



FINLANDIA FOUNDATION®, INC.

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

September 2011

Miriam Leino Eldridge, Editor

Web Page: www.finlandiasf.org

Message from the President

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION - WHO ?

by George Sundquist

From time to time, I am asked by my Nordic friends what Finlandia Foundation stands for, and what do we do? And while it is abundantly clear to me, it apparently is not always so to others. So while we have the Norwegian Club, Swedish Club, Finlandia Club, Kaleva Club etc. etc., Finlandia Foundation surely stands out by itself.

My short answer always is: Finlandia Foundation National is the single largest charitable organization in the US that financially promotes Finland's history and culture—past, present and future—through its Grants and Scholarships programs.

This is often followed by questions like: Do you have to be born in Finland or be of Finnish heritage to belong? Do you have to speak Finnish to be a member? Are there special qualifications to be a member? Can only members apply and receive grants and scholarships? Or, if we join the Finlandia Foundation, will the Foundation take over our assets?

The answer to all of the above is NO!

Finlandia Foundation is open to anyone, regardless of citizenship, ethnicity, language or background, who is interested in Finland and its changing history over the centuries, as well as today's Finland (one of the most prosperous, successful and admired countries in the world). Membership can be through a local Finlandia Foundation Chapter, or individually, directly to the Finlandia Foundation National. Today the Foundation has 40 member chapters across the country, up from 23 ten years ago.

Now administered by a 15-member volunteer Board of Trustees, Finlandia Foundation was established in 1953 by former Finnish Consul and philanthropist Yrjö (George) Paloheimo. Born into a prominent Finnish business family, he immigrated to the United States, and falling in love

2011 Calendar of Events



Saturday, October 22, 4 p.m.

Gala Concert with Former Finlandia Foundation Performers of the Year:
Maria Männistö and Terhi Miikki-Broersma
First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto
Reception Follows with Catered Dinner
(See story)

Sunday, December 11, 2 p.m.

Pikkujoulu/Lilla Jul/Christmas Party
Lucie Stern Center, 1305 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto
Catered Finnish Christmas Dinner
(Joulupukki has said he will be there!)
Silent Auction
(More details to come)

RSVPs are strongly recommended, especially when food must be prepared!



with the West, made it his home for the rest of his life.

(To learn more about this remarkable gentleman, go to www.finlandiasf.org and click on "Yrjö Paloheimo Biography" by K.R.Halme.)

A member chapter pays a yearly fee of \$1.00 per member to Finlandia Foundation National. Individual members pay a \$25.00 per year membership directly to the National Office in Pasadena. (For information go to: www.office@finlandiafoundation.org.)

So what are the benefits of Finlandia Foundation membership? Although any individual, group or organization that presents a project related to the Foundation's goals and objectives may apply for

(Message from the President, continued)

grants and scholarships, members will enjoy the added benefit of receiving the FFN Newsletter twice a year, as well as having priority access to other Finlandia Foundation National programs.

And maybe most important of all is the feeling of being united in the common cause of keeping our immigrant history and culture alive for future generations.

Finlandia Foundation National is an IRS 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization.

POY Gala October 22

In the early evening of Saturday, October 22, we will have the opportunity to hear two of our talented former Performers of the Year, Terhi Miikki-Broersma and Maria Männistö, sponsored jointly by Finlandia Foundation National and the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, in recital at the First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper Ave., Palo Alto, beginning at 4:00 p.m..

The recital, in the sanctuary with its magnificent organ (one of Terhi's many instruments), is at 4:00 p.m. and will be followed by a social hour in the church's Fellowship Hall at 5:30, and at 6:00 by a traditional Scandinavian buffet catered by award-winning Chef Pelle Nilsson.

Terhi will entertain with accordion and vocals during the social hour.

Semi-formal* attire is suggested.

\$60.00 per person in advance. Please send RSVP with check (made out to FFSFBAC) to Gunnel Pero, 1365 Green St. #204, San Francisco 94104. *Checks must be postmarked on or before October 18.* No admittance at the door.

* *Jacket and tie for gentlemen*

About the Artists

2009 POY Terhi Miikki-Broersma is a multi-talented musician who performs on organ, piano, bassoon and accordion among others. Chamber music has always been close to her heart, either accompanying on piano, organ or cembalo or playing bassoon, her favorite instrument.

2007 POY Maria Männistö is one of the finest young sopranos in the Pacific Northwest, with versatility in different styles, medieval chant to jazz and rock-'n-roll. Her recent New York debut in the modern opera **Kocho** was highly acclaimed.

Walentina Choir Draws Enthusiastic Audience in August

The Finnish-Swedish choir *Walentina kören* (*Walentina kuoro*, Walentina choir), based in Helsinki, celebrated its 40th anniversary with a tour of the U.S. Because members Ulf and Birgitta Strom are also Chapter members, they arranged to perform at a special event for our Chapter members and friends that was held on August 7.

The recital, at the First Presbyterian Church in Palo Alto (thanks, Don Fidler, for arranging this venue for us) was attended by some 130 people.

The choir sings in Swedish, English and Finnish, and its performance was enthusiastically received. After the recital, a light buffet was served.

(Ed.note: I was unfortunately unable to attend this event because of a prior commitment. However, I caught the group at FinnFest and was enchanted)

FinnFest 2011: A Report by One Who Was There

Visiting Finland Without the Big Bucks and the Jetlag

By Mae Kaven

This past summer I "caught the Finnish wave" without having to spend thousands of dollars or put up with jetlag.

At FinnFest 2011 in San Diego I got to hear Finnish virtuoso performers generously sharing their talents. Pianist Folke Gräsbeck in recital beautifully played Sibelius (he has recorded on 10 CDs all 220 of Sibelius' piano pieces). Later a chamber music concert by 20th century and contemporary Finnish composers transported me into new sound experiences. For a complete change of pace, there was Anttu Koistinen on the

electrified *kantele* that had earned him the honor of being selected the first Young Star at the Pori Jazz Festival. You should not write off the idea of the electrified *kantele* until you have heard its intriguing sound. It was a big hit with FinnFest audiences. Then there were the Finnish experts in photography, higher education, employment, international relations, migration—the list goes on.

The best Finnish food I had this summer was at FinnFest, with all due respect to Finland, which I did visit in June to celebrate Midsummer. At FinnFest two chefs from the Finnish embassies in Los Angeles and Washington, DC, gave food demonstrations and tastings of the most sublime offerings such as spinach pancakes with lingonberries, berry quark, and the most wonderful of all—salmon carpaccio (a paper-thin slice of fresh salmon flavored with sea salt, ground pepper, and a few drops of lemon juice and olive oil).

Finland was generous this year sending its talent to FinnFest, and a large number of Finnish-

Americans contributed their expertise in a variety of fields as well. A large *tori* (marketplace) filling the Convention Center had plenty of Finnish goods to suit every taste, and every night you could put on your dancing shoes and spend the night doing the polka, waltz, schottische, humppa and tango, and if you didn't know how, you could take lessons during the day. This is only a sampling of everything FinnFest had to offer over the four days. It was indeed a fest! The largest contingent so far from our FFSFBA chapter attended this year (see photos).

If you've never attended a FinnFest, and I fear there are many out there who have not, here's your golden opportunity. In November 2012 it will be in Tucson. You won't have to choose between taking the sun on a rock in Finland and attending FinnFest. In 2012— you can do both. (Stay tuned for more details.)

And now, a photo gallery of Chapter members who were at FinnFest this year:

Chapter Members Spotted at FinnFest 2011 in August 2011

(photos courtesy of Mae Kaven)



Ansa Treanor
–an appreciated Chapter supporter



Ulf and...



... Birgitta Strom
who both sang with the Walentina Choir.
We are pleased that you are Chapter members.



Past President Sue Walima
and Past Vice President John "Jussi" Hodges:
we have fond memories of your administration!



Ulla and Paul Preising
–long-standing, generous and valued
Chapter members



Our own multi-talented musician: Heikki Koskinen
–thank you for so many lovely Pikkujoulu
musical accompaniments.

(continued on next page)



Pirjo Polari-Khan recited her poetry (both serious and humorous) to an appreciative audience,

Well, there you have it: probably the largest number of our Chapter members who have ever attended a FinnFest. Not surprising, since it was practically in the neighborhood. But don't forget FinnFest 2012 in Tucson! That's not so far away, and the weather in November should be most agreeable.

As multi-year FinnFest attendees, both your editor and your photographer have fond memories of these gatherings. These still pictures can't convey the essence of FinnFest—you need to experience it in all its glorious activity and continuous entertainment.

At all past FinnFests I've gazed on the lovely glass birds created by Finland's master glassblower Oiva Toikka and concluded that they were overpriced. But this year I finally succumbed and bought his Ruby Bird. I love seeing it sitting on my sideboard along with my Jack Douglas sandpipers that I bought at the Saratoga Rotary Art Show in 1975 when I lived in Saratoga and the little elephant figurine from Africa that my sister brought me and the crystal ball from a fair in Berkeley. Memories reside in these.



Webmaster Bob Serina
(don't forget to visit our website,
www.finlandiasf.com, that Bob tends so faithfully).



Miriam Eldridge and Mae Kaven (Newsletter Editor and Media Relations representative)



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(Annual Dues: \$20 individual, \$25 couple)

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City, State, ZIP _____

Phone: (____) _____

Email (optional) _____

I (we) wish to (join/renew) (my/our) membership in the Finlandia Foundation's San Francisco Bay Area Chapter for the calendar year 2011.

Check enclosed for \$ _____

(Please make check out to "Finlandia Foundation—SFBAC")

Note: Membership dues are tax-deductible because Finlandia Foundation SFBAC is a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation under Federal tax law.

Please let us know by checking the appropriate box:

I prefer to receive the Newsletter as (check one) Email attachment (with any color material, including photos) Hardcopy (black and white)