

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today awarded the Young Cultural Figure Award of the Cultural Foundation of the President of the Republic to jewel artist, Tanel Veenre.

"Tanel Veenre is an artist who is searching for answers to important questions. What is temporal and what will last? What pleases us in this world and what makes us happy?" told the Head of State, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, today when handing over the award in the Office of the President. "He puts these questions in an open and bright way, wearing a buttonhole, without casting suspicious looks on his surroundings. His attitude is summarised in a book titled Our People. It was compiled by Tanel Veenre, who also added a picture of all the people that made it into the book."

President Ilves recalled that the freedom of a creative person to perceive and give meaning to the world is unlimited, specifying that "today's recipient of the award has been skilful in using this freedom, dividing himself between different creative spheres, as a jewel artist and photographer, cultural journalist and valued lecturer at the Estonian Academy of Arts as well as the author of a number of books on art. We all have to admit that this adds up to quite a lot from such a young person."

Professor of the Estonian Academy of Arts, jewel artist Kadri Mälk, who recommended Veenre as a candidate for the Young Cultural Figure award with her colleagues, characterises him as follows: "Courage to focus on big issues has always been characteristic of Tanel Veenre since he started his career as an artist. He has always been smart in everything he does, having the skill to divide his attention to half-shades and accurately tuned visual language. He helps us to enhance the sensitivity of the ways that we use to perceive the world".

Tanel Veenre cited Elmo Nüganen, who has said that the purpose of art is to make individuals more wholesome, at today's event. "I have always felt this description to be close to my heart," said Veenre, adding that, "culture cannot feed solely on today. Culture is linked to eternity".

Previous laureates of the Young Cultural Figure Award include composer Risto Joost (2011); editor of the Ööülikool (Night University) series Jaan Tootsen (2010); actor, theatre director and translator Marius Peterson (2009); poet Kristiina Ehin (2008); ballerina Luana Georg (2007); composer Helena Tulve (2006); theatre director Jaanus Rohumaa (2005); conductor Anu Tali (2004); literary critic Jan Kaus (2003) and composer Tõnu Kõrvits and folk musician Krista

Sildoja (2002). In 2011, a special award was given to Igor Kotjuh, the poet, essayist, translator and individual who is shaping a society liberated from prejudice.

A cultural figure of Estonian descent aged 35 or younger whose accomplishments in the field of creative arts have won wide recognition or who has, in his or her works or activities in the field of creative arts, considerably contributed to making Estonia and Estonian culture known in the world can apply for the award. Recipients of the Young Cultural Figure Award of the Young Cultural Figure Award of the Cultural Foundation of the President of the Republic are appointed by the Board of the Cultural Foundation, including Indrek Neivelt, Toomas Luman, Jaan Undusk, Tõnu Kõrvits, Priit Kogerman and Jaan Tootsen. The Young Cultural Figure Award is financed by Indrek Neivelt, a member of the Board of the Cultural Foundation.

The award money is 5,000 euros.

Candidates may be nominated by young cultural figures themselves and their supervisors, teachers, employers, and all associations operating in the field of culture, etc., as well as members of the Board of the Cultural Foundation. For additional information, see: [www.president.ee/en](http://www.president.ee/en)

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