

ULTERIOR

Noora Schroderus / Päivi Takala / Elina Vainio

Cartographic Affinities

January 16—February 21, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, January 16, 6—8 pm



Elina Vainio, *Earthquake (Yamamura Koka)*, 2025.
Beeswax, tulle netting, fine art print mounted on aluminum, oak frame
10 ¹/₄ x 11 ³/₈ x ³/₄ in (26 x 29 x 2 cm)

Ulterior Gallery is thrilled to announce ***Cartographic Affinities***, a group exhibition featuring three artists from Finland: Noora Schroderus, Päivi Takala, and Elina Vainio. The exhibition opens with a reception on January 16, 2026, from 6 to 8 pm.

Together, Schroderus, Takala, and Vainio explore the shifting space between humans, animals, and the natural world. Noora Schroderus embroiders the names of dogs with their own hair, drawing a wry and poignant analogy that questions how humans understand their relationships with other nonhuman beings. Using actual dog fur, her embroidery works become intimate portraits of companionship and co-existence. The names given to animals—wether fantastical (*Mörkö*), spiritual (*Koitto*), or human (*Robbie*)—reveal how language binds humans to their companions in deeply personal and emotionally charged ways, often reflecting who we are or who we aspire to be.

In contrast with this intensely bound connection, Päivi Takala's paintings adopt a quieter, more contemplative approach to human-animal connections. She depicts female figures wearing scarves with eyes that look out at us, disguising the creatures hidden beneath, and blurring the boundary between humans and the non-humans. Takala's work reflects on the strange coexistence of these beings and the characteristics and emotions humans often project onto animals. Takala's recurring motifs, such as depictions of horses and birds, meditate on the nature of that intimacy between species, but also on the unbridgeable expanse that separates them.

Elina Vainio's delicate beeswax reliefs bring forward the tension and fragility inherent in these connections. Using beeswax—a material produced through the collective labor of honeybees—Vainio embeds artificial and handmade objects within its surface, creating tenuous visual and material relationships. In *Earthquake (Yamamura Koka)*, the inlaid

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black-and-white image is a reproduction of Yamamura Koka's sketch of the destruction caused by the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. While beeswax appears visually frail, it is materially resilient, prompting viewers to reconsider what they know about the space nature occupies around and within us. The boundaries between culture and nature, as well as humanity's assumptions about permanence, are quietly questioned.

Rather than offering a fixed understanding of these relationships, the works of Schroderus, Takala, and Vainio reveal an unstable terrain. *Cartographic Affinities* maps out that realm, revealing the inconsistencies, uncertainties, and vulnerabilities of humankind's coexistence in nature's ecosystems.

This exhibition is co-organized with The Finnish Cultural Institute in New York and the Consulate General of Finland in New York through their partnership with the New Art Dealers Alliance. This collaboration, which is made possible with the support of a grant by Jane and Aatos Erkkö Foundation, Finlandia Foundation National, and The Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland, underscores a shared commitment to fostering international dialogue between the contemporary art scenes of Finland and New York.

Noora Schroderus (b. 1982) lives and works in Salo, Finland. She received an M.F.A. from the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki in 2014. Interested in different materials and their possibilities, Schroderus stretches meanings and examines humanity, power, and gender, never far from self-irony and humor. Schroderus has held several solo exhibitions, most recently at Galerie Anhava, Helsinki, Finland (2024); Passagen Konsthall, Linköping, Sweden (2023); and Kunsthall Grenland, Porsgrunn, Norway (2019). She has participated in various group exhibitions, including at Hämeenlinna Art Museum, Hämeenlinna, Finland (2024) Borås Art Museum, Borås (2022); and Wäinö Aaltonen Museum, Turku, Finland (2021). Schroderus's works are included in collections such as Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Tampere Art Museum, Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation, City of Norrtälje, the Gösta Serlachius Art Foundation, and the Lars Swanljung Collections. In 2025 Schroderus was awarded the Finland Prize by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Päivi Takala (b. 1970) lives and works in Helsinki, Finland. She studied at Hochschule der Künste, Berlin, and at University of Art and Design, Helsinki. In her works, she observes human existence together with other living beings with a critical yet gentle eye and soft brushstrokes. Her recent, faded palette is a nod to the early Renaissance frescoes to which she returns time after time. Takala has exhibited in numerous solo and group shows, including at Cecilia Hillström Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden (2025); Galerie Anhava, Helsinki, Finland (2024); Malmö Art Museum, Malmö, Sweden (2021-24); EMMA Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Espoo, Finland (2020-23); and the XXVI Mänttä Art Festival, Mänttä, Finland (2022). Works by Takala are included in many important Nordic public collections, such as the HAM Helsinki Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, the Saastamoinen Foundation, the Sara Hildén Art Museum, and the Malmö Art Museum collections. Takala has worked as Lecturer in Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki since 2014.

Elina Vainio (b. 1981) lives and works in Helsinki, Finland. She received her M.F.A. from the Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, in 2013. Prior to her graduate studies, she studied in London and earned a B.F.A. with honors from Chelsea College of Art & Design. Vainio's artistic practice operates in the shadow zones of the modern Western, human-centered worldview. Her works often foreground the limits of knowledge and language in our attempts to understand the world, while questioning the fragility of life and the interconnectedness of humans and nature. Her work has been featured in numerous exhibitions, including Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Espoo, Finland (2025); Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea (2025); Wäinö Aaltonen Museum, Turku, Finland (solo, 2020); Helsinki Art Museum Gallery, Helsinki, Finland (solo, 2020); and Triangle Art Association, New York (2016). In 2024, Vainio participated in residency programs at Hamuro mAiR in Awara, Japan; The time she spent there informs the new works presented in this exhibition.

About the Gallery: Ulterior Gallery, first established on Attorney Street on the Lower East Side of NYC, moved to its current space in SoHo in 2022. Founded in 2016 by Takako Tanabe, a gallerist originally from Tokyo, Ulterior is committed to the exhibition of works by an array of intergenerational artists from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Ulterior Gallery is located at 424 Broadway, #601, New York, NY 10013, on the top floor of a designated landmark building near the intersection of Canal and Broadway. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 pm, and by appointment. For further inquiries, please contact Takako Tanabe: takako@ulteriorgallery.com.