

**Brian Everingham
Diary
2025**

**April
Volume 3**



Reading Program

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Podcasts

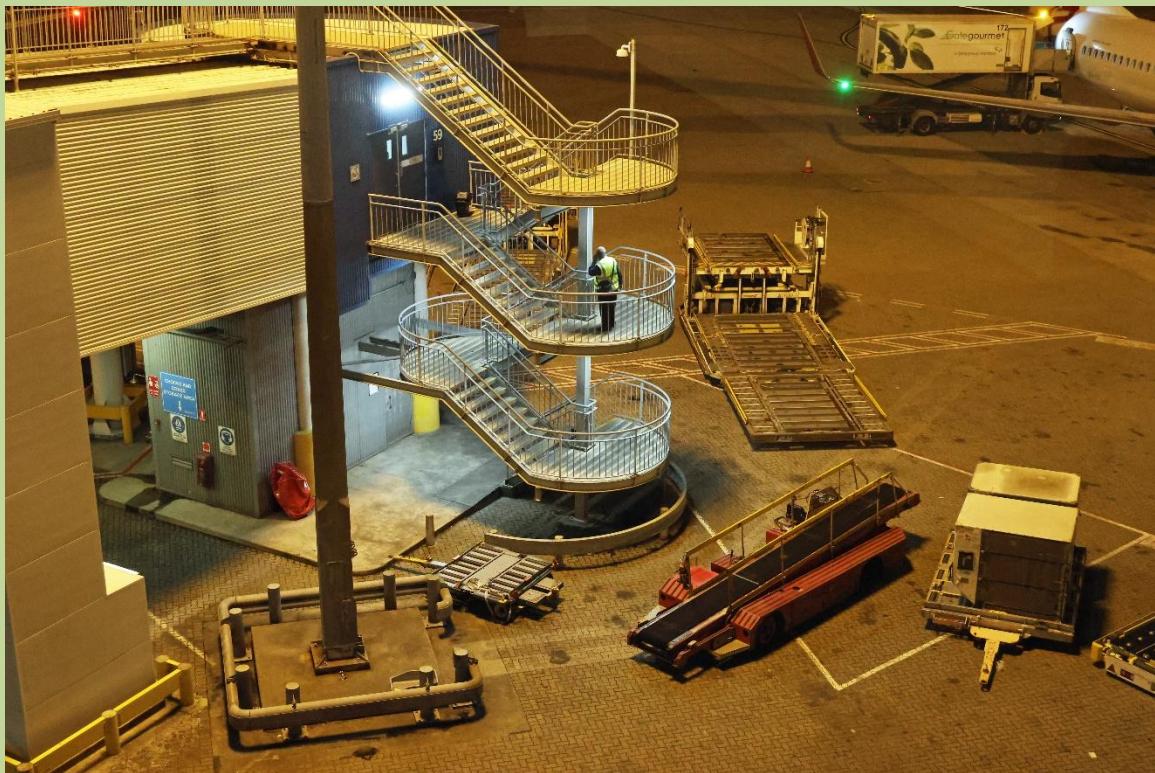
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Wednesday 23rd April 2025

After sitting around and reading for a couple of hours - yes, we were packed and ready - we left the unit just before 4.00pm, hauling our luggage down the stairs and onto the street. We then pushed our bags along the footpath, grunting when it was pebble but when smooth concrete, moving quite quickly. Indeed, we arrived at Engadine railway station not much slower than our regular walk.

By 4.40pm we were on a quick train to Wolli Creek where we changed via the lifts and were soon heading into the departure lounge, E for Qatar, booking in our luggage and sorting out our seats. Now that we were separated by an aisle, the woman opted to change our seats to a window each. We are now in 21A (Faye) and 22A (me). Mind is tight next to the toilet, so I suspect I might sometimes have a neighbouring queue.

Once through security and passport control (totally automatic) we headed to the far end of the building for our Business Class Lounge. We were in Air NZ!



Where we had a nice lunch, a rough red wine from the Barossa Valley, and I even had time to log in to part of the RAC meeting before boarding.



By the time we arrived at gate 10 it was open and we were whisked through and comfortably settled into our seats. Our hostess, Rashid, had provided us with our supplies and taken our meal orders and all we needed was take off.

Which, of course, happened and soon after that I began watching the movie “My Penguin Friend”. It’s a story of a Brazilian fisherman whose delightful son wants to go out fishing with him but is lost in heavy seas. The grieving father rescues a penguin, a Magellanic penguin, cleans it lovingly of its oil, takes care of its rehabilitation and then tries to return it to the sea. The penguin stays! Becomes a fixture in the lives of him, his family and the neighbourhood. But it is free to go and over the course of the years it completes its migration, a long swim to the Patagonia, but returns each year.

On its travels it is caught up in marine science research and is banded. At one stage it is caged and was being taken to a sanctuary to be studied but it escapes and the journey to

the sea is rough. It falls, is concussed, struggles on, swims, exhausted, ends up late and our hero and his friends go searching for the non-returning penguin. There it is, floating and to all appearances, dead. The symbolism of the lost son is palpable.

But as this is a feel good story our penguin revives, is fed, is returned to life. We learn at the end that it does so for eight years before it ceases to return.

And by then I had finished dinner: fresh bread, Arabic mezze (yummy), sea bass and prawns. I skipped dessert!

Thursday 24th April 2025

My first awakening was roughly 4.00am, Sydney time. I was hot and the hips needed to move. I was also thirsty so I got up, ducked behind into the lounge area, had an orange juice and chatted with the guy behind the bar, an Indian of the Himalayas. Indeed, he comes from Darjeeling.

On reawakening, it was 7am in Sydney and officially 24th also in Doha, though we were still four hours away before we land.

But as the first leg of this journey comes to a close, let me dwell on breakfast. First comes the linen cloth, in glorious white, followed by a lap cloth. Then comes a pretend candle, encased in a translucent container with black ribbing akin the decorative glass. The “candle” flickers away during the entire meal.

That begins with a pretend silver bowl of three different breads. One is a warm, fresh croissant. It is accompanied by a long white glazed tray with jam, butter and salt and pepper shakers. There are two glasses. One has orange juice. One has sparkling water. Another glazed tray arrives with half a passion fruit, a slice of watermelon, a slice of pineapple and half a kiwi fruit. Once that is consumed, comes a bowl of Bircher muesli topped with berries. All this quietly and sweetly delivered by Rashid.

Now Rashid is truly sweet. I once taught a girl with similar looks, similar grace and similar personality. Her name was Maysam. Well, it still is. She is now married and probably ruling over not just her children but also her husband. I had never been taken in too much by her sweetness. She was all that but she was also tough. I suspect so is Rashid.

Well, she confirmed it. I told her she reminded me of Maysam and we chatted (yes, of course. I chat with anyone). She told me she came from one of those states of India north of Burma and east of Bhutan. Indeed, about an hour’s drive away. That’s a part of India I have yet to see.

Once we arrived in Doha, we entered a veritable city and that was just the airport. Mind you, the flight up along the edge of the Persian Gulf showed that Doha is not small either. Its population is over 1 million! Many are guest workers!

Nor is the airport. Indeed, it has an internal rail system to take you along the various gates. We were to depart gate C86, quite a long walk from our arrival gate.



It was also fun trying to find the appropriate Business Club lounge but once we were in the right one it was, perhaps of all lounges we have used, the most modern and spacious. Mind you, we didn't use anything except the seats, the toilet and a coffee!

Gate 86 was one of four gates off to the side and we were bussed out to our plane and climbed up the stairs into our new home. It is an A330, considerably smaller than an A380 but in our cabin far superior in layout to the Qatar A380 configuration. I am in seat 3D, one of two central seats. On either side of the aisles there are single window seats. We have only a handful of other passengers in this section. Indeed, a total number of 12. It allows us to migrate to window seats for views and the snowcapped peaks of central Turkey were indeed worth a look.

I decided to tune in to Finnish music for the first part of the journey and I was entranced by a piece by Hannu Lintu called *Cantus arcticus Op 61 Concerto for Birds and Orchestra*.

Breakfasted: a Joseph Perrier Cuvée Royale Brut NV, combining Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier from Cholôns-en-Champagne! It was dry and elegant.

The food I chose was a cheese and chives omelette with a grilled grab chicken sausage, roasted potatoes with mushrooms and creamy spinach. It came with rye bread, seasonal

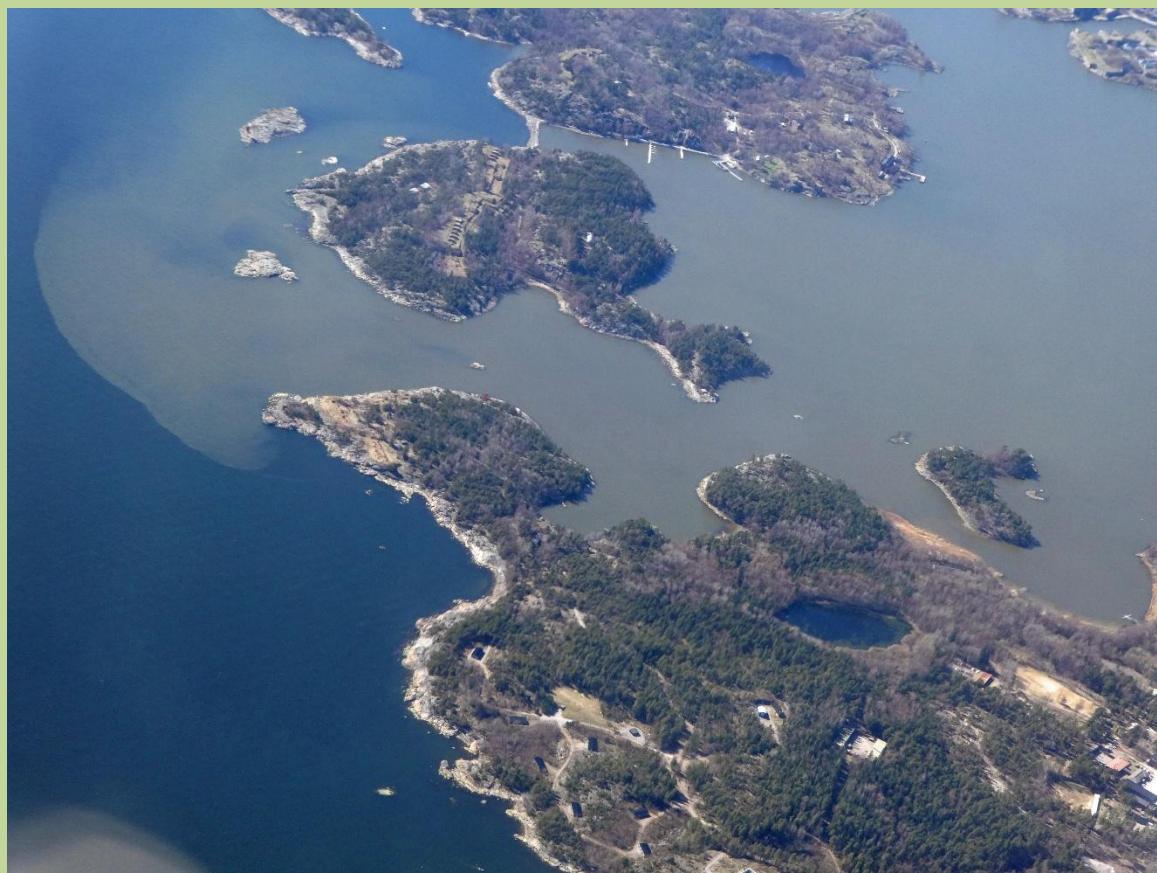
fresh fruit and a small side dish is smoked salmon and turkey breast, cheddar cheese and tomato. I finished with a mango mousse. Such is life when one turns left on entering a plane.

Now how can I say this delicately? In the row in front there is a rather large man. He is wearing braces. So far, so good. But the braces are designed to look like rulers, measuring size. Truly a brave man.

But let's return to the Finnish music and note that the experimental music of Kaija Saarioho is certainly one to add to any Spotify playlist. But never fear. On any Finnish Finest, expect a Sibelius. Today, we had his Symphony No 6 in D Minor, the 4th movement.

I must note that at some stage when in Doha, either a muscle tear or an internal bleed (possibly from the muscle tear) has hit me in the right hand just where the middle finger joins the hand. It is excruciating, puffy and limiting my movement and strength. I trust it will ease by the time I must drive.







We arrived in Helsinki ahead of time but fat good that did us as we took over an hour to clear immigration. The luggage on carousel 5 must have felt neglected.



Our next search was to find the excess luggage office for that was to be where we turned our voucher into two Helsinki City cards. Signage leaves a lot to desire but once we found it, all was good.

Faye's Cash Passport was then tested for the rail tickets - it worked - and soon we were heading into the city, then onto tram 9 and to our hotel. Well, not quite. We overshot it by one stop and came back that stop on another tram.

We are now in our room in the Radisson Blue Seaside and soon, methinks, we will collapse.

Friday 25th April 2025

Considering we were sleep-deprived after the long flight and also multiple time zones from our regular circadian rhythms, we finally emerged into the day at roughly 500am local time. That's amazingly good, to begin our exploration of Helsinki.

By 6.30 we were at breakfast downstairs in the hotel and, given that this is money already spent, we ate well! Perhaps, too well. Finns like meat. And fish. I had both and also an omelette. Well, we plan this to be our main meal while here. Big breakfasts are OK.

Outside it is a blue sky. Indeed, for the duration of our stay the weather is meant to be benign, at least when it comes to precipitation. Temperatures, however, are low. The maximum today is 7. Oh, it might be benign for locals but several times today we had snow flurries.

Radisson Blue Seaside is on the 7 and 9 tram lines and they take us into the city every 10 minutes or so. It's convenient. It got us in at a reasonable time, though we overshot the mark, ended at the ferry terminal and retraced our journey several stops.





Once the Tsar's Royal Palace in Helsinki



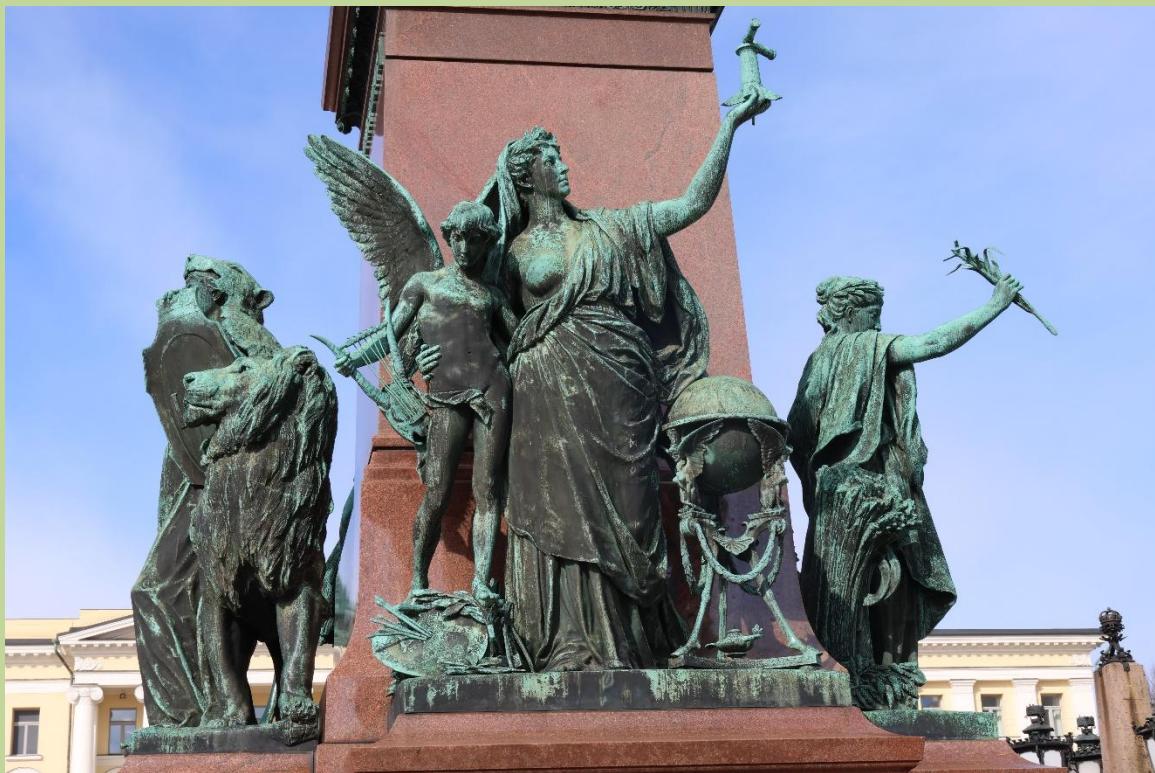
A delivery robot



Smoking is still prevalent here!



Tsar Nicholas I being shat upon



This is in Senate Square

The statue also includes four allegorical sculptures, representing four different virtues - Law (Latin: Lex), Work (Labor), Peace (Pax) and Light (Lux).

Ordered by the Estates and designed by Johannes Takanen (1849–1885) and Walter Runeberg, the monument was revealed in April 1894. The revelation was a great patriotic demonstration to the memory of emperor Alexander II, who was instrumental in establishing Finnish statehood, the first constitution of Finland, granting Finnish an official status for the first time in history, and who is remembered by the Finns as a liberal ruler supporting limits on the autocracy of the emperor.¹

There are limits to this cosy belief.



We had to then visit the Lutheran Cathedral. The church was originally built from 1830 to 1852 as a tribute to the Grand Duke of Finland, Emperor Nicholas I of Russia. It was also known as St Nicholas's Church (Finnish: Nikolainkirkko, Swedish: Nikolajkyrkan) until Finland declared its full independence in 1917.

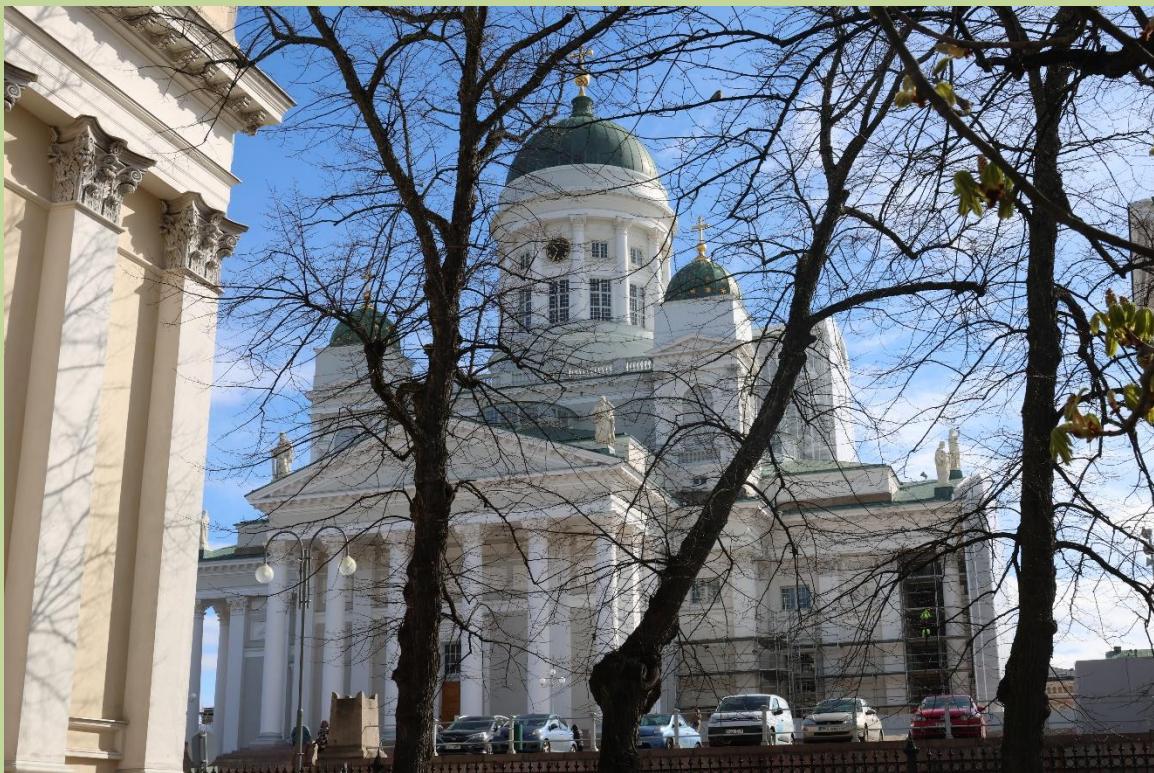
It was designed by Carl Ludvig Engel as the climax of his Senate Square layout.

¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_II_\(statue_in_Helsinki\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_II_(statue_in_Helsinki))

During the Russification of Finland started in 1899 by Nicholas II of Russia - the grandson of Alexander II - the statue became established as the site of anti-Russian demonstrations, remembering Alexander II who had become popularised as the "liberator emperor"



Herring Gull





The church's plan is a Greek cross (a square centre and four equilateral arms), symmetrical in each of the four cardinal directions, with each arm's facade featuring a colonnade and pediment. Engel originally intended to place a further row of columns on the western end to mark the main entrance opposite the eastern altar, but this was never built.²

After Helsinki was made into the capital of Finland in 1812, Alexander I decreed in 1814 that 15 percent of the salt import tax were to be collected into a fund for two churches, one Lutheran and one Orthodox. Similar to the way NSW Governors took care of setting up two and then three official churches that received government money, really!

Our next stop was to and into the National Library!

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral





The main building of the National Library of Finland is one of the most renowned landmarks of the early-19th century Empire architecture and is also significant among the public libraries of its time at a European level. The point of departure of the design is

fire safety: a construction site away from the university's main building, surrounded by planted trees, as well as halls and rooms covered with arches.

In the architecture of the façade and the magnificent interiors, C.L. Engel combined, in an original way, motifs from Classicism and references to the ancient world. The Emperor Nicholas I of Russia approved the most monumental of the three alternatives drawn up by Engel. The symmetrical placement and the layout of the library halls can be derived from the bathhouses of the Roman Emperor Diocletian.

The exterior and interior architecture is based on a solemn Corinthian column system, the façades have been arranged applying the Classical temple architecture and the height dimensions of the columns and the framework follow the dimensions of the university main building exactly.

The large halls of the library are all interconnected. The entrance leads directly to the core of the building, the Cupola Hall, and continues to Rotunda annex. The numerous reading rooms, South Hall and North Hall are connected to the Cupola Hall. At first, all halls had only rows of columns circling the walls and behind the galleries supported by them, the bookshelves were organised by discipline. Hall columns are coated with stucco marble. The decorative paintings of the arches were completed in 1881.³



³ [Architecture and history | Kansalliskirjasto](#)

The construction of Rotunda, the annex to the library designed as a book repository, was commenced in 1902 and it was taken into use in 1906–07. Rotunda has six floors above ground. Shelves for 200,000 volumes were placed radially on all floors around the elliptical open middle space. All structures in Rotunda were designed to be fireproof, using a steel frame and reinforced concrete. For its time, the building is extremely modern, one of the first of its kind in Finland. The inside stairs are of reinforced concrete, window frames and the supporting structures of the extensive glass ceiling are iron, while the windows are string inserted glass. The architect Gustaf Nyström, matched the appearance of Rotunda seamlessly with the old part of the library, while the architectural details absolutely represent the style of the early-20th century. The exterior walls are covered at the height of the heads of the supporting columns with a series of symbols of various sciences, the liveliest ones made by the sculptor Walter Runeberg.

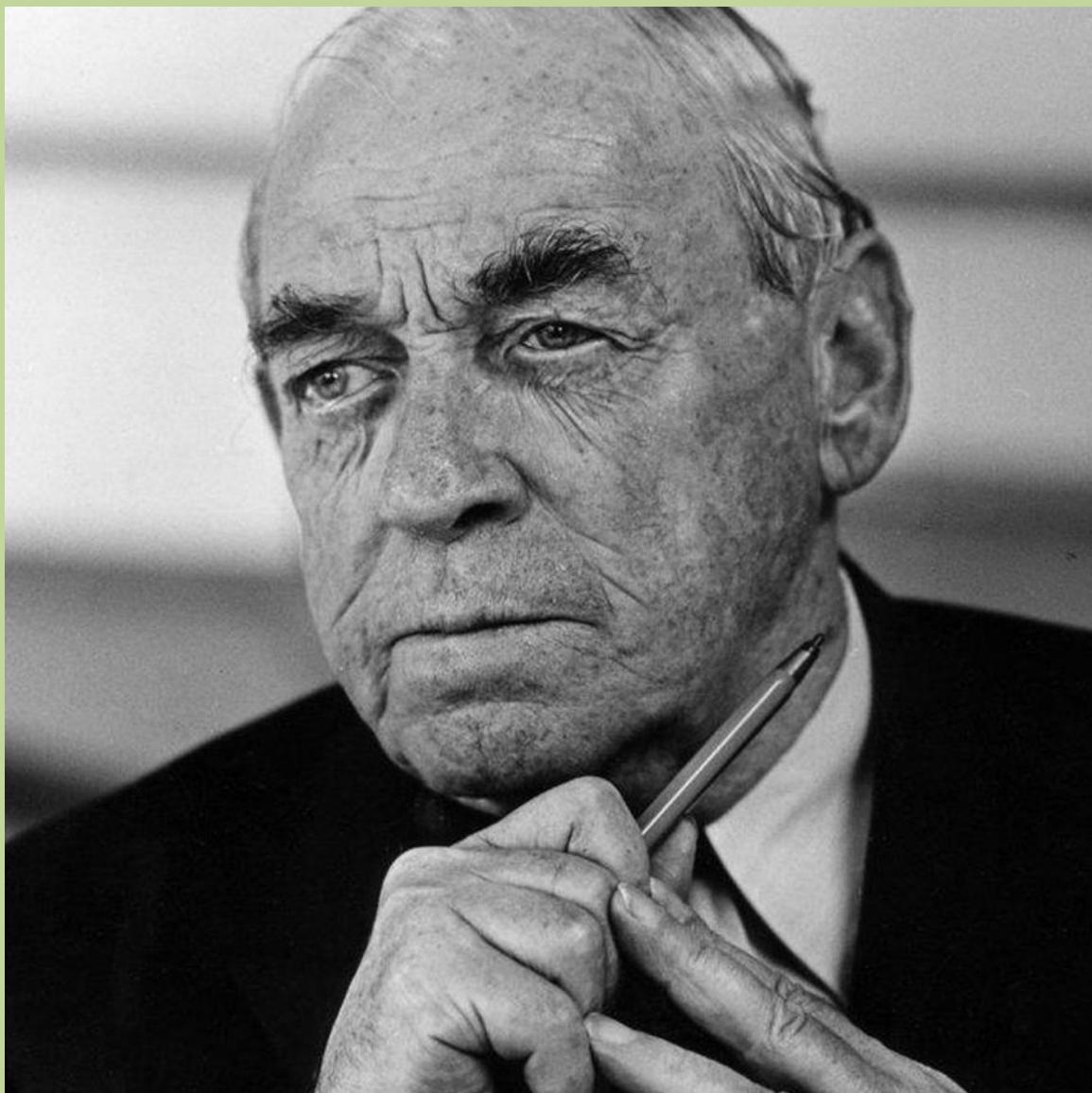
By then it was time to join our city tour by bus and Faye and I secured two of the four front seats on the double decker bus!



On our journey, we learnt much that cannot stay in my head but we did learn about Alvar Aalto, designer and architect!⁴

Although he is sometimes regarded as among the first and most influential architects of Nordic modernism, closer examination reveals that Aalto (while a pioneer in Finland) closely followed and had personal contacts with other pioneers in Sweden, in particular Gunnar Asplund and Sven Markelius. What they and many others of that generation in the Nordic countries shared was a classical education and an approach to classical architecture that historians now call Nordic Classicism. It was a style that had been a reaction to the previous dominant style of National Romanticism before moving, in the late 1920s, towards Modernism.

⁴ His architectural work, throughout his entire career, is characterized by a concern for design as Gesamtkunstwerk—a total work of art in which he, together with his first wife Aino Aalto, would design not only the building but the interior surfaces, furniture, lamps, and glassware as well. His furniture designs are considered Scandinavian Modern, an aesthetic reflected in their elegant simplification and concern for materials, especially wood, but also in Aalto's technical innovations, which led him to receiving patents for various manufacturing processes, such as those used to produce bent wood







Barnacle Geese



Passio Musicae

Or known as the Sibelius Monument - Designed by Eila Hiltunen and dedicated to the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius (1865–1957).

Originally it sparked a lively debate about the merits and flaws of abstract art and although the design looked like stylised organ pipes it was known that the composer had created little music for organs. Hiltunen addressed her critics by adding the face of Sibelius which sits beside the main sculpture.⁵

Ah, the controversy of art!!!!

⁵ [Sibelius Monument - Wikipedia](#)

It consists of series of more than 600 hollow steel pipes welded together in a wave-like pattern. The monument weighs 24 tonnes (24 long tons; 26 short tons) and measures 8.5 by 10.5 by 6.5 metres (28 ft × 34 ft × 21 ft). Hiltunen's aim was to capture the essence of the music of Sibelius.



We then came home and Faye bought some salads from a local small supermarket as our main meal before heading once more into the art world. This time at the Ateneum!

The Ateneum Art Museum is Finland's most renowned art museum. Its collection spans from the 18th century to Modernism and in total, it holds nearly 30,000 national treasures. It has operated since 1888. Many of Finland's great artists have studied in the building, which housed an art school until the 1980s.

The Neo-Renaissance Ateneum building, designed by the architect Theodor Höijer, was completed in 1887. It opened to the public on 13 October 1888. The sculptural decorations on the main facade of the Ateneum building form a visual narrative that is all about equality and harmony between the visual arts and the applied arts. Another key theme is the connection of Finnish art and architecture to the tradition of Western art.⁶



There were two large exhibitions in place today. The first was from the main collection owned by the gallery and it was called “A Matter of Time”. Also called “A Question of Time”!

⁶ [The story of Ateneum | Ateneum Art Museum](#)



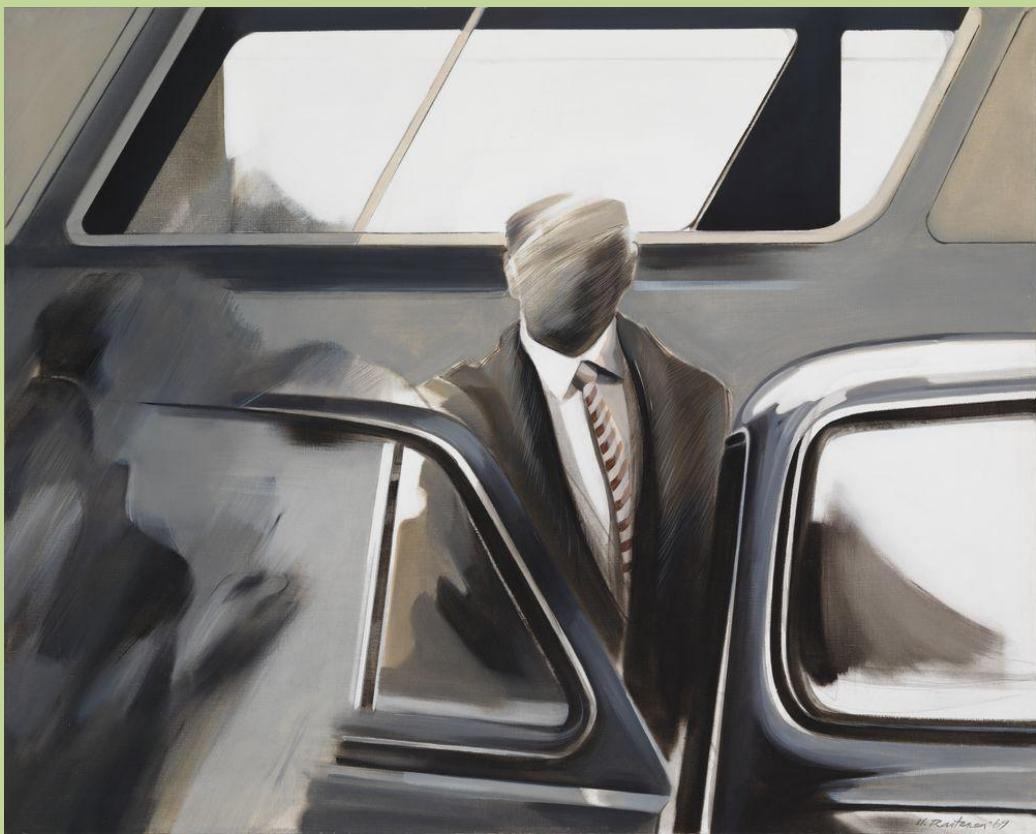
Jeanette Möller - Queen Christina and Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, in 1654



Mikko Oinonen - Market Picture of Paris, 1908



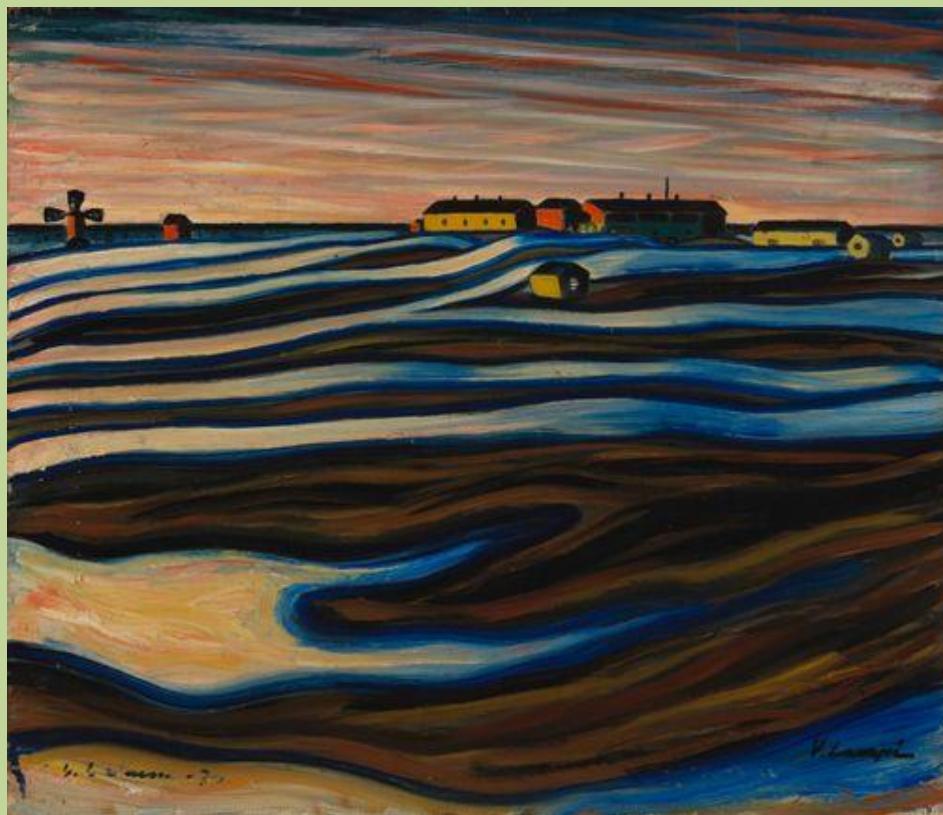
Helene Schjerfbeck - Wounded Warrior on the Snow, 1880



Ulla Rantanen - Street scene, 1969



Ulla Rantanen - Headphones, 1972



Vilho Lampi
Nocturne (Liminka), 1930



Eemil Halonen - Girl, 1908

There was also a special exhibition entitled “Boundary-breakers: Travelling female artists of the 19th century”.⁷

Travelling was slow, sometimes dangerous and required special arrangements because the woman was not allowed to travel alone. Travelling also influenced the subjects of the works: flowers, still lifes and portraits were more popular subjects than landscapes. Women wore hoop skirts in accordance with the fashion of the time, so painting was easier indoors than in nature.

Boundary-breaking artists worked at a time when women did not yet have the right to vote. Women had to choose between a career and a family: when they got married, they usually had to quit their work as artists. Many of the bold artists in the exhibition were role models for later female artists, such as Helene Schjerfbeck and Ellen Thesleff.

The exhibition is significant in terms of art history and highlights previously unknown artists and their networks, as well as presenting works that have never been seen before in Finland. The exhibition continues the Ateneum's work as a pioneer in research related to women artists, and its curator is curator Anne-Maria Pennonen. It highlights Germany's importance as an art country and travel destination compared to France, which has been studied much more.⁸

All of the artists of Border Breakers came from the Nordic countries, the Baltics, Germany and Poland studied and worked in Germany in the 1800s. The Finnish artists in the exhibition include Fanny Churberg, Alexandra Frosterus-Såltin, Ida Silfverberg and Victoria Åberg, as well as foreign artists such as Jeanna Bauck, Mathilde Bonnevie-Dietrichson, Marie Ellenrieder, Julie Hagen-Schwarz, Elisabeth Jerichau-Baumann, Magda Kröner, Amalia Lindegren, Emmy Lischke and Bertha Wegmann.

⁷ For the first time, the exhibition brings together the works of women artists who studied and worked in Germany in the 19th century. In their time, women had to choose between a career and a family, and they did not yet have the right to vote. Those who broke boundaries paved the way for the next generations of artists.

⁸ <https://ateneum.fi/nayttelyt/rajojen-rikkojat/>



Alma Erdmann – A Woman from the Black Forest



Fanny Cherburg – Girl on the Beach (1869)





Quite a day!

Saturday 26th April 2025

Much of the day was on the UNESCO island of Suomenlinna (in Swedish it is called Sveaborg). It is a sea fortress composed of eight islands, of which six have been fortified.

Construction of the fortress began in 1748 under the Swedish Crown as a defence against Russia. The general responsibility for the fortification work was given to Admiral Augustin Ehrensvärd. The original plan of the bastion fortress was heavily influenced by Vauban, a renowned French military engineer, and incorporated the principles of the star fort style of fortifications, albeit adapted to a group of rocky islands.⁹



⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suomenlinna>

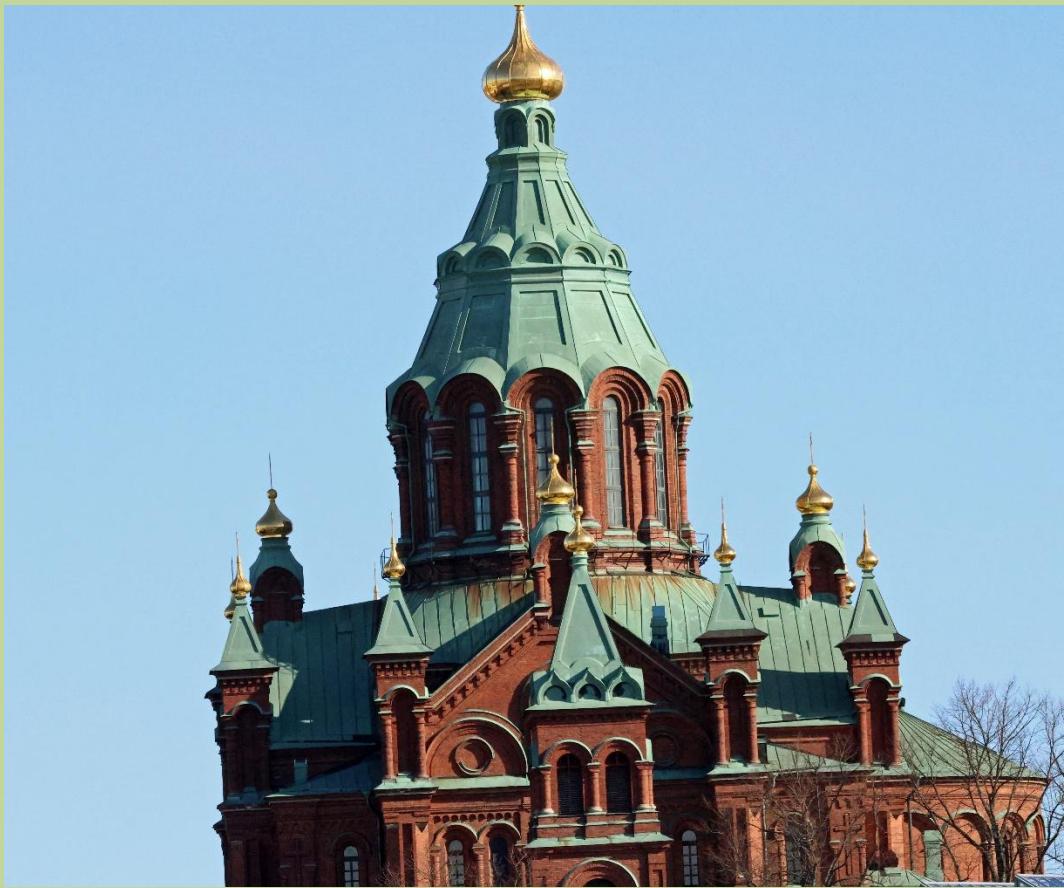
During the Finnish War, Russian forces besieged the fortress in 1808. Despite its formidable reputation as the "Gibraltar of the North", the fortress surrendered after only two months, on 3 May 1808. Its loss paved the way for the Russia's occupation of Finland in 1809, and the subsequent establishment of the Grand Duchy of Finland, an autonomous state within the Russian Empire.

Under Russian rule, the fortress served as a base for the Baltic Fleet during World War I, and in 1915, construction began on the Krestost Sveaborg defense system. Russian forces abandoned the fortress after Finland declared independence in 1917. Originally named Sveaborg ("Fortress of Sweden") and known as Viapori (['via_pori]) in Finnish, it was renamed Suomenlinna ("Fortress of Finland") in 1918. In Swedish, however, it retains its original name. In the aftermath of the Finnish Civil War, the islands housed the Suomenlinna prison camp for captured Red soldiers.



The journey is a short one and the views of the city from the deck of the boat were stunning!







Barnacle Goose





Pied Wagtail



Great Tit



Magpie



Fieldfare



Oystercatcher



Eider Ducks



Wheatear (female)

In addition, we saw Blue Tit, Common Blackbird, Common Starling, Mute Swan, Mallard, and an unidentified raptor with broad wings and a short tail (possibly one of the buzzards). The highlight must be the Common Eider Ducks.¹⁰ They are specialised sea ducks! Adults and juveniles were present. Note that Common Eiders in Finland undertake long-distance migrations, flying to more southerly or coastal regions during the winter. Their migration routes can vary, with some individuals traveling to the Baltic Sea, while others migrate to the Atlantic Ocean.

But this island is not especially known as important for birds. It's the cultural heritage that is the reason why it is listed as a World Heritage site!

It still has a naval presence and it also still houses a minimum-security penal labour colony and, strangely, there are about 900 permanent inhabitants on the islands, and 350 people who work there year-round.

¹⁰ Eider ducks' main food, blue mussels, need salt water to survive. Climate change is bringing more rain to the Baltic Sea region, pushing more freshwater from rivers into the sea. As the water becomes less salty, mussels may disappear from the northern Baltic, leaving Finland's eider ducks in peril.

"Eiders can eat other food to some degree, but there is no way a sizeable eider population will survive completely without blue mussels," Pihlajaniemi says.

Ref : [Birds' lives changing rapidly in Finland, signalling ecosystem shift | Yle](#)





An old submarine





The history of this church is itself worth the visit!¹¹

¹¹ Plastered grey, the Suomenlinna church is one of the oldest shrines in Helsinki. It greets those arriving from the sea by transmitting the H code with its Gustavian style tower, to indicate Helsinki. The onion domed church, originally built as an orthodox garrison church, was converted into a Lutheran church in the 1920s when the country had become independent.

The construction of the Viapori fortification began in 1748. Despite the intentions, the church designed by the Swedish architect, Carl Hårleman, was not built, because the completion of the fortifications was seen as having primary importance. However, the Susisaari fortifications had room for a church, and the small wooden church of the island is mentioned in travellers' journals in 1785.

After Sweden lost Viapori and all of Finland to Russia as a result of the war in 1809, the plans to build a church got a fresh impetus. When the classic church design of Carl Ludvig Engel was regarded as too expensive to implement, Czar Nikolai I assigned the task to St. Petersburg based architect, Konstantin Thon in 1836. At the same time, Thon was also designing the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. The



The one museum we entered (most were closed until May 1st) was Ehrensvärd's home. It was the official residence of the fortress's commandants of which Ehrensvärd was the first.

orthodox church intended for the use of the Russian garrison was completed and dedicated in 1854. For example, the beer manufacturer Nikolai Sinebrychoff's tavern had to be moved away from the church plot.

The Suomenlinna church was dedicated to the memory of the Great Prince Alexander Nevsky. The year of the church's dedication was 600 years after the time when Nevsky fought off the Roman Catholic crusaders in North-West Russia.

Originally the church served the Russian garrison of Viapori. After Finland became independent, it was considered improper for the Russian-style onion domes to first greet people arriving at the city by sea, and the church was converted into an Evangelical Lutheran church.



The Commandant's House is a good example of how in Viapori, living spaces and defensive structures were often combined under the same roof. The house was the residence and official residence of the commandant of the fortress until 1855, when it lost its entire southern half in the bombings of the Crimean War. In 1927, the Ehrensvärd Society took the initiative to establish a museum in the rooms of the commandant's house that had been Ehrensvärd's residence. The museum was opened in 1930.¹²

¹² [Ehrensvärd Museum - Suomenlinna Tours](#)





We then returned home, had a lunch in our hotel room and a rest before then going out again once more. This time we caught the 1T and 3T trams and explored areas of the city not yet visited! That included Observatory Hill!

And, nearby, one such site was the Russian Embassy!



It was a huge complex!



Wood Pigeon

But before I close, some field flowers to note from our time on the islands!





Sunday 27th April 2025

Another cold day! Temperatures are quite low, rising to maximums of 5 or 6 at most, and inside is all air-conditioning and heating. It sure dries out the lips and the nostrils and I am lathering on lip balm.



Having used the 7T and 9T lines a lot, we rode the 1T and 3T lines yesterday. We took the 1T again this morning and then, late in the afternoon, we took the 10T line in both directions. It not only helps fix the city in our minds; it shows us some interesting urban scenes while sitting back in relative comfort.

We arrived in the centre of Helsinki at about 9.30am today and that gave us a chance to look at some public sculpture before our planned art gallery opened.

The first piece we looked at was called “Where the Strawberries Grow” (2007) by Jukka Lehtinen.¹³

¹³ I sculpt movement as space. This somewhat obscure sentence may serve as a definition of my expression. I make things visible that I otherwise wouldn't know even exist. Mind and matter describes my way of working. The need to sculpt is born at the point of friction between the mind and the material. This friction gives life to my artworks.



Now if we ignore the moose outside the Museum of Natural History (currently not open), our next piece was called “Past Knights” by Eila Hiltunen.



Past Knights



Memorial to Mauno Kovisto



Finland's Parliament





Meanwhile, down by the concert halls there were more art works out in the public square!



Song Trees by Reijo Hukkanen¹⁴

While we were there, we saw the military gathering and it included a brass band! Soon afterwards, the band marched and played and gathered outside the Mannerheim Statue¹⁵

¹⁴ Song Trees are a totem for everyone, whether they're just passing by or actually visiting Musiikkitalo. Featuring a series of highly recognisable visual elements, this playful work is guaranteed to catch your attention but also offers plenty of opportunities for personal reflection and interpretation. The familiar features – a grand piano lid, a log pile and a fish head – resonate with the urban landscape surrounding the Music Centre and the wider Töölönlahti Bay. Lighter than its shadow, the sculpture blends effortlessly into its setting, continuing to influence people's experience of it whether they are actively stopping to take it in or not. Song Trees is inspired by The Pike's Song (1928), a poem by Finnish writer Aaro Hellaakoski (1893–1952)

¹⁵ A bronze equestrian statue of Field Marshal Gustaf Mannerheim stands in the centre of Helsinki, Finland. It was made by Aimo Tukiainen and erected in 1960.

and a special service in memory of the final day of WW2 began! Yes, that day is a movable feast depending on which country one is in!



That was right outside the Museum of Contemporary Art (Kiasma), our main target today! There were two exhibitions over five floors and it kept us busy for more than two hours.

The first exhibition was called “Rock, Paper, Scissors” and it explored the diverse meanings and techniques of contemporary-art materials from the 1970s to the present.



Jacob Dahlgren – The Wonderful World of Abstraction



Pearla Pigao – RD2-5DXA-4DXFF

My favourite; hand movements hear the sheets created sounds and could be manipulated into tunes with care and creativity



Claes Oldenburg – Extinguished Match



Kihwa-Endale: Eskista

Upstairs, there were two more artists given special space that were very challenging. The first was Dafna Maimon (Symptoms).

Visitors pass through a velvety intestinal tunnel (it felt eerie) and a cave-sized wisdom tooth to see artworks such as a series of pastel paintings showing mysterious internal worlds. We also encountered an enlarged tardigrade, one of the world's toughest microscopic creatures, as well as noted proponent of the mind-body split René Descartes, who appears in Maimon's musical installation Homebody – and whose dualistic worldview is challenged throughout the exhibition.

The exhibition includes video installations, paintings on velvet, sculptures and drawings.

Three video works follow fictional characters immersed in modern-day lifestyles whose bodies communicate different signs and symptoms. In her work, these symptoms are considered signs of bodily wisdom that, if listened to, can provide us with tools for living more meaningful lives. We really didn't have time for all the videos but what we saw were interesting and challenging!

Perhaps more relevant to me was the work by Monira Al Qadiri called Deep Fate.



Monira Al Qadiri's art deals with what it feels like to live a modern life made possible by oil during the accelerating climate crisis.

Oil's dual role in generating wealth and causing crises is a central theme in the new exhibition by artist Monira Al Qadiri (b. 1983). The starting point for her new exhibition is the way that this raw material formed over millions of years has been almost surreptitiously interwoven into human history and destiny. The subject is personal for her: Al Qadiri grew up next door to oil refineries in Kuwait and experienced the Gulf War as a child.

The title, Deep Fate, refers to the origins of oil deep in the earth and also to the way that dependence on oil and breaking that dependence are a matter of life and death for humankind.¹⁶



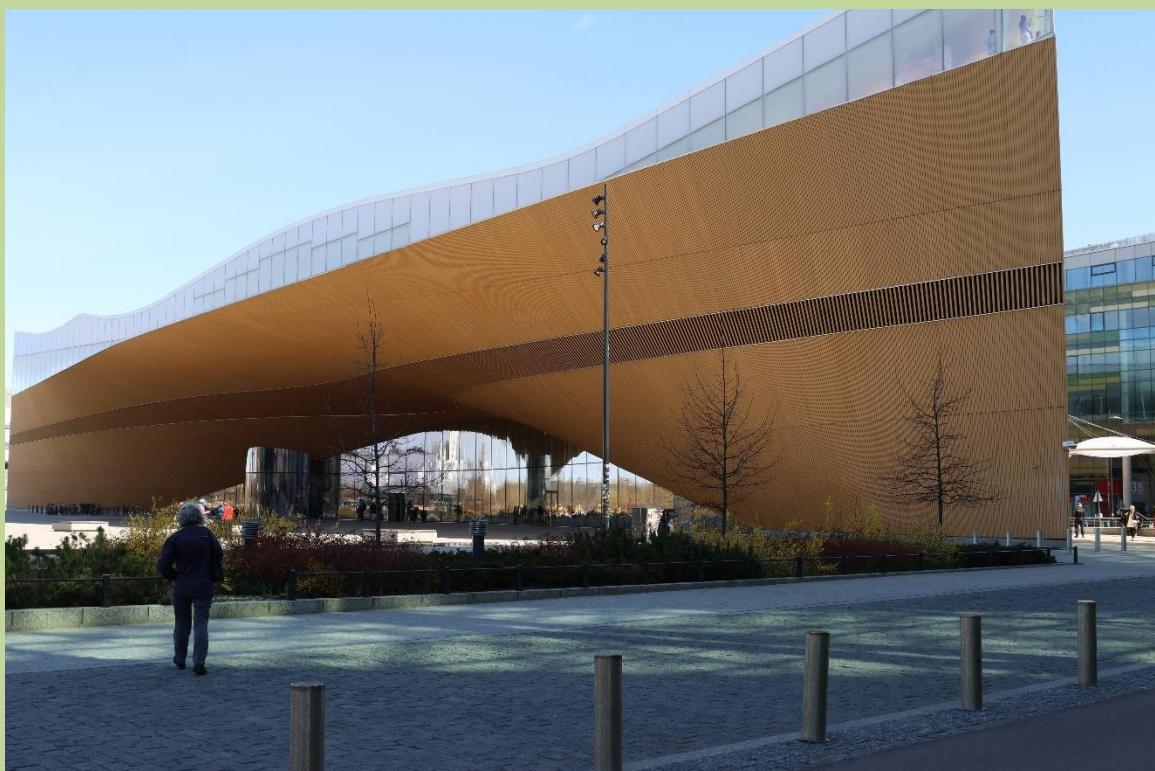
¹⁶ [Monira Al Qadiri: Deep Fate | Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma](#)

After having a smoothie, we dropped down to the new library, if “library” really covers what Oodi represents!

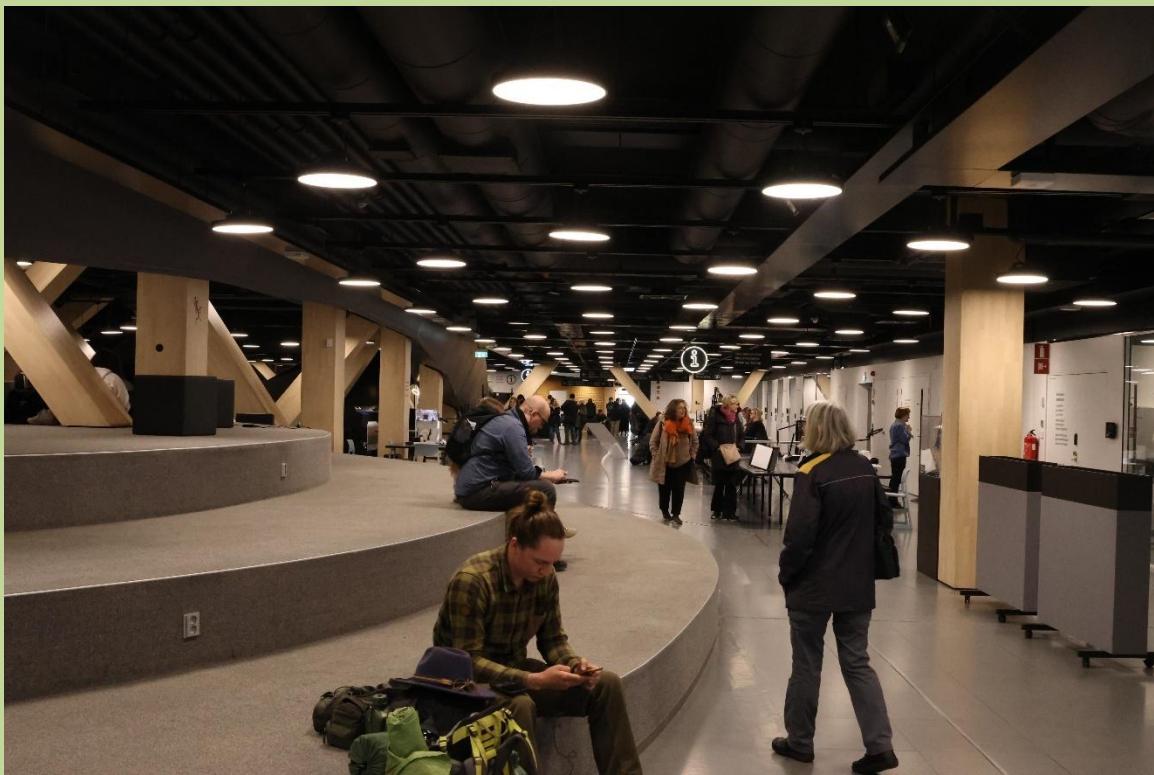
Helsinki Central Library Oodi is a lively meeting place on Kansalaistori Square, right in the heart of Helsinki. Oodi is one of the 38 locations of the Helsinki City Library and part of the Helmet library network.

Oodi complements the cultural and media cluster formed by the Helsinki Music Centre, Finlandia Hall, Sanoma House and the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma. It offers a non-commercial public urban space that is open to everyone right across from the Parliament House.¹⁷

It has a library, of course, but also it has music spaces, meeting places, break-out rooms, 3-D printing facilities, workshops, etc. It is truly a place for innovation and learning.



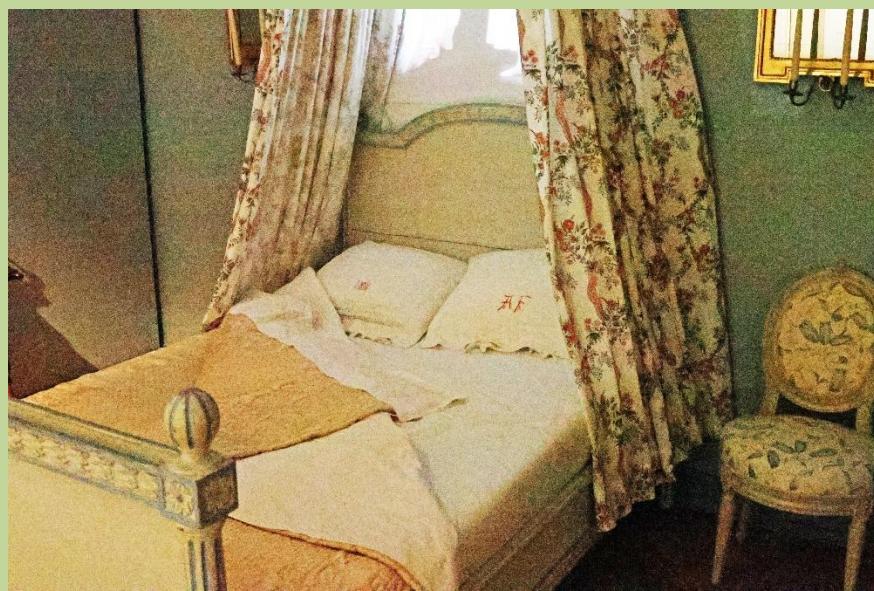
¹⁷ <https://oodihelsinki.fi/mika-oodi/>



Oodi was designed by ALA Architects, who won the open international architecture competition for the Central Library in 2013

Just across the park was a very different building, a 19th century manor called Hakasalmi Huvila.

Villa Hakasalmi (Hakasalmi huvila) is a country house in Helsinki that is one of the few remaining country houses in the city built in the Empire style. The building was built between 1843 and 1846 as a summer residence of the Finnish governor Carl Johan Walleen and was designed by the German architect Ernst Lohrmann. The house was then surrounded by an English garden and was at the time on the coast of Töölönlahti Bay.





We then finished on the 10T train on its full return journey!



Now there are many rocky outcrops in and around Helsinki. I went into a deep dive and discovered that the bedrock of Finland belongs to the Fennoscandian Shield and was formed by a succession of orogenies during the Precambrian. The oldest rocks of Finland, those of Archean age, are found in the east and north. These rocks are chiefly granitoids and migmatitic gneiss¹⁸. Yes, of volcanic origin. Shaved, no doubt, by ice! But hard rock underneath!

The other thing I'd like to mention is that there are many small motorbikes on tiny wheels but with fat tyres. Faye was smart enough to suggest that they are designed to cope with the cobble stones!

And that will be enough for today!

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geology_of_Finland