

# ANSSI KASITONNI

## Gentle Means and Easy Tasks

Beaconsfield | 22 Newport Street | Vauxhall | London | SE11 6AY

7 March – 26 April 2025 | Admission free

Preview | 6.30-9pm Thursday 6 March



Anssi Kasittoni, Maquette for *Gentle Means and Easy Tasks*, 2025. Photo credit: Ellis Parkinson. Courtesy Beaconsfield

**LONDON, UK:** **Anssi Kasittoni** (b. Vilppula, Finland, 1978) who wryly describes himself as the 'country cousin of Jeff Koons', makes epic homespun films and sculptures which reference popular culture and are filled with humour. The recipient of the 2025 Below Zero Finnish Art Award, and a former winner of Finland's Ars Fennica Prize, Kasittoni is a well-known figure on the Finnish art scene. Now he is bringing his DIY aesthetic of crafting fast-sculptures from lo-fi materials glamourised in chrome, from rural Finland to the UK for the first time. His new show, *Gentle Means and Easy Tasks* runs at **Beaconsfield** in Vauxhall from 7 March until 26 April and admission is free.

The Below Zero Prize awards a Finnish artist a commission to make new work with Beaconsfield which is housed in what remains of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Lambeth Ragged School. Responding to the building's mythologies, Kasitonni is creating a new sculpture which reimagines the grand pediment which once crowed the original neoclassical portico.

Kasitonni's pediment, made from cardboard and plaster, then chromed and painted in vibrant colours, features an enigmatic cast of characters, creatures and objects such as an elephant, a peacock and even a yellow submarine. Central to his monumental frieze, is the figure of Eliza Beaufoy, beloved wife of philanthropist Henry who was responsible for building the school for 1000 vagrant children in 1851 in her memory. By 1904 however, the land had been sold back to the Railways, who demolished two of the neo-classical wings to widen the viaduct. This left only the Girls' wing (below, left) which has been occupied by Beaconsfield Contemporary Art since 1995.



The Lambeth Ragged School of Doughty Street (now Newport Street), Lambeth Walk.  
Engraving from the Illustrated London News, 8 March 1851. Source: [landmark.lambeth.gov.uk](http://landmark.lambeth.gov.uk)

Imagery from the original pediment is scant, but it is known that the motto for the school was taken from Shakespeare: 'Those that do teach young babes Do it with gentle means, and easy tasks' - *Othello* Act IV Scene II.

The ten metre wide sculpture will be shown in Beaconsfield's Upper Gallery from 7 March until 26 April and will travel next year to be shown at Finland's cutting-edge contemporary art museum, [Serlachius](#). Throughout the exhibition, the Lower Gallery at Beaconsfield will screen a selection of Kasitonni short films.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

During February, Anssi Kasitonni can be visited working in residence in Beaconsfield's Upper Gallery, open to the public on Wednesdays 12-5pm and by appointment Thursdays and Fridays. There will be a public [Workshop for Enthusiasts](#) on 26 February.

**[Below Zero](#)** is the UK-based contemporary art prize for Finnish and Finland-based artists emerging on the international art scene. Commissioned by Beaconsfield London in partnership with Serlachius and the Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland, supported by the Mirisch & Lebenheim Charitable Foundation. The award offers £20,000, a mentored residency and exhibition at Beaconsfield in London and subsequent exhibition at Serlachius in Mänttä, Finland. The first Below Zero prize took place in 2018. Further details [here](#)

**[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. Bronzecast 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 and was awarded a Master's degree from Lappeenranta Polytechnic in 2025. Finland's most prestigious art prize, Ars Fennica, was awarded to him in 2011. [anssikasitonni.com](http://anssikasitonni.com)

**[The Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland](#)** is a leading expert on Finnish art, culture and society, fostering new perspectives on contemporary challenges. For over 30 years, it has promoted cultural dialogue and the exchange of progressive social knowledge between Finland, the UK, and Ireland. Since 2024, the Institute has been based at Somerset House. [fininst.uk](http://fininst.uk) @fininst\_uk\_ireland

**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 provides the winner with an exhibition and a residency. [serlachius.fi](http://serlachius.fi)

**Beaconsfield** is an artist-run laboratory dedicated to experimentation and sharing key debates in contemporary art, culture, and public life. This unique commissioning organisation celebrates 30 years as a resource of excellence – a beacon – for the development and presentation of international contemporary art – the field. @beaconsfield\_gallery\_vauxhall

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Gallery open Wednesday – Saturday 12–5pm

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