



## NEWSLETTER MAY 2019

The **Estonian Music Information Centre** is committed to the representation, advocacy, promotion and support of Estonian classical and contemporary music and musicians both in Estonia and abroad. The EMIC newsletter aims to present an overview of new Estonian compositions, undertakings of Estonian musicians and music organisations and musical life in Estonia in general. Every newsletter contains a summary of recent events and offers a preview of upcoming activities.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT RECENTLY

### ANNIVERSARIES

One of Estonia's most distinguished contemporary composers **Tõnu Kõrvits** celebrated his 50th birthday on April 9 at the Estonia Concert Hall with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir and many friends and creative partners. The international jazz festival **Jazzkaar** marked its 30th anniversary at the end of April by presenting top Estonian jazz musicians along with the finest foreign guest artists. The jubilee festival included a total of almost 180 concerts and events taking place in festival hubs located in Tallinn as well as in other, often unusual locations in Estonia. The **Association of Estonian Professional Musicians** celebrated its 20th anniversary with the festival *Virmalised*, featuring more than 80 prominent Estonian instrumentalists and singers from different generations. Contemporary music ensemble **Una Corda** gave its 10th-anniversary concert at the Kadriorg Palace in Tallinn with a varied program of different composers.



*Tõnu Kõrvits. Photo by Kaupo Kikkas*

## **MUSICIANS ABROAD**

One of the most celebrated Estonian music ensembles in the world, the Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble the **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir** was on a three-week concert tour in Australia together with the Australian Chamber Orchestra under their artistic director Richard Tognetti and gave additional a cappella concerts led by **Tõnu Kaljuste**. From February 2 to 13 nine concerts were presented at prestigious concert halls including the Sydney City Recital Hall, the Sydney Opera House as well as concert halls in Canberra, Melbourne and Perth. The program included works by Arvo Pärt, Galina Grigorjeva, Veljo Tormis, Johann Sebastian Bach, Benjamin Britten, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Raymond Murray Schafer and Peter Sculthorpe.



*Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. Photo by Kaupo Kikkas*

Another Grammy Award-winning Estonian vocal ensemble **Vox Clamantis** which specialises in Gregorian chant, attended the French annual classical music festival La Folle Journée held in Nantes. Estonia's currently the most acclaimed contemporary music ensemble **Ensemble U:** attended Finland's largest contemporary music festival Musica nova in Helsinki. Works by Estonian composers i.a were also presented by leading Estonian musicians such as **Mari Poll** (violin), **Henry-David Varema** (cello) and **Mihkel Poll** (piano) at the Mendelssohn-Remise Museum in Berlin; **Endrik Üksvärav** (tenor) and **Peep Lassmann** (piano) in Florida, New York and Washington; by **Ulla Krigul** (organ) as part of her solo program in Lviv, Ukraine and **Kristi Mühling** (Estonian kannel) and **Aare Tammesalu** (cello) during their concert tour to Japan.

In March, soprano **Aile Asszonyi** made an outstanding debut in the title role of *Elektra* by Richard Strauss at the opera house in Bonn, where she received a standing ovation. In what is considered to be one of the most demanding roles for soprano, Asszonyi „was convincing in every moment and gave an impressive performance with a youthful, yet dramatically voluminous, multifaceted voice,“ according to the critics. The early spring has also brought success for mezzo-soprano **Kai Rüütel** as The Angel in a new staging of Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* by Calixto Bieito with the Theater an der Wien, as well as for mezzo-soprano **Tuuri Tede** in her recent appearances in Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem* with the Munich Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra under conductor Barbara Hannigan and in Edward Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with The State Choir Latvija and Liepaja Symphony Orchestra under the baton of **Risto Joost**.



*Aile Asszonyi. Photo by Liina Viru*

Internationally sought-after conductor **Kristiina Poska** will become the new chief conductor of the Flanders Symphony Orchestra from the season 2019-20 as well as the music director of the Basel Theatre in Switzerland. The **Estonian Festival Orchestra** under the baton of **Paavo Järvi** debuted outside Europe at the end of April. The EFO, which was founded by Paavo Järvi in 2011, was on tour in Japan from April 22 to 30 with concerts at different venues in Fukui, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima and Tokyo. The program consisted of Erkki-Sven Tüür's *Incantation of Tempest* and Arvo Pärt's *Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten* alongside music by Jean Sibelius, Sergei Prokofiev, and Pyotr Tchaikovsky. The orchestra was joined by Japanese violinist Midori as soloist. **Anu Tali** conducted the final concerts of her six-year-tenure as music director of the Sarasota Orchestra. Named „one of the female conductors to watch“ according to the Washington Post, Tali has welcomed guest artists from around the world and conducted brilliant masterworks during her time in Sarasota.



*Paavo Järvi. Photo by Kaupo Kikkas*

## **HIGHLIGHTED WORLD PREMIERES**

April 19, 2019

***And the Sea Arose*** by Ülo Krigul (Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, conductor Kaspars Putniņš. St. John's Church in Tallinn, Estonia)

April 14, 2019

***So Shall He Descend*** by Toivo Tulev (Brno Philharmonic, mixed choir Ars Brunensis and soloists, conductor Dennis Russell Davies. Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul in Brno, Czech Republic)

April 12, 2019

***Before Leviathan Awakes*** by Jüri Reinvere (Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, conductor Mihkel Kütson. Estonia Concert Hall in Tallinn, Estonia)

April 3, 2019

***Phantasma*** by Erkki-Sven Tüür (Kymi Sinfonietta, conductor Olari Elts. Kotka Concert Hall in Kotka, Finland)

February 28, 2019

***Violin Concerto*** by Mihkel Kerem (Triin Ruubel – violin, Pärnu City Orchestra, conductor Mikk Murdvee. Pärnu Concert Hall in Pärnu, Estonia)



February 24, 2019

**Three Contemplations** by Riho Esko Maimets (Maria Ioudenitch – violin, Timotheos Petrin – cello, Chelsea Wang – piano. Benjamin Franklin Hall in Philadelphia, USA)

February 22, 2019

**The History of Abandoned Lighthouses** by Tõnu Kõrvits (Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, conductor Olari Elts. Estonia Concert Hall, Tallinn, Estonia)

February 1, 2019

**Kuma** by Liisa Hirsch (Chamber Choir Cappella Amsterdam, conductor Lodewijk van der Ree. St. Peter's Church in Utrecht, Netherlands)

## UPCOMING EVENTS IN MAY



**From May 2 to 10** Estonia is honoured to host the prestigious annual contemporary music festival **World Music Days** initiated by the International Society for Contemporary Music. This year's festival dedicated to choral music is organized in collaboration with the **Estonian Music Days** festival which celebrates its 40th

anniversary. The World Music Days presents hundreds of professional musicians and the most recent and most exciting new music in 2019 from more than 50 countries. The Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, the Estonian National Male Choir, the Ellerhein Girls' Choir, chamber choir Collegium Musicale, vocal ensemble Vox Clamantis, Ensemble U:, Kadri-Ann Sumera (piano), Ulla Krigul (organ), Signe Sõmer (clarinet) and Kristi Mühling (Estonian kannel) among others as well as guests from Finland, Sweden and Latvia will be showcasing new music by Estonian composers Tatjana Kozlova-Johannes, Ülo Krigul, Toivo Tulev, Helena Tulve, Elis Vesik, Margo Kõlar, Ardo Ran Varres, Age Veeroos et al.



From **May 2 to 5** the vocal ensemble **Vox Clamantis** and conductor **Mihhail Gerts** with the Sinfonia Varsovia will be attending the **La Folle Journée festival** in Tokyo. The classical music festival based on the format of La Folle Journée held in France presents short classical music concerts for a diverse audience on one day. The Sinfonia Varsovia will perform works by Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn, Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy, George Gershwin and Maurice Ravel under Gerts and Vox Clamantis will present the music by Arvo Pärt.



On **May 3** the Royal Northern Sinfonia under the baton of **Kristiina Poska** will perform Erkki-Sven Tüür's *The Lighthouse*, Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* and other works by Pärt, Jean Sibelius and Dmitri Shostakovich at the **Sage Gateshead Concert Hall**. Viktoria Mullova will join the orchestra as violin soloist.



On **May 3 and 4** the **Estonian Sinfonietta** will end its season with two concerts at the **13th Malta International Spring Orchestra Festival** at the main venue of Teatru Manoel, Valletta. The program will include works by Jean Sibelius, Alfred Schnittke, Richard Strauss, Paul Hindemith, Gustav Mahler, Lepo Sumera et al.



On **May 4 and 5** **Kristjan Järvi** will be conducting the Taiwanese premiere of the *5th Symphony* by Eduard Tubin, arguably the most prominent composer of Estonian symphonic music, at the Performance Hall of the Cultural Bureau, Hsinchu County and the National Taiwan

Symphony Orchestra Concert Hall. The symphony will be performed by the **National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra** alongside Carl Nielsen's *Maskarade-Overture* and Edvard Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A Major* with the soloist Anika Vavić.



**On May 8** the exceptional Estonian pianist, internationally recognized artist **Ivari Ilja** celebrates his 60th birthday. Highly acclaimed as a solo pianist, accompanist, ensemble musician and as a teacher, the rector of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre celebrates his jubilee with a solo recital at the **White Hall of the Tallinn Philharmonic Society House of Blackheads**. The program will consist of works by Frédéric Chopin.



**On May 18** a concert titled *Jazz sinfónico* will be conducted by **Olari Elts** at the Casa da Música concert hall in Porto. Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música will present a program consisting of *The Symphony in Three Movements* by Igor Stravinski, *Night Creature* by Duke Ellington and the Portuguese premiere of the *5th Symphony* by Erkki-Sven Tüür.

Please check the **CALENDAR** on the EMIC website for more events.