# Cats and dogs get the Tom of Finland treatment



The Musti Group, a Finnish pet care brand, has partnered with the Tom of Finland Foundation to reinterpret the iconic artwork of Finnish artist Touko Laaksonen, known popularly as Tom of Finland, famous for his explicit homoerotic imagery featuring men enjoying outsize genitalia. Rather than the traditional masculine figures celebrated in Laaksonen's work, this campaign features illustrations of muscular cats and dogs dressed in the renowned sailor and leather outfits that have become synonymous with Laaksonen’s art.

This series comprises three new pieces of artwork, which have been strategically placed in outdoor media spaces throughout the Helsinki metropolitan area to coincide with Helsinki Pride Week. The initiative highlights the significant cultural impact of Laaksonen's work, which played a pivotal role in shaping gay culture in the late 20th century, influencing figures such as Freddie Mercury and the Village People.

The drawings, executed by Finnish artist Kajo Rauni and officially licensed by the Tom of Finland Foundation, aim to honour Laaksonen's legacy while bringing a playful twist to his style. Eveliina Rantahalvari, the marketing manager for Musti Group, remarked on the collaboration: “Instead of just drawing inspiration from the art of Tom, we felt it was important to get an official seal of approval from the Tom of Finland Foundation. This way our pet versions become a small part of the Tom family, and we get to show our support to the legacy of this great artist and the foundation that looks after it.”

The campaign also comes at a time when Finland is making strides in LGBTQ+ rights, contrasting with a growing tide of anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments in other parts of the world. In 2023, under Prime Minister Sanna Marin's government, Finland's parliament voted to amend transgender laws, facilitating a process for transgender people to change their legal gender through self-declaration, bypassing the previously required long medical procedures and psychiatric evaluations. This progressive move is indicative of Finland's commitment to advancing the rights of LGBTQ+ communities, showcasing a stark difference in legislative attitudes compared to nations where such rights face challenges.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_of_Finland> - This URL supports the information about Tom of Finland's artwork and its influence on gay culture. It also provides details about the Tom of Finland Foundation.
* <https://www.mustigroup.com> - This URL provides information about the Musti Group, a Finnish pet care company, which is relevant to their partnership with the Tom of Finland Foundation.