

Janne Räisänen

January 9–February 1, 2026

Janne Räisänen's fourth solo exhibition at Helsinki Contemporary presents a new body of work in which the private and public, the low and the high, collide joyfully on the canvas through uninhibited brushwork and exuberant storytelling. *Constructivism Begins at Home* marks the Berlin-based artist's first solo show in Finland in more than four years.

The works on view blend drawing and painting in a raw, distinctive manner, merging techniques from graphite to oil paint. Räisänen's process – driven by experimentation, chance, and constant trial and error – reveals itself in the layered, restless surfaces of his paintings. He is known for depicting life with humour and wild associative leaps, sometimes veering cheerfully toward the outright bizarre. His miniature epics radiate warm-hearted absurdity, taking a playful dig at both the quirks of contemporary life and the artist himself.

Räisänen approaches the world through a camp sensibility, unveiling unexpected and often hilarious perspectives through irony, hyperbole, parody, and free-form association. His paintings are veritable surprise parties of visual and linguistic play. The tongue-in-cheek, pun-laden titles – some of them downright baffling – form an essential part of his process. They are less explanations than invitations for the viewer's imagination to leap into the fray.

The title *Constructivism Begins at Home* first emerged while the artist was painting and listening to The Smiths' *Barbarism Begins at Home*. Through a chain of wordplay, "barbarism" gradually morphed into "constructivism." Despite the reference, Räisänen's art shares little with the austere formalism of constructivism from a century ago – unless of course he is gently poking fun at any canonical strictness. Yet, his multi-layered works do echo constructivist learning theory: the idea that people build understanding by reshaping new information through their own experience. Räisänen's paintings are indeed playful constructs, in which film, historical figures, pop music, celebrities, art history, and "real life" swirl together in an irreverent medley.