

English Supplement

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Helsinki seeks nomination as

**World Design
Capital 2012**

Laituri looks towards the future

Laituri is the Helsinki City Planning Department's information and exhibition space in the old bus station building on Narinkka Square - in the very heart of Helsinki near Lasipalatsi Square and Kamppi centre.

Currently the urban structure of Helsinki is changing more rapidly than at anytime during the past hundred years. City residents as well as those visiting the city are interested in the future of Helsinki. A response to people's need to know and make a difference, Laituri is a new and open place where plans, changes and development projects can be examined.

Laituri welcomes anyone interested in urban design – town planning, construction, traffic – as well as residents interested in the future of Helsinki. It is a convenient visitor facility for tourists, experts and students interested in architecture and city planning.

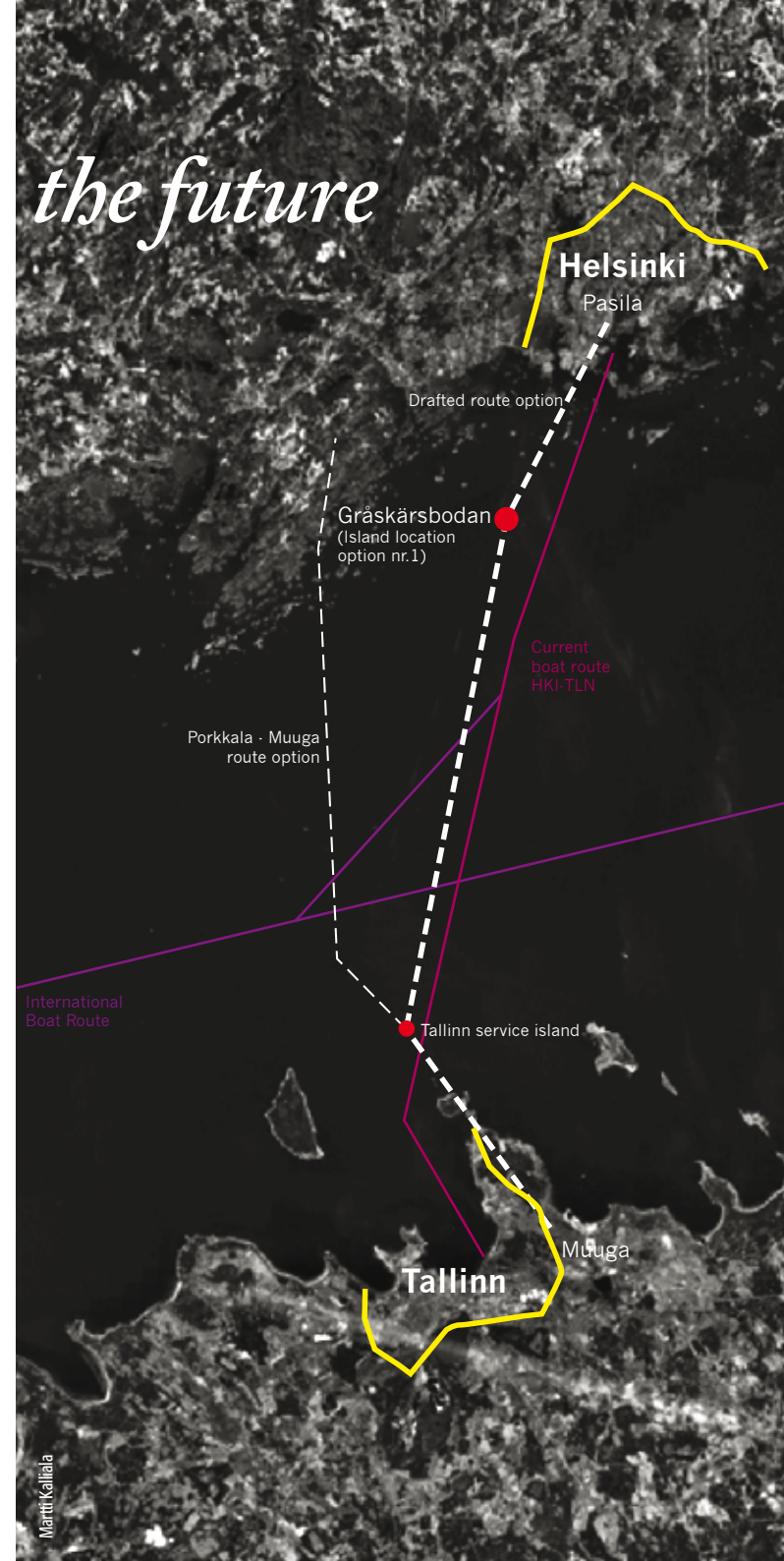
Besides getting acquainted with the latest planning projects and temporary exhibitions, visitors can express their opinions concerning Helsinki's future. At Laituri's sales desk you can obtain brochures or purchase books. Information about the lectures and events arranged at Laituri can be found online at:

<http://laituri.hel.fi>

Opening hours: Tue–Fri 10–18, Sat 12–16

Exhibitions:

- 6.3.-9.4. Building in the Attics in Helsinki
- 17.4.-16.5. Helsinki – a European metropolis: visions, research, projects
- 22.5.-29.8. Alvar Aalto's Buildings in Helsinki



Talsinki, a pragmatic utopia

The possibility of building a tunnel between Helsinki and Tallinn is currently being studied. If it will be built the excavation process will produce 16 000 000 cubic metres of blast stone as a side product.

In his Master thesis **Martti Kalliala**, young student of architecture, studies the option of establishing an artificial island from this material along the tunnel in the Gulf of Finland. The project could be seen, according to Kalliala, both as a profit generating speculative venture and an icon for the transformed relationship of the two cities into a twin city.

Kalliala names the island Talsinki – with homage to the Estonian writer **Jaan Kaplinski** who in 1992 first introduced the playful name of Talsinki or Hellinn for the possible twin city.

Kalliala's visions are presented at Laituri as part of the forthcoming exhibition *Helsinki – a European metropolis: visions, research, projects*.

Martti Kalliala: Talsinki Island – A 21st Century Pragmatic Utopia
Master's thesis in architecture, Helsinki University of Technology, 2008

FRONT PAGE

Martti Kalliala

Helsinki seeks nomination as

World Design Capital 2012

By Johanna Lemola

"The process is important, not just winning the title," **Pekka Timonen** explains why Helsinki is putting in a bid to be the World Design Capital in year 2012.

"We need this process, as fuel for both thought and action," Timonen points out. Helsinki is facing a huge transition – socially, economically, and because of the upcoming development of whole new city sections. "We can't mess this up," he says, "and the bid will help."



The World Design Capital is a designation given to a city every two years for merits in managing the dramatic changes that urban areas face today. It is awarded by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, an umbrella for the world's design organizations. Timonen, Director of Helsinki's Cultural Office, is the co-ordinator of Helsinki's bidding process.

Design – an all-embracing tool for improvement

The meaning of design has expanded vastly from the making of objects. As defined for the World Design Capital concept, it is an approach to do things right and to effect improvement culturally, socially and economically. Design is about making a better city.

Taking a house as an example, design does not only refer to the architecture of the building but also to its surrounding community. Design embraces how services are organized, for example, by using online tools. "One of the big design questions in the world is how to save the seas," Timonen reflects, further expanding the meaning of design.

When Helsinki looks for answers to new challenges, including those pre-

sented by the aging population, design is a key tool to help Helsinki overcome the challenges and succeed. "Our bid to become the World Design Capital is a starting point that sets the tone for the development of the region," Timonen says. "This is no window dressing, and we are sure not talking about vases!"

Helsinki's strengths to win the title

The first World Design Capital is the Korean capital Seoul in 2010. That city, with little history in traditional design, won the title with a bold vision.

Timonen is convinced that Helsinki can match Seoul's accomplishment: "Our city has demonstrated in the past that we CAN do things. We also have concrete projects to peg our bid on, including the Aalto University and the new central library, which will be a library of the future – not to speak about the huge urban development boom ahead of us."

The process has already brought a great deal of good for Helsinki: it has

gathered together major players in an unprecedented way, building up the design cluster of the region.

The short list of candidates will be published in the spring and the winner announced in November 2009.

"Whether we win or not, we will carry out this process in any case," Timonen asserts. ■

"Our bid to become the World Design Capital is a starting point that sets the tone for the development of the region."

Helsinki – a digital city

The digital revolution marches on, improving residents' lives.

Nokia, the world's biggest manufacturer of mobile phones, has its headquarters in the Helsinki region. Maybe its presence explains why the city's residents are among the most mobile-savvy people on the planet. They use their handsets in managing many aspects of their private and social lives, as well as taking pictures and recording and sharing videos.

Many Helsinki residents carry smartphones and use these miniature computers to handle email, maintain social and professional calendars and surf the Web. There are 6.4 million mobile phone subscriptions in Finland, a million more than the number of the country's inhabitants.

Finnish homes have moved into the digital age. Television transmissions were converted to digital format nationally in 2007. The Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) offers many programmes via the Internet or in for-

mat that can be viewed on a mobile phone.

The City of Helsinki distributes information via its website and digital bulletin boards located at shopping centres and on buses and trams. Helsinki residents can buy tram tickets by mobile phone – the ticket is displayed as a text message on the phone screen. Transportation timetables can also be checked by mobile phone.

The City is developing new communication services and interactive tools that can be used via the web. Helsinki City Library has more virtual visitors than physical ones. Visits to the City's site at www.hel.fi exceed one million each month.

City Council meetings can be viewed as both live and on-demand webcasts. This has opened up completely new opportunities for residents who want to monitor and participate in the City's decision-making processes. ■

Digital Glossary

English – Finnish

Digital - *digitaalinen*

Revolution - *vallankumous*

Mobile phone - *kännykkä*

Computer - *tietokone*

Email - *sähköposti*

Web - *netti*

Wireless network - *langaton verkko*

Text message - *tekstiviesti*

Timetable - *aikataulu*

Interactive - *vuorovaikutteinen*



Mika Lappalainen

All trams in Helsinki will have a wireless local area network (WLAN) by the end of this year.

"Art does not need a showy facade"

Painter, drawer and graphicist **Kuutti Lavonen** is one of the most popular and awarded Finnish contemporary artists.

Reviews praise his ability to capture a delicate atmosphere in his work by means of light and scanty, well thought-out colours, the same way great masters of the past did. The general public are touched by the enigmatic, often melancholic human faces on his large canvases. Ateneum Art Museum is at present displaying a Kalevala Exhibition that includes a work of Kuutti Lavonen in which he has given a face to the South and North winds.

To celebrate the 160 years of Kalevala, Ateneum Art Museum presents the most extensive show of Kalevala art seen in decades. The display features more than 200 works from almost sixty artists, all inspired by the Finnish national epic.

For the contemporary art portion the Museum ordered works in pairs from ten different artists and composers. "I had very rewarding conversa-

tions with composer **Olli Kortekangas**. I was given the opportunity of listening to his composition while I was painting and pondering over the solution of my own work" says Mr. Lavonen.

Helsinki inner city with its shores is part of Mr. Lavonen's childhood landscape, as well as winters in Paris with his artist parents. Mr. Lavonen went to Finnish-French school in Helsinki and has carried on the tradition with his own children.

Mr. Lavonen, born in 1960, graduated from the school of Finnish Academy of Fine Arts and pursued postgraduate studies in Italy, among others. Besides his artist's work he has acted as Professor at the Academy in 1998–2003.

"Art does not need a showy facade" says Mr. Lavonen. "Experience comes first, and it is best obtained from original art. Then one can experience the same feeling of integration with the surrounding reality as when being close to another person or in the nature. The experience is very profound. It is not necessary to understand art, just experience it." ■



Landscapes of My Life

- The Life and Works of Kaii Higashiyama

In early April, Virka Gallery will launch a retrospective of the life and work of the Japanese painter **Kaii Higashiyama** (1908–1999). Titled *Landscapes of My Life – The Life and Works of Kaii Higashiyama*, the exhibition marks 90 years of formal diplomatic relations between Finland and Japan. The exhibition at Virka Gallery will comprise photographs, personal items, digital Epson reproductions and 26 original lithographs depicting Japanese and Nordic landscapes. Kaii Higashiyama counts among one of Japan's most celebrated post-war artists.

Originally a student of oil painting, he later went on to adopt the traditional Nihonga style. Higashiyama's work is characterised by his rich use of colour, with blues and sea-greens featuring prominently. The colours are pure and his compositions austere yet lucid.

The exhibition can be viewed from 8 April to 10 May 2009 at Virka Gallery, Helsinki City Hall, Poh-



Kourchi Saito

joiesplanadi 11–13. Admission free. For the duration of the exhibition, the Virka Kino cinema will be screening a biography of Kaii Higashiyama by **Tuomas Sallinen** and **Heikki Mäenpää**, titled "Journey into the white night" (commissioned by Yle-teema, Finnish Broadcasting Company).

Public libraries

The Helsinki City Library is the largest public library in Finland – your local gateway to knowledge and life-long learning. It offers fiction and non-fiction, newspapers and magazines, music and materials in electronic format.

All 36 libraries in Helsinki have items in several languages. The City Library's stock is all in the Hel-

Met-database, as well the stock of other public libraries in the metropolitan area, see www.helmet.fi.

The public libraries are open to all and free of charge. To borrow something, a library card is needed. Everyone who lives in Helsinki can have one. For more information and to find your nearest library see www.lib.hel.fi.

Welcome to Caisa

Caisa is an international cultural centre in the core of Helsinki. Caisa organises concerts, exhibitions, courses and clubs and its own singing competition Ourvision. See www.caisa.fi.

"Between Dot and Majority" 3.4.–23.4.

Graphics and Ceramics from Lithuania.

Vietnam: Past and Present 29.4.–28.5.

Four vietnamese artists.

Lecture: Intercultural Communication 22.4. at 15.00–19.00

Join **Eila Kaarresalo-Kasari** in an interesting and practical workshop, where intercultural communication is tackled with the help of international etiquette. Tickets 10 €
Inquiries and registration: oge.eneh@hel.fi or (09) 310 37508

Women's International Living Room 11.5 at 16–18

Topic: Intercultural Dialogue in Working Life, the Organisational Field, and Elsewhere A chance for immigrant and Finnish women to meet. Discussion and cultural programme.
Registration: oge.eneh@hel.fi or (09) 310 37508

Mikonkatu 17 C/ Vuorikatu 14

Ourvision Singing Contest 2009 Finale 25.4. at 20.00–23.00

Finlandia Hall, Mannerheimintie 13 E
Join us in an unforgettable musical journey around the globe when the ten finalists, two from each continent, fight for the victory! See www.ourvision.fi
Tickets at the door from 1 h before showtime or Lippupalvelu, 0600 10 800 (1,83 € / minute + local network charge)
www.lippupalvelu.fi

St Petersburg Days in Helsinki April 14 to 17

This is the third time that St Petersburg Days are held in Helsinki. The four-day event includes both business related events and cultural happenings. The governor of St Petersburg, Ms **Valentina I. Matvienko**, will sign with the mayor of Helsinki, Mr **Jussi Pajunen**, an act of cooperation - the seventh of its kind.

Exhibitions in the Centre of Russian Science and Culture

14 to 27 April

■ St Petersburg and Finnish Sciences – contacts and impulses

Exhibition from the ethnographic museum.

■ Finland from the Russian artists point of view

Art exhibition.

Adress: Nordenskiöldinkatu 1.

Free admission.

www.ruscentre.org

Chamber music concert

14 April at 20 hrs

Rozhdestvo chamber choir from St Petersburg performs in the Helsinki Cathedral

Adress: Unionkatu 29

Free admission

www.chamberchoir.spb.ru/en



The Helsinki City Museum

Watch out, Gypsies!

Wandering Gypsies in their colourful carriages represent an old romanticised image that has little to do with the reality of the Roma of today. The Helsinki City Museum hosts in Hakasalmi Villa a guest exhibition about the history and culture of the European Roma.

The exhibition, created by the Luxemburg City History museum, has a provocative name "Watch out, Gypsies! The History of a Misunderstanding". The aim of the exhibition is to encourage the visitors to study their own fears and prejudices concerning this minority that has lived in Europe since the Middle Ages.

In Helsinki, the history and culture of the Finnish Roma is emphasized in the exhibition, as they differ in many ways from other European countries, says curator **Jere Jäppinen**. On the national day of Roma, April 8th, the culture and music of the Finnish Roma are presented in the Hakasalmi Villa at 15–20 hrs.

Address: Mannerheimintie 13

Opening hours Wed-Sun 11–17, Thur 11–19. Free admission.

Helsinki Info is a printed newspaper published by the City of Helsinki and distributed to all Helsinki households six times a year.

Helsinki Info's English Supplement resembles the main publication in format but is published online on the City Website, also six times a year.

Next issue 25.5.2009

Publisher: City of Helsinki

www.hel.fi

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Info kit

Information for immigrants

Info Bank is an online service aimed at immigrants, offering information on Finnish society and life in Finland in 15 languages. The website also contains local information on Helsinki.

www.infopankki.fi

Information for everyone

Virka Info telephone service (09) 310 1111 (Mon-Fri 9–15) and **information point** in the City Hall lobby, address Pohjoisesplanadi 11–13 (Mon-Fri 9–19, Sat-Sun 11–17), www.virka.fi.