Pekka Kuusisto

Violin/conductor

Artistic Director: Norwegian Chamber Orchestra
Principal Guest Conductor & Artistic Co-Director: Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra
Principal Guest Conductor: Gothenburg Symphony
Artist in Residence: Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra (from April 2026)

Violinist, conductor, and composer Pekka Kuusisto is internationally recognised for his visionary artistry and creative freedom establishing him as one of today’s most compelling artists. He is Artistic Director of Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor & Artistic Co-Director of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of the Gothenburg Symphony, and Chief Conductor designate of Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra from April 2028. He joins the TMSO as Artist in Residence for a two-year term from April 2026, appearing both as conductor and violinist.

This season, Kuusisto continues his work with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra presenting the renowned DSCH project to Oslo and Copenhagen, while also directing a diverse array of programmes. He takes the stage as both conductor and soloist with the Helsinki Philharmonic, including a tour across Germany and Austria. He also leads three distinctive programmes with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra with soloists such as Anne Sofie von Otter, Ava Bahari, Andreas Brantelid and Katarina Barruk. Kuusisto guest conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, Basel Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. He also performs with New Zealand and Tasmanian symphony orchestras, and with the Taipei Symphony Orchestra, where he conducts Nico Muhly’s *Concerto Grosso*. As soloist, he appears with the Royal Stockholm Symphony Orchestra and joins the Konzerthausorchester Berlin performing Dessner’s Violin Concerto in a New Year’s programme with Joana Mallwitz, and returns to the Los Angeles Philharmonic for the world premiere of Gabriella Smith’s Violin Concerto conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Recent highlights include a BBC Proms performance with Norwegian Chamber Orchestra and Katarina Barruk, appearances with Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lyon, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchester, Berliner Philharmoniker, San Francisco Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, and Boston Symphony Orchestras. He appeared as guest conductor with Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Kuusisto is a key advocate for contemporary music and premieres have included works by Thomas Adès, Daniel Bjarnason, Enrico Chapela, Anna Clyne, Bryce Dessner, Sebastian Hilli, Nico Muhly, Jesper Nordin, Ellen Reid, Andrea Tarrodi, Philip Venables and Sauli Zinovjev. A gifted improviser, he regularly engages with people across the artistic spectrum. Uninhibited by conventional genre boundaries and noted for his innovative programming, projects have included collaborations with Hauschka and Kosminen, Dutch neurologist Erik Scherder, eminent jazz-trumpeter Arve Henriksen, juggler Jay Gilligan, and folk artist Sam Amidon. Kuusisto continues his work with Gabriel Kahane as Council, following tours in the US and Australia.

Blending Kuusisto's classical background with elements of folk and pop music, the soundtrack of animated ‘Moominvalley’ composed by himself, Samuli Kosminen and Jarmo Saari was released in January 2025. In 2024, Kuusisto was featured in two releases on Sony – Bryce Dessner’s album *SOLOS* where he performed composer’s *Ornament and Crime* for solo violin, and on Anna Clyne’s and *The Knights* album *Shorthand* performing *Prince of Clouds* for two violins. In 2023, Kuusisto’s releases included an album for BIS on which he features as conductor of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra performing the first recording of Jaakko Kuusisto’s Symphony, Op.39, and another for Alba as violinist with Malin Broman and Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra performing works by Tarrodi, Byström, Larsson and Zinovjev. In 2022, Kuusisto released his first album as conductor, partnering with Vilde Frang and Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, presenting the Stravinsky and Beethoven Concerti for Warner (nominated in the concerto category of the 2023 Gramophone Awards) and as soloist performing the world premiere recording of Ades’ *Märchentänze* for violin and orchestra with Nicholas Collon and Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra for Ondine. With Pentatone, Kuusisto and Norwegian Chamber Orchestra presented the album *First Light* in 2021 featuring the world premiere recording of Nico Muhly’s violin concerto, *Shrink*.

Kuusisto performs on the Antonio Stradivarius violin, “ex-Sandars”, Cremona 1695, generously loaned by the Anders Sveaas' Charitable Foundation, ASAF.