

Press release 20 June 2024

Anssi Kasitonni receives the Below Zero Finnish Art Award 2025

Anssi Kasitonni has been selected as the fourth winner of the Below Zero 2025 Finnish Art Award.

He says 'I am absolutely thrilled to accept this amazing award! I am looking forward to discussing my proposal even further ...'

Below Zero is the UK-based contemporary art award for Finnish artists emerging on the international scene. Hosted by Beaconsfield London in association with the Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland and Serlachius, the award is worth up to £20,000. The Beaconsfield Commission offers creative support during a mentored residency and exhibition at Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, and subsequent exhibition of the commission at Serlachius in Mänttä, Finland.

Kasitonni's sculptures and videos are complex, hand-made productions that reference popular culture and are filled with humour. During his residency, Kasitonni will be out and about talking to people and delving into the psyche of South London to inspire the new work.

Beaconsfield co-directors **David Crawforth** and **Naomi Siderfin** say: 'Following an intense day of interviews with six diverse artists, the jury finally agreed unanimously, that Anssi Kasitonni would most benefit from the 2025 Below Zero Award. Despite his considerably distinguished career, Kasitonni's parodic sculptural work has rarely been seen outside Finland, and we look forward to introducing this somewhat maverick artist to the British public'.

86 artists applied for the Below Zero Award, which is awarded to an internationally emerging artist who is Finnish or living in Finland. The selection panel included David Crawforth and Naomi Siderfin, Artistic Directors of Beaconsfield London, **Pauli Sivonen**, Director of the Serlachius Museums, **Karoliina Korpilahti**, Programme Director, Arts at the Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland and **Hannele Tilles**, independent curator.

The jury shortlisted six artists who further developed the idea they presented in the open call. In addition to Kasitonni, the shortlist included **Saara Ekström**, **Jaakko Pietiläinen**, **Vappu Rossi**, **shubhangi singh**, and **Maija Tammi**. The jury was very impressed by the high standard of the entries.

Pauli Sivonen comments: 'This will only be Anssi's second solo exhibition abroad. He is held in affection by the Finns since his artworks speak very directly to the Finnish sensibility. It will be exciting to see how this artist responds to the London context and how the work translates'.

The award is organised by Beaconsfield Gallery, Serlachius and the Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland, supported by the Mirisch & Lebenheim Charitable Foundation. Previous winners have been the artists **Jonna Kina**, **Tuula Närhinen** and **Nastja Säde Rönkkö**.

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Notes to editors:

About **Below Zero Finnish Art Award**

Below Zero is the UK-based contemporary art prize for Finnish artists emerging on the international scene. Hosted by Beaconsfield London in association with the Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland and Serlachius, the award is worth up to £20,000 including creative support, a residency and commission at Beaconsfield and subsequent exhibition at Serlachius in Mänttä, Finland.

<https://beaconsfield.ltd.uk/projects/below-zero/>

About **Anssi Kasitonni**

Anssi Kasitonni is an inventor and builder, whose works draw from the fringes of popular culture, of a world of skateboarders and moped boys partly gone by. The materials and techniques of the artworks vary. Bronze-cast reliefs, resin and cardboard sculptures and insightful puppet animations are Kasitonni at his most familiar. While the artworks are humorous, they also speak for equality and humanity. Kasitonni graduated from Lahti Polytechnic Institute of Fine Arts in 2003. Finland's most prestigious art prize, Ars Fennica, was awarded to him in 2011.

<https://www.anssikasonni.com/>

About **Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland**

The Finnish Institute supports the internationalisation of Finnish contemporary art and helps artists, researchers and social and cultural actors to create international networks. Founded in 1991, it is a non-profit, private foundation funded by The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. <https://www.fininst.uk>

About **Beaconsfield London**

Since 1994 Beaconsfield has been a laboratory dedicated to the exploration and evolution of experimental art. It is an uncompromising space where open-minded artists and audiences come to challenge themselves and their understanding of what art can be, and supportive space for taking risks and exploring new ideas.

<https://beaconsfield.ltd.uk>

About **Serlachius**

Serlachius is one of Finland's most important cultural institutions. The Gösta Serlachius Fine Arts Foundation operates a museum complex and an artist and researcher residency in Mänttä. As a partner of the Below Zero Art Award, Serlachius will provide the winner with an exhibition and a residency. <https://serlachius.fi/en>