

Opening Ceremony of Aalto University
Wednesday 1 Sep 2010
For release at 1pm



Chairman of the Aalto University Student Union **Jussi Valtonen**

When I was walking one summer day, I was going through in my mind the history of the creation of Aalto University: First came the idea, then the foundation, the illustrious name, the board, Tuula and finally the whole thing was blessed through the new University Act. The birth of Aalto has been a historically fast-moving episode in the history of Finnish universities.

Most of the events have, however, been well structured. Many students and members of staff have said that, in everyday life, they have only seen evidence of Aalto in the coloured flags outside university buildings. But I wonder if that is really the case?

When I came across the students' notice board, I stopped to look at the posters, wondering how many of the things would not have come to pass without Aalto – AaltoES, Aalto-on-Tracks and many other co-operative programmes – in actual fact most of the posters on the board. We have started well, but the effects of individual actions are limited, although the wind of initial enthusiasm has filled our sails, we must not be fooled into thinking the road ahead will be easy – some major choices await our community after the next stretch of open sea.

Personally, I see the campus as a key choice related to how the culture of the Aalto community and thus the university will develop. In making the choice, we need far-sightedness, an ability to view the decade further away towards the horizon.

The campus should be alive, the beating heart of the university, where science and art meet technology and economics – a campus that lives and breathes the pluralism, internationality and entrepreneurialism of the community.

Our journey has offered us excellent opportunities – in the near future we will see whether we have the courage to grasp them. Every day through our choices and deeds, we decide what kind of community we are building Aalto into for ourselves and for future generations.

Dear teachers and students,

Let us passionately grasp the search for new things, let us make bold choices caring for and inspiring each other. The university and Students' Union have together undertaken to build a community like this.

Hopefully, as many people as possible will try to adopt the Aalto values, and, during the autumn, commit to being a builder of the Aalto community by giving their Aalto assurance, the Code of

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Conduct, where teachers and students pledge to challenge each other, to learn and to discover together.

The Aalto community is brimming with diversity and needs the contribution of each one of us. Let us value one another and, in our deeds, commit ourselves to taking Aalto forward every day.