

The Ninth Annual Presentation in the
JAY NATHAN, PH.D., VISITING SCHOLAR LECTURE SERIES



Finland: History. Culture. Economy.

A Panel Discussion with a Cultural Performance and Reception to Follow

Thursday, January 15, 2026 • 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

PNC Auditorium, Loyola Science Center
The University of Scranton

Join us for an evening exploring Finland's history, culture, and economy, featuring distinguished speakers and a live performance by Finnish singer, Josefina Silén & Finnish Classical Pianist, Markus Kaitila.

A reception will follow the performance.

This event is free and open to the public, though reservations are encouraged.

Please register at scranton.edu/JayNathanLecture or call 570.941.4740.

The Jay Nathan, Ph.D., Visiting Scholar Lecture Series

The Jay Nathan, Ph.D., Visiting Scholar Lecture Series welcomes international scholars from a wide range of nations and cultural backgrounds, offering perspectives shaped by diverse political, social, and economic contexts. The series invites distinguished guests to address issues that enrich intellectual and cultural life at The University of Scranton and within the broader Northeastern Pennsylvania community.

This initiative highlights the research and contributions of distinguished guest scholars who visit campus to share their perspectives on timely and timeless global topics. During their stay, visiting scholars engage in presentations, discussions, and informal exchanges with students, faculty, and community members.

Finland

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A Panel Discussion with a Cultural Performance & Reception



AMBASSADOR LEENA-KAISA MIKKOLA

Ambassadorial Seal of Finland

Leena-Kaisa Mikkola began her post as Finland's Ambassador to the United States in September 2024. A career diplomat since 1992, she has previously served as Ambassador to China (2021–2024) and Israel (2011–2016), and as Director General for Africa and the Middle East (2017–2021). Her career also includes postings in Brussels, Canberra, Athens, and Budapest. Originally from Kaustinen, Finland, she holds a master's degree in law from the University of Helsinki.



PETRI KOIKKALAINEN

Counselor for Science & Higher Education, Embassy of Finland to the U.S.

Petri Koikkalainen promotes partnerships in science, technology, and higher education between Finland and the United States. Before joining the Embassy, he held academic posts at the Universities of Tampere and Lapland and was a visiting scholar at UC Berkeley and the European University Institute in Florence. He holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi.



DR. JAY NATHAN is a Fulbright Specialist, full professor, and lifetime member of the Fulbright Association. Keystone College named its International Guest House in his honor to support cultural exchange among students and scholars. As a Fulbright Scholar to Finland, Dr. Nathan lectured at the University of Helsinki and continues to foster international academic collaboration.



JOSEFIN SILÉN born and raised in Espoo just outside Helsinki, discovered her love for music early, and began singing before she could speak. After early success in children's choirs and theatre, she signed with Helsinki Records as a teenager and went on to study musical theatre in Gothenburg and London. Her acclaimed performances include leading roles in *Mary Poppins* (Svenska Teatern), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Tampere City Theatre), and *Love Never Dies* (Finnish National Opera and Ballet).





MARKUS KAITILA born in Helsinki, began playing piano at the age of six and quickly found his way onto concert stages across Europe and the United States. After early competition successes in Finland and Germany, he continued his studies in Essen, New York, and at NYU Steinhardt, where he earned advanced degrees in piano performance and pedagogy. He has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra and One World Symphony, and his performances have taken him to venues such as Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, and Salzburg's Wiener Saal.



Illustration by
Sanna Mander