

**PUBLICS**

**HELSINKI**

**9 DEC**

**PUBLICS**

**LAUNCH**

**PUBLICS**

**2017**

**PUBLICS**

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**LAUNCH OF  
PUBLICS:**

**A NEW SPACE  
AND  
CURATORIAL AGENCY  
IN HELSINKI**

**PRESS  
RELEASE**

**PUBLICS**

# PUBLICS

PUBLICS Space  
Sturenkatu 37-41 4b,  
00550 Helsinki  
Finland  
Program hours:  
2pm–5pm  
publics.fi

African Pots restaurant  
Mäkelänkatu 45 C,  
00550 Helsinki  
Finland  
Program hours:  
6pm–8pm

Club Kaiku  
Kaikukatu 4,  
00530 Helsinki  
Finland  
Program hours:  
8pm–4am  
(Ticket sale from 10pm)  
clubkaiku.fi

For full schedule see:  
publics.fi

For more information  
please contact:

PAUL O'NEILL  
Artistic Director  
PUBLICS  
+358 44 2443 240  
paul.oneill@publics.fi

ELIISA SUVANTO  
Program Manager  
PUBLICS  
+358 40 8450 914  
eliisa.suvanto@publics.fi

PUBLICS is a curatorial agency with a dedicated library, event space and reading room in Helsinki launching on December 9. Its launch coordinates the opening of a new space with a series of public events in Vallila—a predominantly residential central-northern neighborhood in the city of Helsinki, known for its industrial working class histories and, more recently, for its influx of divergent artistic and academic communities.

Under the artistic direction of curator Paul O'Neill, with program manager and curator Eliisa Suvanto, PUBLICS explores a “work together” institutional model with multiple overlapping objectives, thematic strands and collaborations. PUBLICS is a constellation of practices, projects and productions. As such, PUBLICS proposes the term “Public” as always plural—as a concept; as a group of people (imagined, actualized or real); and as a contested spatio-temporal location/discourse in the world.

The opening of PUBLICS coincides with the unveiling of its design identity, by international renowned collective design practice Julia (julia.uk.com), and with the initiation of its on-going project strands: PUBLICS' Library; PUBLICS' Talks; and PUBLICS' Events and Performances. These initiatives will evolve in time and in parallel with the project's longer-term curatorial programmes, PUBLICS' Public Art Commissions.

PUBLICS develops out of Checkpoint Helsinki, a contemporary art initiative established in 2013. In its spirit, PUBLICS continues this organization's commitment to critical social thinking, contemporary art and publicness. The result is an emergent, evolving and co-organized institution based on a number of operative principles:

- PUBLICS is discursive and instigates dialogue between local, regional and international art.
- PUBLICS commissions, produces and curates durational, longer-term contemporary public art.
- PUBLICS recognizes the need to identify, activate and actualize diverse publics for contemporary art.
- PUBLICS is an educational, civic and public resource.
- PUBLICS is dedicated to debating, curating, imagining and making contemporary art in, with, and in relation to its multiple PUBLICS.

The opening of PUBLICS will be held on December 9 in three different locations. The program starts in Vallila with a series of artist and curator talks and book launches, including *How Institutions Think*, a new LUMA Foundation / Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College / the MIT Press-published anthology edited by Paul O'Neill, Lucy Steeds and Mick Wilson addressing such questions as whether institutional building is still possible, feasible, or desirable. PUBLICS has invited New York based James Hoff to give a lecture on his practice as an artist, publisher and DJ; followed by a discursive event with London based curator Adelaide Bannerman around questions of curatorial autonomy versus interdependency; and a spatial intervention and related talk with artist Kathrin Böhm; and artist-educator Mick Wilson comes from Gothenburg to present his on-going curatorial research project *The Food Thing*, during a shared meal in a local restaurant serving African fusion food.

The evening ends in club Kaiku, famous of its combination of open-minded audiences and innovative music programming. In Kaiku, PUBLICS presents live performances by James Hoff (PAN Records); Hannah Quinlan and Rosie Hastings working with unseen footage from the UK Gay Bar Directory, a moving image archive of gay bars in the UK made in 2016; and kallio manninen, who reimagine the future of humanity through fantasy and issues regarding gender, alienation and hypersexual disorder, and DJ sets by James Hoff, Paul O'Neill and @Gaybar.