Pekka Kuusisto

Violin/conductor

Violinist, conductor and composer Pekka Kuusisto is renowned for his artistic freedom and fresh approach to repertoire. Widely recognised for his flair in directing ensembles, Kuusisto is Artistic Director of the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra (from season 21/22), and Artistic Partner with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Mahler Chamber Orchestra. He is also a Collaborative Partner of the San Francisco Symphony, and Artistic Best Friend of Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. In season 20/21 Pekka Kuusisto is Artist in Residence with the hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt with whom he will appear as soloist, conductor and chamber musician. He is also In-Residence at Milton Court at the Barbican, which culminates in a concert with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra.

Kuusisto is an enthusiastic advocate of contemporary music and 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. In the coming season he will premiere new concerti by Bryce Dessner, Djuro Zivkovic and Enrico Chapela and chamber works by Sauli Zinovjev and Calliope Tsoupaki. He also performs other concertos written for him including Daníel Bjarnason’s Violin Concerto, Anders Hillborg’s Bach Materia and Nico Muhly’s violin concerto, Shrink. In recent seasons Kuusisto has premiered new works by Sauli Zinovjev, Anders Hillborg, Philip Venables and Andrea Tarrodi. He also tours around the world with orchestras such as Chicago and Los Angeles symphony orchestras, Concertgebouworkest, Orchestre de Paris, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Philharmonia, as well as Tapiola Sinfonietta, and the Australian, Scottish and Swedish chamber orchestras.

Kuusisto has released several recordings, notably for Ondine and BIS. He has recently recorded Ades’ Violin Concerto with Aurora and Nicolas Collon for Deutsche Grammophon, Hillborg’s Bach Materia and Bach’s Brandenburg Concertos Nos.3 and 4 with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and Thomas Dausgaard for BIS and Daniel Bjarnason’s Violin Concerto with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra with the composer conducting for Sono Luminus. Past 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.