

THE
NEXT>>FESTIVAL
OF EMERGING ARTISTS

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THE NEXT FESTIVAL OF EMERGING ARTISTS 2019

A “unique place in the vastly diversifying field of new music” presents its seventh season with concerts in Massachusetts (May 31 at Egremont Village Inn), Connecticut (June 1 at Music Mountain), and New York City (June 2 at National Sawdust, June 8 at the Center for Ballet and the Arts, NYU)

Violinist Miranda Cuckson is the festival’s guest artist



Jeffrey Zeigler, cello, and Peter Askim, conductor, at Next Festival 2015; Miranda Cuckson ([more photos](#))

“Under the inspired leadership of Peter Askim, The Next Festival of Emerging Artists prepares our finest young artists to be open-eared, fully-expressed musicians in today’s challenging environment.”

–Ralph Farris, violist, ETHEL Co-Artistic Director

“The players are so eager to learn and share music that resonates with their current lives; and they bring an incredible energy to their performances. I commend Peter for his vision in creating a festival in which emerging artists can be allowed the space to create and collaborate.” –Jennifer Koh, violinist

“The Next Festival holds a unique place in the vastly diversifying field of new music. Peter Askim has a special gift for creating vibrant camaraderie among the most promising young musicians who are on the brink of reshaping the field.”

–Lisa Bielawa, composer

“It is extremely rare,” says cellist Jeffrey Zeigler (Next Festival 2015 guest artist) “to find a festival that fosters an environment of hard work and camaraderie while at the same time making contemporary music its primary focus.” That festival, which has received raves from a growing list of participating composers, guest artists, and students since its founding by composer, conductor, and bassist Peter Askim in 2013, is the Next Festival of Emerging Artists, whose seventh season takes place this spring.

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists 2019 features as its guest artist the violinist Miranda Cuckson, one of contemporary music’s stars. The events include a chamber music house concert by the festival musicians in Massachusetts (**May 31 at the Egremont Village Inn**), and string orchestra concerts featuring soloist Miranda Cuckson in Connecticut (**June 1 at Music Mountain**), and New York City (**June 2 at National Sawdust**). The orchestra concert program includes the U.S. premiere of Toshio Hosokawa’s *Hika* (2015) for violin and string orchestra; Toru Takemitsu’s *Nostalghia* (1987), also for violin and string orchestra; and three works for string orchestra alone: Aaron Jay Kernis’s *Sarabanda in Memoriam* (2004); Reena Esmail’s *Teen Murti* (2018); and the world premiere of a work by Peter Askim. The festival’s concluding event, a composer/choreographer workshop (**June 8 at Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU**) is free and open to the public. (See complete concert details below.)

A two-week (May 26 – June 8) immersive experience for the modern string player, composer, and choreographer, the Next Festival of Emerging Artists provides a comprehensive approach to entrepreneurial career-building, contemporary music performance, and intensive, personalized artistic development. Over the past six years, the Next Festival has included some of the most prominent figures in new music today: guest artists including Tony Arnold, Matt Haimovitz, Jennifer Koh, Nadia Sirota, Richard Thompson, Jeffrey Zeigler, and the string quartet ETHEL; and composers including Derek Bermel, Lisa Bielawa, Liisa Hirsch, Pierre Jalbert, Aaron Jay Kernis, Phil Kline, Jessica Meyer, and Aleksandra Vrebalov; as well as choreographer Christopher D’Amboise. www.next-fest.org

Read more about the Next Festival of Emerging Artists below the concert listings:

THE NEXT FESTIVAL OF EMERGING ARTISTS 2019

[Friday, May 31, 2019, at 7:00 pm](#)

Egremont Village Inn

South Egremont, Massachusetts

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists Chamber Music

At this beautiful country inn, built in 1786 and on the National Register of Historic Places, the musicians of Next Festival 2019 will perform a house concert of chamber music, the program for which they will devise themselves.

Admission is free; donations are welcome

[Saturday, June 1, 2019, at 7:00 pm](#)

[Music Mountain](#)

Falls Village, Connecticut

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists

Peter Askim, conductor

Miranda Cuckson, violin

Toshio Hosokawa *Hika* for violin and string orchestra (2015 – U.S. premiere performances)
Toru Takemitsu *Nostalghia* for violin and string orchestra (1987)
Aaron Jay Kernis *Sarabanda in Memoriam* (2004)
Reena Esmail *Teen Murti* for string orchestra (2018)
Peter Askim New work for string orchestra (2019 – World premiere performances)
Admission is free; donations will benefit the David M. Hunt Falls Village Library

Sunday, June 2, 2019, at 7:00 pm

[National Sawdust](#)

Brooklyn, NY

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists

Peter Askim, conductor

Miranda Cuckson, violin

Toshio Hosokawa *Hika* for violin and string orchestra (2015 – U.S. premiere performances)
Toru Takemitsu *Nostalghia* for violin and string orchestra (1987)
Aaron Jay Kernis *Sarabanda in Memoriam* (2004)
Reena Esmail *Teen Murti* for string orchestra (2018)
Peter Askim New work for string orchestra (2019 – World premiere performances)
Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$29 at the door

[Saturday, June 8, 2019, at 4:00 pm](#)

Center for Ballet and the Arts at New York University

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists Composer/Choreographer Workshop

The artists of The Next Festival of Emerging Artists talk about their collaborations and show excerpts of their work in an informal setting. Get a glimpse inside the innovative collaborative process between Next Festival composers, choreographers, instrumentalists and dancers.

Free and Open to the Public

The music on the June 1 & 2 program

Next Festival Artistic Director Peter Askim describes the program: “We are thrilled to work with Miranda Cuckson, one of today's foremost proponents of contemporary music, in a program that explores remembrance, tradition, and loss – and our own relation to them. We are excited to join with Miranda to present the American premiere of Hosokawa's *Hika*, which, like Takemitsu's *Nostalghia*, is a meditation on memory and its fragility. Aaron Jay Kernis' epic *Sarabanda in Memoriam* is a searing reaction to the cataclysm of 9/11. Reena Esmail's *Teen Murti* filters Hindustani musical traditions through a uniquely individual style that pays homage to the past with an eye to the future.” Completing the program is a new work by Peter Askim that he describes as “a celebration of the human spirit's ability to transcend circumstance and find hope and joy in the midst of everyday life.”

Takemitsu's *Nostalghia* draws inspiration from Andrei Tarkovsky's 1983 film of the same name, and its central theme of homesickness. Toshio Hosokawa says about *Hika*, which he based on an elegy composed for a friend, “The solo violin is a person who sings a song of sadness, and the string orchestra

represents nature and the cosmos surrounding that person. The violin converses and argues with the cosmos, but ultimately melts into its resonance. Through singing about sadness, people find salvation.”

What makes The Next Festival of Emerging Artists unique?

“This festival began as a manifesto,” says Peter Askim. “I wanted to prove it could be done – to assemble a group of motivated, outstanding young musicians, treat them really well, give them the freedom to work with each other and on the music they wanted, and provide the best possible guides and collaborators I could find – to give them the tools to keep making this art in today’s world. Most importantly, they shouldn’t go into debt paying for it! They pay what they can, and the festival works to raise the money to make up the difference.”

Bringing together an intimate ensemble of 20 string players aged 20-30, the festival begins with a week on the grounds of Music Mountain in Falls Village, Connecticut. Here, the musicians create their own schedules of intense study, beginning with one-on-one lessons and chamber music coaching with Peter Askim in the musicians’ chosen repertoire. Student-led chamber music rehearsals, master classes and talks with guest artists and composers follow, as well as ensemble rehearsals devoted to the festival’s concert program of new works. A public performance at Music Mountain concludes the first week.

The festival moves to New York City, where the concert is performed again, often with the composers in attendance, at a prominent new music venue such as (le) poisson rouge or National Sawdust. Then, student composers invited by Grammy- and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Aaron Jay Kernis bring new works to be rehearsed in depth over three days before being recorded in a professional studio.

Composer/Choreographer Workshop – “I don’t think there’s anything like this anywhere else, really.”

For the culmination of the festival, the young composers and student choreographers invited by Tony Award-nominated choreographer Christopher D’Amboise join the musicians in a series of workshops exploring multi-disciplinary collaboration and improvisation. This component, instituted in 2017, is described by D’Amboise as “an exercise in radical laboratory collaboration.” Peter Askim adds, “There’s a sense of play that we’re going for.”

“Six musicians and four dancers at my grasp – and a composer who’s making music for me to create to – it’s an artist’s dream.” –Ellie Hardwick, choreographer

“It’s been very collaborative. I feel emboldened! I don’t think there’s anything like this anywhere else, really.” –Marco Adrián Ramos, composer

“We’re going to assign each of you to one of the dancers’ limbs...” –Eli Greenhoe, composer, to the musicians

Watch a two-minute trailer on the Next Festival Composer/Choreographer Workshop:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=88&v=vRHooUg2abY

“What is your unique artistry” – Making a career today

Composer and violist Jessica Meyer, who distinctively combines the threads of compositional creativity, performance artistry, and communication into a unique career, has been the Next Festival’s “resident entrepreneurial artist” since its second year. “There’s a realization among young musicians today that being great at what you do isn’t enough,” she says. Next Festival musicians, liberated from what at larger festivals and institutes can be a somewhat pressurized atmosphere, feel excited about what’s

possible in the small, intimate group, Meyer observes. She engages the musicians in a session of exploration, getting them to identify “their own unique artistry,” and instilling the importance of self-reflection, deepening of connections with others, getting the most out of contact with composers, and being a part of the processes that go into creating music – “accessing their own inner composer.” The ability to understand and articulate their place in those processes, says Meyer, “helps them pave that path to creating a career that will work for them.”

Pay-what-you-can

The Next Festival offers generous scholarships to enable students to attend regardless of financial circumstances. Deeply committed to helping the artists of tomorrow, the festival maintains a unique pay-what-you-can model to ensure that participants can attend for a price they can afford. “our relationships with the students begin with an honest dialogue, and an understanding that each student’s financial needs will be met,” says Peter Askim. “This is the foundation of the honest, open and generous spirit the festival aims to cultivate.” Through fundraising, the festival has met 100% of student need each season.

The results? Here’s the feedback...

“The precision and energy they brought to [my] piece took it to a new level.” –Christopher Theofanidis, composer

“I was amazed at the quality of musicianship from these young players, and the great skill of Peter Askim in educating, leading and coaxing the best from them.” –Richard Thompson, composer

“Everyone worked so hard and all mentioned how Peter’s coaching benefitted them in so many ways: he really changed our way of thinking.” –Violinist, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

“I wish to express here my unyielding support for [Peter Askim] and for his dream to provide a musical haven for aspiring musicians. This is particularly important to me as I have been unable to attend music festivals for several years due to financial constraints. That Peter made it his priority to raise enough funds to provide substantial scholarships to participants is something that I will never take for granted.... This festival provided me with one of those rare paradigm shifts that illuminates the simple answers to a meaningful life. It has re-energized me, reawakened my creativity, and reaffirmed, despite the overwhelming odds against me, why I do what I do.” –Cellist, Columbia University, Manhattan School of Music

The Next Festival’s forward-looking ethos has already led to further collaboration among its alumni: the formation of the ensemble [Du.0](#), violinists Aimée Niemann and Charlotte Munn-Wood, a self-described “feminist-gesamtkunstwerk-chamber-noise violin duo based in New York City”; and a [project for the CUNY Dance Initiative](#) by composer James Budinich and choreographer Gabrielle Lamb of [Pigeonwing Dance](#). Both these duos met as Next Festival participants.

Read more of what people had to say: www.next-fest.org/testimonials

Watch a 10-minute video about the Next Festival: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsnBHh3m13c>

Watch more videos about the Next Festival and of past performances: www.next-fest.org/video

Peter Askim, Next Festival Founder and Artistic Director

Active as a composer, conductor and bassist, Peter Askim is Artistic Director of the Next Festival of Emerging Artists and Music Director of the Raleigh Civic Symphony and Chamber Orchestra, as well as Director of Orchestral Activities at North Carolina State University. He was previously Music Director and Composer-in-Residence of the Idyllwild Arts Academy Orchestra. He has also been a member of the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra and served on the faculty of the University of Hawaii-Manoa, where he directed the Contemporary Music Ensemble and taught theory and composition. A dedicated champion of the music of our time, he has premiered numerous works, including those by composers Richard Danielpour, Nico Muhly, Aaron Jay Kernis and Christopher Theofanidis, and has collaborated with such artists as the Miró String Quartet, Matt Haimovitz, Vijay Iyer, Jeffrey Zeigler, Nadia Sirota, and Sō Percussion. As a composer, he has been called a “modern master” by *The Strad* and has had commissions and performances from such groups as the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, the Honolulu Symphony, Cantus Ansambl Zagreb, and the American Viola Society, as well as by performers such as ETHEL, cellist Jeffrey Zeigler, flutist/conductor Ransom Wilson, and violinist Timothy Fain.

www.peteraskim.com

Miranda Cuckson, Next Festival 2019 Guest Artist

Violinist and violist Miranda Cuckson delights listeners in the U.S. and internationally with her versatile and expressive playing of a large range of music, from the newest creations to older pieces. She has been deeply and widely involved in contemporary music and is passionate about the creative role of the performer/interpreter in the artistic process and in communicating the music. She performs as soloist and chamber musician at concert halls and festivals, schools and universities, galleries and informal spaces. *Downbeat* magazine recently stated, “violinist Miranda Cuckson reaffirms her standing as one of the most sensitive and electric interpreters of new music.” Her recording of Luigi Nono’s *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura* for violin and electronics with Christopher Burns (Urlicht AV) was named one of the best albums of 2012 by *The New York Times*. She recently premiered a violin concerto written for her by Georg Friedrich Haas at the Suntory Festival with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, with the Staatsorchester Stuttgart, and the Orchestra of Casa da Musica in Porto. www.mirandacuckson.com

Jessica Meyer, Next Festival Resident Entrepreneurial Artist

With playing that is “fierce and lyrical” and works that are “other-worldly” (*The Strad*) and “evocative” (*New York Times*), Jessica Meyer is a versatile composer and violist whose passionate musicianship radiates accessibility, generosity, and emotional clarity. Jessica has premiered pieces for solo viola internationally – expanding the repertoire for viola by championing new works while also composing her own. Of her recent appearance at The TANK Center for Sonic Arts, where she wrote a solo piece on site for this destination concert venue that boasts a 20-second reverb, Alex Ross of the *New Yorker* says, “Meyer’s fierce-edged playing activated the Tank’s awe-inspiring properties.” Meyer is equally known for her inspirational work as an educator, where she empowers musicians with networking, communication, teaching, and entrepreneurial skills so they can be the best advocates for their own careers. www.jessicameyermusic.com

www.next-fest.org

April 30, 2019