with a thesis that explores how animation can serve as an analytical method for revealing necropolitics within liberal peacebuilding. Using the artist's studio as the site of knowledge production, she critically engages with structural violence in liberal peace.



Asiiimwe Dorcus is a scholar with a master's degree in Social Exclusion from Åbo Akademi University in Turku, Finland. Her academic background in the study of religion explores how identity, power, and belief systems intersect. She has worked with grassroots human rights organisations in Uganda, gaining deep insight into the spiritual trauma and resilience of marginalised communities.



Kristof Heidemann is a PhD researcher under the supervision of Prof. **Janne Salminen** at the Faculty of Law of the University of Turku. His previous research focused on constitutionalism and democracy, especially legal protections against interferences into the democratic process and the prospects of constitutional implementations of democratic innovation proposals.



Sara Ilveskorpi is a visual artist, researcher, art educator, and agroecologist who explores deep ecology as practice. Her work focuses on reciprocity and resilience as well as encounters with multispecies in a time of sustainability crisis. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Arts degree at Aalto University's Department of Art and Media.



Hanne Lammi graduated as a puppeteer artist (UAS) in 2016 and is currently studying at Turku University of Applied Sciences' Art Academy, in the Contemporary Contexts of Arts programme.

In her artistic work, which combines visual and performing art, she shifts attention to intertwining moments. The focus of her art is on ecological materials and the dialogue with them.



Andrei Morariu is passionate about computer engineering, project development, and technical communication. He is currently pursuing a doctorate focused on embedded systems, with research on decarbonisation, advanced 5G communication in maritime environments, and engineering education within The Sea strategic group.



Juulia Niiranta is a doctoral researcher at Tampere Peace Research Institute TAPRI. Juulia is currently working on her doctoral research project that deals with the peace narratives of people living in war-affected circumstances. Her research also explores the potential of photography in peace research, using photography as a primary language with participants.



Muhammad Hassan Qadeer Butt is a PhD student in English Literature at Åbo Akademi University, Turku. His areas of interest include Literary Urban Studies, Postcolonial Studies, South Asian literature, and Partition Studies.



Rut Karin Zettergren is a PhD candidate in artistic research at Uniarts Helsinki. Her thesis, *Cyborg Perception*, investigates how infrared imaging technologies, rooted in military applications, can be (mis)used through speculative technofeminism to imagine alternative ways of sensing and seeing worlds beyond what is visible.



Read more about the Retreat's participants on our website:



Panel Session: Whose Peace? Exploring Sites for Practicing Peace

11 September 2025

13:00–14:30

Who is the bringer of peace? If peace can be built, then, by whom, and for whom? If we call for peace, who will give it or make it happen? By which means? That is, can force, war, and militarised means bring peace? Can peace also be built in our everyday lives? Can we all contribute to peace, here and now?



These questions and more will be brought to the fore when common assumptions about peace are placed under the scrutiny of peace researchers and the audience. In the session, we will take a look at how the meaning of peace is socially constructed and contested. Drawing on the case of Iranian women, Finnish conscientious objectors, and the different narratives of the war in Ukraine, we will discuss the different ways for imagining peace. We will do so by looking at the forms peace takes in the world and in ourselves, and the power, agency, and relations in making peace possible.

Myungjin Moon (he/him) is a doctoral researcher at Tampere Peace Research Institute (TAPRI). With a background in the peace movement in South Korea, his current research interests centre on the workings of militarisation and resistance to it in the Finnish context. Situated at the intersection of feminist peace research, critical studies on men and masculinities, and critical military studies, his dissertation focuses on Finnish conscientious objectors who refuse military service yet choose care work. It explores the potential, tensions, and implications of caring masculinities in destabilising hegemonic masculinities against the backdrop of militarisation in Finland.

Zahra Edalati (she) is a doctoral researcher at Tampere University. She holds two master's degrees: one in Peace and Conflict Research from Tampere university, and the other in Communication and Journalism from Iran. Her PhD research explores transnational networks of solidarity among Iranian women, both in Iran and the diaspora, with a focus on how the experiences of women from diverse backgrounds and politicisation processes shape their perceptions and their differentiated positions on gender issues in Iran. Her research interests include feminist auto-ethnography, feminist peace, intersectionality, identity politics, and decolonising perspective. She has teaching experience in courses such as Feminist Peace, Memory Politics, and Decolonial Peace.

Juulia Niiniranta is a doctoral researcher at Tampere Peace Research Institute TAPRI. With a background in moral and social philosophy, Juulia is currently working on her doctoral research project that deals with peace narratives by people living in war-affected circumstances. Her research also explores the potential of photography in peace research, using photography as a primary language with participants. Visual narratives convey alternative stories of war and peace, stories where hope, recovery, and capability are present. Outside academia, Juulia works at art departments in film productions, does illustrations and photography, and performs voluntary work in Youth Walk-in therapy consultations.

Sina Jasmin Krämer (she/her) is a doctoral researcher at Tampere Peace Research Institute (TAPRI), focusing on the construction of emotions and memories of German National Socialism. Beyond this focus, she writes on the impact of gender norms on psychosocial peacebuilding, neuroscience and peacebuilding, trauma-informed peacebuilding, and critical perspectives on resilience in the European Nordics. She holds a Master of Philosophy in International Peace Studies from Trinity College Dublin and has an academic background in psychology. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on feminist peace studies and psychology, examining the impact of trauma, memory, and emotions on post-conflict societies and peacebuilding efforts.

AGORA: The Role of History in War and Peace

Erkki Tuomioja

11 September 2025
15:00–16:30

“ In my remarks on The Role of History in War and Peace, I will seek to examine the role of history and historians as both instigators of war and how they can be used to prevent and defuse conflict.

Although it is mostly politicians and sometimes the media who abuse history to justify and make war, nothing *a priori* excludes the possibility that historians, too, can lend their knowledge and expertise for abusive purposes. This is why it is extremely important to engage in dialogue with all historians as researchers, with the aim of encouraging and supporting the possibilities for independent and critical historical research transcending borders, so that historians could also be contributors to conflict prevention and resolution.

The first step in any attempts to remove history as a source of conflict is to get historians from both sides to sit down together and listen to each other’s narrative of their historical relations. This does not entail accepting all narratives, and they can be contested, but awareness and recognition of these narratives is always the first step towards removing history as a source of conflict.

This describes the idea behind Historians without Borders. Our organisation has, i.a., managed twice before Russia’s full scale attack against Ukraine to bring together Ukrainian and Russian historians in closed seminars in Helsinki.

Russia is not the sole perpetrator engaging in the misuse of history for twisted ends, even if it is certainly the most notorious and dangerous one.

Dealing with a country’s history openly and honestly is never easy. Each country has a strong built-in propensity to look at its own history from a very nationalistic viewpoint. This is where it becomes vital that historians look at and study history also with historians from other countries, and particularly with those from their neighbouring countries.



Erkki Tuomioja (1946) is a Ph.D. and Docent in Political History at the University of Helsinki and the author of over 25 books on history, politics, and current affairs. He has served as a Member of Parliament for over 40 years and is the longest serving Minister for Foreign Affairs in Finland. He is also the chair of Historians without Borders in Finland and the international network of Historians without Borders, for which the Finnish NGO acts as the secretariat. He has also served as a member of the Finnish Olympic Committee and remains an active participant in the Finnish peace movement.

Spirit Land/Vuoigŋalaš Eanadat

11 September 2025

18:00–20:00

Performance 18:00–19:00 @Turku Cathedral

Dialogue Session 19:00–20:00 @Sibelius Museum



Spirit Land/Vuoigŋalaš Eanadat is a practice-based transdisciplinary artistic research project around animated Sámi landscapes. It is an act of decolonisation in a hybrid form, composed of textile art, music, and theology. Three cosmological spheres in traditional Sámi mythology – Jabbmeájjmo/Underworld, Eana/Earth, and Albmi/Heaven – are represented by monumental weavings, here set to music. Threads, different musical instruments, voices, sung and spoken words interact in a temporal cyclical performance.

Spirit Land/Vuoigŋalaš Eanadat can be seen as an act of reconciliation between the Sámi and Nordic peoples. The Sámi spiritual historiography, which has been silenced, both past and present, is here given voice and incorporated into the church space of Turku Cathedral. What was banned and hidden is now invited and embraced. The voices of the landscapes are heard anew, restored and brought to life, but also transformed into something hitherto unknown. Matter is hereby given spirit and life. The restoration process has begun.

Spirit Land/Vuoigŋalaš Eanadat is part of the transdisciplinary research project Praxis of Social Imaginaries, Åbo Akademi University, Finland, and is a collaboration between textile artist and archaeologist **Emma Göransson Almroth**, Sweden, and musician, composer and theologian **Frank Berger**, Finland.

Participants: Frank Berger (hurdy-gurdy and vocals), **Carolina Bjon** (cello), Emma Göransson Almroth (yoik), **Minna Hokka** (overtone flute), **Olli Liljeström** (percussion), **Marianne Maans** (violin), **Kari Mäkiranta** (keyboard), **Nina Nordvall Vahlberg** (joik and drum).

After the performance, a dialogue session will be held by TD **Laura Hellsten** where she will interview the artists and performers Frank Berger, Emma Göransson Almroth, and Nina Nordvall Vahlberg about creating and participating in the Spirit Land project. The dialogue session asks questions about the role of transdisciplinary research in approaching historical colonial wounds and how art can be part of reconciliation processes.



Frank Berger is a composer, singer, vocal coach, theologian, musician, and multi-disciplinary artist. He has performed in over 25 staged productions in opera, musical theatre, and church music. As a dramatic baritone, he has recently developed into an interpreter of the demanding heldenbaritone opera repertoire. As an instrumentalist and folk musician, he plays the hurdy-gurdy, an unusual medieval violin instrument. Berger has won two composition competitions in Finland and has written music for choirs, folk ensembles, and the theatre stage. His artistic approach is drawn to cross-genre expressions, bold drama, and strong, harmonically rooted melodies. For more information, visit his website at www.frberger.com.



Emma Göransson Almroth is Swedish/Sami artist MFA, archaeologist PhD, and curator whose work investigates natural, cultural, and spiritual landscapes over time. Her art has a strong sense of materiality, with references to archaeology and architecture. She primarily works with textile techniques and materials but also with printing. Since 2023, she has served as the artistic director of Aerpie – Center

for Contemporary Sami Art, in Stockholm, Sweden, an artist-run green space in the city centre that focuses on environmental issues, indigenous human rights, and spiritual empowerment.



Nina Nordvall Vahlberg is a Sámi musician, composer and artist based in Jokkmokk, Swedish Sápmi. They have composed music for their own productions with the yoik, accordion, and various instruments in different genres, as well as music for theatre, dance performances, and film/documentaries through the years.

Nina's work is often based on traditional Sámi singing, the Sámi drum, and different aspects of environmental work, with a touch of folk music that can be heard, for example, in the choir piece "Musik till Gammelskogen – Music for People and Trees" or the documentary films "Storskogen Karatj- Råvvåive" and "Drums and Drones" by Ignacio Acosta. Nina has worked with handicraft, music, and art since childhood, and also recently studied duodji, (Sámi handicraft) at Sámi Áhpadusguovdásj. You can see some of Nina's work at the "VUOVDEK (a forest Sámi person) – We Live Among Trees" exhibition at the "Myggholkens väntrum" bookshop during the 2025 winter market in Jokkmokk. In addition, Nina has arranged workshops and lectures on the yoik, the Sámi drum, Swedish folk music, and traditional dances.

Listen to Nina's latest EP, Biernna (The Bear):





Friday
12 September 2025

Panel Session: Biodiversity & Peace

12 September 2025

10:00–11:30

This session explores the theme of ABOAGORA 2025 from the viewpoint of planetary boundaries. Today's ongoing climate and biodiversity emergencies pose an imminent and ubiquitous threat to peace and, in turn, societal stability, and they are imperative for tackling the environmental crises we are facing. In their panel discussion, **Anna Törnroos-Remes**, **Nina Tynkkynen**, and **Björn Vikström** examine the interconnections between nature (biodiversity and climate) and human actions in general, and environmental crises and peacebuilding in particular, and reflect on what this interconnectedness means for envisioning peaceful, sustainable futures.

The session is organized by Åbo Akademi University's Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Ocean Science (SOS) and research profiling area The Sea.

Anna Törnroos-Remes is an associate professor (tenure track) in environmental and marine biology and the Director of the Centre for Sustainable Ocean Science (SOS) at Åbo Akademi University. Her research focuses on the functioning of coastal areas, marine environments, and particularly the seafloor.



Photo: Linda Svarfvär

She is especially interested in what organisms do in this system, that is, what roles or functions they perform and how that translates to services for us humans, such as food resources, stabilisation of coastal landscapes, and carbon sequestration. With a passion for life in the sea, her recent work has also inspired her to engage with disciplines such as the social sciences, business and technology, and the humanities to investigate our human relationship with the sea and marine socio-ecological challenges, or wicked problems.

Nina Tynkkynen is a professor of environmental governance and policy at Åbo Akademi University, where she also chairs the steering group of the university's profiling area The Sea. Her research explores multi-level governance



and knowledge politics, particularly in relation to marine environment and sustainability within multi-level governance frameworks. Through her leadership in interdisciplinary projects, her research has produced valuable insights on governance and policy approaches that steer societies toward a sustainable future.

Björn Vikström is a professor of systematic theology at Åbo Akademi University. His research has focused on, among other things, ecotheology and environmental ethics, minority theology, and the relation between religion and nationalism. He is currently PI of the Finnish team of a HERA-funded research project investigating how churches in Finland, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine have reacted to Russian aggression, rising nationalism, and the threats against democracy.



Panel Session: Concealed in Plain Sight: Transcribing Transitional Justice Data Between Remembrance and Erasure

12 September 2025
13:00–14:30

When peace finally comes and weapons are lowered, an inevitable emotional weight blankets the new seeds of hope planted within the furrows of our memory. Public memory spans generations and, as such, weaves the past into the everyday existence of post-conflict society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The framework of the judicial archives serves not only as a tool for facing contested narratives and preventing similar atrocities in the future, but also as an integral part of transforming fragmented sites of remembrance into visible experiential episodes. This panel will deliver four case-study lectures to create a poignant visual narrative, followed by a panel discussion to facilitate a dialogue beyond the ordinary expectations of memorialisation.

Bitter Land: Mapping the Hidden Gravesites of the Yugoslav Wars

Nejra Mulaomerović

Bitter Land is the first multimedia database that provides information on the locations of mass graves discovered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia related to the wars in the 1990s. While countless persons responsible for the crimes remain unpunished, many mass grave locations have been ploughed for agricultural use, sold off for new business development, or used as trash dumps.

Three decades since the war, the survivors' testimonies convey enduring grief and despondency over the failed transitional justice implementations.

Nejra Mulaomerović is a researcher, producer and manager working in the civil society sector with a focus on transitional justice, memorialisation, and cultural production. She works as a program manager at the Balkan Transitional Justice Initiative



at BIRN Hub, coordinating teams and assisting in the implementation of programs across the network's platforms. Nejra is based in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Email: nejra.mulaomerovic@birnnetwork.org

Herbarium

Ismar Čirkinagić

Herbarium encapsulates experiences of both mapping personal trauma and documenting collective remembrance. Plants collected from the mass graves are pressed to tell their story parallel to the process of exhumation, where often only fragments, and not full bodies, are discovered.



Ismar Čirkinagić is a visual artist. Most of his artistic practice is thematically related to the socio-political context. It is mainly produced in the form of conceptual installations, consisting of videos, photos, texts, and object-based elements. His earlier works resulted from extensive research on war and the post-war

period in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on the violent process of the disintegration of society and its postulates. Ismar lives and works between Copenhagen, Denmark, and Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Forgotten Battlefield: [re]Interpretation of Time, Place, and Memory

Selma Ćatović Hughes

Forgotten Battlefield is an investigative study that uses the archives to draw a parallel between an individual quest for fragments of the past and an open platform for sustaining collective multigenerational memory. Relying on the intimate experience of retracing her father's steps to the frontline, the author analyses layers of deconstructed memory, archival fragments, and readjusted contested narratives to (re-)embrace the past.



Selma Ćatović Hughes grew up in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her ongoing research on memory began as a subconscious form of therapy, and her artistic practice in visual arts is a collection of individual and collective voices of memory. Her artistic practice and academic research delve into issues about memory, transitional justice accountability, difficult histories, and identity. Selma holds a master's in architecture and is currently a PhD researcher in Cultural History at the University of Turku, Finland.

There Is No One To Harvest Them

Anita Karabašić

There Is No One to Harvest Them is a symbol for the aftermath of war and a protest against the eradication of the genocidal narrative. The series of ceramic indigenous fruit embody the remembrance of 102 children killed in Prijedor, whose names are not allowed to be publicly – or permanently – commemorated. An homage to gardens and trees, the collection of objects contains hidden marks for factual statistics, displaying them subtly yet openly.



Anita Karabašić is a designer and visual artist from Austria of Bosnian origin, based in the Netherlands. Anita graduated from the Willem de Kooning Academy (Rotterdam, NL) with an interactive ceramic installation based on the notion of commemorative monuments, researching the significance of commemorative rituals – or the absence of them.

AGORA: Values of Peace: Communicating Dialogue and Inclusion through Lived Experience

Natalia Djandjgava

12 September 2025

15:00–16:30

“ In recent years, we have witnessed a global trend toward increased militarisation, accompanied by declining investment in peacebuilding efforts. In this context, the values underpinning private diplomacy in peace mediation – neutrality, inclusivity, and local ownership – offer a critical counterbalance. Grounded in the legacy of **Martti Ahtisaari** that all conflicts can be resolved, the work of CMI demonstrates the transformative potential of sustained and inclusive engagement, with a particular emphasis on gender-sensitive approaches.”

The session examines how strategic communication can complement mediation efforts by reframing public discourse around peace. It argues that amplifying lived experiences humanises the impacts of conflict, fosters empathy, and broadens public support for peaceful solutions. The analysis draws on two illustrative cases: CMI’s “Keys for Peace” campaign, which leverages personal narratives to underscore the value of dialogue, and the communication campaign in Moldova on the

Gagauzia Dialogue process, designed to strengthen communal bonds through shared storytelling. By integrating strategic communication with mediation practice, these examples highlight the capacity of values-based narratives to enhance the legitimacy and sustainability of peace processes. The session invites reflection on how such approaches can inform broader conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies, making dialogue not just a tool for mediation, but a shared societal value.



Natalia Djandjgava is the Country Manager at CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, Finland. She has over 18 years of progressive professional experience in international organisations, such as the EU and UN. She has worked in the sensitive political environment of the Transdniestrian settlement process and Gagauzia Autonomy in Moldova from the political perspective, development angle, and mediation and conflict prevention approach. Natalia is an experienced mediator and facilitator of dialogue processes within sensitive settings. She is currently pursuing her doctoral degree at Moldova State University, at the Doctoral School of Social Science, specialisation theory and methodology of international relations and diplomacy. Her research focuses on good governance, social peace, and conflict prevention. Natalia is John Smith Fellow 2018, Goerdeler-Kolleg Fellow 2019, and Geneva Center for Security Policy Fellow 2021.

Closing Reception

12 September 2025

~17:00–19:00

Concert: hope / toivo

Sallamari Keinänen

Greetings from the City of Turku

Suvi Innilä, Turku 800 Project Director, Turku 2029 Foundation

To close ABOAGORA 2025, we will toast all the epiphanies that were had during the three-day event as well as new collaborations brewing, accompanied by hopeful tunes played by pianist **Sallamari Keinänen**.



Sallamari Keinänen is a pianist originating from Tornio, Finland, and she is currently in the final stages of her music pedagogue studies at Turku University of Applied Sciences' Arts Academy. Under the tutelage of Eveliina Kytömäki, Sallamari has been able to enhance her skills in both solo piano music and lieds. In addition to piano studies, she considers classical singing an important part of her musicianship.



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THANK YOU

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We wish to thank all of our student assistants for their invaluable time and effort in making ABOAGORA 2025 a reality!



ABOAGORA 2024. Photos: Pekko Vasantola.



*William Thuring's
stiftelse*

