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 **Runolaulu-Akatemia**
Runosong Academy

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SEE, HEAR AND EXPERIENCE THE RICHNESS AND VERSATILITY OF
FINNO-UGRIC LANGUAGES AND CULTURES!

KUHMO AS FINNO-UGRIC CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2023 -PROGRAM SUMMARY IN ENGLISH



Photos: Opening ceremony of Sommelo Festival is held at the Kuhmo marketplace (upper on the left), a concert at Jonkeri lake 2017 (upper right), Värttinä in a concert on Kuhmo Art Centre stage (lower left) and runosong concert in Juminkeko (lower right).

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GENERAL

Established in 2013, the programme of Finno-Ugric Capitals of Culture is a flagship initiative of MAFUN and URALIC Centre that aims to raise awareness of Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic peoples as well as Uralic languages, to strengthen collective Finno-Ugric identity and to stimulate sustainable local development in different corners of the Finno-Ugric world.

Why Kuhmo?

Kuhmo is highly suitable for Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture. Forest, music and Kalevala have been the most eminent strengths of Kuhmo and they are exactly the same as special features of Finno-Ugric world and cultures, relationship for nature and forest, singing traditions and mythology.

Kuhmo is situated in the very center of Baltic-Finnic language area. Kuhmo is nominated a Creative City of Literature by UNESCO since 2019. Kuhmo actively maintains close and friendly relationship to Kostamuksha, where for instance former FU Capital of Culture **Vuokkiniemi** is located. Many highly valued cultural institutes, like **Juminkeko**, **Ethno Music Festival Sommelo**, **Runosong Academy** and **Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival** are located in Kuhmo.



Photos: Juminkeko (left) is open year-round. Chamber Music is one of the highlights of summer in Kuhmo.

There are several events arranged yearly in Kuhmo, which can take Finno-Ugric languages and culture as their theme for the year 2023. **Kuhmo Celebrates Winter in February** is very suitable for the opening

ceremony of the FU CC -year. **Kalevala day** and **-week**, Arhippa Perttunen symposium, Runosong day, and above mentioned Sommelo and Chamber Music can take the Finno-Ugric culture as their theme.

Also the municipalities around Kuhmo can be part of the festivities. **Suomussalmi** and **Ilomantsi** especially are invited to take part of the year. One extra possibility comes from the fact that **Singing Heritage Route** -initiative concerns all of these municipalities and areas.

Kainuu is very near to Viena Karelia, and actually there are three Karelian villages in Kainuu. The **Rimpi**-village is in Kuhmo, and **Kuivajärvi** and **Hietajärvi** are located in Suomussalmi. The ancient hiking path "**Viena route**" (Vienan reitti) has connected Kainuu and Viena Karelia for centuries.

In Kuhmo there are many other culturally active associations and groups, also those which are interested in Finno-Ugric theme. **Kuhmo Arts Centre** is a suitable venue for the events in Kuhmo. And **Wild Taiga** (Idän Taiga ry) is an association of about 60 tourist enterprises and organisations.

Kuhmo is also part of **Oulu 2026 European Cultural Capital** -program, and the FU CC -year can be connected to this as preparation.

PREPARATORY MEASURES

Runosong Academy is preparing the application in 2021. A working group is established together with Kuhmo town and Juminkeko. The working group also invites some specialists to give their expertise in particular questions, like professor Annika Pasanen as linguist, researcher Irina Nurieva from Udmurtia, Alevtina Voitovitsh, vice director of Finno-Ugric Music Department in Petrozavodsk Conservatory, Janika Oras from Estonian Literary Museum and Music Academy, Sari Rusanen from Kuhmo Chamber Music and Gergely Varkonyi from Forest and Nature research centre in Kuhmo.

In the year 2022 many preparatory measures are taken. In March Pekka Huttu-Hiltunen and musician Sakari Kukko are visiting Petrozavodsk Conservatory work shop and seminar of Komi and also in general Finno-Ugric music. Later in August they participate an expedition to Komi area, and visit the Udmurtian Bayterek.



Photo: Runosong Academy has implemented many expeditions in the last years. One was in Hanti-Mansisk, Surgut area, Russkinskaya village (left) in 2014. It has also formal agreements with many institutes, like Mordvia State University (right).

In summer, some groups from Udmurtia and Karelia visit Kuhmo, Sommelo festival. In autumn, the preparation continues, and the program in details is ensured.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR 2023

- Opening ceremony week of the year (20.-28.2.2023)
 - The Kuhmo Celebrates Winter has many concerts, exhibitions and other events, and all of them are coordinated according to the theme of the year.
- Kalevala week (20.-28.2.2023)
 - Arranged and coordinated by Juminkeko
- International Mother Language Day (21.2.2023)
- On 24.2. there is going to be outdoor event, where the year is ceremonially opened. In the evening of the same day, a special concert is held in Kuhmo Arts Centre, in the Lentua hall.
- During the opening week, a conference on Finno-Ugric languages is arranged by Runosong Academy on 24.-26.2.
- In Juminkeko the whole week is Kalevala week, and it culminates to the celebration of the Kalevala day on the 28.2.
- The day of poetry is celebrated also in Kuhmo on 21.2.2023, in Juminkeko
- Runosong day is arranged on 25.4. (the day when 1834 Elias Lönnrot met Arhippa Perttunen) in Kuhmo, Suomussalmi, Ilomantsi and Vuokkiniemi.
- Arhippa Perttunen symposium is arranged on 25.4. in Juminkeko. It is an audience friendly event with a scientific presentation and runosong performance.
- In May, the Kuhmo Music Institute is having a concert of young students, in the FU-theme.
- Kuhmo summer musicians (5.6.-5.7.) are having the FU-theme. Pekka Huttu-Hiltunen is giving lessons on runosong and other Finnish traditional music.
- In June, Ethno Music Festival Sommelo is held in a special way. The whole week 26.6. – 3.7. is dedicated to Finno-Ugric languages, songs, music and culture. Artists, researchers and musicians are invited from different parts of FU world. Sommelo is the culmination of the Cultural Capital year 2023.
- Ilomantsi is having one week (Parppeinvaaran vaaraviikot) on the FU theme.
- Kuhmo Chamber Music is maybe the biggest event of the year, if one looks at the number of visitors. One of the best and appreciated festival in the world collects about 40 000 visitors every year. There are about 80 concerts during the two weeks, 9.-22.7.2023.
- Jolly July 26.6.-31.7. is a program for children. All events and also small associations and groups are giving children an opportunity to experience culture in Kuhmo.
- Hiking event on Viena Route (Vienan reitti), from Finland to Viena Karelia across the Finnish-Russian border 28.-30.7.2023. If we succeed, for the first time in about 100 years, we walk on the ancient route, which has been for centuries the “Highway to Viena Karelia”. Also Elias Lönnrot walked on it, and many others. This will be one of the highlights of the year.
- Concert on 30.7. in the memory of Jussi Huovinen, the “last runosinger”.
- In August, ethnographic films are shown in Korpikino, Kuhmo.
- International day of literature is on 8.9.2023. It is celebrated in Juminkeko as FU-theme.
- The Night of Art is arranged in Kuhmo on 9.9.2023
- A conference by the Viena Route is arranged in 23.9.2023
- A special event for the FU year is On the Trails of the Big Bear. It is concentrating on Finno-Ugric myths of bear being involved in the birth of mankind.
- Kekri (also called Römppäviikko in Kainuu) is a Finnic old yearly event. It used to be the swift of the year in old agricultural culture; a time when employees were “free” for two weeks. There was all

kind of happening, dances and local parties where young people could meet each other's, etc. As a memory of this time, Kuhmo is having still program called Römppäviikko.

- In November a seminar on Kalevala translations and also other epics of Finno-Ugric languages and cultures is held in Juminkeko.
- An international conference on singing tradition is held by Runosong Academy, on 24.-26.11.2023.
- The ending celebration event is held in December (15.12. 2023) in Kuhmo.

PROJECTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES WHICH SUPPORT THE FU-CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR 2023

Singing Heritage Route -initiative is connecting Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It gives many opportunities to promote also runosong and other Finnic and Estonian traditions as part of the main theme of the Route.



Runosong Academy is strongly campaigning to get **Runosong on the Unesco international list of intangible Cultural Heritage**. In this campaign there are many nationally the most appreciated institutes, such as, for example, Sibelius Academy Folk Music Department, Finnish Literature Society, Kalevala Association.

Juminkeko is having yearly 4 – 5 **art exhibitions**. These can be coordinated with the FU theme in 2023.

Kuhmo library can arrange an exhibition of Finno-Ugric literature during the year. It is also having regular meetings of bibliophile people, and the themes can be coordinated with FU theme.

PERSONNEL

The working group will be Pekka Huttu-Hiltunen as convoker, Olga Zaitseva and Markku Nieminen from the Juminkeko and one or two persons from the Kuhmo town.

BUDGET FOR EXTRA COSTS OF 2023

All partners will have their own budget, and the most of expenses are taken care by them. The extra costs, which come in addition, because of the FU theme, are allocated to be something like 150 000 e. They are covered by different project funding which are applied.