



Bern, December 6th 2020

Ladies and gentlemen, dear visitors of the Ossi Saarinen exhibition,

I am very pleased to welcome you to this virtual exhibition by the Finnish photographer Ossi Saarinen. Nidau Gallery could not have chosen a more appropriate time for the opening of this exhibition: Today, December 6, 2020, we celebrate the 103rd Independence Day of the Republic of Finland. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the gallery owners Anne-Marie and Johann Müller for showing respect for my country in this way.

If there is anything else from the year 2020 that will remain in our memories besides Corona, then it is certainly the "virtual year 2020". We will remember how the real was transformed into the virtual: we could no longer meet and move around as usual, museums, galleries and restaurants were closed; and meetings to which one had previously had to travel, were suddenly replaced by computers and screens.

Here you will now also visit a virtual exhibition, a virtual exhibition of a virtual world, because isn't photography also a virtuality? Photographs are real moments and views of a photographer, which we are allowed to view at any time around the world thanks to his camera. In this virtual exhibition you can now experience the beautiful nature of Finland without being there yourself. You experience Finland in the second dimension; flat on paper and on the screen. But if you have already been in the wide nature of Finland, you will miss the third and, if I may say so, also the fourth dimension: the optical 3D reality of being on site and in the middle of the action, and as the "fourth dimension" also the world of senses and feelings. These includes the "scent" of the clear air in the vast Finnish forests, the crackling of the snow on an icy winter's day, the perception of the presence of wildlife as well as the sight of the sun on the horizon on a late summer's evening.

The beautiful pictures of the only 23-year-old talented photographer Ossi Saarinen are meant to show you in these days the beautiful flora and fauna of Finland with which we Finns are part of the unique "ecosystem" of nature. Ossi Saarinen's works clearly convince us that together we must preserve this enchanting ecosystem for future generations.

I hope that the pictures you get to see now will delight you, bring your thoughts to the nature, and perhaps also arouse your interest in Finland. It won't be long before traveling will be possible again, and I hope that you will make the step from the virtual second to the real third and fourth dimension and experience the beauty of Finland with your own senses. As Ambassador of Finland I would like to welcome you in these two dimensions - now at home and as soon as possible in Finland.

Timo Rajakangas
Ambassador of Finland to Switzerland and Liechtenstein