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NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

January/Tammikuu 2010

Borderlands: Stories across Finnish-Russian Border Presented by: Minna Rainio



For our January program, Minna Rainio, Visiting Associate Professor, Government of Finland and Nancy Speer Chair for 2009-2020 at the University of Minnesota, will talk about "Borderlands," a video installation about the Finnish-Russian border that she created with her husband Mark Roberts, and about an exhibition by Finnish and other European artists that she is curating for the Nash Gallery at the University in January and February.

Minna Rainio, a photographer and media artist, studied photography at the Surrey Institute of Art and Design, England, and has an MA degree in audiovisual media culture from the University of Lapland, Finland. Rainio is currently working on her Ph.D. in Finland. She is interested in the political and ethical aspects of art and is looking into how installation art conveys non-linguistic experiences using image, sound, and space.

Rainio collaborates with her husband Mark Roberts to produce large-scale, multiple-screen video installations that deal with social and political issues. Their most recent body of work, "If you could see me now," is a trilogy of video installations that explore how different groups of people experience changing social positions and relations. The three works focus on people at the margins of society, either geographical or social, and look at the transformations they experience passing from one set of circumstances to another.

JANUARY FACAA PROGRAM

Minna Rainio
Friday, January 15
7:30 p.m.
International Institute
1694 Como Ave., St. Paul
If you need transportation, call
Marianne Wargelin
at 612-374-2718

Rainio has exhibited widely in Finland and Europe in solo and group exhibitions. Her recent exhibitions include Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Finnish Cultural Institute, Paris; Ludwig Forum für International Kunst, Germany; as well as international art biennials and triennials. In 2010, Rainio and Roberts will have a solo show at the Franklin Art Works, Minneapolis. (612) 872-7494. Minna Rainio's Web site: www.rainioroberts.com Katherine E. Nash Gallery, Regis Center of Art, University of Minnesota, 405 21st Ave. S., Minneapolis, 1/22 (opening) through 2/18/10

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President's Message

By Kaarina Kotkavuori

Happy New Year! I hope the holiday season was enjoyable for everyone. We are now on to a new year, and I am looking forward to the spring that will be here soon.

I had an excellent time at our Christmas party. It was a pleasure to have the beautiful singing of Diane Jarvi as our entertainer. It also gave me pleasure to award the Sauna Bucket to Al and Betsy Norgaard. They both do so much work in the Finnish community.

We will have a bake sale at our March program to raise additional money for the *Salolampi* Language Village scholarship fund. We hope all our members will join in the fund raiser. Please bring your baked goods to the March meeting and be generous in purchasing some of the items for sale. We will continue to have the basket for donations on the back table, next to the poster of the *Salolampi* Language Village.

The programs which included discussions of literature have been well received. We have received a book donation by Professor Richard Impola, which he has translated into English. We do not yet know how we will be disbursing the books, but they will be available soon.

We continue to seek new board members. We had a call committee two years ago that was successful. It has been suggested that we ask for a volunteer who will coordinate a call committee once again. The committee will call each of our members to ask if they will be on the board. We have three board members leaving in May so the need is urgent. Please consider volunteering to be on the board or to serve on the call committee. We all are need to pitch in.

I regret that I will not be at the January program as I have a commitment at my church. Jeanne Swope, our vice-president, will be at the podium welcoming you. Join us for coffee once again at the beginning of the evening, greet old and new friends, and enjoy the program.



Welcome New Members!

**Roger & Jan Luoma, Eden Prairie
Judith & Jon Matala, Carver
Judy Mikkola, Minneapolis
Eila & Scott Norberg, Apple Valley**

Tervetuloa!

Board Notes *By Stella Arola*



L-R Andreas Ostenso, Edith Boos, Jeanne Swope, Stella Arola, Jane Olson and Kaarina Kotkavuori

The board met at the home of Kaarina Kotkavuori on the evening of November 17th. Treasurer Andreas Ostenso gave his financial report and secretary Stella Arola provided the minutes of the last board meeting. Both reports were approved.

The *Pikkujoulu* dinner and program were discussed. There were only a few details that needed to be decided upon.

Andreas arranged to have a banner made for the Northern Lights Film Festival and we were all encouraged to attend and make this a big success.

Plans for our cultural display at the Festival of Nations in May are underway. The emphasis will be on the Kalevala epic.

Our next board meeting will be on January 12, 2010, at 7:30 p.m.

Conversational Finnish Class

Tuesdays, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

St. Anthony Library

Corner of Como and Carter Ave.

St. Paul

Everyone is welcome.

For more information, please call
Urho Rahkola at (651) 429-3319

European Photo/Video Artists Address Borders and Globalization at Nash Gallery

Exhibit includes artists who have shown in Venice Biennial

A selection of internationally renowned Finnish and European-based artists who deal with issues of dislocation and migration or challenge manifestations of mental and physical borders in a globalized world will have their work shown at the Katherine E. Nash Gallery beginning January 22. The artists approach these global and political issues from varying angles – some artworks are rooted in personal experience, others are based on investigation and direct engagement with different communities and people.

Many of the artworks in the exhibition throw into question ideas of national spaces, territory, and borders. The video installation *2 x 3 Borders* by Pauliina Salminen and Andres Jaschek creates a link between subtropical and arctic regions located in the border areas of six countries. Ursula Biemann's video essay *X-Mission* explores the logic of the refugee camp as one of the oldest extraterritorial zones. In their three-screen video installation *Borderlands*, Minna Rainio and Mark Roberts explore the once politically charged, today remarkably anonymous yet richly metaphoric border between Finland and Russia. Maria Ylikoski's video portrait *Tuula* explores migration and dislocation through the personal narrative of a Finnish-American woman. Katarina Zdjelar's video piece *Don't Do It Wrong* investigates how social rituals build and promote a sense of belonging. Her video *There Is No Is* highlights the physical aspects of speech through the difficult vocalization of foreign words. In Adel Abidin's video *Common Vocabularies*, a seven-year-old Iraqi girl learns a vocabulary of war, one that has become commonplace for Iraqi children today. Jaakko Heikkilä's panoramic photographs engage with the issues of nationalism, history, and diaspora in relation to Armenian diaspora.

Almos(t)here is curated by Minna Rainio, the Government of Finland/David and Nancy Speer visiting professor at the University of Minnesota. She will be teaching and creating programming in Minneapolis at least through the end of 2010.

Zdjelar, Abidin, and Heikkilä have shown in the Venice Biennial. The opening reception on January 22 will include remarks by the Consul General of Finland, Ambassador Ritva Jolkkonen.

Related Events

Artist talks, begin at 7:00 p.m., In Flux, Regis Center for Art, University of Minnesota West Bank, 405 21st. Ave. S., Minneapolis. The tentative schedule: Katarina Zdjelar, February 11; Jaakko Heikkilä, April 22; Andres Jaschek, TBA; Adel Abidin, TBA.

***Pikkujoulu* Celebration**

By Beth Jarvis

Pikkujoulu was celebrated on December 12 at Christ Church Lutheran in south Minneapolis. According to Andreas Ostenso, FACA treasurer, 110 tickets were sold. This is about half the attendance at *Pikkujoulu* celebrations in years past. A long-time FACA member noted that about half of the attendees are not FACA members.

Festivities began with the traditional glögg, served with shaved almonds and raisins (see recipe, pg. 7). Bud Berry served as *glögg*-tender. President Kaarina Kotkavuori welcomed the group and recognized board members and several others. She noted that a small *tori* was set up in the back of the room, staffed by Don Salin (sporting a *tupsulakki*) and Judy Bollar, who was selling jam (also available at Finn Bistro). Andreas then read the Christmas story from Luke 2:1-14 in Finnish. That was followed by a dinner prayer read in Finnish and English by Kara Middleton.

Dinner was catered by Soile Anderson's Deco Catering. The menu featured fruit-stuffed pork loin, poached salmon with dill sauce, two kinds of bread with both plain and herb butter, beet salad, dilled cucumbers, herring, carrot casserole, rutabaga casserole, new red potatoes, a baby greens salad, and carrot, sausage and onion salad. A white layer cake torte was served with strawberry jam and milk chocolate between the layers and topped with fresh fruit and whipped cream. FACA volunteers served coffee, cleared tables, and served dessert.

Diane Jarvi provided the music and was accompanied by Ralph Tuttila. Ralph and Delores Salin then lead the group in singing several Christmas carols.

Greg Peck appeared in the role of Santa Claus and invited everyone to sit on Santa's knee.

The Sauna Bucket award for member(s) of the year went to Al and Betsy Norgard in recognition of their commitment to FACA and willingness to help when-ever needed.

Pikkujoulu closed with "Silent Night" sung by all.



Don Salin and Ernie Bantari at the tori.



Some of the food.



Ralph Tuttila and Diane Jarvi entertain.



Betsy and Al Norgard, Sauna Bucket winners



Norwegian exchange student meets Santa.



Kaarina asks for a Corvette.

Photos: Betty Ruskanen, Urho Rahkola, Beth Jarvis

Thank You

By Kara Middleton

Many thanks to all of the volunteers who helped to make our *Pikkujoulu* dinner a success! Thanks to their industry and creativity, the tables were beautifully decorated with cedar greens and candles; and the room was sparkling with Christmas lights. Thanks to those who volunteered to serve coffee and dessert, our guests were able to sit comfortably after dinner and enjoy the music.

As a first-time attendee to *Pikkujoulu*, I especially appreciated the traditional Finnish food. The potatoes and rye bread and rutabaga casserole made me think of my relatives in Finland. And I enjoyed seeing all of the FACA members who have made this event a Christmas tradition. It was a nice way to bring together our Finnish heritage and the observance of Christmas.

Thank you especially to volunteers Mike and Carol Krutch, Kathy Chambliss, Bud Berry, Tiina and Ed Watts, Seija Rahkola, Jeanne Swope, Stella Arola, Edith Boos, Jane Olson, Delores and Dan Salin, Kathy Jackson, Kaisa Taipale, and Andreas Ostenso. Without all of you we could not have had such a lovely evening.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FACA needs your ideas and your helping hand. If you can help with any of the committees or events, please return this form. Thanks!

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Hospitality |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival of Nations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Phone |

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Return to FACA, P.O. Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708 or bring to the next program.

November 2009: Pauliina Raittila

By Jeanne Swope

In November, Pauliina Raittila talked about education and assessment of students on the upper level of a Finnish comprehensive school. She provided a basic picture of Finnish education and presented a case study.

Pauliina Raittila is a Fulbright Finnish Language and Culture Teaching Assistant during 2009–2010 in the Department of German, Scandinavian, and Dutch at the University of Minnesota. She has a B.A. from the University of Helsinki and is now studying for a master's degree, with the goal of becoming a Finnish teacher (counterpart to our high school English teacher).

Finnish Education

In Finland, public education begins with the comprehensive school, where a child begins at the age of seven or eight. The comprehensive school has nine grades, one through six in the lower level, and seven through nine in the upper level.

After the comprehensive school, a student may attend an upper secondary school for three years with the goal of going on to a university education after taking a matriculation exam, or a vocational school to prepare for working life and perhaps go on to a polytech. It is also possible to combine both upper secondary paths. At the university level, the usual end degree is a masters (automatically, students pursue both a bachelor's and master's degree).

The Finnish comprehensive school was created in the 1970s. Before then, children attended a folk school for six years. Often it was not possible to attend the upper secondary school due to expense. The intention in the 1970s was equal educational opportunities for everyone for the first nine years.

In grades one through six, children have class teachers to instruct, guide, and assess their work. In grades seven through nine, there are subject teachers. Schools are organized by local authorities; a child goes to the school near his or her home. Instruction and materials are free; private schools are uncommon. There is a national core curriculum for basic education. The objectives and core contents for each subject are set nationally, and materials and methods are chosen locally. The national objectives include descriptions of good performance and assessment and performance goals.

Pupils receive grades from four through ten (fail to excellent). The national goal is for each pupil to receive an eight. Children are assessed continuously from year to year, then carefully assessed on the objectives during the ninth grade. Although there are no special final exams in ninth grade, it's important for an individual to meet the national objectives, because as they go on to higher education, it is assumed that they have done this.

Teaching and Assessing Writing

In teaching language and literature, the schools take a wide perspective on texts and literacy—radio programs, songs, and so forth, are also included. The goal is to give pupils the skills to interpret texts and to write clearly themselves.

How Does the Teacher Assess?

Pauliina Raittila put together a case study about how a teacher assesses a specific assignment. What is the reality? How does one proceed? What are the results? She wanted to describe the process from the teacher's point of view. Using a method of qualitative analysis, she conducted and recorded a 30-minute interview with a teacher in a small Finnish town, and then analyzed a transcript of it. She used open-ended questions that covered her areas of interest. The 14 student texts had been marked by teacher, with corrections on the pages and feedback at the end of the paper. The texts received grades from four through ten; "plus," "minus," and half-points were also used.

Pauliina looked for correlations between the marked texts and the criteria the teacher used. Students were to write in their own words, cover the essential topics, and structure their essay logically. All of these areas showed up in the marking and criteria. Higher grades were associated with positive feedback, such as "brought up causal explanations," "used narrow and/or broad discussion," "showed how things are related to each other." Structure and content were more important than fluency of language in this particular assignment. However, Pauliina noted that students with high language fluency were rewarded. Because the assignment had multiple purposes, the teacher had to consider and balance many things to arrive at a "whole" consideration.

Pauliina was a charming, well-organized, and very interesting speaker. She will continue at the University of Minnesota for this academic year, then return to her studies in Helsinki.

Pieniä Paloja

- Finland has become the first country in the world to declare broadband Internet access a legal right. The move is aimed at bringing web access to rural areas, where access has been limited.
- The movie *Napapiirin sankarit* is being filmed in Lapland. The Finnish title translates as “Heroes of the Arctic Circle,” although the official English language title is *Lapland Odyssey*. Erkki Kautto, director of business for the City of Rovaniemi, believes that film may prove to be a major business in Finnish Lapland. “The City of Rovaniemi has set as its goal that Lapland should become the centre of the film content business in Finland,” he says.
- The 2012 European Athletics Championships will be hosted by Helsinki. The championships will take place from June 25 to July 1.
- When it comes to decorating for Christmas, Finns have been regarded as conventional decorators. Red, green, and white are the most popular colors. An angel is by far the most popular decoration, but the crown of the Christmas tree is a star tree-topper.
- There are reportedly as many as 1,500 or more lynx in Finland. Nineteen have been fitted with GPS collars as part of a study to look into their territories, movements, and predatory habits. The lynx preys on hares, rodents, grouse, wild boar, foxes, white-tailed deer, and also reindeer in the far north.
- Fashions change and mens’ fur hats are becoming something of an endangered species around Helsinki. Back in the 1970s, the fur cap and fur hat were the most common form of male headgear in the winter months. Nowadays people wear woollen hats or *pipos*, or the occasional baseball caps.
- Finland has decided not to accept prisoners being held by the United States at its military base in Guantánamo.
- Striker Laura Österberg Kalmari has signed a contract to play next season for Sky Blue FC, a team from New Jersey playing in the Women’s Professional Soccer league. Österberg Kalmari has made 120 appearances for Finland, scoring 36 goals in the process.

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Vänskä conducts *Suite from Karelia and Kullervo*

“Vänskä conducts Sibelius,” Minnesota Orchestra with the YL Male Choir, 8 p.m., Friday, February 26.

Finlandia Foundation-Twin Cities Chapter has reserved a bloc of 40 tickets for the concert featuring Osmo Vänskä conducting Sibelius’ *Suite from Karelia and Kullervo*. These are among the earlier works of Jean Sibelius and among his most well known. *Kullervo* includes two soloists and will feature the renowned YL Finnish Male Choir from the University of Helsinki. The soloists are Päivi Nisula, mezzo, and Hannu Niemelä, baritone.

The YL Finnish Male Choir, directed by Matti Höykki, performed in Minneapolis at Northrup Auditorium in 2002 for FinnFest. The choir is more than 100 years old and has performed around the world. It is distinguished as being the choir for which Sibelius wrote a number of his choral works.

The 40 reserved tickets are on the main level in the center section. The cost of the tickets is \$59 (regular price is \$69). Prior to the concert, beginning at 7 p.m., a lecture will present background to the two orchestral suites and is scheduled to introduce some of the guest performers. To reserve your ticket for this concert—which will likely sell out—e-mail Betsey Norgard at norgard@winternet.com or call (651) 786-5988. The deadline to reserve is January 25.

Glögg Recipe from *Pikkujoulu* Dinner

Many of our guests at Pikkujoulu remarked that they would like to have the recipe for the *glögg* that we served. Here it is. Enjoy!

- 1 gal. apple juice or cider
- 1 liter black currant juice
- 4 sticks cinnamon
- 30 cloves
- 2 T dried citrus peel
- 1 T cardamom (coarsely ground works well)

Heat all together in pot on stove and simmer for 20-30 minutes. Strain and serve hot. (Can be chilled and served cold but is best hot.) To serve, place a few raisins and slivered almonds in bottom of cup, then fill. Makes about 20 cups.



Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.
P.O. Box 580708
Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708

FACA

Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc. is an organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the cross-cultural heritage of Americans with Finnish ancestry.

Information

(612) 374-2718
www.finnfaca.org

FACA CALENDAR

Jan 9 Ameriikan Poijat 20th anniversary concert, with soprano Eeva Savolainen and folklorist John Berquist telling tales of the people whose lives were touched by this music. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave. S., Minneapolis. 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$15 (students \$8) at the door. Proceeds from the concert benefit the preservation of the church building, a National Historic Landmark. Information: friendsofCCL.org or call (651) 797-2161.

Jan 12 FACA Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Jan 15 FACA monthly program, 7:30 p.m., International Institute of Minnesota

Jan 17 Finnish Culture Through Movies group, 6:00 p.m., *Koirankynnen leikkaaja* <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0349691/> Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave S., Minneapolis. More information: (651) 428-3155.

Jan 30 *Heikinpäivä* is set for January 30, with events throughout the week leading up to the primary festival day. Hancock, Mi. More: pasty.com/heikki/sched.html

Feb 14 Traditional *Laskiainen* celebration, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., Como Park Ski Chalet. In addition to the outdoor fun, sledding, cross country and downhill skiing, and

some '*lumibandy*' (snow hockey), there will be pea soup and *laskiaispulla* in the chalet. Como Park Ski Center, 1431 N. Lexington Parkway, Saint Paul. (651) 488-9673. More: suomikoulu@minnesotafinnish.org

Feb 21 Finnish Culture Through Movies group 6:00 p.m. *Pahat Pojat* http://www.solarfilms.com/elokuvat/kaikki/pahatpojat/en_GB/badboys/ Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave S., Minneapolis. More information: (651) 428-3155.

Feb 26 Minnesota Orchestra, Vanska conducts Sibelius. For reserved, discounted group tickets at \$59 each, e-mail norgard@winternet.com or call (651) 786-5988. Deadline to reserve is January 25. (See pg.7.)

Mar 7 Church service and reception honoring Martti Ahtisaari, Nobel Peace Prize laureate 2008 and former president of Finland. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Details coming in February newsletter.

Mar 12 Rajaton Finnish Vocal Ensemble, 8:00 p.m., Orchestra Hall. The six members of this a cappella group have already thrilled Orchestra Hall audiences with their unique take on the music of rock group Queen and '70s pop group ABBA. For additional information: minnesotaorchestra.org