

## Broken Roots

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There is one incontrovertible fact that no amount of substantiation will disprove: the world does not grow. Against this background, it is astonishing how rarely the issue comes up in the everyday life of the average westerner. Material growth ensures wellbeing, or at least so we profess to believe. But what else do we need on top of this? In a material sense we have been completely satisfied for decades and even if material wellbeing or prosperity were to grow, spiritual wellbeing would not grow in anything like the same amount. Moreover, the materials we use do not return to the cycle of nature, but remain behind as concentrated poisons to pollute our environment. Major movements of materials overload the environment even more and this leads to the destruction of various species of living organisms, weakening the quality of the soil and leading to erosion.

This is something that affects all sub-areas of culture, both art and building culture. It takes tons of raw materials to make just one small design object. Where do we get this material and where do we put all the rubbish it gives rise to? Soon there will not be enough space left on the globe. There rarely seems to be the time to put things in perspective and examine the fallout from one's own generation let alone the ability to see or think about the consequences many generations hence.

There are approximately 20,000 artists in Finland who work professionally. If you calculate that each one of them makes a photograph, a picture a sculpture or something else, the end result is an enormous amount of discarded material.

It is generally believed that artists can interpret, describe and criticize their own times, and in this day and age they ought to be able to take their job a little more seriously. Displaying their own internal angst to the public is no longer necessarily sufficient, neither are exhibitions organized for selected sections of the public. What we need instead is community art, where the border between art and life as it is lived is removed. With the passing of the years, I have begun to reconstruct Finnish annual traditions and study our ancient roots to try and construct a fractionally more human rhythm for life today.

Working with groups of people of different ages is most fruitful and productive, because in those circumstances nobody needs to perform as an individual star. The same operating principle should run through building culture, as well, although architects, for instance, find it difficult to share their own turf with other people. The winds of change are blowing from the direction of architectural and environmental education for children. I hope the changes they bring with them will be for the good.



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