

# EMIK

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## NEWSLETTER

### Pärnu Music Festival Reaches a New Audience Record, Lepo Sumera Prize Awarded

The 15th [Pärnu Music Festival](#) attracted nearly 13,000 visitors to its concerts over ten days, while almost 25,000 viewers worldwide followed the festival's live web broadcasts on [Pärnu Music Festival TV](#). This year's festival program paid tribute to [Arvo Pärt](#), in celebration of his 90th birthday year. The festival's top-class concert program featured world premieres of new works by Estonian composers [Erkki-Sven Tüür](#), [Elis Hallik](#), and [Alisson Kruusmaa](#).

Alongside the festival, the Järvi Academy hosted conducting courses as well as masterclasses for strings, winds, and percussion, where 129 young musicians received training from world-class mentors.



At the Pärnu Music Festival, the Lepo Sumera Composition Prize, established by the Estonian Authors' Society and the Estonian Composers' Union, was awarded to composer Märt-Matis Lill. Lill's scope as a composer is remarkable: in his distinctive authorial style, profound meditateness is fused with outward drama, sonic sensitivity with figurative sharpness, and introversion with striking theatricality. Previous laureates of the Lepo Sumera Prize include Toivo Tulev, Helena Tulse, Tõnu Kõrvits, Jüri Reinvere, Galina Grigorjeva, Ülo Krigul, Tatjana Kozlova-Johannes, Age Veeroos, and Erkki-Sven Tüür.



The Pärnu Music Festival is one of the best-known international classical music festivals in Estonia and Europe. It combines the Järvi Academy — a workshop platform for young musicians — with a high-level concert program and the Estonian Festival Orchestra, led by Paavo Järvi. The next Pärnu Music Festival will take place on **July 8–18, 2026**.

### **Hans Christian Aavik named „Young Artist in Focus” with the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn**

The [Württemberg Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn](#) (WKO) has announced that Estonian violin sensation [Hans Christian Aavik](#) will be its *Young Artist in Focus* for the upcoming 2025/26 season. With his charismatic stage presence, radiant sound, and bold musical vision, Aavik is already captivating audiences across Europe – and now he will bring his artistry to Heilbronn in a series of exciting projects with the WKO.

Aavik first drew international attention after winning the prize at the 2022 Carl Nielsen International Competition. His rapidly growing discography includes a debut orchestral album with conductor Gemma New, pairing Bruch's Violin Concerto with Erkki-Sven Tüür's Violin Concerto No. 2, released on Orchid Classics in May 2025. He also appeared in Deutsche Grammophon's new *Rising Stars* series on STAGE+ and recorded three singles with pianist Karolina Aavik in the label's „Musical Moments” series. The duo's critically acclaimed debut album AETERNUS was recorded at the Arvo Pärt Centre in 2021.



As the WKO's *Young Artist in Focus*, Hans Christian Aavik will appear in multiple concerts throughout the 2025/26 season, offering audiences the chance to experience one of today's most compelling young violinists at the heart of the orchestra's programming. His residency promises a season full of discovery, energy, and unforgettable music-making.

### **World Premiere of Erkki-Sven Tüür's New Work *Leaving Behind* at the Bonn Beethovenfest**

On September 18, the world premiere of Erkki-Sven Tüür's new work *Leaving Behind* will take place as part of the prestigious **Beethovenfest** classical music festival in Bonn. The piece for piano and string orchestra will be performed by Georgian pianist Giorgi Gigashvili together with the **East-West Chamber Orchestra** under the baton of conductor Rostislav Krimer. The concert will be held at Bonn's Pantheon Theatre. Prior to the concert, a discussion will take place featuring composer Erkki-Sven Tüür, conductor Rostislav Krimer, and musicologist Michael Struck-Schloen.





Erkki-Sven Tüür. Foto: Kaupo Kikka.

Tüür describes the work as follows: “On a certain level, the music expresses a set of emotions a person must endure when facing the most dramatic changes in life — the loss of a loved one, fleeing from one’s homeland, and much more. These situations are often tied to the most violent acts in human history, known as war. A cruel, absurd, and inhuman way of doing politics. This music is also a prayer for all suffering souls.”

### Ülo Krigul receives the Veljo Tormis Scholarship

At a grand event dedicated to the 95th anniversary of [Veljo Tormis](#), held at the beloved composer’s birthplace in Kõrveaia, the Veljo Tormis Fund’s 2025 scholarship was awarded. This year’s recipient is Ülo Krigul.

[Ülo Krigul](#) (b. 1978) is an Estonian composer who graduated with a master’s degree in composition from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. He is also a music organizer: he founded the Autumn Festival of the Estonian Academy of Music, and from 2004 to 2014, together with Timo Steiner, he was the artistic director and producer of the annual contemporary music festival Estonian Music Days. In 2019, Krigul was composer-in-residence with the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir.

The Veljo Tormis Fund was established in 2000 under the Estonian National Culture Foundation on the initiative of composer Veljo Tormis and the Estonian Choral Association, with the goal of promoting nationally oriented music. Previous recipients of the Veljo Tormis Scholarship include composers with distinctive styles: Ester Mägi (2004), Rasmus Puur (2020), and Mariliis Valkonen (2023).

### SELECTED PREMIERES

**Jüri Lepp** - Tuultele valla for string quartet

PREMIERE: String Quartet M4GNET; August 23, Pärnu Concert Hall / August 24, Tallinn

House of Blackheads

**Hans-Gunter Lock** - Moon, Sun and Pedal Point of Sadness for reader, flute, 6 percussionists, and vocal. Text by Ilmar Laaban

PREMIERE: Jaan Malin (declamation), Hans-Gunter Lock (ôhounbo drum, vocal), Leonora Palu (flute, hand clap), Marc Lujan Ballester (gankokoé bell), Andrus Kallastu (kpwalé drum, ôssôrgué rattle, gankokoé bell, vocal), Indrek Palu (ézinhou drum, gankokoé bell, hand clap), Rebeca Vilpuu (cléoun drum, gankokoé bell), Otto Iivari (kpessin drum, gankokoe bell); August 9, 2025, Pärnu St. Elizabeth's Church, Final concert of the interdisciplinary musical composition workshop COMP 2025

**Pärt Uusberg** - Sügisese jooned (Autumnal Lines) for piano trio (violin, cello and piano)  
PREMIERE: Trio '95: Robert Traksmann (violin), Marcel Johannes Kits (cello), Rasmus Andreas Raide (piano); July 31, Kadriorg Castle, Tallinn

**Alisson Kruusmaa** - Valse lente (2025) Dedicated to Paavo Järvi and the Estonian Festival Orchestra. For symphony orchestra (2222, 2221, 1, harp, strings).  
PREMIERE: Estonian Festival Orchestra, conductor Paavo Järvi; July 25, 2025, Pärnu Concert Hall, Pärnu Music Festival

**Elis Hallik** - Oori (2024-2025) Dedicated to the Estonian Festival Orchestra and Paavo Järvi, in reflection of Arvo Pärt's 90th birthday. For symphony orchestra (2232, 4331, 1+3, harp, celesta, strings).  
PREMIERE: Estonian Festival Orchestra, conductor Paavo Järvi; July 20, 2025, Pärnu Concert Hall, Pärnu Music Festival

## You Can Support the Global Reach of Estonian Music!

Estonian music is so much more than just notes and sounds—it is our identity, culture, and history, carrying immense potential. To better showcase and share Estonia's musical masterpieces with audiences worldwide, EMIC needs to enhance and modernize its online platform(s).

Our goal is to create a user-friendly, interactive, and innovative environment that connects Estonia's musical heritage with the possibilities of modern technology.

To make our unique and ever-growing music collection even more dynamic and accessible, we encourage you to [support us](#). You are welcome to join us in opening the world to Estonian music!

**Yes You Can!**