



Foreword

Finnish nature is, of course, truly important to me. I could not survive without regularly returning to Finland and to our summer cottage.

When I have guests in Finland on their holidays I take them to the Turku archipelago. For me it contains the most beautiful scenery the country can provide!

In my work in international opera productions I meet artists who have never been to Finland. It gives me a perfect person to person opportunity for marketing our country.

Before inviting anyone to Finland one should perhaps find out how they feel about being near water, because water is something one can hardly escape here. With the sea and its long coastline, plus all the lakes and rivers, water is the most predominant element of our nature.

Like many other Finnish international artists, I have also lured foreign artists to work in one or an-

other of the many summer festivals we host. They have come once, they have come twice, they have come many times and brought their friends and colleagues with them. For my colleagues, opera singers, Savonlinna Opera Festival is naturally the main event. With the new covering over the castle yard, it has become even better than it was before, a brilliantly resounding space.

Once visiting colleagues get the taste of Finnish nature and the exotic light summer nights they understand how important the peace and quiet of nature is as a contrast to our work.

For practical reasons, I have lived for many years in Central Europe, in Zurich. But I made sure that our house was located with a view of the lake! 'Home' for me, however, will always be Finland.

Matti Salminen

