KLOVHARUN 2024

Memories from the island

Artists in residence:

Julia Boström
Ida-Lovisa Rudolfsson
Anna Karlström
Svein Størksen
Katie Engström
Staffan Engström
Madeleine Wallin
Katalin Trencsényi
Anzu Takahashi
Mami Hagiwara

Julia Boström

Before we went to Klovharun we decided to put ourselves outside of time, we turned off our phones and had no watches. We worked as long as we wanted, ate when we were hungry, swam when we were warm and fell asleep when we were tired. Day after day. It was days of ultimate freedom.
It was also exciting to really feel on the spot how Tuulikki and Tove coexisted in life and work, and the moments in their outstandingly unique sauna became for me an important place for reflection. Every evening after the sauna, I sat in the rocking chair and read aloud from the Summer Book, a book that must be read every summer to remind yourself that you are really alive.

”It was days of ultimate freedom”

Julia Boström (1976) is a an artist, project manager within culture and holds an MFA in Film from HDK-Valand.
I most often use conversations as a starting point in my work, preferably in collaboration with other artists. I am interested in interhuman and interanimal encounters, and in what happens when we truly reveal ourselves to one another. I am drawn to existential philosophy and psychology, and through conversation and movement in nature, either alone or with others my projects arise and develop. I work in a multidisciplinary way, and the artistic process often results in performances, films, images, installations, or texts.
I live and work in the countryside of Svenshögen in Bohuslän, Sweden. Alongside my artistic practice, I work with regional cultural planning, project management, and curating.
From 2019 to 2024, I was one of the founders and artistic directors of the association Stationen in Svenshögen, a cultural venue and a site for artistic production.

www.juliabostrom.se

Photo: Kristian Berglund

Ida-Lovisa Rudolfsson

”…when we layed on the smooth rocks next to the sea drying after a swim we felt the island breathing.”

One of the days at Klovharun when we laid on the smooth rocks next to the sea drying after a swim we felt the island breathing. As the island was a living being who carried us on its chest, it was an extraordinary experience.

For me, Tove and Tuulikki personify the longing for freedom I have always felt, the way they lived – where artwork and writing were a big part of everyday life – is a huge inspiration for me. And the themes that Tove explores in her writing, both in the books about the Moomin family and her other novels, are themes that are also recurring in my imagery. Also, the way she during the years worked in such a broad field – as an illustrator, political satirist, in the theater and as a painter – is as a huge source of energy. And there is something in the way she uses the colors, the warm kindness at the same time as she has a sharp, wise and questioning gaze at the word.

Ida-Lovisa Rudolfsson (1979) has an MFA in Textile Art from HDK-Valand - Academy of Art and Design in Göteborg, she lives on Orust, an island on the west coast of Sweden. Since her master degree in 2010, she has regularly held solo and group exhibitions both around Sweden and internationally. In 2020, she published the embroidered picture book Efter stormen. She has received several major grants, for example from The Sten A Olsson Foundation for Research and Culture and the Swedish Arts Grants Committee and her work is represented among others at the Gothenburg Art Museum, Nationalmuseum and several municipalities and private collections. In Ida-Lovisa Rudolfsson's work the embroidery and the narrative is central and the threads meanders from real events, through carefully embroidered rooms, to surrealistic dreams and then back again. The stories are built up piece by piece with stitches, fabric paint, pieces of inherited sheets and other things that have been collected, and the collage becomes a method for mending the world. Cut it open, sort it neatly, mess it up and then sew it all back together again, in a different order.

www.idalovisa.se

Anna Karlström

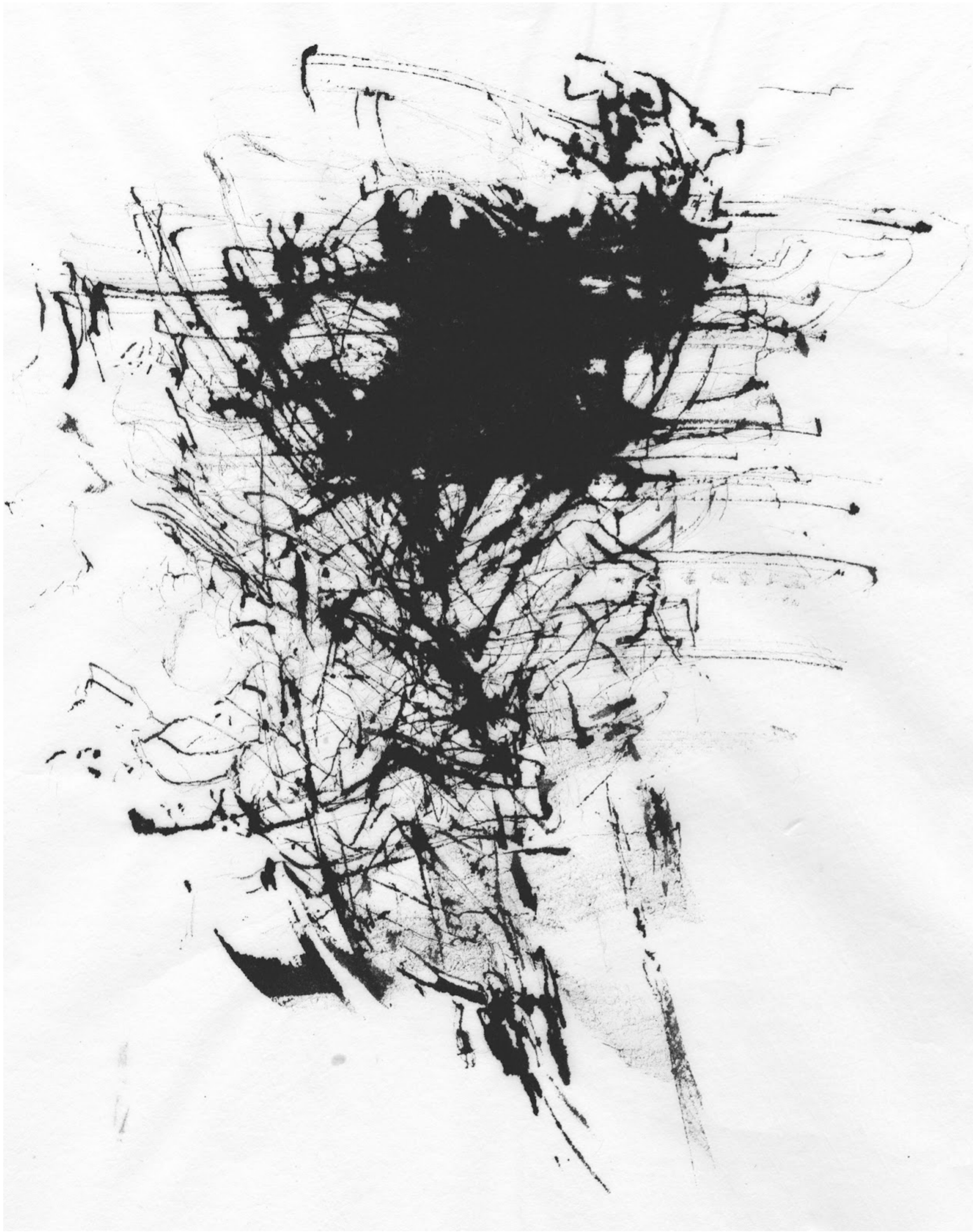
When going to Klovharun, my intention was to focus on writing, to finish a text for an exhibition at Röhsska Museum in Gothenburg within the Morus project (see bio). In addition to writing material, I also brought cocoons made by silk worms that I breed as part of the project…just in case I wanted to lay my hands on other things than the writing. And so it happened that I, in between my writing sessions, spotted and was indeed intrigued by the multitude of knaggar, the kind of hooks made by wooden branches that furnished the entire house. I counted and came to almost a hundred. It turned out that Tuulikki carved these, most practical and beautifully individual pieces. So, the residency on Klovharun not only inspired me to write a lot, but also to document this unexpected trace of former everyday life at Klovharun, to craft and carve what I had at hand (my pencils) and experimenting with various silk thread spinning methods. All in all, several hundred meters of silk thread was spun at Klovharun and will soon be included in the Morus exhibition at Röhsska. True inspiration is to be able to attend to the unexpected!

"True inspiration is to be able to attend to the unexpected!"

Anna Karlström is researcher and senior lecturer in heritage studies at Uppsala University, who has dedicated most of her work within academia to explore the politics of cultural heritage and relations to religion, identity, minorities, resistance and human rights. Her research is published in journals and books, such as Preserving impermanence (2009) and Archaeologies of 'us' and 'them' (2017). Furthermore, her research interests include the intangible values of heritage and she is particularly interested in living heritage and how pastness and heritage objects are used and cared for in the present. As part of this, she has explored art-based methods in her fieldwork and research through artist collaborations and poetic inquiry. Most recently, she is engaged in Morus, a scientific and artistic project about sericulture (breeding of silkworms and small-scale production of silk), including an international network that proposes home-sericulture, to engage local communities in historical and future silk production.

Photo: Tomas Angerth

Svein Størksen



Tove Jansson's work has been an inspiration for me, both for my work as an artist and publisher. The Klovharun island is a limited and balanced habitat that most of the year exists totally without human contact, and I wanted to visit it with a respectful and observing attitude. And I hoped to assimilate some of the same inspirational input that obviously was so important throughout Tove's life and artistic career. I didn't want to make the island a direct subject for my own artistic interpretation. I rather wanted to document parts of the place by facilitating to let nature itself make visual renderings, thus becoming a more direct and "true" expression. The wind is almost ever-present at Klovharun, it makes everything but the rocks being in a constant motion. It looks like the plants are dancing to an organic rhythm, or maybe they resemble the paint brushes of an artist. For my project I put black non-toxic ink on plants waving in the wind and then held a sheet of paper next to it. The result became renderings based on the plant species and the wind force, carrying evidence of a specific moment in a specific place.

"It looks like the plants are dancing to an organic rhythm, or maybe they resemble the paint brushes of an artist."

Svein Størksen is a Norwegian illustrator and publisher. He's educated at the National Academy of the Arts in Oslo with a Master Degree in graphic design and illustration. After working as a freelance illustrator for around 15 years, doing a wide range of commissions from book illustration to art installations, he's now the editor and owner of Magikon, which is a Norwegian publishing house specializing in picture books. Magikon is also a literary agency selling translation rights all over the world.

www.sveinstorksen.no www.magikon.no

Katie Engström

"best week of my whole life!"

Katie found the remote beauty of Klovharun to be beyond her wildest expectations, the week was truly transformational, the "best week of my whole life!" she said. She worked on embroidery whilst on the island, trying to capture the little house that Tove and Tuulikki built and lived in, through differing stitching methods. Katie is now planning a tapestry weaving of the island from an off-shore view, showing the land, sea, and skyscape.

Katie is a British citizen, born in 1965, married to a Swede, with three sons and four grandchildren. Even as a child, she was inspired to make things, to create art and objects of beauty, mostly using textiles of various sorts, including especially embroidery, tapestry weaving, and knitting.
She has gained much support and learning from her involvement in a Bewdley art group, which led to work in printmaking, experimenting with new styles and approaches. Katie practiced successfully as a medical doctor for many years, whilst also raising a family, but in her late forties realised that she was much more interested in nurturing her creative side rather than seeing patients! She retired and has spent much time making beautiful things and pictures.

Staffan Engström

Coming to Klovharun was an enormous thrill and a powerful encouragement for artistic engagement. The island is in a remote beautiful location, hardly changed from that place where the two talented artists, Tove and Tuulikki, wanted to be and to create their art and writing. It feels as if their very spirit and presence is imbued into the stones and buildings, especially with so little having changed since they were there. When you arrive on Klovharun, there are two compulsions which come upon you, one after the other. The first is just to sit and to BE, trying to absorb every flower, every wave and cloud and rock into yourself. I sat for hours, in different parts of the island, taking in the light, the colours and reflections. The second compulsion is to try to capture some of what you see, which is an almost impossible task, as it is so beautiful, so beyond what I could do. But you must try. It takes patience, and starting over more than once, but brings with it the gift of observation. To capture beauty, you must truly observe that beauty, and to observe gives deeper insights still.

"To capture beauty, you must truly observe that beauty…"

Staffan was born in Sweden in 1963, to an engineer and schoolteacher, and has vivid memories as a young boy of sitting with his parents and them reading the Moomin stories in his Swedish mother-tongue. After moving to the United Kingdom, he was able to develop an interest in painting and drawing, but sadly this creative passion had to be put to one side with the focus on education, making a living as a corporate manager and strategy consultant, and raising a family. Retirement has created a new opportunity for Staffan, to focus once more on this area of creativity, which he has found to be fulfilling and exciting. He has focused recently on a project to make pencil portraits of his extended family and close friends, and re-visiting landscape painting.

Madeleine Wallin

Klovharun has touched me deeply and will forever remain in my heart and soul.

The moment I jumped ashore, a sense of calm and a bubbling joy washed over me. It was like coming home. Nature embraced me in a way that reminded me of my childhood, a kind of natural belonging, where it was hard to tell where I ended and nature began. We were one.

The present was all that existed and it was liberating to let go of demands and the involuntary noise that often surrounds us, which made room for other things to take their place. My sister and I rediscovered a playfulness and were unusually giggly and laughed a lot. We became as close as we were in childhood.

The cottage itself provided security and a place to return to, but it was nature that kept calling to me. The rhythm of nature became the rhythm in me. The sun demanded my presence at dawn, made me aware of every shift in the light throughout the day, and left me at dusk with a sense of stillness and a call to reflection.

My stay at Klovharun awakened a creativity that had been dormant when time for other things had been allowed to take its place. What a treasure to recapture it!

”The rhythm of nature became the rhythm in me.”

Madeleine Wallin (b. 1966) lives in Hyssna, Sweden, and is currently writing a memoir about walking one’s own path. She has been creative all her life, primarily through painting and writing.

She is a mother of five and has worked for families for over 25 years, focusing on women’s invisible care work and children’s needs.

Madeleine is President of Haro, Sweden’s national organization for stay-at-home parents, and Secretary General of FEFAF, the European Federation of Parents and Carers at Home. Internationally, she has spoken at the United Nations, the European Parliament, and co-organized seminars at Rio+20 and 2025 in the British Parliament where Nobel laureate James Heckman spoke.

Her writing has been published in The Wall Street Journal and in the book Renaissance of the Family (2025). She has also been interviewed by the BBC and appeared in a documentary on Swedish radio.

Madeleine is co-founder and part-owner of Malwa Forest.

Katalin Trencsényi

NOTES ON AN ISLAND

How do you tune into an island?

It started with letting go. Letting go of my ego as a human being on top of the food chain and instead withdrawing myself, not disturbing the habitat here with my loud presence. Letting go of the idea that this place was for my entertainment, recreation, adventure, or anything else to extract or gain from it. Letting go of the idea that I had any more rights to be here or do the things I wanted than anyone or anything else belonging to this island.

It continued with acceptance. Accepting that things on the island are not here to serve my comfort, but on the contrary, I need to adjust my habits and ways of operating to the island's rules. Accepting that I am a guest here who also has responsibilities: being considerate of the island's fragile ecosystem, not doing any harm to it, and taking care of the place.

It followed up with learning: learning to read the signs and languages of this habitat. Treading gently, accepting my not knowing, and trying to observe, feel and understand with compassion how things work here and what the island and its various beings want to communicate with me.

They too were watching me and learning about my intentions and behaviour.

Upon my arrival, a gull landed on the rock facing the south-eastern window of the cabin, eyeing my moves as I was unpacking. The terns were flying near my head over the veranda, turning in my direction but keeping a safe distance – and I couldn't but admire their lean, white bodies and black caps that looked like the helmets of pilots in silent movies. The great skua by the lagoon, who followed with curious irony my first attempt at taking a dip in there, warned me that it wasn't my place to swim, and cackled when I retreated because the water was cold. The swallows, that skittered away every time I walked under their nest.

It felt like a dance in which both the island and I were trying to find our way…

Only small things happen on an island. Yet, its simple and mundane life is full of beauty, surprises, and wisdom. It taught me to slow down, take my time, pay full attention to things, and love them in a way that is not suffocating but freeing – love that gives everyone and everything space.

"It felt like a dance in which both the island and I were trying to find our way…"

Katalin Trencsényi (HU/UK) is an award-winning dramaturg, theatre-maker, and researcher based in London, who works in the fields of contemporary theatre, dance, and performance. She teaches at the University of the Arts Helsinki, and is currently writing her debut novel, entitled Palimpsest on Haru.

Anzu Takahashi

I was intrigued by what it must have been like for Tove and Tooti to live alone as partners on a remote island, in an isolated studio. Unlike life in Tokyo, where houses are packed close together, I was inspired by the ever-changing natural scenery in all directions, every day. In that environment with just the two of us, I was able to focus and really felt my senses sharpening. The cabin was simple, but everything inside, both the objects and the design, was well-chosen, and the figures matched perfectly wherever I placed them, as if they were alive. It was a lot of fun placing cats around different spots on the island.

(English translation supervision/Sumika Iijima)

"...I was able to focus and really felt my senses sharpening."

Anzu Takahashi is a figure artist leading the brand, "Real Animal Factory." Anzu studied graphic design at Musashino Art University in 1991 and worked on repairing and restoring damage to buildings since 1994. They make realistic animal figurines such as cats, dogs, tigers, and crocodiles under the name "Real Animal Factory" since 2006. They currently create cats in various poses. They photograph three types of cat figurines based on Tove's black cat Psipsina in various locations. In July 2025, they will exhibit at Wonder Festival, an event organized by Kaiyodo, the most well known Japanese figure manufacturer. They live in Tokyo, Japan.

Mami Hagiwara

"For a week, we spent a happy time without being disturbed by anything…"

Moomin is very popular in Japan. Mami grew up watching Moomin animations and reading the original novels. For a long time in Japan, it was said that Tove was single and spent her summers alone on a deserted island. When we found out that Tove was always with her partner Tooti, we thought that if we ever visited Klovharun, we would like to live with Mami and Anzu, not just for a short time on a tour. In the summer of 2024, that dream came true. We live together in Tokyo for a long time, but we are politically strangers because same-sex marriage is not possible here. In the time when Tove and Tooti lived, their relationship was a crime or a disease. On the island, we don't have to worry about what others think, and we can just be ourselves. For a week, we spent a happy time without being disturbed by anything, watching the beautiful sea and sky that changed with every moment. Although the strong wind and rough sea made us feel uneasy, the hut was very comfortable, and we felt protected. When we are in Japan, we fill the bathtub with hot water and wash our hair every day. Living on a waterless island has taught us a different way of life and strengthened us. We are now writing about our experience on the official Moomin blog and creating manga.

(English translation supervision/Sumika Iijima)

Nushi & Yashi
A unit consisting of Mami Hagiwara and Anzu Takahashi. Mami became an independent freelance writer in 1992 after working for a publishing company. Mami was involved in the launch of Japan's first magazine for sexual minority women, "Phryné", and was the editor-in-chief of "Anise". They currently write Moomin articles for publications such as "Moomin House" and "Moomin Quilts" (DeAgostini). They are currently serializing a blog about Moomin on the official Moomin website in Japan. The unit has been working together to create the manga "Tellkoto"(Cats tell us something) , which depicts the process of how they came to rescue cats since 2023. Anzu draws the pictures and Mami writes the text. They are currently posting their "Our road to Klovharun " on Instagram.

www.instagram.com/tellkoto