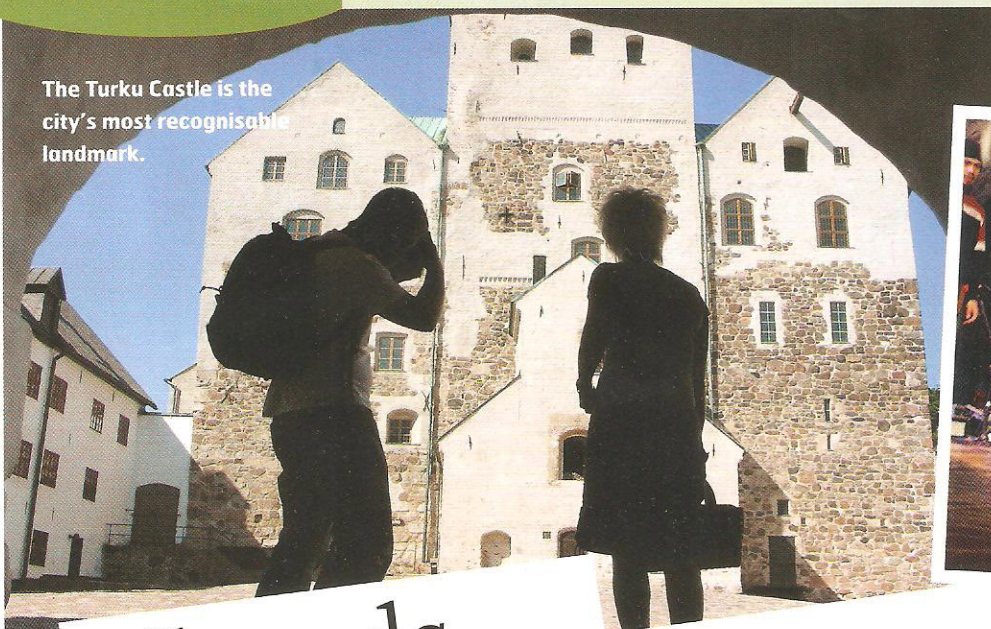


The Turku Castle is the city's most recognisable landmark.



## All roads lead to Turku

International artists draw inspiration from the 2011 Capital of Culture.

**TURKU**, Finland's capital city from 1809–1812, will reclaim the spotlight in 2011. Along with Tallinn, the city of 176,000 inhabitants will hold the title of European Capital of Culture and roll out a program of about 150 live performances, exhibits and workshops. Among the most high-profile productions are a heavy metal musical, a year-long exhibit by Tom of Finland creator Touko Laaksonen and an eco-park by American landscape architect Martha Schwartz.

About three-fourths of these productions were chosen from an open application process that yielded more than 1,000 proposals. The selection committee scouted for projects that promoted wellness, had an international scope and, most importantly, could leave a permanent mark on the city. As demonstrated by Liverpool (2008's Capital of Culture) and Glasgow (1990), the year-long honour can transform a city's image, initiate artistic collaborations and get future generations excited about the arts.

"I have the feeling that this year will improve the vitality of the city as a whole," says Cay Sevón, CEO of the Turku 2011 Foundation. "One of our criteria for the application process was that even international projects had to involve locals. This way each project can leave a mark on Turku."

### THROUGH AN OUTSIDER'S EYES

Two foreign artists whose project is part of the Turku 2011 program are Berlin-based architects

and filmmakers **Simon Brunel** and **Nicolas Pannetier** ([www.atelier-limo.eu](http://www.atelier-limo.eu)), who are exploring a route between Tallinn and Turku and creating a documentary film and online database entitled *The Detour* about the shared memory of Finland and Estonia. Two years ago, the pair completed a similar project along the Schengen border.

"The history of these two countries is very linked to the history of Russia," says Brunel.

The pair has travelled through Karelia, visiting museums, meeting locals and investigating stories behind buildings they saw along the route. They are currently retracing their steps and conducting interviews.

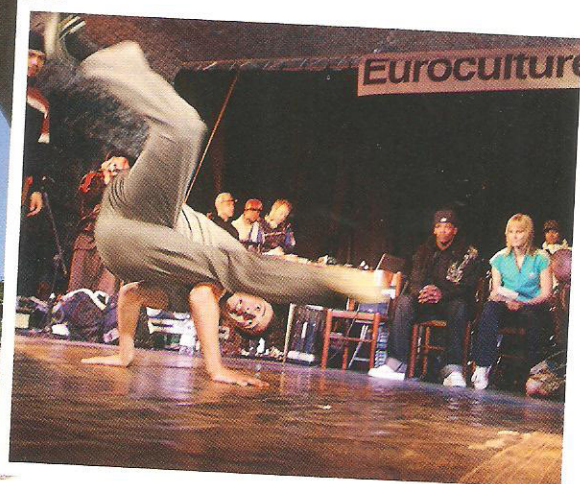
"We've met a lot of people with very intelligent ways of seeing history," says Pannetier.

"As two foreigners, we can approach these themes from a different point of view," says Brunel.

### TAKE IT TO THE STREETS

Another international project on the roster is Eurocultured, a series of artist residencies and workshops that lead up to a street festival in late May. Behind the project is Manchester, UK-based Spearfish ([www.spearfish.co.uk](http://www.spearfish.co.uk)), a company that promotes young people's involvement in the arts and culture outside of conventional art spaces. Spearfish has organised Eurocultured festivals in Dublin, Manchester, Belfast and Bratislava.

This October, a group of graffiti artists from Turku, a digital artist from the UK and musicians from Slovakia will create an animated work with a group of Turku teenagers. More open workshops in the visual and performing



**ABOVE**

Manchester-based Spearfish will bring its Eurocultured street festival concept to Turku.

arts will take place before the festival in May.

"We see ourselves as a forum where artists can come together and meet like-minded people from different countries, exchange ideas and develop new projects," says **Ben Reed**, director of Spearfish.

"Turku is similar to Manchester with its industrial past," says Reed. "I think this year will be a fantastic opportunity for Turku, as it was for Liverpool. Liverpool has changed into a city that has relevance in the cultural landscape."

"It's important that some of the smaller cities can stake their claim," he says. ■

**Finnair, the corporate partner of Turku 2011, flies to Turku several times daily.**

## Countdown to 2011

■ **876 Shades of Darkness:** During the late autumn in 2010 and 2011, a series of events will explore the inspiring aspects of darkness. So-called Huts of Darkness will be built into the centre of Turku this October, inviting passersby to warm up next to an open fire.

■ **The People of Turku (*Turkulaiset*),** a travelling exhibit depicting the many faces of the city, will make its final stops on the market squares of Lahti (September 27–October 3) and Tampere (October 4–10) before moving back to Turku, where it will be on display during the summer of 2011.

■ **2011 Kulma** (Kristiinankatu 1) houses a design shop and café, carries information materials and sells tickets to events. Workspaces for visiting artists are also located here.