



Finnish Tango Festival in Germany

Patron Aki Kaurismäki

At the 101st birthday of Finnish tango, Hamburg-Altona will turn into the center of Finnish tango and Finnish flair: Hiphei, FINtango!

From 19th to 21st of September 2014 the powerful and melancholic northern European music and its soulful dance will be staged at different landmark venues in Hamburg. The festival starts in Lübeck, on the 18th of September.

Under the patronage of cult film director Aki Kaurismäki, the first-and only Finnish tango festival outside Finland was created by Finnish musician and German resident Timo Valtonen.

For their generous support, the festival team warmly thanks the following partners: The Finnish Ministry of Culture, the Embassy of Finland (Berlin), the Finnish Consulate General (Hamburg), the Altonaer Museum, the Alfred Schnittke Academy, the Finnish Institute (Berlin), the Finnish Music Foundation MES (Helsinki) and Music Finland (Helsinki), and the German-Finnish Society Nord (Hamburg).

The focus of this year's edition will be seven Finnish **tango bands** coming exclusively from the land of the grand lakes and birch trees, as well as Finnish **tango princess Sanna Pietiäinen**, star of the movie "Midsummer Night's Tango" who will join the ranks of the festival's performing artists. There will be eight **dance courses** led by master teachers Leena & Mika, and wherever Tango plays, dance conductors will be ready to assist. Renown Finnish DJ's will play **DJ sets** and many **movies** will be shown, i.e. "Midsummer Night's Tango". And to complement the three day program a **mobile sauna** will be in place as well as an **exhibition** celebrating the exceptional history of Finnish tango. The festival will bring a taste of the widely unknown Finnish way of life to Hamburg. There will also be a unique FINtango cocktail of pure **birch juice** sponsored by Nordic Koivu. The festival venues are **Alfred Schnittke Academy** (Max-Brauer-Allee 24), the **Altonaer Museum** and **Platz der Republik** between the participating institutions (see program).

"Finnish Tango: 101 years" the jubilee exhibition at the Alfred Schnittke Academy will provide an inside look into Finnish tango, informing about how the land of the thousand lakes became the second largest tango nation in the world. It is curated by the grande dame of Finnish tango, **Maarit Niiniluoto**.

"With the festival we will bring the authentic Finnish lifestyle to Hamburg, and this, naturally can begin with an introductory sauna session..." promises the director of FINtango, Timo Valtonen, who lives in Germany for over 20 years. Valtonen has been working tirelessly to promote Finnish music and culture throughout Germany. "Tango is deeply rooted in the tradition of Finnish culture and strongly anchored in the lives of the people in Finland. Especially at midnight sun, tango is a fundamental element of everyday life. Tango happens at



festive occasions, in restaurants, dance halls, in pedestrian zones, even on ferryboats, but especially in summer at Lavatanssi (engl. dance on plank floor).”

Finnish tango resemblances Argentine tango of the 1930's but is less formal and is reminiscent of Polka. The timbre tends towards minor rather than major scales and prefers declining to rising melodies. Nature and romantic love are core subjects of Finnish tango lyrics.

Finnish tango differs from Argentine tango in the way that everyone can tango—no matter their dancing skills or appearance. And this is our aim with FINtango: it is easy-going and brings the midnight sun to Germany.

Welcome to FINtango! - Tervetuloa FINtangoon!

More information at:

www.fintango.de

Download photo material on:

<http://studio.neq3.com/fintango/>

Linklist:

www.schnittke-akademie.de

www.altonaer-museum.de

www.finnland.de

www.finnland-institut.de

www.taike.fi

www.musiikinedistamissaatio.fi

www.musicfinland.com

www.dfgnord.de

www.finnfood.de

www.nordickoivu.com

www.vikingline.de

www.marimekko.com

www.harvia.de

www.trikont.de

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Info on the Artistic Program

Bands and Djs

Tango princess Sanna Pietiäinen accompanied by Pekka Kuorikoski (Friday, 8.00 pm)

Sanna Pietiäinen is the star of the movie "Midsummer Night's Tango" (www.mittsommernachtstango.de). The current success movie has already reached more than 50.000 viewers in Germany alone. FINtango will screen this movie following the opening concert. Pietiäinen is known in Germany for her engagement as a singer supporting the Finnish Tango star M.A. Numminen (Book: "Tango on intohimoni," engl: "Tango is my passion"), and through the album "Tule Tanssimaan", an audio compilation released on Trikont, featuring Pietiäinen on interpretations of Finnish tango classics such as Yön Kuningatar (engl: "Queen of the Night"). There are not many of those outstanding artists in the world of Finnish tango, who would know how to fascinate, to spellbind the audience in such an enchantingly soulful way. Pekka Kuorikoski, one of the top five tango instrumentalists in Finland, will accompany her on grand piano. When he plays the violin, Pietiäinen herself takes up the piano, mesmerizing the audience with her musical flexibility.

www.sannapietiainen.net

Johanna Juhola Reaktori (Sat, 10.00pm) and as duo Milla Viljamaa & Johanna Juhola (Sat, 2.00pm)

Millions of viewers used to be baffled in 2007 when the Eurovision Song Contest caused an unexpected stir in a moment of musical delicacy: Johanna Juhola was playing "Fantasiatango", a title that stands for this exceptional accordion virtuososo, navigating between Tango Nuevo and Electronica. With her band „Johanna Juhola Reaktori“ she effortlessly moves from folkloristic ease and electronic offbeat experiments to melodic naivety and virtuous sound excursions. The latest works released on CD were „Fantasiatango2“ and „Tango Roto Live“. Johanna Juhola will give two concerts: with her duo she will open the Saturday concert parcours, mixing Argentine and Finnish tango. The quartet Johanna Juhola Reaktori, accompanied by their outstanding sound engineer, will perform Saturday evening showing their artistic diversity and authenticity.

www.johannajuhola.net

Tangon Taikaa (Sat, 5.00pm)

Tangon Taikaa counts as the pioneer when it comes to Finnish tango in Germany, and remains the most popular Finnish tango band to this day. The taikaas, instrumentally led by the great accordion player Valentin Butt – member of the Berliner Philharmoniker – will surely find the pulse of the audience at a stunningly high musical standard. The singer Timo Valtonen sings the lyrics partly in German or, recites the text as part of the band's improvisations. Marburger Neue Zeitung: "Many 'messages' can only be translated through musical sounds opening up a space for encounter and communication. Valtonen manages to do this masterfully, he is an expert in interacting with his audience, and it is apparent that he becomes one with his music."

www.tangontaikaa.de

Beltango (Sat, 7.00pm - Part 1 and Sat, 11.30pm - Part 2)

This Finnish-German band plays pure instrumental tango. Annette Fischer and Karen Salewski are coming from this side of the Baltic Sea, from Greifswald, Hanna Silvennoinen from the Finnish side- from Helsinki.

On clarinette, cello and accordeon, the female musicians create magically the soft and delicate sounds of tango. Quiet and gentle, or wittily and bold, Beltango tells the tales of the sea, of love, of joy and despair through the classic Finnish tangos. Beltango plays at Milongas for dance, in classical concerts or at cultural festival events and enthruses ever more audiences in Germany for Finnish tango – just recently they played at the Scandinavian cultural festival „Nordischer Klang 2014“.

www.beltango.de



Harri Kaitila and Band (Sun, 5.00pm)

TANGO BABEL delineates the closing concert of the festival. Here, various tango cultures of seven languages will merge together. The band of three, around the tenor of Harri Kaitila, will give life to tango in all its diversity. On his new CD "Un finlandés en Buenos Aires" (A Finnish man in Buenos Aires) Kaitila interpretes a representative selection of Argentine and Finnish tango music- the latter received a remarkable review by Tangodanza in March 2014: "Kaitilas melodic, lyrical tenor is firm and present in its intonation, flexible and of powerful voice, as well as of delicate timbre."

Kaitila is accompanied by both Dmitri Pavlov, who complements with his artistic qualities as composer and arranger and who shines with his remarkable play of the piano and by Berlin based violonist Andrej Sur who is part of Berlin based Symphony Orchestras, as well as several tango ensembles.

www.harri-kaitila.com

Vallilan Tango (Sat, 8.00 pm and Sun, 3.00 pm)

Vallilan Tango, a dance orchestra from Vallila, comes from an old working class district situated in the Eastern area of Helsinki. Its repertoire embraces the traditional dances of the old dance halls including tango, waltz, foxtrot and beguine (ballroom dance in 4/4 key, but also known as musical style), as well as typical Finnish dances such as jenkka and humppa. The music is inspired by the 1930's and 40's - the songs are carefully composed and genuinely arranged, reaching back to the golden age of Finnish popular music.

The acoustic ensemble, consisting of violine, clarinet, trombone, trumpet, accordeon, contrabass and drums revives the somewhat scratchy sound of these past decades. A hint of exotic nature is added by the singer Hans Wessels, who left his Dutch homecountry to find the melancholic sounds of tango in Finland.

One of Aki Kaurismäki's favorite band, Vallilan Tango will give two different concerts. Whilst one performance will focus on the Finnish tango of the 30's through to the 50's the second performance will additionally present other traditional Finnish rhythms.

www.vallilantango.net

DJ Vilunki 3000

Vilunki 3000 is a star DJ for Finnish tango at Radio Helsinki and has played the turntable in all of Helsinki's acclaimed Clubs. Europe-wide he is best known with his electronic band Op:l Bastards.

DJ Tixa

Tixa is Finland's most legendary DJ. His career as a DJ started in Berlin back in the 1960's. His choices of tracks and sets would always make for a surprise. In his shows everything is possible, anything goes from playing his tiny instruments to whistling and other surprises - his interspersing rhetoric and spontaneous gesture bearing resemblance to a theatrical performance, ultimately passing on lots of love and excitement.

DJ Litmanen

Litmanen works as a music journalist at NDR and is specialized in European tango literature - particularly versed in Finnish literature. When he desperately fell in love with a Finnish woman, a Finnish tango had been played: Musta ruusu (engl. The Black Rose).

DJ Grönfors

The Finnish performance artist and tango lover Mirka Raito, alias Grönfors, meticulously works with tango melodies in her extravagant JOKAklubi shows. She spreads the charm of Finnish tango far beyond Finnish and German geographic and cultural borders.



Learn to Dance

During the festival dance instructors will be available wherever tango plays. According to the course participants of last year's festival, the Finnish tango seems to be more relaxed and easier to learn than the Argentine tango. Everyone is welcome: young and old, casually or fancy dressed. Everyone can tango – it is a “tango to go.” After this motto the FINtango dance teachers, **Leena Erholz and Mika Lustig** will proceed. They will perform a show dance during the opening concert on Fri, 19th of September at 8.00pm and surely inspire the audience to move into their own bodies.

Leena and Mika met on a warm summer night. Mika asked Leena for a dance at a “Lavatanssi” at an open air lake-side dance hall. Ever since the couple not only shares the passion for dance, but also their lives. Back home in Eastern Finland their engagement in the dance club J&V Kuopio (tanssiseurajetv.fi) certainly contributes to this passion of life. Moreover, both of them also teach at local adult education centers, evening classes and student groups. Being representatives of the biggest Finnish union of ballroom dancing (SUSEL), we are proud to have them at FINtango. Having taught hundreds of Finnish dance interested, they are well versed and experts in transmitting tango: They will share their expertise in Hamburg, seven slots will be available:

Beginners: Friday, 6.00 pm, Saturday 12.30 pm, 3.30 pm, 6.30 pm and Sunday 12.00 pm (noon).

Adanced: Saturday 9.00 pm and Sunday 2.30 pm. These classes will be held at the museum's auditorium.

The class in Lübeck held on Thursday, 18th September 2014, will start at 7.30 pm.

The exhibition

This year once more, an exhibition on the history of Finnish tango will be displayed at the Alfred Schnittke Academy. Last year's jubilee exhibition “100 years of Finnish tango” will now be replenished. It will shed light on how the land of the thousand lakes became the second largest tango nation in the world. **Maarit Niiniluoto**, the grande dame of Finnish tango has curated this exhibition. She was supported by **Kalervo Kärki**. For many years they have meticulously documented the manifold history of Finnish tango.

One part of the exhibition is dedicated to the works of composer **Toivo Kärkis** (1915 – 1992). There will be a total of 300 recordings of Kärki's tango pieces, the most beautiful top 30 can be heard on the first floor of the Academy. In addition, the captivating photographs of **Reijo Porkka** about dance sites of the 1970's will be on display. Porkka received the British and the Finnish art award of photography. **Ari Ellerts'** photographs show everyday life of the dance sites in the 1990's. Photographies and music will be complemented by text boards and a film, titled “Siks oon mä suruinen,” which will show the peculiarities of the nation's craving for tango.

Maarit Niiniluoto will be holding an interactive lecture on Finnish tango lyrics at the museum's “Figuresaal” on Sunday, at 1.30pm.

Maarit Niiniluoto

The daughter of long-time chief editor of the country's biggest newspaper and sister of the former chancellor of the University of Helsinki, is a contemporary witness of many stages Finnish tango has gone through. As author and radio voice she really made her mark through various publications. Niiniluoto knows all significant stars of Finnish tango personally. She studied in Strasbourg and Helsinki and is as lecturer and as ambassador worldwide on the move for Finnish Tango.