

New birds from Anu Penttinen: Flock of happy Cartoon Chicks

Professor **Oiva Toikka** designed his first glass birds at the Iittala Group's Nuutajärvi glassworks back in 1972. These laid the foundation for what has become the *Iittala Birds* collection, now known worldwide. Iittala Birds was further extended last year with a series of pieces by the Italian designer, **Giorgio Vigna**. The young Finnish designer, **Anu Penttinen**, is behind the latest addition to the family. Penttinen's birds owe much to pop culture and the world of cartoons, and are full of humour.



Cool Joe



I'm All Banans



Ippy the Hippie



Nightbird

Anu Penttinen knows her glass, as it is her medium of choice as an artist and she has a studio at the Nuutajärvi Glass Village. Her preference is for strong colours and clarity of form, she says. Used to working with abstract designs, creating her new birds was quite a challenge, she continues:

"I decided to give my birds some humour and a personality all of their own.

"The working name for my collection was 'Cartoon Chicks', and I took my inspiration from the hand-crafted forms found in clay animation and tropical birds. I'm fascinated by the colours and very graphic shape and startling nature of tropical birds like toucans. Their strong beaks and very individual eyes provided the input for some of the most important details of my glass birds."

Six different personalities

Penttinen's new bird collection is being launched this year with six birds. While resembling the confident stance of penguins, their colours are tropical. Their vertical format emphasises their beaks and eyes, features that make the collection very much its own.

The amusing names Penttinen has given her birds highlight their different personalities. Which do you prefer? Ippy the Hippie, Cool Joe, or Cottoncandy? Or what about Nightbird or Snowball? Or I'm all bananas? The names say it all.

An urban background

Anu Penttinen is a graduate of the University of Art and Design Helsinki, and her art reflects her interest in the phenomena and details of the urban environment. Maps, city streets, and transport – moving from place to place and location to location – have always fascinated her:

"I filter out my visual world from concrete places and human activity, which can end up as abstracts for my glass pieces."

If Oiva Toikka's birds are elegant and watercolour-like, and Giorgio Vigna's akin to a series of abstract sculptures, Anu Penttinen's birds transport us into the world of carnivals and street parties. Choose the one that suits your mood best.

Product information, Birds by Penttinen collection

Cool Joe

Snowball

Cottoncandy

Nightbird

Ippy the Hippie

I'm all Bananas

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