

THE  
FINNISH  
INSTITUTE  
IN LONDON

Press Release

**BELOW ZERO**  
**Finnish Art**  
**Prize**

Building on long established links with the Finnish art community, Beaconsfield is honoured to launch BELOW ZERO – a new contemporary art prize for emergent Finnish artists.

In association with [The Finnish Institute in London](#) this prize has been made possible by an anonymous benefactor. The prize offers a platform for a residency at [Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall](#) and a new commission mentored by Beaconsfield, thereby fostering positive relations and creating new opportunities for intellectual cross-fertilisation between Finland and the UK.

Finnish writer and curator **Mika Hannula** has been invited to the 2017/18 selection committee, which includes representatives of the The Finnish Institute in London, Beaconsfield and the benefactor.

The selected artist is invited to work within Beaconsfield's tradition of outward facing, public residency. Artists are encouraged to respond to the unique physical character of the venue and the distinctive creative identity of Beaconsfield stimulated by the inaugural theme *Harmony and Dissonance*. A catalogue will be published to celebrate the prize.

BELOW ZERO is open to Finnish artists who have studied to degree level, either in Finland or the UK, and may be resident anywhere in the world. The selection committee will focus on artists who have not previously won a prize (this does not include bursaries or educational grants) and who would benefit from a major UK commission. For further information please email [pauliina.stahlberg@fininst.uk](mailto:pauliina.stahlberg@fininst.uk)

Below Zero Open call – 1st June 2017

Application deadline – 1st September 2017

London residency & exhibition – between January and March 2018

Online application portal:

[www.beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects/below-zero](http://www.beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects/below-zero)



Notes for editors:

The BELOW ZERO award includes

- mentoring residency with Beaconsfield
- solo exhibition at Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall
- fee/materials/accommodation/subsistence/travel costs

The **Finnish Institute in London** makes Finnish culture, society and research known by strengthening existing and creating new co-operation and networks in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Finland. The Institute supports the internationalisation of Finnish artists, researchers and other social and cultural actors. The Institute is a private, non-profit trust that identifies emerging issues important to contemporary society and encourages cross-disciplinary and cross-border collaboration by creating networks and building new partnerships.

**Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall** is a unique, non-profit, politically engaged, artist-led entity, placing equal emphasis on audiences and artists. Founded as an educational charity in 1994 with the desire to fill a niche between the institution, the commercial and the 'alternative', Beaconsfield's reputation rests on the staging of an influential programme of commissions (beacons) in a range of art mediums (field). The organisation's function as a primary research vehicle is particularly notable for pioneering developments in time-based and sound art as well as curatorial practice.

In 1996, the late [Mika Vainio](#) and Ilpo Väisänen as Pan sonic engaged in one of Beaconsfield's first performance based residency-exhibitions, *Rude Mechanic*. This project was seminal to the development of sound art in a gallery context and included cameo performances from key figures on the scene including Finland's [Jimi Tenor](#). Pan sonic worked again with Beaconsfield in 2007.

The following year Beaconsfield co-curated with [Muu ry](#) the UK's first exhibition of contemporary Finnish Art, which included Eija-Liisa Ahtila (<http://www.mariangoodman.com/artist/eija-liisa-ahtila>), Andy Best and Merja Puustinen (<http://www.andyandmerja.com>), Roi Vaara (<http://www.liveartarchive.eu/es/archive/artist/roi-vaara>), Pia Lindman (<http://www.pialindman.com>) and Pekka Niskanen (<http://www.pekkaniskanen.com>). More recently Beaconsfield has developed work over long periods with IC-98 (<http://www.socialtoolbox.com>) and Heidi Kilpelainen (<http://www.heidikilpelainen.com>).

For more information: [beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects](http://beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects)