

## Lending Art Is Easy

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### Abstract:

*Pyhäjoki Municipal Library started to loan art in the summer 2011. We want it to make it very simple. Therefore it does not differ from the loaning of the books or other library material.*

**Keywords:** art rental shop, art, loaning practices

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### The Environment

The rural town of Pyhäjoki is situated on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia in Northern Finland. The population is just over 3000, and it is decreasing by 3% per year. However, if the proposed nuclear power plant becomes a reality, then the population will grow 25% by the year 2025.

The municipal library of Pyhäjoki started to lend pieces of art in August 2011. Pyhäjoki is a small community with no art galleries except for the library. We started our art rental shop because we wanted to give our citizens the opportunity to have art on their walls.

### Acquisition

The community of Pyhäjoki buys and owns the pictures, just as we buy and own the books we loan. They are bought by the Cultural Department of our town. The library budget is not used for the pictures and buying does not affect the acquisition of other materials for the library. That means we do not buy fewer books because we buy art.

The pictures are not very expensive: the cost varies between 100 and 400 euros per piece. The most expensive was 1600 euros but we bought that with an end-of-year budget surplus.

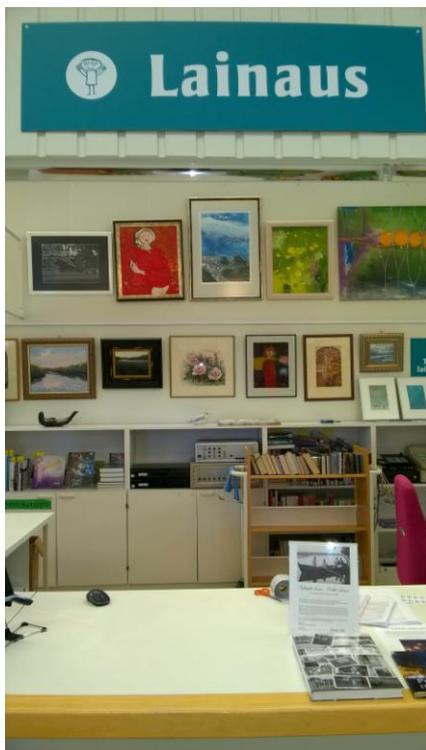
In the beginning we had some pictures bought earlier by the town of Pyhäjoki. When we started our art rental shop, we bought about 10 new pictures from local artists. Now we buy 2 – 4 new pictures every year.

### **Loaning in Practice**

We wanted to make the loaning very simple, therefore pictures are registered in the same way as books in the library system. We use very basic registration and complete only the most important fields, e.g. artist, title, year.

The pictures are hung with the barcode stickers behind them. We kept the pictures on the wall behind the circulation desk so everybody can see them.

### **Picture 1. The Pictures Behind the Circulation Desk**



### **Picture 2. Barcode Sticker Behind the Painting**



The loaning period is three months, but we have to remember to record the date every time before loaning. The patrons cannot renew the loan in the online library as with other materials. However, the library staff can renew the loans manually up to five times. The patrons cannot buy the pictures, so this is what separates us from commercial art rental shops. What separates this material from other material is that you cannot make reservations. That limitation is because our large consortium has a shared reservation queue and therefore it may come to pass that we would have to send a picture to the other side of Finland!

### **Do People Want to Borrow Art?**

Yes and no: some patrons want to change their wall hangings from time to time, for example according to the seasons. Some patrons do not want to loan art because it is not possible to buy the pictures if they get very attached to them.

At the moment, we have 31 pictures. At the end of May 2017, ten of those were on loan. Usually more than half of them are on loan.

### **Getting Rid of Them?**

We consider the art collection as a library collection, and a library collection should be dynamic. Therefore, this summer we have decided to sell a few of the oldest pictures.

### **Why Do We Have an Art Rental Shop?**

We think our art rental shop strengthens the image of the library as the most important cultural centre in the town.

Besides, we love art.