

## **Finland, National Year of Brass Music 2001**

This project aimed at promoting brass music instruction and practice in Finland. Three hundred events were organised with a view to attaining this objective. The Association of Finnish Music Schools initiated the project.

### **Background**

Recent years have seen a worrying decline in brass instrument instruction in Finnish music schools. The Association of Finnish Music Schools responded by designating the year 2001 as the National Year of Brass Music.

### **Concept and Objectives**

By inspiring children and young people to take up a brass instrument, and by drawing as much attention as possible to brass music in local and national media, the project intended to the word about brass music in order to get the general public acquainted with it. Objectives are to increase applicants to the music schools' brass programmes and to increase in the number of new students.

### **Description**

The National Year of Brass Music featured various events, including a National Brass Day on which numerous concerts were held around Finland. In addition, during the year many other organisations including army brass bands, church ensembles and symphony orchestras took part with their own concerts and activities. The main event was the Koli Brass Seminar, which included a brass band jamboree that attracted a large number of brass bands and brass music enthusiasts to Koli. Other important events were the Lieksa Brass Week and the International Tuba and Euphonium Conference (ITEC). The Rich Matteson Jazz Competition for Tuba and Euphonium was held in conjunction with the conference. Honours went to Antti Rissanen, who was also named Brass Player of the Year by the Lieksa Brass Week. Music schools also offered an extra entrance examination day for brass instruments. The co-operations with schools were very important for the project and resulted in establishing new youth orchestras between music schools and primary schools.

### **Organisation**

The National Year of Brass Music was initiated by the Association of Finnish Music Schools and organised under the patronage of Minister Olli-Pekka Heinonen. The association also co-ordinated the project and assigned a working group to handle the events. The group consisted of the association's managing director, a project secretary, the director of the Finnish Music Information Centre, the managing director of the Lieksa Brass Week, the director of the Lieksa Music School, the Helsinki Parrish organist, the Sibelius Academy Orchestra intendant, a National Opera trumpet player, and a teacher from the Sibelius Academy.

The member magazine, general meetings and the National Brass Year website on the Internet served to keep schools and pupils up to date. Music school directors also passed on information to teachers and pupils.

The National Year of Brass Music was organised with the help of a wide variety of institutions and individuals including the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church, composers, schools, the Finnish Defence Forces, symphony orchestras, and the brass music appreciation societies around Finland.

### **Publicity**

To publicize the National Year of Brass Music, the project secretary sent information to television, radio and newspapers. The association organised a public relations event for the media. Local organisations, such as music schools, were also highly active in informing the media.

### **Finance**

The National Year of Brass Music was organised with the help of the National Board of Education.

## **Results**

At the conclusion of the year, the Association of Finnish Music Schools conducted a survey to gauge how successful the National Year of Brass Music had been in reaching its main objectives. Survey questionnaires were sent to all Finnish music schools. Survey results indicated a 45% increase in applicants to the music schools' brass programmes compared with the previous year, and a 9.6 % increase in the number of new students admitted, all of which suggests that the year was quite successful in reaching its main objectives. Significant progress was also made in regard to the media. Besides the many concerts, the National Year of Brass Music also produced new brass music by Finnish composers.

## **Information**

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For information about the project (in Finnish), surf to: [www.musicfinland.com/vaskivuosi](http://www.musicfinland.com/vaskivuosi).