

**Address by H.E. Ambassador MURATA Takashi
at Opening of “Tracing Boundaries” Exhibition**

Hyvää päivää,

I am MURATA Takashi, Ambassador of Japan to Finland. I would like to express my sincere congratulations on the opening of “Tracing Boundaries” exhibition by Ms. SHIOTA Chiharu.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to Espoo Museum of Modern Art and the Saastamoinen Foundation for their tremendous efforts to make such a great one year-long exhibition possible.

Ms. Shiota is a renowned Japanese contemporary artist who is active home and abroad. In 2015, Ms. Shiota represented Japan at the International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia. In 2019, her solo exhibition at Mori Art Museum in Tokyo attracted approximately 666,000 visitors in total, causing a great sensation.

I learn that this is the first time Ms. Shiota’s exhibition is unveiled in Finland. I highly appreciate her endeavor to convey the attraction of Japanese contemporary art as one of its varied cultures and arts.

Year 2019 marked the centenary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Finland. The amicable friendship and bonds between both countries lay the foundation for our solid bilateral friendly relations.

I learn that the yarns used in Ms. Shiota’s work symbolize the connection between people and the complexity of human relationship. The opportunity to give us suggestions on human relationship is highly valuable in the midst of the COVID-19 period.

I sincerely hope that as many people as possible will enjoy this great exhibition and our ties will become further stronger.

(End)