

THE
NEXT>>FESTIVAL
OF EMERGING ARTISTS

Contact: Jennifer Wada Communications
718-855-7101
jennifer@wadacommunications.com
www.wadacommunications.com

**The Next Festival of Emerging Artists Launches
Next Fest Connects –
“A Support System for Artists During Difficult Times”**

**Participating artists include Ashley Bathgate, Miranda Cuckson, Ralph Farris,
Matt Haimovitz, Jeffrey Zeigler**



May 12, 2020 – Faced with the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, **The Next Festival of Emerging Artists**, the unique contemporary music festival founded in 2013 by composer, conductor, and bassist Peter Askim, acted quickly to address the needs of musicians by forming a new component: **Next Fest Connects**. “An immediate support system for artists during difficult times,” Next Fest Connects has hired an all-star roster of music and business professionals to collaborate on a full slate of free programs, resources, and opportunities for connection and performance. Available now:

- **[Free Online Seminars](#)** – All are invited to join seminars in such issues as career and audience building, networking, video strategies, and tricks for the homebound artist from **Megan Ihnen, Nahre Sol, Angela Beeching, and Todd Reynolds** (upcoming: **Sarah Whitney** and **Tracy Friendlander**). These are also archived on the festival website for [on-demand streaming](#).
- **[Free Online Masterclasses](#)** – A selection of Next Festival alumni musicians can participate in (and anyone can audit) masterclasses with such new music luminaries as cellist **Ashley Bathgate** (a member of the acclaimed sextet Bang on a Can All-Stars for ten years), violinist **Miranda Cuckson** (called “one of the most sensitive and electric interpreters of new music” by Downbeat magazine), cellist **Jeffrey Zeigler** (Avery Fisher Prize winner and National Sawdust curator), and – upcoming – violist **Ralph Farris** (a founding member and Artistic Director of the genre-bending string quartet

ETHEL), and cellist **Matt Haimovitz** (renowned musical pioneer called a “ferociously talented cellist” by The New York Times). These are also archived on the festival website for [on-demand streaming](#).

- [Free One-on-One Music Lessons for Next Festival Alumni](#) – Next Festival alumni musicians and current students may schedule free online lessons and coachings with Artistic Director **Peter Askim** and guest faculty. “At a time when students are having concerts and many school activities canceled,” says Peter Askim, “we want to provide opportunities for them to receive feedback, set goals, and emerge stronger as artists on the other end of this crisis.”

In addition, Next Festival alumni are participating in [Quarantine Concerts](#); just this month, these include Jennifer Jordan, cello; Ana Luna Uribe, violin; and Dorisiya Yosifova, violin (May 12) ; and Molly Jones, cello; Jay Julio, viola; and Giancarlo Latta, violin (May 19).

Soon to come:

- [Online Collaborator Database](#) of composers, choreographers, and performers in search of kindred spirits with whom to dream up new projects
- [Adopt an Artist Program](#) to connect Next Festival alumni and current students with music-loving donors

[The Next Festival of Emerging Artists](#) is a contemporary music festival for the modern string player that has been [receiving rave reviews](#) from its participants. Its first seven seasons featured guest artists Tony Arnold, Miranda Cuckson, Matt Haimovitz, Jennifer Koh, Nadia Sirota, Richard Thompson, Jeffrey Zeigler, and the string quartet ETHEL, and the participation of composers including Aaron Jay Kernis, Derek Bermel, Lisa Bielawa, Liisa Hirsch, Pierre Jalbert, Phil Kline, Jessica Meyer, and Aleksandra Vrebalov, and choreographer Christopher D’Amboise.

The festival normally takes place over two weeks in May and June at Music Mountain in Connecticut and at National Sawdust and NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts in New York City. **Next Festival 2020** is adapting its programs to take place online in the coming months: intensive sessions in improvisation, extended virtual workshops in which students play for each other and workshop new works in progress, composer talks and presentations, and a composer/choreographer workshop with an emphasis on adaptation of innovative technologies. **Ashley Bathgate**, the 2020 festival guest artist, will work with the festival’s collaborating composers, who will write new works for her.

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists and Next Fest Connects are part of Next Edge Arts, Inc., a not-for-profit organization supported by tax-deductible donations. The board of trustees in formation includes Lydia Kontos, Executive Director Emeritus of New York’s Kaufman Music Center; and Guy Story, former CTO and Chief Scientist at Audible.com.

“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

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.”

www.next-fest.org

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

www.next-fest.org