**Pekka Kuusisto**

Described as “one-of-a-kind” by Toronto’s *The Globe and Mail*, Pekka Kuusisto is renowned for his fresh approach to repertoire. Widely recognised for his flair in directing ensembles from the violin, Kuusisto is Artistic Partner with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Artistic Director of ACO Collective - a string ensemble of Australia’s most talented young professional musicians delivering innovative projects across the country. In 2017 he became Artistic Best Friend of Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen and in 2018 became an Artistic Partner of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra. Other directing engagements include the Tapiola Sinfonietta, and the Scottish and Swedish chamber orchestras.

Concerto highlights of the 2018/19 season include debuts with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Aurora Orchestra, with whom he will be embark on tour playing Adès Violin Concerto under the baton of Nicholas Collon in the UK and on tour to Singapore. He returns to Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, and tours throughout Europe with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. Kuusisto also takes up a season-long residency at Wigmore Hall.

The Finnish violinist is an enthusiastic advocate of contemporary music and has recently premiered new works by Sauli Zinovjev, Philip Venables and Andrea Tarrodi.

Following last season’s Hollywood Bowl premiere of Daníel Bjarnason’s Violin Concerto with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel, this season Kuusisto performs the work with the Iceland and Detroit symphony orchestras, as well as its Finnish premiere with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. He also performs the Austrian premiere of Anders Hillborg’s Bach Materia with the Camerata Salzburg. As a composer, together with Samuli Kosminen, Kuusisto is composing, performing and recording the music for a new animated television series of Tove Jansson’s Moomin stories.

Kuusisto is a gifted improviser and regularly engages with people across the artistic spectrum. Uninhibited by conventional genre boundaries and noted for his innovative programming, recent projects have included collaborations with Hauschka and Kosminen, Dutch neurologist Erik Scherder, pioneer of electronic music Brian Crabtree, eminent jazz-trumpeter Arve Henriksen, juggler Jay Gilligan, accordionist Dermot Dunne and folk artist Sam Amidon.

Other recent highlights have included appearances with the Concertgebouw Orchestra and Orchestre de Paris, and a European tour with the Philharmonia Orchestra. He has play-directed the Karajan-Akademie der Berliner Philharmoniker with tenor Mark Padmore and completed a mini-residency at Pierre Boulez Saal with REDDRESS; a collaborative project with South-Korean artist Aamu Song that blurs the boundaries between performance and visual art.

Kuusisto has released several recordings, notably for Ondine and BIS. Recent releases include Erkki-Sven Tüür’s Noesis, Concerto for Violin and Orchestra for Ondine, and Sebastian Fagerlund’s violin concerto *Darkness in Light* for BIS both recorded with Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Hannu Lintu. This season he records Hillborg’s Bach MateriaandBach’sBrandenburg Concertos Nos.3 and 4with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and Thomas Dausgaard for BIS.

Kuusisto plays a fine Italian violin by Francesco Stradivari, circa 1738, on loan from Mr Peter Biddulph.