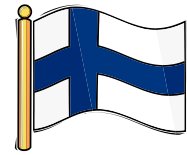


## *Embassy of Japan in Finland*

*Unioninkatu 20-22, 00130 Helsinki*

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Press Release

### **2016 Spring Conferment of Decoration**

#### **Mr. Seppo Kimanen**

29 April 2016

On 29th April 2016, the Government of Japan decided to confer on Mr. Seppo Kimanen, Cellist and Artistic director of the Kauniainen Music Festival, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to promoting friendly relations and mutual understanding between Japan and Finland through music. Mr. Seppo Kimanen is one of 91 foreign recipients.

- **DECORATION:** the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette
- **SERVICE:** Contributed to promoting friendly relations and mutual understanding between Japan and Finland through music.
- **NAME:** Seppo Kimanen
- **MAJOR TITELS:**
  - Artistic director of the Kauniainen Music Festival
  - Founder and former Artistic director of Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival
  - former Vice-Chairman of Executive committee
  - Festival advisor, Artistic director, Kitakyushu International Music Festival
- **ADDRESS:** Helsinki, Finland

## **Summary of contributions**

Mr. Seppo Kimanen, well-known cellist in Finland, has started his professional career as early as the 1970's after completing his study at the Hochschule für Musik Detmold. Among his multiple and versatile activities, which highlighted his abilities as a talented artist and contributed to spreading and heightening the reputation of Finnish music, the greatest achievement was the Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival that he has founded with his wife, violinist Yoshiko Arai in 1970 as its artistic director. While Mr. Seppo Kimanen successfully developed the Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival establishing the status unique music festival in Finland held in the great nature of Kainuu area, he started to invite top level Japanese composers and players such as Michio Mamiya, Minoru Miki, Mayumi Miyata and others. He also introduced many other Japanese musicians to Finland through Avanti! Summer Sounds Festival and Korsholm Music Festival as the artistic adviser of these events. His endeavors to bridge Japanese and Finnish classic music artists were closely connected to the establishment of Kitakyushu International Music Festival in 1988. Mr. Kimanen contributed to the development of the festival in various titles such as artistic director together with his wife Yoshiko Arai, in cooperation with Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, and promoting and developing chamber music in Japan. From 2007 to 2010 Mr. Kimanen served as Counsellor for the Press and Culture Section at the Finnish Embassy in Tokyo. After the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, Mr. Kimanen organized a charity concert with Japanese association in Finland and Finnish musicians.

Mr. Kimanen has made outstanding contributions to promoting friendly relations and mutual understanding between Japan and Finland through his musical career and literary works.

For further information about the Conferment of Decoration, please contact Hiroko Noguchi, Protocol Affairs: 090-686 0200 / [culture@hk.mofa.go.jp](mailto:culture@hk.mofa.go.jp)

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