

ITE Art Recognition 2024

The communities of Hakkila Container Village in Vantaa received recognition from the Association for Rural Culture and Education

The Association for Rural Culture and Education has awarded ITE Art Recognition 2024 to communities in the container village of Hakkila, whose activities reflect the multicoloured variety and powerful lushness of life taken into own hands. The container village in Vantaa is home to vibrant urban village activities that bring together artists, artisans and entrepreneurs.

As a physical environment, Hakkila Container Village is a maze-like network of colourful shipping containers and barracks towering on top of them. The complex is managed by Suomen Kotteria Oy, led by **Pentti Kotiaho**, and it rents premises to bands, artists, artisans, hobbyists, small entrepreneurs and warehouse use. Currently there are about 200 tenants in the area. The ideology of the village is based on the ecological circular economy.

The art spreads throughout the village in colourful paintings filling the walls of containers. The murals were created in workshops organized by **Shadow Room Association**. The aim is to use community art to turn the container village into an art-filled Hakkila Art Village.

Alongside the creative industries, the village has a culture of handiness and small entrepreneurship. CEO Pentti Kotiaho emphasises the freedom and diversity of voices among his tenants. He believes that art brings appreciation to the environment and, with it, shared care and volunteer spirit. Kotiaho hopes that the mission statement of his container village will spread to other parts of Finland as well. The Shadow Room Association is also interested in planning creative use of different spaces or in receiving orders for workshops in different locations.

With the ITE Recognitions of the Year, the Association for Rural Culture and Education highlights the voices and perspectives of self-taught artists and communities who have made significant productions. "In the future, we want to encourage citizens and communities to be creative and make choices about life that suits them in accordance with the idea of a self-made life," say Cultural Director **Helka Ketonen** and Cultural Producer **Raija Kallioinen** from the Association.

- *ITE Art is Finnish visual contemporary folk art. The acronym ITE comes from the Finnish words 'Itse Tehty Elämä', i.e. self-made life. ITE is art which is dependent on its maker's environment and experience; it is a way to live a good life that emphasises aesthetic values.*
- *Association for Rural Culture and Education is an adult education and cultural organisation which supports people's personal growth and creativity as well as an active civil society and the vitality of rural areas.*

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