

# PIN+UP

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Featuring  
**DELFINA DELETTREZ, HANS KOLLHOFF,  
ROLU, PAULO MENDES DA ROCHA,  
VALERIO OLGIATI, TOM OF FINLAND  
AND MORE...**

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# TOM'S

**Welcome to Tom  
Of Finland's L.A.  
Sanctuary**

# PLACE

**Photography by Daniel Trese**



Hidden behind a tall eugenia hedge in the unassuming Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, at 1421 Laveta Terrace, stands an Arts-and-Crafts bungalow where Touko Laaksonen spent much of the last ten years of his life. Better known as Tom of Finland, Laaksonen produced an enormous body of work whose radical and utopian depictions of masculine confidence, fantasy, and pleasure influenced reality with such dominance that they liberated generations and became a permanent cornerstone of gay culture. Today, the Laveta Terrace bungalow is home to the Tom of Finland Foundation, run by Durk Dehner — a former model and Tom’s agent, friend, lover, muse, and business partner for many years — and his partner Sharp. An informal museum of Tom’s life, the foundation houses his archive as well as thousands of mementos from a career that spanned four decades. Art, leather, and dark-wood trim permeate the house, creating a heavy masculine energy, whether in the cozy ski-lodge-style living room or in the guest rooms, which are now used for artist’s residencies. But there are light touches too: a Tom of Finland cookie jar, two Michelangelos flanking the main bathroom’s sink, a fully-functioning phallic toilet flush, and a wall covered in celebrity photographs showing Dehner with the likes of Grace Jones and Liza Minnelli. The backyard, fitted out with a fun cage and an outdoor throne with peculiar openings, overlooks the Hollywood Hills. It is here, at a cabana-meets-boot-camp outdoor bar, that the foundation hosts its regular parties which, Dehner warns, are not necessarily for the faint of heart (a dungeon-style basement is reserved for selected visitors only).

But it’s not all fun and games for Dehner and Sharp. Under their direction, the foundation’s mission has expanded: as well as celebrating, preserving, and protecting Tom’s art, it is also an active community center, and promotes erotic art in general. All available wall space showcases works depicting some form of beauty, decadence, desire, hedonism, love, and lust. And while many appear to be by the master, they’re not all real Tom of Finlands. “Unlike most artists, Tom was never offended by others copying his style — he was always flattered,” says Dehner, who keeps the many donated Tom-inspired pieces in annual rotation. The foundation even commissions new pieces, like the trompe-l’œil murals with strategic holes that turn viewers into voyeurs.

There is one room, however, on the third floor, that has a very different aura. Quiet, uncluttered, almost monastic, with just a bed and a bare-bones drafting table, it was Tom’s private room. Since the artist’s death in 1991, Dehner and Sharp have preserved it exactly the way it was, with Tom’s leather jacket hanging by the bedside and his sharpened pencils on the desk. “Tom always enjoyed all the visitors and wild events we hosted here over the years,” says Dehner, “but through it all, he would always find time to slip away to work in the attic, putting in many hours, every day. He was absolutely driven to make his work. It was his life’s mission.”

Michael Bullock





















tom







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