

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

May/Toukokuu 2007

Making Landscape Come Alive Susan Harstad, Art Historian

What do you see when you look at landscape? Realistic, photographic images? Small images of flowers or massive mountains and oceans? Or is nature more symbolic, evocative to you? When you think of Finland, what landscape comes to mind?

From June 24-Sept. 2, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts will host a major exhibit, "*A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting 1840-1910*," containing more than 100 paintings by Nordic artists. The exhibit is organized into periods of landscape painting—nature as majestic and awesome, nature as exacting and real, nature as mood-evoking, nature as symbolic. In the different countries, landscape took on different perspectives—in Finland, for example, nature served an important role in developing national identity.

Art historian Susan Harstad will help make the exhibit come alive by showing images from the exhibit; introducing the artists, primarily the Finnish artists; and by explaining contexts in which they approached their art. Learning about the artists—such as Akseli Gallén-Kallela, Pekka Halonen, Ellen Thesleff, Hugo Simberg, and Eero Järnefelt—and the significance their particular paintings had in Finnish culture will bring life to the artwork on the museum walls.



MAY FACCA PROGRAM

Nordic Landscape Art
Friday, May 18
7:30 p.m.
International Institute
1694 Como Ave., St. Paul
If you need transportation, call
Marianne Wargelin
at 612-374-2718

If you have a favorite picture or photo of Finnish "landscape," bring it to the meeting to create FACCA's own exhibit of landscapes for the evening.

Susan Harstad works full time at FinnStyle in Minneapolis. She has bachelor's degrees in art history and art education; and a master's degree in art history from the University of St. Thomas. She first became involved with *Salolampi* in 1987 as a villager, and has been on staff since 1990, currently as ethnic music and arts coordinator. She has traveled to Finland three times and hopes to return this summer.

Image: Wild Angelica, Akseli Gallén-Kallela

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President's Message

By Alan Norgard

I was reading the *Finland Focus on the Economy* magazine this week and an article on “smart clothing” caught my eye. It seems that some ingenious Finns have found ways to make clothing that can monitor things like heart rates and body stress and feed that information into a wrist computer. Now, instead of having to be in a laboratory hooked up to all kinds of wires and sensors, athletes can be on a running track or ski trail and acquire the same data under real conditions. The sensors are actually woven into the fabric, not just sewed on, and it is reported to be very comfortable to wear. The company, Clothing+, also makes children’s snowsuits with illuminating fibers to replace the more common reflective cloth strips. These technologies are achieved by replacing the plastic in electronic components with textiles, making a cloth that is comfortable, lighter, and looks better also. Although the clothing is not yet commonplace, the manufacturers hope to change that soon. Other ideas in the works include runner’s clothing that can heat or cool you as the situation warrants, and clothes that can “talk” to cars and warn them of your presence.



For those of us who love rye breads, the place to be is Finland. I haven’t seen it myself yet, but it seems you can get a “McRye” burger at McDonald’s in Finland! It makes sense—McDonald’s tries to give a local flavor (no pun intended) to their menu in different countries, and Finns love their rye breads. Rye is also Finland’s most important source of nutritional fiber and other grains are now beginning to catch up. How about a nice Italian dinner of oat pasta and a rye baguette? It’s out there! Maybe you would prefer some bread made from rice, corn, buckwheat, tapioca, or potato? All these are available for people who need gluten-free products, and a Finnish bakery making them is the largest of its kind in Europe. Maybe I have the Festival of Nations café on my mind yet, but maybe the McRye might be a hit...?

This month will mark the end of our FACA programs, but make sure you watch for all the upcoming events this summer and fall, ending with a big splash in December with the Independence Day festivities. Watch the *Kalenteri* for details as well as the MinnesotaFinnish web pages and probably some flyers in the mail. It should be a busy summer and I hope to see you at all the events!

Welcome New Members!
Leona Kirkham of Minneapolis, MN
Roy Rudolph of Minneapolis, MN

Tervetuloa!

Salolampi Scholarship Recipients

FACA awarded the following students \$100 each for the one-week program at *Salolampi*:

Kylie Almendinger and Luc Almendinger, Oak Grove, grandchildren of Joan Selover; Emily Overtoom, Pine City, niece of Junelle Bernard and Katarina Watts, Coon Rapids, daughter of Ed and Tiina Watts.

The following students were awarded \$200 for the two-week program at *Salolampi*:

Selina Erstad, St. Paul, daughter of Richard Erstad and Keshia Hietala, Albuquerque, New Mexico, grandchild of John and Dixie Luoma.

The \$500 *Kisarit* folk dancers four-week for credit program scholarship was awarded to: Anna Kuure-Kinsey, St. Anthony, daughter of Bernice Kuure and Barry Kinsey.

Congratulations to each of you!

FinnFest 2008

The Duluth area Finnish-American community has been bustling with excitement and planning for FinnFest 2008. Entitled "Sharing the Spirit of Finland," the event will be held July 23-27, 2008. The event will be held at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center (DECC). Located on the shore of Lake Superior and within easy walking distance of many hotels, restaurants and shopping areas, the DECC will be able to accommodate almost all of the FinnFest events under one roof. Mark your calendars and look for more information to follow.

Board Notes *By Luella Zibell*



L-R: Andreas Ostenso, Luella Zibell, Barbara Nikula Owens, Alan Norgard, Kaarina Kotkavuori, Floyd Niskanen

The visit of the Finnish Ambassador to the Twin Cities on April 15 was the subject of discussion at the Board meeting. Alan and Betsey Norgard represented FACA and enjoyed meeting the ambassador and others in the visiting group.

After review and discussion of the regular reports of the secretary and treasurer, the remaining agenda items included the Festival of Nations, the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, Finnish Consortium events, the Nordic Art exhibit opening in June at the Minnesota Institute of Arts, and reports from the Vice President/Programs and Special Events and Hospitality chairs.

The open board positions continue to be a concern—we encourage and invite members to serve FACA in this way. The annual meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 18, 2007.

Baking Day a Huge Success

By Junelle Bernard and Merja Wilenius

A big *KIITOS* from Junelle and Merja to all who helped make our 2007 Baking Day a success. Our crew worked like a finely tuned machine and turned out 60 cakes, 180 dozen cookies and 15 dozen *piirakkaa* in record time! These items will be offered for sale in the Finnish Cafe at the Festival of Nations, May 3-6. Thank you to: Pam and Urho Rahkola, Betty and Aune Ruskanen, Stu and Laura Bernard, Dan and Delores Salin, Andreas Ostenso, Kaarina Kotkavuori, Linda Davis, Carol Pesola, Marge Stewart, Gloria Thorpe, Dixie Luoma, Kathy Chambless and Bob Katvala. We couldn't have done it without you!

Nordic Art in Minneapolis this Summer

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts is the only North American stop for a major Nordic art exhibit coming this summer. FACA members will get an exhibit preview at the monthly meeting on May 18 from Sue Harstad.

“A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting 1840-1910,” opens June 24 and runs through Sept. 2. The exhibit showcases 107 landscape paintings and explores Nordic attitudes to nature and the importance of landscape, especially as a symbol of national identity. Finnish artists represented include Akseli Gallén-Kallela, Eero Järnefelt, Pekka Halonen, Hugo Simberg, Ellen Thesleff, and Fanny Churberg, as well as Nordic leading artists Edvard Munch, Carl Larsson, Prins Eugen, and Bruno Liljefors.

Organized by the Nordic national galleries, the exhibit opened at the Ateneum Art Museum in Helsinki last spring. It has already been shown in Stockholm, Oslo, and will close in Copenhagen.

From July 12-15, Twin Cities folks will be able to join with visitors coming to Minneapolis for the art exhibit as part of a tour sponsored by Finlandia Foundation-Twin Cities. Included in this will be a visit to Christ Church Lutheran for a luncheon with guest speaker architect David Salmela, and a reception with the tour group.

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts has scheduled a number of Finnish-related events during the summer, some involving local performers. Highlights are:

- July 12, lecture by Leena Ahtola-Moorhouse, chief curator at the Ateneum Art Museum in Helsinki (Tickets \$5; free to MIA members)
- July 15, piano recital by Tuomas Kyyhkynen, Sibelius Academy (free)
- Aug. 4 and 11—Finnish films: *See article at right for details.*

For an updated list of events and information, go to www.artsmia.org and www.minnesotafinnish.org.

Let's Go To the Movies!

In conjunction with the upcoming exhibition *“A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting, 1840–1910”* three Finnish movies will be shown at the Minnesota Institute of Arts, Pillsbury Auditorium. The price, per movie is \$6, \$3 for museum members.

“Tommy and the Wildcat” Poika ja ilves (1998) 102 minutes, in English, directed by Raimo O. Niemi. This film tells the touching story of twelve year-old Tommy, who moves with his dad from the city to a farm in the northernmost wildlife park in the world. Tommy befriends a captive lynx, which he sets free when the park decides to sell it abroad. Born and bred in captivity, the lynx cannot survive in the wild without Tommy's help. Tommy succeeds at his task until a poacher begins to hunt the wild cat, which forces Tommy and the lynx into a life and death struggle for their very survival. This is a film that will enchant people of all ages, however, it is particularly appealing to children who will identify with Tommy. Noon showing, Saturday, August 4.

“Mosku – lajinsa viimeinen” (2003) 139 minutes, in Finnish with English subtitles, directed by Tapio Suominen. A film of the legend of Mosku, who was a rugged individual and a legendary character in the history of Finland. Mosku was a “reindeer ranger” in the lawless frontier land of Northeastern Finland in the early part of the 20th century. The film plays a bit like an American Western, albeit one set in Finland's Lapland rather than Monument Valley. The cinematography highlights the beautiful if remote wilderness of Finnish Lapland. Kai Lehtinen plays the role of Mosku much in the manner that Clint Eastwood might. 2:15 p.m. showing, Saturday Aug. 4.

“Dog Nail Clipper” Koirankynnen leikkaaja (2004) 105 minutes, in Finnish with English subtitles, directed by Markku Pölönen. This beautiful film, which is set in the late 1940s, is a lyrical rumination on the challenges and, ultimately, the resilience of the human spirit. Dog Nail Clipper tells the story of an intelligent young soldier, Mertsu, played by the excellent actor Peter Franzen, who is challenged to find his place amongst his countrymen after surviving a serious head injury in WWII. The breathtaking cinematography by Kari Sohlberg captures the beauty of the forests of Northern Finland. This picture was awarded 5 Jussis, the Finnish Oscar, all coming in major categories. Saturday Aug. 11, 2:15 p.m.

Pillsbury Auditorium is located at 2400 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis. For more information call (612)870-6323.

Crime and Punishment in Finland: A Cross-National Comparative Perspective

The April program was presented by Professor Jukka Savolainen who is a visiting professor at the University of Minnesota. He is here through the Government of Finland and the David and Nancy Speer visiting professorship program. Dr. Savolainen is presently on leave from the National Institute of Legal Policy in Finland. He has taught at Western Washington University and at the University of Helsinki. He earned his Ph.D from the State University in New York.

Savolainen started the presentation by saying he would focus the program on the comparative perspective of homicides in Finland and the USA. He stated that Finland is not immune to brutal crimes and it occurs in all countries. His charts showed the crime rates and incarceration rates for many countries. The US crime rate is about average, but its prisoner rate per capita is the highest in the world. Finland is almost the polar opposite with high homicide rates and almost the lowest prisoner rate. He then compared Finland to Minnesota which is close in population size. The two have comparable homicides, but Minnesota still had almost 2 1/2 times the prisoner rate of Finland even though it is the least punitive of the states.

He went through a few examples of brutal crimes in Finland and the sentences which seemed very lenient by our standards, even for repeat offenders. He also showed how the Finnish media didn't sensationalize the crimes, but only had short side bar articles of the crime. The tabloids would have larger articles with pictures. The US media sensationalizes the incidents and continues to headline the crime for many days which seem to affect the sentencing. Another reason Finland tends to be lenient is that they belong to the Nordic Countries and try to have their crime and sentencing comparable to the other Nordic countries.

Savolainen concluded by talking about some of the reasons for the crimes and showed charts where a high concentration of the crimes occur in the poor areas of the inner cities and ghettos. But he stated it was not just the inequality, but the spatial segregation (neighbors), segregation of the schools (classmates), segregation of occupation (colleagues), segregation of media (role models), segregation of dating and marriage (family), segregation of leisure (leagues and activities) and the limited personal contacts by or with social groups.

Editor's Note

As I read through the copy I have received for this issue I am amazed at the variety of social and cultural opportunities coming up this summer! As a fan of *Conga Se Menne*, I have my calendar already marked for the Blueberry Festival up in Ely. The lakes up north should even be open by then!

One of my families favorite musical groups is *Apocalyptica*. My daughter was exposed to the band while visiting friends in Germany. She brought home music from their first CD, which was made up of heavy metal band *Metallica* covers. It is great to hear cellos playing heavy rock on what is generally known as a classical instrument! *Apocalyptica* consists of three classically trained cellists who graduated from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. You may have heard their music on different soundtracks or as theme music for video games. So far the band has sold over two million albums worldwide and has performed in more than 30 countries, including supporting *Metallica* on two different occasions. They are in the studio working on their next CD. If you're interested in learning more, you can hear them for yourself at www.apocalyptica.com.

My son Jacob is getting more interested in his Finnish roots. He listens to my Finnish language tapes while driving, has picked up a couple of books from grandma and even baked Finnish pancakes a couple of times! I'm still waiting for my breakfast invitation.

FACA Membership

A one-year membership provides you with eight issues of this newsletter plus other benefits for \$25. To subscribe or renew, complete this form and mail with your check to FACA, P.O. Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708. (Check mailing label for membership expiration date.)

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Membership Challenge!

By *Andreas Ostenso*

A number of things impressed me about FACA after I discovered it in 2002; the monthly programs were consistently interesting and of a high quality. The members were welcoming and friendly. FACA definitely threw the best *Pikkujoulu* party I had ever attended.

If all this wasn't enough, membership was a bargain. Yet, in spite of all that FACA had to offer, I was surprised that there were not more members. This seemed particularly curious as Minnesota has the most Finnish-Americans of any state in the union, both in terms of absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total population.

As treasurer, I can now report that year-over-year membership dues and meeting attendance have declined modestly since I joined the Board in 2004. The reasons behind this troubling trend are unclear. What is clear is that, the average age of the group has increased with time. The way I interpret this is that FACA has really done something right in order to keep people coming back. I also think this means that FACA has not gotten out the message that there really is something interesting going on at the International Institute every third Friday of the month.

A vital membership is essential to maintain a vital organization. From a financial point of view, there are "economies of scale" benefits to a growing membership. It would certainly help insure that FACA remains solvent and can continue to offer high quality monthly programs. Indeed, growth of the membership is one of the Board's main priorities.

I believe that FACA can sell itself on its own merits. It is interesting to note, that our most publicized event, *Pikkujoulu*, is also the best attended. Over 25% of the attendees are non-members. This being said, I am certain that attendance would be even higher were we able to really get the word out. The same likely would apply to the programs and membership numbers in general. In short, FACA needs to be more proactive in finding new members. While the Finnish-American community is our natural target population, the programs clearly have a broader appeal. This is

especially true here in Minnesota. FACA is fundamentally a civic organization and everyone is welcome.

To this end, the Board will put our money (that is to say, "your money") where our mouth is. We are offering one free adult *Pikkujoulu* ticket to the person who can recruit the most new members by December 1st, 2007. Second prize will be a one year dues waiver. For the purposes of this challenge, new members may include former members whose memberships have lapsed for more than a year.

As always, the Board is open to suggestions about how to address this issue. Feel free to contact me or any of the Board members with any questions or concerns.

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
Floyd Niskanen at 763-540-0121.

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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Laskiainen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship | <input type="checkbox"/> Pikkujoulu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival of Nations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Phone |

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

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

Pieniä Paloja

- A **thank you** to the April coffee hosts Dan and Delores Salin, and Bob and Merryalice Jones.
 - The **Finnish football** (soccer) season is now underway, and with over 110,000 people playing in organised teams, it's the biggest participation sport in Finland.
 - Many **Finnish kids** spend their summers working. Most are seasonal jobs like selling ice cream, working in outdoor cafes, restaurants and tourist attractions, or picking strawberries. Other summer jobs are created by the departure of the regular workers on their summer holidays.
 - This spring, **Finlandia University** honored their new alumni as 112 graduates walked proudly across the stage at the Paavo Nurmi Center in Hancock. This marks the 110th graduation commencement at Finlandia University and the first 18 graduates in the school's new four-year nursing program.
 - It seems that the most significant single factor directly responsible for the **decline of the Finnish forest reindeer population** is the growing wolf population. In 2001 the Finnish forest reindeer population in Kainuu was established at 1,700. In a March helicopter count, only 960 were located.
 - The **Finnish community in Columbia**, South America numbers under 50 people. Some 12,000 people (about 10%) of Thunder Bay, Canada are Finnish descendants.
 - **Helsinki**, the city of Sibelius, known as a center for innovative technology and design, now stakes its claim as an urban hotspot, according to Smithsonian magazine. Find out more at: <http://www.smithsonianmagazine.com/issues/2007/march/helsinki.php>
 - According to *Forbes Cleanest Cities*, Helsinki ranks #3. They go on to say, "Helsinki is Finland's gateway to international trade and communication. It is the political capital of the country and its business, media and cultural center. It has a slightly aged tram and subways system and a light rail commuter system."
- More Calendar*
- June 14** Singing Strings will perform the Kalevala theme piece "Väinämöisen synti." Performing with Singing Strings will be Julie Hanson-Geist, soprano. On drums, John Driscoll. 6:30 p.m., South View School Auditorium 4725 S View Ln, Edina. Info: lepakheli@msn.com. This event is sponsored by Edina Community Services.
- June 17th** A Midsummer's Evening with Finn Hall at the Park Pavilion in Cromwell. Dancing 6:30 p.m. –10:00 p.m.
- June 22-24** The Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival Celebrate the unique cultures of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Scandinavian America and experience the finest in Nordic Entertainment, Arts, Traditions and Contemporary Cultures at the Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival in Fargo and Moorhead. For more info www.scandinavianhjemkomstfestival.org.
- June 22-24** Celebrate Midsummer *Juhannus* at Palmquist Farm (800) 519-2558 www.palmquistfarm.com Brantwood, WI 54513
- June 24-Sept. 2** *A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting 1840-1910*. Minneapolis Institute of Arts www.artsmia.org
- July 26-28** Finnfest USA 2007 Ashtabula, Ohio, "A Great Lake: A Great Heritage." <http://finnfestusa2007.com> for more information and to register.
- July 28** *Conge Se Menne* at the Blueberry Art Festival, Ely.
- Aug 5** Nordic Dance Party with Finn Hall, Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Tango demo and lesson as well as other dance participation for all the family. This free event will be held at Target Park at 2:00 p.m. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2400 Third Avenue South, 612 870-3204 For more info see www.artsmia.org.
- Aug. 26** *Pesäpallo* (Finnish baseball) game sponsored by *Suomi-koulu*.
- Oct. 12** Concert by *Saana* Ensemble, part of the Leiv Eriksson International Festival, 7:30 p.m., Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, 924 E. 21st St., Mpls., \$10. For info, see www.mindekirken.org.
- Nov. 4** (tentative) All Saints' Day Service, Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave. S., Mpls.
- Dec. 1** (tentative) FACA *Pikkujoulu* dinner.
- Dec. 8** 90th Anniversary Independence Day Celebration, sponsored by Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities Chapter.
- Dec. 15** (tentative) *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* service of the "most beautiful Christmas songs."



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

May 11-13 *Salolampi* Spring Work Weekend.

May 13-19 *Salolampi* Spring Adult Week.

May 12 *Saana* Ensemble in Concert, Noon Join this Finnish music group for a musical hour and a chance to purchase their new CD. *Finnstyle*, *Gaviidae Common I*, 651 Nicollet Mall, Suite 207 Minneapolis, (612) 333-2127.

May 17 12:30-1:30 p.m. Osmo Vänskä CD signing Have a cup of coffee and visit with Osmo at *Finnstyle*.

May 19 Join Finn Hall at the Masonic Temple, 4 W. 2nd St. Duluth. Lesson at 6:00 p.m., and dancing will follow from 7:00-10:00 p.m. All welcome! This event will help raise money for FinnFest 2008. Admission: \$10 Sponsored in part by Finlandia Foundation National.

May 19 *Saana* Ensemble in concert, 7:00 p.m. Hear the story of a Finnish woman's life journey, Gethsemane Lutheran Church 715 Minnetonka Mills Road, Hopkins, for more info: (952) 935-1753 or (651)329-4610, \$3.

May 19 Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota, 9:00 a.m. Meeting topic: Duane Wiita. "Leo Mustonen Story." Golden Valley Library, 830 Winnetka Ave. N, Golden Valley.

May 23 Summer Calendar deadline. Send text to Mary Belanger and photos to Beth Jarvis. (See pg. 2 for contact information).

May 24 & 25 Sibelius' Symphony No. 2, Osmo Vänskä, conductor, Minnesota Orchestra Hall. www.minnesotaorchestra.org

June 7, 8, 9 Mahler's Resurrection, Osmo Vänskä conductor, Helena Juntunen, soprano, Minnesota Orchestra Hall.

June 8-9 Nisswa-Stamman Folk Music Festival, Nisswa, www.nisswastamman.org.

June 9 Finnish American Summer Festival 10:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m. Timber Hall, Embarrass. Bring an antique or a few. Expert antiques appraiser, Dan Sershon will be available. Finnish meal, Embarrass weather display with Roland Fowler, boot throwing contest, tour of historical Finnish American farmsteads, music, dancing, storytelling, children's activities, crafted items, Finnish merchandise and more. Admission \$4. Children under 13 and members (w/membership cards, free). Info: (218)984-3012 or sisuheritage@yahoo.com
Calendar cont. p. 7