

State Art Commission

Competition jury

Open art competition for a work of art for the new building of Oulu Courthouse, 2021

Date & time: Monday 24.5.2021 from 9:00–16:08

Place: Meeting room Rausku, Hakaniemenranta 6, Helsinki

Present: State Art Commission

Henri Terho, Chair

Jari Auer

Marja Helander

Liisa Kantanen

Paavo Paunu

Ari Pelkonen

Kirsti Saarikorpi

Nora Tapper

Eija Aarnio, secretary of the jury

Heli Ahmio, competition liaison

Experts heard 13:00–15:00

Leena Komulainen (Komulainen Arkkitehdit Oy); Maria Holthoer, Interior Architect (PES-Arkkitehdit), Ahti Kontturi, District Judge (District Court, Oulu Courthouse); Kati Jokelainen, Client Manager, Architect (Senate Properties)

1. Legality and quorum of the meeting

The Chair noted that the meeting was duly convened and quorate.

2. Review of competition rules and competition brief

The jury read the competition rules and competition brief.

It was noted that the competition was an open art competition organised by the Finnish State Art Commission in collaboration with Senate Properties. The Finnish State Art Commission served as the competition jury.

Competition documents had been downloadable starting Wednesday, 17 February 2021, at the State Art Commission's website, and the competition ended on Wednesday, 5 May 2021. Competition languages were Finnish, Swedish and English.

3. Submissions

It was noted that a total of 101 competition entries were received from the following aliases. (see Annex 1).

4. Satisfaction of competition criteria and disqualifications

It was noted that 88 entries satisfied the criteria set out in the competition brief. 13 entries (see Annex 1) did not meet the criteria set in the brief either because the competitor's contact data was visible in the submitted documents, the entry was submitted after the deadline, or the entry did not otherwise meet the formal requirements.

5. General assessment

The purpose of the competition was to find ideas for artworks to be installed in the courtrooms and lobbies of the new courthouse building at Torikatu 34-40, Oulu, Finland. The new building will house the Oulu District Court, the Administrative Court of Northern Finland, local facilities of the national Enforcement Authority and National Prosecutor Authority, as well as premises for main hearings of the Court of Appeal in Oulu. The complex will also house the offices of Legal Aid and Public Guardianship District and facilities of the Finnish Immigration Service.

The jury was mandated to select one or more works to be implemented. Also a serial concept to be installed in several spaces was acceptable. Entries were also allowed that consist of works in several different spaces that are linked thematically, regardless of the medium. The proposed artworks are

required to be easy to service and maintain, and have a modest lifetime cost. Assessment focused especially on artistic quality, viability of implementation, and development potential of the entries.

The jury noted that the competition was of a good standard. Entries were received for the court rooms as well as the lobbies. The specific character of the competition site and sensitivity towards users were taken into account in the entries. The artists had been inspired by the materials used in the new building. The ecological life cycle of the artwork was also taken into consideration in many entries. The jury felt that the entries might have been more three-dimensional in character and thematically more challenging.

Competitors had the right to request further clarification and information concerning the competition. The questions concerned, among other things, whether it was possible to participate in the competition as a team, and whether it was possible to send an entry posthumously on behalf of a deceased artist. Questions were also presented about the allowed production cost of the work. Competitors also requested additional materials and photos of the lobbies.

6. Selection of winners and assessment of submissions in the upper category

The jury chose the following five entries for the upper category, and noted the following assessments:

023 *Lacunae*

The proposed work establishes conceptual tensions in the space through the use of different elements. It consists of figurative reliefs and text elements cast in bronze. Its motifs are drawn from imageries common in courthouses, the symbols of justice: law book, sword and scales. Carved into plywood walls, the text elements are Latin terms related to law. Words displayed in the lobbies of civil, criminal and arbitration courts are carefully chosen to fit their context.

024 *Polut*

The entry shows how nature can be brought into architectural space. A sculptural ensemble consisting of real tree branches, the work introduces subtle colour gradients in the space that interact with nature motifs on perforated back walls. Interlaced branches of different thicknesses and lengths are a reminder of alternative routes and crossroads also in the life of individuals. The mood of the installation is warm, sympathetic and soothing. The natural materials used in the work boldly assert themselves in the space.

047 *Virta*

In appearance, the work is a graphic pattern, a line that meanders over the walls and creates an impression of river valleys seen from the air. A second manifestation of the work brings the viewer close to reflections of water and light. The handcrafted patterns are made of white gold leaf, producing vivid reflections and mirroring the surroundings. Flowing water is a commonly used metaphor in references and quotations. The entry is an integrated concept that is thematically connected to the Oulu region.

063 *Loputon kuva*

The entry takes repetition as its theme. Separate and distinct yet compatible elements build landscape panoramas. A series of lino prints is used to create a continuum. The artist plays around with the motifs, occasionally repeating them upside down or reversed into a mirror image. The motifs are drawn from imageries associated with the Oulu region, the sea, the sky and the countryside.

075 *Silmätysten*

The entry is a mosaic of photographs of different people's eyes and gazes. The work seeks to create eye contact situations. The small individual images produce a matrix of gazes. The entry also raises questions about the conventions of viewing, whether the viewing situation is reciprocal or a configuration of surveillance and control. Eyewitnesses play an important role in the judicial process. A close reading of the work reveals the infinite range of emotions conveyed by our fellow human beings and their eyes.

The jury decided to award

1st prize, entry No. 047, *Virta*, prize sum: 7,000 euros.

2nd prize, entry No. 063, *Loputon kuva*, prize sum: 4,000 euros.

3rd prize, entry No. 075, *Silmätysten*, prize sum: 3,000 euros.

Merit awards, 500 euros each

No. 023, *Lacunae*

No. 024, *Polut*

The prizes are tax-free.

No honorary mentions were awarded.

7. Implementation of winning entries

It was decided to start negotiations for further development and implementation with the creators of the first and the second prize.

8. Disclosure of the identity of entrants

The envelopes containing information about the identity of winning submissions were opened, to note:

1st prize, No. 047, *Virta*, artist: Otto Karvonen

2nd prize, No. 063, *Loputon kuva*, artist: Kai Rentola

3rd prize, No. 075, *Silmätysten*, artist: Jouni Kaipia

Merit award winners:

No. 023, *Lacunae*, artist: Hanna Råst

No. 024, *Polut*, artist: Pia Hentunen

9. Announcement of result and decision regarding online exhibition

The result of the competition is announced on Thursday, 3 June 2021, at the State Art Commission's website. The winning entries and merit award recipients as well as the jury report will be on view online from 3 June 2021 to 2 December 2021 at the competition website www.valtionaideteostoimikunta.fi/oulun_oikeustalo-taidekilpailu. Unawarded entries with their identifying data will be destroyed six months after the resolution of the competition.

10. Closing of the meeting

The Chair closed the meeting on Monday, 24 May 2021, at 16:08.

In witness of the above

Chair

Henri Terho

Competition secretary

Eija Aarnio

Jari Auer

Marja Helander

Liisa Kantanen

Paavo Paunu

Ari Pelkonen

Kirsti Saarikorpi

Nora Tapper