



Finlandia Foundation - Boston

October 2022 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

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Message from Our President Tuija Vainio

Dear Members,

The fall programs have started and in September we heard from Janne Taalas, the CEO of CMI- President Martti Ahtisaari's Peace Organization, about the peacemaking process globally. Naturally, the question arose if CMI had been asked to find a solution in Ukraine. Mr Taalas replied that for the CMI to start peace talks, both parties would need to be willing to negotiate- which is not the case yet. If you missed this webinar, you can find it on Finlandia Foundation National's YouTube Channel.

Since Finland's application to join NATO is a hot topic, I have asked former FFB President Tapani Ronni to write a brief summary of past relations between Finland and Russia, and Finland's recent decision to seek membership in NATO. You find his article below.

As mentioned last month, I spent most of July in Finland. Some family matters called me back to Finland in September. While there, I had a chance to visit 'Pikku Finlandia' (Little Finlandia), which has been built as a temporary solution while Finlandia House is being renovated. Various design features including clever use of tree trunks on the porch and a beautiful patio cafe overlooking Töölö Bay made the visit special. I also visited Villa Kokkonen, a private residence designed by Alvar Aalto. It was "a house designed around a grand piano". Aalto and composer Joonas Kokkonen sat in a restaurant and Aalto drew a grand piano on a tablecloth, then asked if there was a need to walk around the instrument. The answer was 'yes' and thus the plans began.

Another high point of my trip was a visit to the Helsinki Music Hall to hear "Songs and Poems about Staying Sane" performed by singer Kyösti Mäkimattila and Finnish poet Heli Laaksonen. It was a delightful evening with a program that made me laugh and brought me to tears more than once.

Back here in Boston, our members had the opportunity to meet two Finnish-born scientists Netta Mäkinen and Minttu Rönn on September 17 via Zoom. Their presentations were excellent and provided a great overview of their work in cancer research and public health. On October 2, we had the fortune to meet Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year Eepi Ursin in person at the Scandinavian Cultural Center; (see photo below). Her performance was top-class and it was a real treat to have an in-person meeting again after a two year hiatus due to Covid. Special thanks go to Sirkku Konttinen, Teresia Möller, Edith Eash, Greta Ljung, Anne-Mari Paster, and Linda Lindell, who made contributions to the coffee table.

Our upcoming events include a conversation with award winning author Emmi Itäranta via Zoom on November 6. Later that day, there is also a Finnish music event on Cape Ann that may be of interest to you.

Have a wonderful Harvest Season!

Yours sincerely,

Tuija Vainio, FFB President

Meet Award-winning Author Emmi Itäranta via Zoom At Noon on Sunday, November 6



Finlandia Foundation - Boston invites you all to a virtual book talk with Finnish author, Emmi Itäranta. Join us for a chat with this award-winning, sci-fi and fantasy author via Zoom on Sunday, November 6, 2022 – noon-12:45 p.m. The author will discuss the creative process of writing simultaneously in Finnish and English and describe how environmental themes, present in all her works, are integrated into the stories. There will also be a Q&A, where the author answers questions on these topics and previous works, including her latest book, "*The Moonday Letters*", now available on Amazon. As described on Amazon, the book is an effortlessly rich and lyrical mystery wrapped in a love story that bends space, time, myth, and science.

The event is free and a Zoom link will be emailed to you a few days before the event. The link will also be posted on the Finlandia Foundation-Boston website.

Finnish Music Event on Cape Ann Sunday November 6, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Finnish guitarist Jussi Reijonen will be performing at Rockport Music, his only USA appearance, to introduce his new album. The event is a wonderful opportunity for us all. For further information and tickets, see: (<https://rockportmusic.org/ticket-information/>)

Finland, Russia, and NATO; A Brief History

This has been a momentous year that has changed the current security landscape of Finland and some long-held doctrines of the Finnish foreign policy. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has resulted in Finland applying for full membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Finland declared independence from Russia in 1917. As a consequence, the socialists ("the Reds") started an armed rebellion in 1918 against the Finnish conservatives ("the Whites"), igniting a Civil War. The Whites fought with support from the German Empire's military and won. However, because Germany lost the First World War, Finland abandoned the plans to become a monarchy and became a democratic republic instead. In

1939, the rearmed and belligerent Germany signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. This Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact had a secret protocol that split Europe into two spheres of influence, Nazi and Soviet. Finland was assigned to the Soviet sphere along with Estonia and Latvia.

Soviet Union invaded Finland in November 1939 (The Winter War) soon after the outbreak of World War II. Finland fought the war alone, with little help from the West, but managed to retain its independence. Nazi Germany decided to take advantage of Soviet Union's weakness during this time and attacked, thus causing the Continuation War (1941) between Finland and the Soviet Union. Finland was in a difficult bind between the two hostile super powers but finally allied with Germany against the Soviet Union. A ceasefire was reached in 1944, but this meant that the Germans had to be driven out of Finnish territory. The Lapland War against Germans finally ended in April 1945. A time for peace and rebuilding started. Finland navigated the post-war situation carefully, focusing on growth, economic development, and peace-keeping efforts.

After the Soviet Union fell in 1991, Finland started moving toward the West. It joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program in 1994 and has had a relationship with NATO since without being a member and the Finnish armed forces have aligned with NATO structures and weapon systems. The Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) joined NATO as full members in 2004, while Finland retained neutrality. The general opinion in Finland has been hesitant of full NATO membership until this year.

The geopolitical environment in Europe changed in February 2022 when Russia began an unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine. The Finns' opinion on NATO membership swung from 25% to 75% approval and the Finnish government decided to, jointly with Sweden, apply for a NATO membership. All 30 existing NATO member countries must agree to accept an applicant country. This ratification process was expected to be quick for Finland and Sweden and, as of today, 28 countries have approved. Full membership is expected in 2023.

In the view of history, full NATO membership is a good and safe option for Finland in the current geopolitical environment.

-Contributed by Tapani Ronni

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Please Join Us at FinnFunn, October 28-30



The preparations for the FinnFunn 2022 weekend are in full steam. This year's anniversary event will be held at the East Hill Farm in Troy, New Hampshire, during the weekend October 28-30. Join at the Inn to meet old and new friends and to celebrate our Finnish heritage and culture. There will be a wide variety of presentations and workshops such as: **the Moomins, Kalevala & Pohjala's Daughter, Writing my Finnish Story, the Finnish immigrant settlement in Troy, craft workshops, photo exhibits, and more.** There will be music by **Brent Buswell, Bernie Nowak Jr., Oivan Ilo, and the Finnish dancers Revontulet.** There will also be a sauna and a tori. The tori (Finnish market) will take place at the Troy Elementary School on Saturday, October 29. For further details about the program and how to reserve space, see the FinnFunn 2022 website at <https://www.finnfunn.org/>.

Eepi Ursin Performs for FFB on October 2:

