

Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation
Press release, 25 October 2021

For the third time, the Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation will be awarded to professional artists and artistic associations within the cultural field in the Barents region. On 26 October 2021 in Tromsø, Norway, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council will award four scholarships to recognize and encourage artistic excellence and cooperation across borders.

The Joint Working Group on Culture of the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation now has the pleasure to reveal the scholarship recipients for 2021.

The Finnish scholarship recipient is **The Artists' Association of Lapland**, who develops work conditions and promotes work opportunities for artists in Finland and abroad. For the past 30 years the association has been active in the cultural cooperation within the Barents region, implementing and participating in numerous projects and activities. With an ongoing project highlighting young contemporary art in the selected northern geographic area, the The Artists' Association of Lapland helps to create new networking possibilities for artists and curators.

The Norwegian scholarship recipient is **Stellaris DansTeater**, an independent dance company from Hammerfest, Finnmark who has contributed to creating meeting places for working artists throughout the Barents region for more than 20 years. Stellaris DansTeater and their projects fulfil the Barents Scholarship's purpose of recognizing outstanding art and culture created through cross-border collaboration. Through the projects Stellaris DansTeater will bring art from the Barents region to the outside world - and vice versa.

The scholarship recipient from the Russian Federation is the **State Opera and Ballet Theater of the Republic of Komi**, founded in 1958. Today, the institution is a unique cultural center in the region and has toured both within Russia and internationally. The theater combines classical traditions and innovative ideas in the work with its own productions, tours and festivals. Through their pedagogical work, special attention is paid to young people's artistic education and practice.

The Swedish scholarship recipient is the photographer, editor and writer **Kenneth Mikko**, born in Kiruna, Norrbotten, whose many years of artistic commitment have generated cultural exchanges and collaborations within the Barents region. The work of Kenneth Mikko is characterized by an impressive versatility and quality, and the interdisciplinary activities generate exchanges with people from different areas and from different backgrounds. Always with the intention to shed light on the importance of the north.

About Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation

The Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation, amounting to 10 000 euros, was established by the Ministers of Culture of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in 2016. The scholarships have been awarded in Arkhangelsk in 2017 and in Umeå in 2019.

Scholarships are awarded to professional artists and artistic associations within the cultural field in the Barents region. Scholarships are awarded every second year, once per BEAC presidency. Four scholarships are awarded, one for each Barents country. The scholarships amount to 10 000 Euros

Awarding scholarships shall be based on an overall assessment of:

- Experience and ambitions: Experience with cultural cooperation across borders in the Barents Region and ambitions for further development of projects.
- Artistic quality in previous work.
- Barents affiliation: The recipient must be a resident and work within the Barents Region.

Scholarship recipients 2017:

Photographer **Jaakko Heikkilä** (Finland)

Travelling theatre **Samovarteateret** (Norway)

The association **Ethno-Cultural Initiatives Support and Development Fund in the Republic of Karelia** (Russia)

Poet and writer **Mona Mörtlund** (Sweden)

Scholarship recipients 2019:

Cultural magazine **Kaltio** (Finland)

Saxophonist **Ola Asdahl Rokkones** (Norway)

Festival manager **Iliia Kuzubov** (Russia)

Embroidery group **FIMBRIA** (Sweden)

For more information about the recipients and the Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation, please visit: www.barentscooperation.org/en/Barents-Regional-Council/Barents-Success-Stories/cultural-cooperation