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, 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 the 2021/22 season, he is the Philharmonia Orchestra’s Featured Artist, with whom he performs as both violinist and conductor and has programmed two concerts in the orchestra’s *Music of Today* series.

In the 2021/22 season Kuusisto performs the world premiere of Bryce Dessner’s violin concerto with the HR Sinfonieorchester, and later with the Philharmonia, San Francisco Symphony, and Munich Chamber orchestras and Orchestre de Paris. He performs the world premiere of Thomas Ades’s Märchentänze for violin and orchestra with the Finnish Radio Symphony orchestra and later with Barcelona Symphony, Gothenburg Symphony and Danish Radio Symphony orchestras. He performs the French premiere of Märchentänze for violin and piano with the composer at the Fondation Louis Vuitton and later at the Wigmore Hall in London. Kuusisto performs other concertos written for him including Nico Muhly’s violin concerto, *Shrink* and a new concerto by Djuro Zivkovic. In recent seasons Kuusisto has premiered new works by Sauli Zinovjev, Daníel Bjarnason, Anders Hillborg, Philip Venables and Andrea Tarrodi.

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.

Kuusisto also tours around the world with orchestras such as Chicago and Los Angeles Philharmonic, Oregon and Portland symphony orchestras, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

As a conductor, Kuusisto makes his debut in 2021/22 with the European Union Youth Orchestra and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and he returns to conduct the Helsinki Philharmonic and the Philharmonia orchestras. In 2020/21, Kuusisto conducted the Concertgebouworkest, Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen for recordings of Beethoven violin concerto with Vilde Frang., hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt and Tapiola and Scottish Chamber orchestras. Other recent highlights have included his residencies with the hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt and Swedish Chamber Orchestra.

Kuusisto has released several recordings, notably for Ondine and BIS. With Pentatone, Kuusisto and the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra presented the album *First Light* in 2021 featuring the world premiere recording of Nico Muhly’s violin concerto, Shrink. Kuusisto 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.