

MEDIA
RELEASE

January 30, 2015



OF GREATER VICTORIA

Marimekko, With Love

February 7 – May 3, 2015
Curated by Shauna McCabe,
Executive Director,
Textile Museum of Canada

Marimekko, With Love Lecture

February 7, 2015,
1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Marimekko brightens up Victoria

Just in time for Valentine's Day, Marimekko comes to Victoria, with love. The vibrant exhibition looks at the heyday of Marimekko, the Finnish textile and clothing design company that revolutionized the design world with its lively, groundbreaking prints.

Opening on February 7, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria is presenting the retrospective, which draws together landmark Marimekko fabrics and fashions created by pioneering designers during the 1960s and 70s.

Lengths of fabric from the time period include the company's most famous designs, such as Unikko, which today, some fifty years later, is one of the most recognizable patterns in the world. This large poppy pattern was born in 1964 shortly after the Marimekko's founder, Armi Ratia, who favoured original and utopian designs, had announced the company would never print florals. Famed designer Maija Isola, who produced many of Marimekko's most recognized patterns, designed an entire collection of floral patterns in protest—true to the company's collaborative and pioneering culture.

But the exhibition, like the company, is about more than fabric design. Photographs, letters and more tell the personal stories and relationships at the heart of the company's international impact, as well Marimekko's impact on the Canadian design scene.

Visitors will get a sense of the excitement and changes that swept the design communities in Finland, Canada and other countries thanks to Marimekko's belief in form and function as well as being bold and comfortable. The company was revolutionary in changing the way people expressed their personalities and recognized the power of design in everyday life.

"This exhibition is exciting for us for a number of reasons," says Nicole Stanbridge, AGGV's curator of engagement. "It brings together art and design as it applies to both iconic objects from our daily lives and key moments in art history and popular culture. The vision behind Marimekko connects to a lineage of art movements that created ideals for living, such as the Arts and Crafts, International Style, and Bauhaus movements." Stanbridge notes the exhibition is on loan from the Textile Museum of Canada, and it is that museum's most popular exhibition to date.

Mika Ihamuotila, Marimekko's current CEO, points out that Marimekko has as much a place in our present time as it does in our past, "Today it's more relevant than it's ever been before. I think we live in a world where people hide their personality, their identity[...] We have to free people. Let people have the courage to be themselves. To let their own personality come out," he says in a video on the company's website.

Marimekko, With Love runs until May 3, 2015.

For more information visit aggv.ca or call (250) 384-4171.

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

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Related Programs at the AGGV:

February 7 | 1-2 p.m.

Lecture with *Marimekko, With Love* exhibition curator Shauna McCabe and Marimekko expert and collector Janis Kravis.

February 27 | 8-11p.m.

URBANITE

SOCIAL // SPECTACLE

Inspired by *Marimekko, With Love*

19+ | Tickets \$20 (\$15 members/students) at the door

March 15 | 2-4 p.m.

Family Sunday

Join us for an afternoon of experimenting with art making and ideas, for the whole family. Inspired by the exhibition *Marimekko, With Love*.

Ongoing drop in tours throughout the run of exhibition, go to aggv.ca for dates and times.