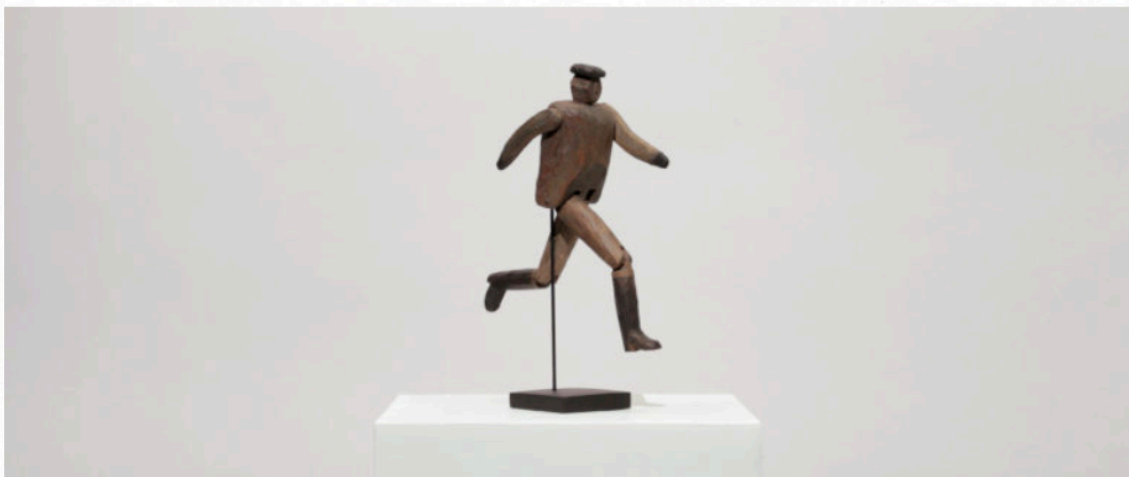


MUU Writes is a group composed of MUU member artists who share an interest in writing. The group has set themselves the task of publishing an essay on every exhibition scheduled in MUU's program, to be released both online and in the gallery.

### **Elli Vuorinen: Dynamic Stasis** **Text by John Gayer**

Check out Elli Vuorinen's homepage ([ellivuorinen.com](http://ellivuorinen.com)) and you will see a video clip of a running man. He is crudely carved out of wood, mounted on a slender support and moves persistently. But despite the energy put into this effort, he goes nowhere. His arms and legs merely slice through the air.

The vignette is an excerpt from *Still Lives* (2019), Vuorinen's latest animation, which explores the inactivity that typifies contemporary life. She does this from a host of perspectives, by employing cultural artifacts highlighting diverse historical periods and sound bites spoken in various languages. The artifacts refer to the Paleolithic era and Classical antiquity as well as more recent folk art traditions. They appear together, in an arrangement suggesting a museum display, individually, and in detail views. Two are sealed in display cases and some, like the running man glimpsed on the artist's website, perform repetitive actions. The objects are made of a variety of materials. They include stone, terracotta and painted wood. Each also disintegrates in a particular way.



The voices on the soundtrack expand upon or contradict the animation's visual content. Delivered in the form of a sales pitch, song and whispers, they explore a range of situations and emotions. They speak about change and allude to the march of time and the changes it transpires. Things

converge, diverge, penetrate to deeper levels or are influenced by ambient factors – something said to be “in the air.” Processes of self-betterment, the status of inter-personal relationships and state-of-the-art work environments are emphasized.

Looped for continuous play in the gallery, the presentation proposes no obvious beginning or end. Like the Greek runner painted on the spinning pot present in both the animation and on the turntable in the adjacent space, it is locked into a continuous pattern of movement. The scenarios, moreover, play across a three-screen arc that virtually encompasses the seated viewer’s field of view. Prolonged viewing assimilates one into the work’s treadmill-like course and circumscribed space.



Nuances of confusion and futility, as well as touches of humor, suffuse Vuorinen’s deliberations on contemporary life. She employs tactile objects – unique handmade items – to highlight and counter the intangibility, mutability, and strangeness that defines today’s computerised and self-absorbed world. By animating inanimate artifacts, her work explores current limitations and generates questions about the directions in which we are heading. Is life become more or less fulfilling? Are horizons being broadening or becoming more restricted? Are we behaving more like puppets or independent beings? This richly provocative and open-ended presentation not only strikes a chord, but also proposes we take a step back to consider what it is we are doing.

**ELLI VUORINEN – KIIREHESSÄ LIKKUMATOIN**  
3.8.-8.9.2019, MUU Studio