

Posti's art award goes to visual artist Janne Laine

Stamps featuring landscapes with spruces and birds will be issued in September

Posti has given its 2020 art award, which promotes stamp art, to visual artist Janne Laine, who is known for his impressive landscapes. Posti's art award includes a prize of EUR 10,000 as well as a stamp publication of the artist's works. Janne Laine's graphic art will be featured in two stamps next September.

Janne Laine creates landscapes that are not tied to a particular time or place. "I want to remove recognizable elements from the works and focus more on our mental image of a landscape."

Laine was inspired to photograph landscapes after visiting Iceland for the first time 20 years ago. "In Iceland, you feel the openness of the space in a completely different way compared to anywhere else. The rough landscape could well have existed before the existence of humans or after, which is what makes it fascinating. I am fascinated by the boundary between visibility and invisibility when the landscape is shrouded in mist and fog."

Laine started photographing Finnish forests after he visited the old-growth forest he used to spend time in as a child in Lavia. "I saw that the entire forest had been cut down. It made me feel as if my childhood had been taken away. Since then, I have wanted use my works to create my own untouched forests where nature is in balance. For many, the forest is a holy place where you can feel a genuine connection to nature."

Janne Laine is internationally known for using heliogravure, a technique that was used to print the first pictures in books in the 1870s. "The technique combines the benefits of photography and graphic art. First, I take a photo and expose it onto a copper plate, which I etch shade by shade and then print the finished picture on porous paper. This allows me to make the picture look less like an overly detailed photograph."

For the stamps to be issued in September, two pictures with something Finnish in them were selected from Laine's extensive range of work. *Itarusko* depicts sturdy spruces at sunset, behind which you can see dead trees. *Duetto* features two dark forms of birds perching on a treetop against a background of light sky and reddish clouds.

Graphic art works well on stamps

With the art award, Posti wants to raise the status of stamps and increase people's appreciation of them. "Stamps are everyday graphic art and a part of Finland's country brand," says Design Manager **Tommi Kantola**, who is the Chairman of Posti's Art Committee.

"In terms of its content and form, Janne Laine's graphic art is an excellent fit for stamps, which are also great at conveying the shades created by the heliogravure technique he uses. Through Laine's pictures, you can visit a forest and enter your own mental landscape," says Kantola.

This is the fourth time Posti's art award has been presented. In 2017, the art award was presented to sculptor **Jasmin Anoschkin**. In 2018, it went to graffiti artist **EGS**. And in 2019, it was awarded to fashion designer **Mert Otsamo**.

Janne Laine, 50

- He graduated as a visual artist from the Tampere School of Art and Media in 1995.
- Appointed a Master Printer in 2006.
- Many solo exhibitions as well as collective and group exhibitions in over 40 countries.
- He has received many international art awards and honorable mentions.

- *Laine's work can be found in, for example, the Amos Anderson Art Museum, the Didrichsen Art Museum, the Serlachius Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and the Finnish Parliament's art collection.*

Further information: Posti MediaDesk, tel. +358 (0)20 452 3366 (Mon–Fri 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Image material for the media: <http://digilibrary.posti.com/I/9tMmR5fTCsHT>

Janne Laine's website: <https://jannelaine.net>

All stamps available for sale are featured in Posti's online shop at: www.posti.fi/ostoksille