



# Finlandia Foundation<sup>®</sup> National

**Our Mission** is to sustain both Finnish-American culture in the U.S. and the ancestral tie with Finland by raising funds for grants and scholarships, initiating innovative national programs, and networking with local chapters.

S P R I N G 2 0 1 5

## By Betsey Norgard

*FFN Trustee and POY Chair*

**F**inlandia Foundation National has selected Sara Pajunen as its Performer of the Year (POY) for 2015-16. A native of Minnesota's Iron Range, Sara was steeped in Finnish folk music as a child. After earning a bachelor's degree in classical violin performance from the University of Minnesota and a Solo Studies degree from Stadia in Helsinki, she returned to her Finnish-American musical roots. In 2010, she received a grant from Finlandia Foundation National to study folk music in Finland, which led to a commitment to study how the sounds of her past Finnish ancestors meld with the present. Sara has toured in North America and Europe sharing the music of her heritage in what she calls "progressive yet reverent ways."

**H**er latest collaboration has been the duo Aallotar, with Finnish accordionist Teija Niku. Their debut album, recorded in Finland, is founded on the common musical ground the women share from when their families lived near each other in Finland. But it also revels in the cultural differences born when the lineage was separated by an ocean and the passage of time.

Sara's first musical collaboration was the duo Kaivama, which recorded an album in Finland in 2012 with Arto Järvelä, acclaimed Finnish fiddler and Pajunen's mentor. She has also produced and performed an album of classic Finnish tangos, reinterpreted with influence from various musical genres.

**I**n 2014, she was commissioned by the Cedar Cultural Center and Jerome Foundation to conceive *Laatikko/Box*, a multimedia interactive piece where participants spend time with reproduced materials from Finnish-American archives while listening to live violin, vocals, archival voices and electronics. *Laatikko/Box* toured

through northern Minnesota and will be presented at FinnFest USA 2015 in Buffalo.

Sara has been called "an amazingly versatile musician who now counts among the most ambitious and notable practitioners of Finnish folk music outside of Finland."

She will appear as Performer of the Year from September 1, 2015-August 31, 2016.

To arrange an appearance, contact POY Coordinator Betsey Norgard at [bjnorgard@gmail.com](mailto:bjnorgard@gmail.com)

For artist info: [sarapajunen.com](http://sarapajunen.com).





## Word from the President Hyvät Ystävät:

We've had an exciting start to 2015, the Sibelius 150 Jubilee year, with a great deal of activity described in stories throughout this newsletter. Notably, Finlandia Foundation has presented its inaugural Award of Excellence to the Seattle Symphony

in recognition and appreciation of the orchestra's series of concerts celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Jean Sibelius, the first Patron of Finlandia Foundation.

The FFN board held its spring meeting in Seattle to coincide with the opening of the orchestra's Sibelius festival, of which Finlandia Foundation was a sponsor (see page 18). At the same time we were pleased to support appearances in that region by Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Ruusamari Teppo, who performed works by Sibelius and gave pre-concert lectures about the composer, Ruusamari's great-great-grandfather.

It is exciting to see the many Sibelius tribute performances by orchestras of all sizes across the U.S., but just as exciting are the number of Finlandia Foundation chapters that have received special FFN Sibelius grant monies to assist with Sibelius 150 Jubilee programs throughout the year (see story on page 11).

We are pleased to announce the selection as Performer of the Year Sara Pajunen, a Minnesota

artist who uniquely interprets traditional Finnish music, and Lecturer of the Year, Finland's versatile entertainer Taina Elg.

This year's FFN scholarship and grant recipients, featured in this issue, show outstanding talent and originality. In addition, we are helping young people pursue their interests in heritage, music and language at Soiva International Music Camp and Salolampi Finnish Language Village in Minnesota.

We have begun work on Finland's Independence Centennial in 2017, and I am sure that all FFN chapters are looking forward to arranging their own celebrations. We would like to hear about your plans well ahead of time, and stand ready to assist you. On page 15 you'll find a message from Ambassador Ritva Koukku-Ronde regarding the Finnish government's interest in working with us under the common theme, "Together."

All of these programs are made possible with your contributions to Finlandia Foundation. As indicated by the list of donors in this issue, we are enjoying the support of a growing number of individuals, which we greatly appreciate. To continue and to enhance our efforts to nourish Finnish-American interests in the U.S. we ask you to consider participating with a donation to Finlandia Foundation at the highest possible level.

Ossi Rahkonen  
President

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## From Finland to Stardom: An Evening With Taina Elg



As Lecturer of the Year, Taina Elg talks about her career on stage and screen.

**By Jon Saari**  
FFN Trustee and LOY Coordinator

How often do stars in American popular culture visit your city, your neighborhood, your Finnish-American group? Not via TV or film, but in person?

The 2015 Lecturer of the Year is one of the few Finnish-Americans who made it big in Hollywood and on Broadway. Taina Elg, 85, lives in New York City, still performs on stage in Finland and the U.S., and is ready to come to your chapter to share stories of her experiences.

Finlandia Foundation National thought that recognition for Taina Elg's artistic achievements in song, dance and on stage was long overdue, and persuaded her to create a retrospective show on

her career. The program takes place through a live interview of Taina by a young Finnish actress, Heli Sirviö. The two of them, equally adept at Finnish and English, tell Taina's story, aided by film clips and soundtracks from the past. Together they create an aura of candid and emotional remembrance of Taina's life in Hollywood and on Broadway.

Taina was born in Finland near the Russian border in 1930, and was forced to resettle, with her family, in Turku after the war. As a child actor she was invited to join the Finnish National Ballet in Helsinki. In 1954, while working with a ballet company in England, she was discovered by an American movie producer and offered a contract with MGM Studios. That was her big break.



Hollywood starlet Taina Elg.

In the 1950s Taina performed in films with many Hollywood stars, and later appeared in television shows, stage plays and musicals. She was awarded a Golden Globe for the 1957 film *Les Girls* starring Gene Kelly, and earned a Tony nomination for her stage role in *Where's Charley?*

Heli Sirviö is a graduate of the Theater Academy of Finland. She has had an active career in television and theater in Finland as well as in New York City, where she currently lives.



Heli Sirviö appears with Taina as LOY.

For more information on the LOY program, visit the FFN website at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org). To book the LOY presentation by Taina Elg and Heli Sirviö contact Jon Saari at [jsaari@nmu.edu](mailto:jsaari@nmu.edu)

# Grants Aid Projects from Puppets to Poetry

By Maria Kizirian

Assistant to the Board of Trustees

Every year, individuals and organizations apply for Finlandia Foundation National grants for projects related to Finnish America and Finland. It is a great privilege to see the many ways that people are furthering Finnishness, and each year FFN receives far more requests from worthy projects than the organization has the resources to support. This year, there were 52 applications that requested funding totaling \$265,881. The amount FFN awarded to 31 of the applicants was \$75,000. The Grants Committee is chaired by FFN Trustee Richard Ahola.

The two applications that received the highest grant amounts are the **Bay Area Book Fest** for bringing Scandinavian writers to the event, and **FinnFest 2015 in Buffalo**, celebrating Eliel and Eero Saarinen's Kleinhaus Music Hall at 75.

The greatest number of applications came from California, with a total of 14. Minnesota was second, with seven; New York had five and Washington four applicants. We even had one application from a Finn in Belgium!

## ABOUT THE GRANTS

The **Bay Area Book Fest** in Berkeley, California, will bring prominent **Finnish writers** to the festival in June. They will be a part of a panel of 150 local, national and international writers. A half-square mile of the city will be closed off for the event, which is free and open to the public. UC Berkeley will host many activities, which 100,000 people are expected to attend. There will be receptions with the Scandinavian Studies Department and a VIP party with the authors.



The **Museum of Arts and Design** in New York City will present a groundbreaking exhibition, **Pathmakers: Women in Art, Craft and Design; Midcentury and Today**, exploring the impact of women on postwar visual culture, April 28–September 27, 2015. Central to the project is the work of four Finnish artists: Rut Bryk (her work is at left), Vuokko Eskolin-Nurmesniemi, Maija Grotell and Marianne Strengell.

**Eliel and Eero Saarinen's Kleinhaus Music Hall** will be the centerpiece of **FinnFest USA 2015** in Buffalo, New York, where events will highlight the largely unknown Finnish-American contribution to a major civic and architectural landmark in the city. The hall's 75th anniversary coincides with the Sibelius 150 Jubilee, and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra is participating with Sibelius concerts. FinnFest will have an architectural emphasis in its programming, and the Saarinen story will be told to audiences previously not as well acquainted with Finnish America.



Dancer/choreographer **Jenni Kiilholma**, with Nannette Brodie Dance Theatre, is creating a **dance/theatre production** that explores the life of Jean Sibelius through movement, poetry and live music. It will be themed mainly to the symphonic poems of Sibelius and his relation to Finnish nature. The dance focuses on contemporary movement vocabulary, using elements of traditional Finnish folk dances. Modern and classical Finnish poetry is an element in the production, which will feature Finnish and U.S. artists in three performances in Southern California.

**Hauli Huvila** is a popular Finnish community camping/vacationing spot in Reedley, in central California near King's Canyon, an area known for its massive Sequoia trees. John Hauli (Hakkarainen) donated the site to the Finnish Hall in Berkeley, stipulating that the property be used as a gathering place for California Finns in an effort to help preserve their heritage and to foster strong ties within the Finnish community. The grant will help with repairs to the deteriorating women's sauna.

Acclaimed actresses/directors **Marjo-Riikka Mäkelä** and **Nina Sallinen** are bringing famous Finnish playwright and actress Minna Koskela to Los Angeles to perform in the play, **Melkein Kuin Emmerdalessä** (*Almost like Emmerdale*). Minna Koskela is well known in Finland for, among other things, the TV series *Kumman Kaa*.

**Takeshi Moro** is a Japanese-born, Britain-bred videographer who is based in Santa Clara, California but is currently in residency at Serlachius Museum in Mänttä, Finland. He will produce a set of **karaoke videos** of songs of Finnish, English and other languages including music from 19th and 20th century Mänttä, set against visuals of that area's landscapes.



**Nordic American Voices** is a prolific and award-winning group dedicated to collecting and preserving stories from Pacific Northwest residents who emigrated from the Nordic countries. NAV is producing a documentary, **Finland in World War II**, based on video interviews of Finnish-Americans who reside in their region of the U.S. The Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle will host a public screening, and 500 copies of the DVD will be available for distribution.

**Sisu is in the Heart** by **Park Cofield** is a multi-year, international, cultural exchange project designed to bring attention to Finnish ancestral stories and the pauper statues (*vaivaisukot*), a folk tradition found only in Finland. The project creator, theatre director and puppeteer received funding in 2014 for recording stories from Fairport, Ohio, the first portion of his production. This year's grant will assist with final development of the play, pre-production logistics, community auditions and rehearsals and the U.S. premiere in Fairport.



**Organist Kalevi Kiviniemi and cantor Jukka Pietilä** are scheduled for a residency at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis and Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota. Their program, **"Sacred and Secular Music for Organ and Voice: 21st Century Finnish Artists Present a Less Known Finland"** will include music by Sibelius for the 150 Jubilee year.

**The Workers' Hall in Crosby, Minnesota** was built in 1913, but due to considerable alterations to the building it has been refused National Register of Historic Places designation. The National Park Service encouraged an application based on its history, which involves the socio-economic impact of the ideas brought by immigrants to this country. The grant will assist an historian in documenting that history to help gain the appropriate recognition.

**Elaine Moe** is a **birch bark basketry** enthusiast who learned the ancient Finnish craft and delivers presentations about it. Her funding allows her to improve her birch bark skills and knowledge through courses and lessons. She aims to revive the craft and allow for its appreciation and continuity in the Finnish-American community as well as to broader audiences.



**The Appelo Archives Center** in Naselle, Washington is dedicated to preserving and sharing the area's rich history, with an emphasis on its Finnish heritage. The FFN grant will assist Paula Pakkanen, a Finnish graduate of the University of Turku with a BA in Archives and Library, with travel to the museum this summer to help with the organization.

**Frozen Music: Light and Sound in Alvar Aalto's Library** by **Third Angle New Music** is a sound installation set for fall of 2015 at the Alvar Aalto-designed Mount Angel Abbey Library in Benedict, Oregon. Third Angle will correlate with the library's collection and reflect the design philosophy and aesthetics of Aalto's architectural masterpiece. The audience will have the opportunity to interact with the building and its collection via technology utilizing the voices of Aalto and others instrumental in building the library.

**The Otherworld Cycle** is a new CD by **Rent Romus** of original compositions and improvisations inspired by the *Kalevala* and Finno-Ugric traditions, which he has spent 14 years researching. The music reflects his Finnish background, which he seeks to share with the Finnish-American community and beyond. A Vappu Day concert for the CD debut benefited the Finnish Kaleva Hall in Berkeley, California.



**Victoria Pitkänen-Stoppiello**, whose paternal ancestors were fishermen on the Columbia River and Pacific Ocean, has compiled a soon-to-be-published book of essays she wrote for the *Chinook Observer* in Pacific County, Washington. **This Side of Sand Island: Fish, Finns & Family on the Lower Columbia** is about the heavily Finnish-American community around Ilwako and the Washington-Oregon border where her fisherman father worked.

**Mini-Salolampi Small Group Themed Curriculum and Programming** will provide instructors or coordinators with materials to use in small group settings outside of the traditional framework of Salolampi Language Village in Bemidji, Minnesota. While it can't replace the full Salolampi experience, by introducing this unique program to audiences on the East Coast it will be a tool for furthering interest and encouraging attendance at Salolampi to those from outside of the Midwest region.

**Suzanne Morlock** will travel to Finland for the Raumars artist-in-residence in Rauma, Finland to further her skills and pursue **The Lace Making Project**. She will use her talents in knitting, lace creating and sculpting from repurposed rope, and incorporate a dance/movement aspect to her work. She plans to invite the community to become involved in her project.



**Diane Jarvie**, Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year 2000, is working on a multimedia project, **The Way She Told Her Story**, combining her

poetry that centers on voices of Finnish-American women immigrant experiences with the recently released CD *Bittersweet*. She is also working with a filmmaker to use her text and music to create a short form film narrative, and with Red Dragonfly Press, an independent, local publisher. She expects that these clips will work well at concerts, festivals, on YouTube and in other social media.

After attending an artist-in-residence program at Arteles Creative Center in Haukijärvi, Finland, **Jason Pearson** will work on re-imaging the 1916 silent film, **The Wings** by gay cinema pioneer Mauritz Stiller (a distant relative of Pearson's). The original film, destroyed by silver nitrate, was restored in 1987 but still had missing portions. The only copy is housed at the National Library of Sweden in Stockholm. Pearson hopes to bring *The Wings* to a broader community because of its role as a pioneering film in GLBTQ history.

**Finnish-American Heritage Center** at Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan, is bringing history into the digital age by upgrading technology to improve its ability to preserve digital materials as well as increase online access to its collections. This grant will help replace out of date computers, scanners and microfilm readers with an external hard drive, two computers and software.

Three teaching artists, **Anna Hersey, Matti Hirvonen** and **Kayla Paulk** (left) will travel to educational institutions throughout the U.S. to present **Nordic Lights: A Song Recital and Masterclass Tour** about this unique and rarely heard repertoire. The goal is to promote interest in Nordic art song at free events for audiences of students, musicians and the general public. They will be hosted by institutions such as Eastern New Mexico University, Auburn University, University of Alabama, Texas Tech University, Pacific Lutheran University, Coe College and Kansas State University.

Filmmakers **Jason DeBose** and **Edward Hillel** are creating a 10-15 minute segment about Helsinki-born, New Orleans-based jazz trombonist Katja Toivola for inclusion in the documentary **The Music Never Dies**. The film features Katja and her experiences with three elderly musicians and their life lessons and stories from post-war America to the present. Through visits to their homes, on the street and in concert, using their words and music and



archival material, the film explores their successes and failures as well as exploitation in the music business.

**The Finnish School of Seattle** (*Seattlen Suomi Koulu*) is celebrating its **20th anniversary** with a gala concert in October 2015 for Finnish School parents and supporters, followed by a concert in November, for which they have invited Satu Sopanen and her Tuttiorkesteri from Finland to perform.

The brass septet **Ameriikan Poijat** will embark on its **25th Anniversary Concert Tour** during the Sibelius 150 Jubilee year. The long-standing group, paying homage to Finnish music, will play at FinnFest USA 2015, the Midwest Viking Festival and the Northfield Vintage Band Festival.

**The Scandinavian Music Festival 2015** will feature three outdoor summer concerts performed by musicians of the New York Scandia Symphony and guest artists. The concerts will include music by Jean Sibelius, Jorma Panula and Jukka Viitasaari, and take place on Billings Lawn at Fort Tryon Park, with great views of the Hudson River.

**Mimmi Fulmer** will create a **teaching video about Nordic songs** specifically for U.S. colleges and universities. The video will include information on Finnish history, song repertoire and composers, as well as performances of Finnish songs. Excerpts from this video will be posted on YouTube as a free resource to anyone interested in learning more about Nordic music.



The **"Finlandia Meets Earth Day" concert** set for April 23, 2016, will feature the Masterworks Chorale of Augsburg College. The program, at Central Lutheran Church in downtown Minneapolis, will honor Sibelius with *Finlandia* and music by Finnish composers Olli Kortekangas and Kari Tikka. The texts for Kortekangas' pieces are by Wendell Berry, who celebrates both the despair and beauty of planet earth.

**Los Angeles Finlandia Foundation** received funding for a concert featuring cellist Jussi Makkonen and Jean Sibelius' great-great-granddaughter, pianist Ruusamari Teppo. The concert is part of the Sibelius 150 Jubilee activities.

**Kivajat Finnish Dancers**, a group of 33 children from Hancock in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, will

travel with their director Kay Seppälä to perform at **Tanssiva Turku Folk Dance Festival** in Finland. The Turun Kansantanssit Ystävät are providing room and board. Kivajat performs traditional Finnish and American folk dances, and is a varied group of ethnic, spiritual and socioeconomic backgrounds.



**Hämärä** (*Twilight*) is a new multimedia theater piece that uses music, film and monologue to investigate how language and culture affect the construction of Finnish identity. **Benjamin Mosse**, the co-director for acclaimed avant garde piece *Imagining O*, is directing the four storylines woven together by soprano Maria Mannisto, the compositions of Joachim Brackx and films by Quincey De Buck. They plan to tour in Finland, Belgium and the U.S. at international festivals and in association with Finnish cultural consulates and embassies.

**Northwest Heritage Resources** has received funding for the touring exhibit **Extraordinary Ordinary People: American Masters of Traditional Arts**, which includes 2011 Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year **Wilho Saari**. The kantele expert was a recipient of the National Heritage Fellowship awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Saari will conduct workshops to teach his Finnish musical tradition and will perform with the Finnish Choral Society and at the Jack Straw Composer Spotlight event.



**The St. Anthony Sister Cities Association** in Minnesota will premiere **The Lost Melody**, a new children's orchestral piece based on a Finnish story by Eeva Tikka. Salo is the Sister City to St. Anthony; the two cities have had a relationship for 30 years, and that anniversary coincides with the Sibelius 150 Jubilee. The St. Anthony Civic Orchestra and St. Anthony Village High School are participating in the community concert.

## 2015 is Golden for Finlandia Foundation of Colorado

By John Koski  
FFC President

On February 28 the Finlandia Foundation of Colorado celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding with a luncheon at the Columbine Country Club in Littleton. VIP guests were Finnish Consul General Juha Markkanen and Tuula Markkanen from Los Angeles, and Finlandia Foundation National President Ossi Rahkonen and Karin Rahkonen from Washington, D.C.

Also in attendance were the honorary consuls Donald Peterson, Sweden; Nanna Nielsen Smith, Denmark; and Rita Ehrmann, Norway. Representatives were present from area Nordic clubs including Den Danske Klub, Swedish Club of Denver, SWEA and The Sons of Norway, Trollheim Lodge. Our founding members as honored guests were Dorothy Haldeman, Nancy Harju, and Nancy and Vic Pakka. Nancy and Vic were soon celebrating their 73rd wedding anniversary.

The celebration began with a cocktail social hour of good cheer as people arrived to the folk music of wandering troubadour-accordionist Mikko Koski. Master of ceremonies, Colorado Honorary Consul Juha Mäkikalli, greeted us all and welcomed the honored guests. Following the lunch Juha introduced the musical program by the Ainomäe

## FAHS Offers Souper Sampling



FAHS members who shared their tips and dishes, (from left) Mary Ellen Harmon, Anita Smiley, Patti Folsom, Susan Coupe and Katrina Bousquet. Photo by Sean Tate



FFC founding members Nancy and Vic Pakka were among the honored guests at the chapter's 50th anniversary luncheon. Photo by Linn Hirvela

String Quartet (drawn from the Colorado Symphony Orchestra) who, in tribute to the Jean Sibelius 150 Jubilee, performed his *Andante Cantabile* and *Voces Intimae*. Next we enjoyed speeches by FFN President Ossi Rahkonen and Consul General Juha Markkanen.

After the formal program, the microphone was made available for impromptu reminiscences and performances. Tapa Harönoja related some history and activities of the FFC by describing ski trips, programs and people from earlier years, and Vic Pakka amazed us again with his harmonica rendition of *Orpopojan Valssi*.

The program concluded with Finnish folk, pop and dance entertainment by the wonderful Finnish Folk trio of Hanna Leiponen-Syyrakki, Matti Syyrakki, and Esa Naukkarinen. The visiting and socializing continued to the very end as no one wanted to leave this special celebration, which ran from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

About 40 folks followed the tempting aromas to the Finnish Hall in Canterbury, Connecticut on April 11 for the Finnish American Heritage Society's annual Culinary Delights cooking demonstration and sampling of favorite foods.

The theme was "Soups and Breads," and featured these tasty dishes presented by FAHS members:

- traditional rye bread with orange peel, dark molasses and spices by Mary Ellen Harmon
- Susan Coupe's barley bread, ideal for sandwiches
- pasties, a Cornish meat pie adapted by Finnish immigrant miners, made by Anita Smiley
- salmon chowder prepared in advance by FAHS President Stan Karro, who was unable to attend the event
- ham and pea soup made with pigeon peas by Katrina Bousquet
- creamed rice with fruit soup from Patti Folsom, who chaired the event

## Columbia-Pacific Chapter Hosts Sweetheart of a Sibelius Gala

By Chris Lazarus  
FFCPC Communications Chair

An enthusiastic crowd of 74 Finnish-Americans and members of other Nordic organizations in Portland turned out to celebrate Jean Sibelius' 150th birthday at a gala Valentine's Day dinner and concert. The event, organized by Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter, was held at Portland State University's Smith Center.

A string quartet from the Melegari Chamber Players performed Sibelius compositions, including *Finlandia*, *Valse Triste* and *Andante Festivo*. There was a display of Sibelius books, and a documentary film on Sibelius was shown.

Greg Jacob, FFCPC president and emcee for the evening, welcomed everyone to a true celebration of Nordic community, with participation by several organizations. Andrea Tolonen spoke about the Finnish-American Historical Society of the West; Greg Smith, new executive director of the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation, gave an update on the construction of Portland's Nordic Community Center (opening in August); and Eila Chisholm talked about Messiah Lutheran Church's history and upcoming move to the new Nordic Center.

Finlandia Foundation National Trustee Satu Mikkola spoke about the organization and the nationwide Sibelius 150th celebration. Also in

## Last Call for Suomi Kutsuu



Finnish American Heritage Center Director and Honorary Consul for Michigan's Upper Peninsula Jim Kurtti (left) extends good wishes to Finnish-American TV legend Carl Pellonpaa on his retirement. Photo by Ellen Varney



Melegari Chamber Players perform works by Sibelius at the FFCPC Valentine's Day dinner and concert.

attendance were Mike O'Bryant of SHF and FFN Trustee Dirk Schulbach; Carol Tripp, president of New Sweden; and Ann Grangaard from Norse Hall.

Dave Alford presented a Certificate of Distinguished Service to Mike O'Bryant, former executive director of SHF. Greg Jacob then presented certificates of appreciation to hard-working FFCPC members in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the organization: Anu Korhonen and Kai Sjoblom for their service on the board of directors; Christine Schulbach for her volunteer work in creating the setting for FFCPC's ScanFair Joulupukki photo booth and other projects; and to Dennis Usitalo a "Most Valuable Finn" certificate for his many hours of volunteer work on so many projects.

FFCPC also would like to express its gratitude to Pirjo Schulbach, Christine Schulbach and Hilja Davis for their delightful decorations for the event.

Carl Pellonpaa, host of the television program *Suomi Kutsuu*, (*Finland Calling*) wrapped up a 53-year run of the weekly show on March 29 on WLUC-TV in Marquette, Michigan.

*Finland Calling* was a Sunday morning staple for generations in the Upper Peninsula. It offered a variety of music, videos of Finland, guests of Finnish-American interest and information about events, music, history and travel to Finland delivered in Finnish and English. The show also hosted popular community dances, which were videotaped and broadcast on the program.

The host, now 84, was legendary for never missing a program, which he taped in advance of the Sunday morning airing.

Finlandia Foundation National extends congratulations and best wishes to Carl Pellonpaa and his wife Doris on producing what may be the longest running program on TV.

## Finger Lakes' Finishing Touches: More Than a Craft Fair

By Karen Warfle

Finger Lakes Finns Publicity Chair

You don't have to travel to Finland to learn how to make Finnish crafts from Finnish artisans. For the past two Novembers, the Finger Lakes Finns have hosted Finishing Touches, an event that allows the community in and around Newfield, New York (near Ithaca) to see, hear, taste, touch and make-and-take crafted items that have a Finnish connection.



**Sormi kudonta, finger knitting, is a form of knitting that doesn't require needles.** Photo by Maija Deroche

Woodcarvings and blown glass are the first wonderful sights you see when you walk into the

Newfield Fire Hall, where decorations hang from the ceiling and the walls are lined with handcrafted quilts, rugs and wall hangings. Artisans are busily, but patiently, demonstrating and describing their techniques.

Recorded Finnish music plays in the background, and if you're lucky you'll arrive when Toivo, an established band of local musicians, is playing familiar Finnish tunes. Coffee, pulla and other tasty treats tempt the taste buds as you meander among the tables.

Needle felting appeals to the sense of touch. The soft textures of felt fabric and loose wool contrast with the sharp needles used to create pictures with the materials. Colorful paper strips and glue form beautiful, woven Finnish Christmas stars and heart baskets. Finger knitting, assembling wool roving birds and quilting are handiwork to try that require few or no tools. Other crafts to observe or attempt include loom weaving, bobbin lace and birch bark jewelry making. Each activity is identified by its Finnish name along with a description and a bit of history.

Finishing Touches is a multi-generational event that appeals to all who are interested in learning about Finnish culture and traditions. Its interactive nature brings the traditions to life and renews the joy of learning from one another and, for those of us who are Finnish-American, sharing our mutual heritage.

## Seattle Chapter Hits Right Notes

It was a musical weekend in Seattle March 14-15, as the Finlandia Foundation Seattle Chapter hosted events coinciding with the opening of Seattle Symphony's Sibelius festival.

On Saturday evening the chapter, along with the Swedish-Finn Historical Society, welcomed a sold-



**Ruusamari Teppo and Jussi Makkonen perform "Jewels of Sibelius" at the University of Washington.**



**Maria Mannisto directs the Finnish Choral Society at the Finnish Lutheran Church of Seattle.**

out crowd to a buffet dinner and a program at the lovely Finnish Lutheran Church of Seattle. There were performances by the Finnish Choral Society and four former FFN Performers of the Year: soprano Maria Mannisto (POY 2007), multi-instrumentalist Terhi Miikki-Broersma (2009), singer Maria Kizirian (2012) and pianist Marja Kaisla (2013).

The following evening Seattle Chapter President Mikko Männistö welcomed the public to a "Jewels of Sibelius" concert by cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Ruusamari Teppo at the University of Washington.

# SIBELIUS 150 JUBILEE 1865 2015

The strains of "Finlandia" are familiar to most anyone who has listened to classical music, but in the year 2015 audiences across the U.S. have multiple opportunities to hear more of the repertoire of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius.



Symphony orchestras and ensembles of all sizes are "playing tribute" to Sibelius in honor of the 150th anniversary of his birth, and they are featuring a broad selection of his work, from his seven symphonies to the *Swan of Tuonela* and *Pohjola's Daughter*. Finnish violinist Petteri Iivonen is performing Sibelius' *Violin Concerto* and other pieces with orchestras and chamber groups across the U.S.

Over 130 events fill the Finlandia Foundation Sibelius Jubilee 150 website calendar, and FFN is supporting dozens of them, from the Seattle Symphony's recent "Luminous Landscapes" festival to lectures, musical performances and other programs hosted by FFN chapters.

With the assistance of funding from individual donors and a substantial grant from the Finnish government, the Sibelius 150 Jubilee funds

## Make a Sound Gift to FFN

Soon after Finlandia Foundation was organized in 1953 in Pasadena, California, Jean Sibelius demonstrated his belief in the organization by agreeing to serve as its first Patron. FFN is proud of the affiliation, and is actively supporting Sibelius 150 Jubilee events celebrating the anniversary of the birth of the composer.

FFN invites you to recognize its early and strong connection to Sibelius with a gift in his honor. Your tax-deductible donation will help Finlandia Foundation with its many programs, including its long-standing tradition of nurturing music-related studies, performers and programs.

Please consider a gift of \$150, \$1,500 or any amount. For gifts of \$500 or more, we would like to thank you

are helping to bring Finnish music and culture to a broad audience that reaches beyond the Finnish-American community.

Marja Kaisla, chair of the Sibelius 150 Jubilee Committee, says, "We're looking forward to the Tapiola Chamber Choir's Sibelius tour on the East Coast from June 18-30, when they will perform at the Chelsea Music Festival and Carnegie Hall in New York, Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in Washington, D.C., and at the oldest church in the United States still in operation, the Old Swedes Church in Wilmington, Delaware, where the first Finnish and Swedish settlers came in 1638."

Finlandia Foundation has commissioned a set of large, freestanding displays that explore Sibelius' life and work. Audiences have been absorbed in the attractive banners filled with photos and stories, and an accompanying six-minute documentary about Sibelius and his family. The materials are available for loan for the cost of shipping. For information about reserving the display contact Marja Kaisla (mjkaisla@yahoo.com).



**Satu Mikkola, coordinator of the Performer of the Year program for many years, pauses with former POY who performed at a Sibelius celebration hosted by the Seattle chapter in March. From left: Terhi Miikki-Broersma, Marja Kaisla, Satu, Maria Kizirian and Maria Mannisto.**

with a very special CD of the music of Sibelius that was recorded at Ainola, the beloved country home of the composer and his family. The CD features Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azejian on Sibelius' grand piano.

You can make a gift of any size safely and securely online at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org) with your credit card or by PayPal, or mail your check to FFN, PO Box 92046, Pasadena, CA 91109-2046.

Questions? Contact Maria Kizirian at [office@finlandiafoundation.org](mailto:office@finlandiafoundation.org) or 626.795.2081.

*Finlandia Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization and your donation is tax deductible. Your contribution to Finlandia Foundation National will be matched dollar for dollar (up to a total yearly match of \$100,000) by a generous pledge from the Paloheimo Foundation.*

# FFN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS 2015

Scholarship Chair, FFN Trustee Hanna Wagner, with four volunteer committee members, reviewed 54 applications and awarded 19 scholarships in 2015. The undergraduate and graduate students are pursuing a variety of fields of study in the U.S. and Finland.

**1 LUCY ABRAMS** is completing her second year of the Masters of Music/Diploma in Clarinet Performance at Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Her main studies are with world-famous orchestral and solo clarinetist Olli Leppäniemi. Lucy performs in a variety of orchestral and chamber music projects at the academy and as a freelance clarinetist. She helped found the Cocoon Woodwind Quintet in September 2013 and has performed recently with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra and Aholansaari Sinfonietta.

**2 ANDRE BIGOS** is a student at the University of Florida pursuing his interests in engineering and computer science. Currently designated a mechanical engineering major, he intends to declare a double major in computer science during his sophomore year. "Language has always been important to me, and I am studying French so as to study engineering abroad, in Europe. Kiitos jälleen kerran tästä kunniasta. Lupaen etten petä teidän luottamuksianne."

**3 MIRANDA ENBERG** is a junior at New York University studying media, culture and communication with a minor in digital art and design. "Within my major, I have found a passion for film and television,

taking most classes in the field of images and screen studies as well as global and transcultural communication. I hope to turn this passion into a future career in film or television production."

**4 JYRI ESKOLA** believes that architecture provides the physical and spiritual frame for our everyday, partially shaping our existence. "As the increasing interaction of cultures changes the structure of our communities, architecture faces a challenge to adapt, to evolve. In order to understand, and moreover, to be a part of this evolution, one needs to step outside the familiar cadre—to explore and to investigate the foreign." Harvard Graduate School of Design trains architects to function on a global scale, and offers a medium for this kind of interaction.

**5 ALEK HAUTANEN** is working towards his bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance at Musicians Institute in Hollywood. In addition to learning various vocal styles, he has received a profound musical education in theory, history, studio recording, business and arranging. After graduation in the spring of 2016 he plans to remain in Los Angeles, and "aspires to be a well-rounded musician and a fine representation of Finnish music in the United States."



**6 HEATHER JARVIE** is a third-year student of anthropology and linguistics at the University of Minnesota. "It has been my pleasure for the 2014 school year to learn much more about the language and culture of my ancestors, and I am looking forward to applying for graduate programs that will continue to make my heritage an important part of my academic future. I hope to obtain a Ph.D. in linguistics that specializes in the Finno-Ugric languages."

**7 MARKUS KAITILA**, who was born in Helsinki, studied piano at Sibelius Academy and Folkwang University of the Arts in Europe. He has participated in master classes with Paul Badura-Skoda, Dmitri Bashkurov and Angela Hewitt, and is training at Aaron Copland School of Music with Nina Lelechuk. Markus has accepted a Solo Piano Fellowship at Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara this summer, and is looking forward to performance activity on the East Coast and beyond.



**8 MERI-SOFIA KARTTUNEN** is working toward a bachelor's in economics with a minor in finance at the University of Texas at Dallas.

"I plan on going to Finland for the fall semester of 2015 to study abroad at the University of Jyväskylä." After graduating with her economics degree she hopes to spend a year working in the field, and then pursue a master's degree.

**9 IRENE KETONEN** is a Ph.D. candidate at the University at Buffalo, where her dissertation research examines farmers' attitudes toward European Union agricultural policy. "My additional professional activities include teaching at the College at Brockport, and serving as chair of the editorial committee of CritCom, an academic publication of the Council for European Studies."

**10 HEINI KORHONEN** is an undergraduate student at Rhode Island School of Design with a

major in illustration and a concentration in scientific inquiry. She is excited about spending a semester abroad with RISD's European Honors Program. "Peering into the future, I am hoping

to attend graduate school in Helsinki, and to work as an illustrator, designer and educational researcher. And of course, continue to wave the Finnish flag up high wherever the road may lead!"

**11 ELSA LASKORSKI** is in her junior year at Wheaton College, double majoring in anthropology and Hispanic studies. "After graduation, I'd like to spend some time working at a non-profit advocating for human and immigration rights, and after a few years, attend law school."

**12 KAISA OJA** is finishing her first year in a doctoral Occupational Therapy program at Creighton University's School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, and is preparing to begin fieldwork experiences. "Upon graduation, I intend to use my skills working in a pain management or a neurological rehabilitation setting, and in a research capacity."

**13 KAIJA PERKIOMAKI** is a senior at the University of Washington in Seattle, double-majoring in honors English and communication. With a minor in Scandinavian Area Studies, she says, "I've had the great privilege of pursuing my love for Finnish in an academic environment. I have applied to the Master of Arts English Philology program at the University of Helsinki for the next school year, and plan to continue my higher education in Finland this coming fall."

**14 SUSANNA PESONEN** is a freshman at UC Berkeley planning to major in mechanical engineering and minor in Scandinavian studies. "Both of my parents are Finnish; my mother is from Kuopio and my father is from Helsinki, and from a young age they have encouraged me to be proud of my Finnish roots. As soon as I found out about the Scandinavian program offered at UC Berkeley, I knew I could not pass up an opportunity like that."

**15 NATHALIE RITA** is a first-year doctoral student in sociology at the University of Hawaii. "Upon completion of my doctoral degree, my goal is to use my knowledge of sociology to assist impoverished communities through education and research. Being a recipient of the Finlandia Foundation National scholarship award, I plan on using the funds to further my research and educational endeavors."

**16 MIKKO SILLIMAN** spent a year working at his uncle's farm in Karelia, Finland, before starting his undergraduate studies in

economics and philosophy at Tufts University. After his sophomore year he taught 8th grade with the Breakthrough Collaborative in New Orleans, where he became interested in inequality and education policy. He is now working on a Master's in Social & Public Policy at the University of Helsinki. "As part of my master's degree, this summer I am working as a trainee at the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in Paris, getting an opportunity to be immersed in education policy first hand."

**17 OSCAR SOMERSALO**, born in Vantaa, Finland, has been playing guitar since the age of six. He began his studies at East-Helsinki Music Institute and has performed and studied internationally. Oscar completed his Bachelor of Music degree at Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and finished his Graduate Performance Diploma at Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, where he is pursuing his Master of Music degree under Manuel Barrueco.

**18 NEA SUNILA** is a junior at Louisiana State University at Alexandria studying kinesiology, and she is the captain of the women's soccer team. With a 3.5 GPA she is 30 credits from graduating in the spring of 2016. "The next step for me after that would be to pursue a career in sports and wellness. My main goal would be to help the community towards a healthier lifestyle and fitness with the knowledge I gathered throughout my college studies."

**19 ERIC WONG** is a senior at Columbia University majoring in economics-mathematics, and has studied Finnish culture and language for the last four years. He will pursue a Master's in Economics through the Helsinki Center of Economic Research (HECER) at either Aalto University or the University of Helsinki as a Fulbright scholar. "My proposed thesis will explore how Finland is adapting to become more competitive in an increasingly globalized economy, and I hope to pursue a career in building Finnish-American relations."

### P.J.C. LINDFORS LEGAL STUDIES FUND

Pertti Lindfors of San Francisco, a retired Finnish-American attorney, established a scholarship for Finnish law students to study in the U.S., and American students to study law in Finland.

**1 JOHANNES MUNTER** is studying law because he wants to make a difference. "In South Sudan, where I worked for almost a year, I witnessed lawyers achieve incredible things and change people's lives every day." The George Washington University student is looking forward to delving into international law, human rights and intellectual property rights. "In a few years, I will hopefully be in a position that, no matter what I end up doing, I will be able to utilize my education while helping those in need. And the

scholarship from the Finlandia Foundation helps me do exactly that."

**2 JOHANNA PUUKKA** began her law studies at the University of Helsinki in 2010, and is attending an exchange semester at the University of Montana School of Law through the International Student Exchange Program. She is enjoying the exchange experience, the trial practice and business law-related courses. "I want to encourage all law students in the USA and Finland to use the valuable opportunity to study abroad; it will definitely give you an advantage in the field of law."

**3 MIRJAM SUPPONEN** is studying law at the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii at Māaanoa to assist in her goal of practicing law internationally. The differences between the Finnish and U.S. legal systems are greater than she expected. "The role of case law is naturally significant—Finns use case law merely as persuasive authority whereas Americans draw their rules from case law. Learning how to analyze cases has definitely been one of the greatest things I have learned."

**4 JENNA TIRKKONEN** holds both a bachelor's degree and a Master of Laws degree from the University of Helsinki, and has interned at law firms in Finland and the U.K. She has been accepted to a L.L.M degree at the University of Washington, where she wants to study and compare U.S. and EU antitrust laws, for a global viewpoint. "Many Finnish lawyers have an L.L.M. degree, but usually from a European university,



thus the knowledge of the American system itself would be an advantage for me in the Finnish job market." She also appreciates learning about American society as a whole.

## 100 Years of Independence: Together in 2017

By **Ritva Koukku-Ronde**  
Ambassador of Finland to the U.S.

Finland celebrates its hundredth anniversary of independence in 2017, and we at the Embassy want to make it a special year for all Finns, Finnish-Americans and friends of Finland in the United States. The theme of the year is "together" and this is exactly what we want to do here in the U.S. We hope that the 46 Finlandia Foundation chapters across the states want to work together with us to create a unique year for all the friends of Finland in this country.

At this point we want to reach out to all Finnish-American communities and make them aware of the approaching centennial. Our goal is that it would be celebrated throughout the year all around the U.S. We hope that the Finlandia Foundation chapters could help us to make this a reality. We look forward to hearing your ideas and feedback and are excited to plan together the most memorable year possible.

The Embassy already held a kick off meeting on March 17, 2015 with Finnish-American organizations from the Washington, D.C. area.

## FinnFest USA 2015 Celebrates Sibelius and Saarinen

Imagine hearing the music of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius in a spectacular setting designed by Finnish architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen. This special experience is one of many in store at FinnFest USA 2015, October 9-12 in Buffalo, New York.

In a departure from its traditional summertime schedule, FinnFest this year will be held in the fall to coincide with two significant events: the 75th anniversary of the city's landmark Kleinhans Music Hall, designed by the father-son team of architects, and the Sibelius 150 Jubilee salute by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Buffalo's Burchfield-Penney Art Center will feature an exhibit by Charles Burchfield, an American painter and visionary artist inspired by Sibelius' music. The Albright-Knox museum will present the first U.S. survey of the work of 21st century Finnish video artist and photographer Eija-Liisa Ahtila.

Kleinhans Music Hall is the setting for the Tori Kas well as traditional and contemporary music, dance and performance art including that by newly-named FFN Performer of the Year Sara Pajunen, whose piece *Laatikko/Box* allows audiences to connect to the Finnish immigrant experience.



Ambassador Koukku-Ronde encourages Finnish-Americans to celebrate the centennial of Finland's independence in 2017.

Ossi Rahkonen, president of Finlandia Foundation National, as well as Kirsti Frenzen Noring, president of Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter, attended the meeting.

We hope that you send all your suggestions and feedback to FFN Communications Manager Kath Usitalo (kathusitalo@mac.com), who will be our point of contact at Finlandia Foundation National.

Buffalo, which is known for its Polish and Italian communities, does have minor connections to Finnish America. Explorer, botanist and naturalist Pehr Kalm visited Niagara Falls in the 18th century, and there was a small group of steel workers and domestic workers who came to work in Buffalo in the 20th century.

Post-festival tours on Monday, October 12, will take in nearby sights in Buffalo, Western New York and Niagara Falls. Hotel rooms has been reserved at a special price at the downtown Hyatt Hotel. For FinnFest USA 2015 information: [finnfestusa.org/buffalo2015/](http://finnfestusa.org/buffalo2015/)





## The Funeral of Jean Sibelius *Sibeliuksen Hautajaiset*



As a student in Helsinki, Leena Mela Riker was there for the Sibelius funeral procession.

By Leena Mela Riker  
Gearhart, Oregon

The Finnish National Composer, Jean Sibelius, passed away on September 20, 1957 at Ainola, his home in Tuusula, which is 16 miles north of Helsinki. He was 91.

Sibelius' casket was brought to the Helsinki Cathedral, *Suurkirkko*, on the Senate Square, on the evening of September 29. Members of the Helsinki Student Unions, *Ylioppilaskunnat*, stood guard at the church overnight to offer their

last service to one of the most important citizens of the country, an artist, a great musician and a beloved educator.

On the morning of September 30, Aino, the wife of Jean Sibelius, entered the Cathedral looking frail but elegant. She was followed by Finland's President Urho Kekkonen with his wife Sylvi. The country's prominent composers and musicians arrived to honor their hero and colleague. The Helsinki City Orchestra (*Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri*) performed music by Sibelius, including *In Memoriam (Funeral March)*, which he had composed in 1909-1910.

After the service, eight distinguished Finnish musicians carried the casket from the Cathedral down the long flight of steps to the Senate Square. The funeral procession moved through the main streets of Helsinki. University students wearing their white student caps lined the streets paying their respects to their National Composer.

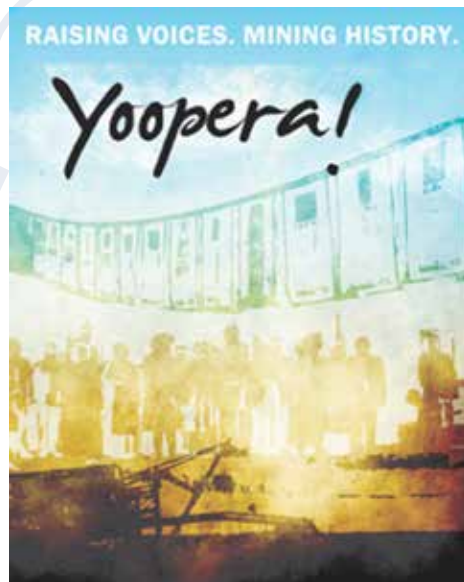
I was one of the students from the University of Helsinki. The funeral procession was led by a parade of students carrying 37 flags, for 36 student organizations and one for the Republic of Finland. The procession moved slowly towards Ainola, where Sibelius was buried that night. Along the streets, store owners had placed photos of Sibelius with flowers and candles in their windows to show their participation in this solemn memorial for the most important and celebrated Finnish composer of all time.

involvement and 'telling your own story' are a perfect fit for the PBS mission. After the successful FFN Lecturer of the Year screenings, this seems like a natural next step."

To accomplish this distribution model, the film needs to raise capital for Executive Programming Services to translate the formats to the broadcasters and promote the film to the independent PBS stations throughout the U.S. The highly-respected team will do the relations management work and market and advertise the film to receive the optimal broadcast partners. Suzanne has retained Market Vision, an international marketing firm, to help with securing sponsorships, marketing and public relations.

"We are seeking individuals, foundations, organizations and businesses to help with the fundraising effort. PBS offers larger corporations, foundations and organizations a sponsor card or video clip at the beginning of the film," she explains.

For information on how you can assist the PBS production, contact Tana Torrano at [tana@marketvision.org](mailto:tana@marketvision.org) or 256.520.7544. To donate to and learn more about the film: [yooperadoc.com](http://yooperadoc.com).



## Yoopera! Plans PBS Air Date

Following a busy schedule as 2014 FFN Lecturer of the Year, interest in the documentary *Yoopera!* remains high and filmmaker Suzanne Jurva has agreed to additional LOY appearances at FFN chapters in 2015. To schedule a Lecturer of the Year appearance contact Jon Saari: [jsaari@nmu.edu](mailto:jsaari@nmu.edu).

The film about "Raising Voices and Mining History" chronicles the production of the Rockland Opera (at Pine Mountain Music Festival) and The Storyline Project in Houghton, Michigan. In an exciting development, Suzanne reports that *Yoopera!* has been accepted by Executive Programming Services for distribution throughout the PBS networks starting in September 2015.

Rather than a film festival run where a limited number of people will be able to see *Yoopera!*, she decided that a PBS broadcast was the best platform for maximum viewership.

"Since its inception *Yoopera!* has felt like a PBS film, she says. "The length of the film, the creative spirit of the area, and the messages of community



## OLLI AND ALL THAT JAZZ

Olli Hirvonen (in cap) visits with Reem Mansoura and Jari Becker at his recent POY appearance in Atlanta.

Olli Hirvonen continues to rack up rave reviews as Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year at appearances across the country. The award-winning Finnish jazz guitarist, who now lives in New York City, is making a positive impression about contemporary Finland and Finnish America on a wide range of audiences--- including young people who may not have any connection to or knowledge of Finland.

At a March show hosted by the Atlanta Finland Society near the University of Georgia Atlanta campus in Athens, Olli wowed a student crowd of many backgrounds. Alex Ehlinger, a sophomore

at UGA (his mom is *Yoopera!* filmmaker Suzanne Jurva), reports that everyone enjoyed the evening, from the music to the Finnish foods provided by AFS members Bill and Sari Klett. The following evening Olli performed to a different audience at a pub in midtown Atlanta, also hosted by AFS.

For upcoming POY appearances check the FFN Facebook page and events calendar at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org).

For information about booking a show contact POY Coordinator Betsey Norgard ([bjnorgard@gmail.com](mailto:bjnorgard@gmail.com)). For artist info: [ollihirvonen.com](http://ollihirvonen.com)

## Winter War Memorial in Helsinki Seeks Support

By Ossi Rahkonen  
FFN President

Finland's Winter War with the Soviet Union ended 75 years ago on March 13, 1940. It was an epic struggle for Finland's independence, worthy of a monument.

The cornerstone for the National Winter War Memorial was laid on March 13, 2015, at the Kasarmitori Square at the very center of Helsinki across from the Finnish Ministry of Defence. This formal event was witnessed by the President of Finland Sauli Niinistö, Prime Minister Alexander Stubb and other dignitaries, including veterans of the Winter War.

The initiative for the Winter War monument dates to 2002. Its driving force since 2009 has been the Winter War Association supported by a public-private committee. An open competition for the monument attracted 258 proposals, and the winning design, *He Who Brings the Light* by sculptor Pekka Kauhanen, was unanimously selected by a jury in December 2013. It depicts a soldier, 20 feet high, on a 10 foot spherical foundation. The monument will be cast in acid-resistant steel and

dedicated in 2017, when Finland celebrates the 100th anniversary of its independence.

The cost of the monument, about \$1.5 million, will be equally shared by the Finnish government, the City of Helsinki and the Winter War Association, whose share needs to be obtained from private donors. Fundraising is well in hand in Finland, but there is still a substantial gap of about \$170,000 needed from private donations. The Winter War Association looks to Finnish-Americans for contributions, knowing that there are many Finnish war veterans in the U.S.

Finlandia Foundation National is a member of the Winter War Association and is accepting donations for the memorial, which will be forwarded to the Winter War Association. You may make a contribution by check payable to Finlandia Foundation National and mailed to FFN at PO Box 92046, Pasadena, CA 91109-2046. You may make a donation by credit card or PayPal online at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org). Please note that the donation is for the Winter War Memorial.

Individuals donating \$11,000 or more, and incorporate donors contributing \$33,000 or more, will have their names inscribed on the entrance wall of the Finnish Ministry of Defence facing the Winter War monument.

This memorial deserves our support.



## SEATTLE BOARD MEETING

Cellist Jussi Makkonen presented a copy of his new children's book/CD *Soiva Metsä* to each FFN board member at their Seattle meeting. Standing, from left: Ossi Rahkonen, Hanna Wagner, Dirk Schulbach, Peter Mäkilä, Tarja Silverman, Richard Ahola, Betsey Norgard, Päivi Tetri, Dennis Anderson, Jacqueline Harjula, Paul Halme, Marja Kaisla and Maria Kizirian. Seated, from left: Jussi Makkonen, Satu Mikkola, pianist Ruusamari Teppo and Anita Smiley.

The Sibelius 150 Jubilee set the tone for the Finlandia Foundation National board meeting in Seattle, March 13-14. On the evening prior to the business session the trustees attended the opening concert of "Luminous Landscapes," the Seattle Symphony's Sibelius festival, at which FFN President Ossi Rahkonen presented the inaugural Finlandia Foundation Award of Excellence to Seattle Symphony President and CEO Simon Woods.

## FFN Inaugurates Award of Excellence

The sesquicentennial of the birth of Jean Sibelius has inspired concerts, lectures and other events related to the Finnish composer. The Sibelius 150 Jubilee is also the catalyst for a new honor that recognizes outstanding efforts in the U.S. on behalf of Finnish and Finnish-American interests, individuals and achievements. The inaugural recipient of the Finlandia Foundation Award of Excellence is the Seattle Symphony, which presented a three-week festival in March, "Luminous Landscapes: The Sibelius Symphonies."

Finland's Ambassador to the U.S. Ritva Koukko-Ronde (at left) applauds as FFN President Ossi Rahkonen presents the Award of Excellence to Seattle Symphony President and CEO Simon Woods.



The meeting agenda included committee reports on 2015 grant and scholarship award recommendations and selection of the Performer of the Year. Dennis Anderson reported that registrations by Finnish and American music students are strong for Soiva Music Camp in June, and that several chapters have nominated young people for FFN matching grants to attend Salolampi Language Village this summer. Both camps are in Minnesota, and FFN offers travel grants to assist students with transportation costs.

The Sibelius 150 Jubilee Committee also met to decide on grants to organizations producing events honoring Sibelius and related aspects of Finnish music and culture.

The board discussed future programs, including plans to recognize the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence in 2017 (see related story on page 15).

Following the meeting adjournment on Saturday, many of the board members and guests enjoyed a dinner and musical performance at the Finnish Lutheran Church of Seattle. On Sunday evening several attendees headed to the University of Washington for the "Jewels of Sibelius" concert.

Under the direction of Thomas Dausgaard the orchestra performed all seven of Sibelius' symphonies as well as his *Violin Concerto in D minor* and *Finlandia*. The festival included chamber and vocal music performances.

"The extraordinary commitment by Seattle Symphony to such an extensive Sibelius program is deserving of Finlandia Foundation's recognition," says FFN President Ossi Rahkonen, who presented the award at the Sibelius festival's opening concert at Benaroya Hall.

Finlandia Foundation Trustee and Sibelius 150 Jubilee Committee Chair Marja Kaisla proposed the prize as a part of the Sibelius tributes in 2015.

"We are thrilled with the Sibelius celebrations taking place throughout the Jubilee year," says Marja. "It seemed a natural opportunity for Finlandia Foundation to recognize these efforts and their importance not only within but beyond the Finnish-American community."

The honor will be awarded biennially. The next presentation will coincide with the centennial of Finland's independence in 2017.



## FFN WELCOMES NEW TRUSTEES

By Anita Häkkinen Smiley  
FFN Trustee

Trustees George Sundquist and Paul Suomala stepped down from their seats on the Finlandia Foundation National board, and we thank them for their years of service.

We extend a warm welcome to Katariina Lehtonen-Harrskog and Tim Nurvala, who were elected to the board at the recent meeting in Seattle.



Katariina Lehtonen-Harrskog

Katariina Lehtonen-Harrskog of Lake Oswego, Oregon has years of experience with the Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter. She is a founding member of that chapter, sharing a mission of promoting Finnish culture and keeping the Finnish traditions alive. Some of her favorite contributions are helping with the yearly *Vappu* celebration, the Midsummer Festival in June, and the ScanFair *Joulupukki* booth prior to Christmas.

Katariina was born and raised in Saarijärvi, Finland. After completing her accounting and marketing education in Jyväskylä, she moved to Sweden to practice her Swedish. Her planned three-month stay in Sweden turned into more than two decades after she met her Swedish husband, Ola Harrskog, in Stockholm. Wanting to experience something different, they decided to move with their three children---Karita, Oscar and Henrik---to the United States for a year. That one year has now become 18 years.



FFN Trustee Emeritus J. Bradford Borland (right) visits with Trustee Päivi Tetri and Brent Tetri during the Sibelius evening at the Seattle Finnish Lutheran Church in March.



Tim Nurvala

Katariina's extensive accounting, business and financial background and her years of volunteer activities show that she is ready to add her expertise to the work of the FFN trustees.

Tim Nurvala joins the board with more than 20 years of experience working with nonprofit organizations.

He grew up in New York and Connecticut in a home where the family's Finnish heritage was

celebrated. In fact, Tim learned to speak Finnish before learning English. Tim's family moved to Florida where his parents operated the Altai Apartments, home to many vacationing Finns and Finnish-Americans during the winter months.

As a vice president for CCS Fundraising, Tim has helped raise almost \$250,000,000 for nonprofit organizations such as the American Red Cross, U.S. Naval Academy, South Carolina Philharmonic, Kennedy Krieger Institute, Martin Memorial Hospital (FL) and many others. Tim has even traveled to Helsinki at the invitation of AmCham Finland and former Finnish President and Nobel Laureate Matti Ahtisaari's Crisis Management Initiative to provide insights into American philanthropy.

Previously, while living in Washington, D.C., Tim was president of the Northern Virginia Technology Council Foundation, a nonprofit organization created to help provide disadvantaged children with access to computers and technology after school. He also worked briefly in the White House Office of Public Liaison during the President George H.W. Bush administration, assisting in the planning of White House briefings, signing ceremonies and official visits by foreign leaders.

Tim resides in Gladwyne, Pennsylvania and Annapolis, Maryland. He has previously served as Vice Chairman of the Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter.

## FFN Gifts Suomi Koulus with Sibelius CD and Picture Book

Children from New England to San Diego and Minnesota to Texas will enjoy a new book and CD set about Jean Sibelius when they attend their Suomi Koulu (Finnish School). As a Sibelius 150 Jubilee gift to the language classes, Finlandia Foundation National is presenting each of the 16 U.S. schools with a copy of *Soiva Metsä (Melody Forest)*, a picture and storybook accompanied by a CD of Sibelius music recorded by the book's creator, Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen, and pianist Nazig Azezian. The story and illustrations are by Finnish artist Katri Kirkkopelto.

Jussi was inspired to publish the book as he made musical presentations about Sibelius at schools across Finland. He has performed over 1,000 concerts for more than 300,000 students in Finland, and his goal is to reach every school in that country.

He and pianist Ruusamari Teppo, who is the great-great-granddaughter of Sibelius, were in Oregon and Washington in March to perform a variety of narrative Sibelius concerts for students, following their pre-concert lectures during the acclaimed Sibelius festival by the Seattle Symphony. While in the Northwest the duo traveled to 13 schools where they captivated students from kindergarten through high school with a program similar to the one that Jussi presents in Finland.

## FFN Attends SXSW 2015

By Maria Kizirian

Finlandia Foundation National was again represented at the South By Southwest (SXSW) Music, Film and Interactive festival in March in Austin, Texas. Already the world's largest festival of its kind, SXSW continues to grow, attracting an international crowd of filmmakers, musicians and startup companies including performers and attendees from Finland and the other Nordic countries.

On behalf of FFN I was able to build on the contacts made in 2014, the first time we participated in the event. FFN presence at SXSW enhances our exposure and image with new audiences and reinforces our goal of supporting Finnish and Finnish-American culture, both past and present.

Notable bands with Finnish ties that performed this year were the Los Angeles-based Jutty Ranx, the Von Herten Brothers (VHB) from Helsinki and Jorma Kaukonen, a founding member of the popular psychedelic San Francisco-based band Jefferson Airplane. I was able to chat with the Von Herten Brothers, who are working to gain



Satu Mikkola, with a copy of *Melody Forest*, coordinated the appearances by Jussi Makkonen and Ruusamari Teppo.

FFN Trustee Satu Mikkola coordinated the duet's busy tour, which was sponsored by Finlandia Foundation.

"Jussi is passionate about teaching classical music to young people," says Satu. "It was delightful to observe the attentive and enthusiastic audiences at the 13 schools. In September, their second U.S. school concert tour will take them to California, Washington, D.C. and New York City."

entry to the U.S. For that interview and more about Jutty Ranx and Jorma Kaukonen go to the SXSW page at the FFN website: [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org).

Exhibiting at the Interactive Festival was the Nordic Startup Bits team, a group of 13 startup companies from Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. They joined forces to collectively promote products and businesses from the Nordic region, including the group MAD Partners created by Pekka Pärnänen, formerly from FinPro Silicon Valley and a strong supporter of the importance of SXSW. In true startup fashion, each was asked to make a 140-character introduction, such as: #MAD-Partners helps Nordic and Baltic startups in their business development needs in Silicon Valley. Nothing is crazy enough for us!

With hundreds of sessions and exhibitors and over 80,000 registrants, SXSW is an exciting opportunity for FFN as it strives to broaden awareness of its mission and programs.

*Maria Kizirian is a singer, songwriter, music producer and instrumentalist and was FFN Performer of the Year 2012. Contact her at FFN headquarters: [office@finlandiafoundation.org](mailto:office@finlandiafoundation.org)*

## Why I Give: Eero Tetri Increases Support for FFN Programs

Finlandia Foundation National is pleased to announce that it is the recipient of another generous gift from Eero Tetri of Poulsbo, Washington. He helped FFN establish the Eero and Helli Tetri Fund in 2012 and inaugurated it with a pledge of \$125,000 given over five years. To provide sustaining support to FFN, Eero has decided to not only continue but to increase his support with a gift of \$175,000 to the Eero and Helli Tetri fund over the next five years.

"I'm impressed by the hard work of the FFN board and its volunteers to bring outstanding Finnish artists to the United States, and organize activities that promote awareness of our rich Finnish heritage," says Eero. "The recent Sibelius series performed by the Seattle Symphony, with sponsorship by the FFN, is just one example of how Finlandia Foundation increases the visibility of Finnish culture to a wide audience in the United States."

He hopes that others will see his contribution as an example of what can be accomplished by helping FFN fulfill its mission.

Both Eero and Helli Tetri were born in Viipuri, Finland, and as young children left with their families in the exodus from Karjala during the Winter War and again in WWII. Their families made their way to central Finland where they settled in



Eero Tetri's road took him from Finland to Washington, with a detour to Alaska.

Jyväskylä. Eero pursued his childhood dream of working with cars and completed his studies in automotive engineering at the Technical School of Helsinki. Following graduation he began work as a service manager at Sisä-Suomen Auto Keskus. Eero met and married Helli Skyttä in Jyväskylä.

Seeking adventure and new opportunities, the young couple said goodbye to friends and family in 1957 and, with their young daughter, two suitcases and \$250, began a new life in Seattle.

Always active in the local Finnish community, they met Eero and Saara Krook in Seattle. Seeking yet another adventure, the two couples headed to Juneau, Alaska to

open a Volkswagen dealership. Over the years they expanded their business ventures to Anchorage, Eugene, Oregon and the Seattle area.

"It has been a hell of a ride!" says Eero of his life. He speaks of his gratitude to the United States for providing his late wife and him with a warm welcome and bountiful opportunity. His generous gifts to FFN are an expression of his appreciation, and he says that he is delighted to be able to help unite his two homelands by supporting FFN programs that increase awareness of Finnish culture throughout the U.S.

your loved ones and the organizations that are important to you.

### If I make a commitment, what happens if I need the money myself?

Bequests are a way to make a gift without impacting your current financial needs. Since bequests only transfer upon death, you have full access to your assets during your lifetime. You can change your mind at any time.

### How can I establish a bequest to benefit Finlandia Foundation National?

Contact your attorney or estate planner with your intentions. FFN Vice President and attorney Paul Halme ([pohhc@aol.com](mailto:pohhc@aol.com)) can provide examples of language to use in your will or living trust expressing your wish to establish a bequest.

## Charitable Bequests and FFN

If you have been considering a bequest to Finlandia Foundation National, a nonprofit charity, here are answers to some questions that might be on your mind:

### Who makes charitable bequests?

Charitable bequests are for anyone who wants to make a difference. There is no minimum amount for a bequest to Finlandia Foundation National. You can donate cash, stock, property or even a percentage of your estate.

### Does making a bequest affect my entire estate?

Donations from your estate are exempt from federal estate taxes. Bequests are a great way to support

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You may donate securely online at: [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org) or mail your gift to FFN, PO Box 92046 Pasadena, CA 91109-2046

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Don Heikkila (right), president of the FF Inland Northwest Chapter, visits with FFN President Ossi Rahkonen following the "Jewels of Sibelius" concert in Seattle in March.

## Finlandia Foundation® National Chapters: Year Affiliated and President/Chairman

### ARIZONA

The F-A Club of Tucson/2007  
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Finns and Friends  
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Park, Inc./2005  
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F-A Society of Cape Cod/2012  
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### F-A Cultural Corporation/2012

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