

# CARNEGIE HALL

2025–2026 Season

Richard and Barbara Debs Composer's Chair

# Arvo Pärt

Carnegie Hall joins the worldwide music community in honoring visionary composer Arvo Pärt—holder of the Hall's Richard and Barbara Debs Composer's Chair for the 2025–2026 season—as he celebrates his 90th year.

Pärt is a widely influential composer whose musical output is singular, profound, and enthralling. Marking this milestone year, leading artists explore his music over the course of seven Carnegie Hall concerts. Highlights of the season-long retrospective include two all-Pärt programs with selections that span six decades of his compositional career presented on consecutive evenings in October. The first features the highly anticipated North American debut of the Estonian Festival Orchestra, led by Artistic Director Paavo Järvi, joined by violinists Midori and Hans Christian Aavik, composer-pianist Nico Muhly, and the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. The Grammy Award-winning choir returns the second night with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra and its Artistic Director and Chief Conductor Tõnu Kaljuste for a program that reflects Pärt's prolific choral output. The Pärt celebration also includes a tribute concert curated by violinist Gidon Kremer, a close collaborator and longtime proponent of the composer's music, with cellist Giedrė Dirvanauskaitė and pianist Georgijs Osokins; an innovative performance by The Knights, presented in Zankel Hall Center Stage; a distinctive performance of Pärt's *Summa* sung by the Budapest Festival Orchestra under the baton of Iván Fischer; a duo performance by cellist Nicolas Altstaedt and lutenist Thomas Dunford to include a transcription of Pärt's *Spiegel im Spiegel*; and a concert by Ensemble Connect.

Born in 1935 in Paide, a small-town south-east of the Estonian capital Tallinn, **Arvo Pärt** is a composer whose creative output has significantly changed the way we understand the nature of music. Since 1976, his unique *tintinnabuli* compositions have established a new kind of musical paradigm—a radically different approach to many aspects of music, as well as to interpretation and listening.

As one of the most radical representatives of the Soviet avant-garde, Pärt's work passed through a profound evolutionary process: from neo-classical piano music to the use of dodecaphony, composition with sound masses, chance music, and collage technique.

After his last and most dramatic collage piece, *Credo* (1968), Pärt withdrew from the music scene for almost eight years. In 1976, after intensive study of Gregorian chant, the Notre Dame School, and polyphony, he emerged with a new and highly original musical language that he called *tintinnabuli* (*tintinnabulum*, Latin for "little bell"), which has defined his work through today.

*Tintinnabuli* first appeared in Pärt's short piano piece *Für Alina* (1976), and then in a subsequent rush of new works the following year, including *Fratres*, *Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten*, and *Tabula rasa*, which remain among his most beloved compositions.



Pritt Grepp

In 1980, Pärt was forced to emigrate from Soviet-controlled Estonia after a series of controversial reviews and confrontations with Soviet officials in reaction to the religious aspect of many of his works. Pärt and his family settled first in Vienna and later in West Berlin. In exile, he composed important works, including *Passio* (1982); *Te Deum* (1985); *Miserere* (1989–1992); *Lamentate* (2002); Symphony No. 4, "Los Angeles" (2008); *Adam's Lament* (2009); and numerous choral works that have since been performed worldwide.

Pärt's musical credo is rooted in the Christian tradition, and since the Word (Logos) plays a vital and even structural role in Pärt's

compositional process, many of his orchestral and vocal works are based on liturgical texts. Pärt's oeuvre is rich and versatile, including large-scale compositions for choir and orchestra, four symphonies, and works for soloists and orchestra, as well as numerous choral pieces and chamber music. His musical achievements have been recognized with a host of international awards and accolades.

The year 1984 marked the beginning of Pärt's creative collaboration with the distinguished record label ECM and producer Manfred Eicher; and the first recording of *Tabula rasa*, featuring violinist Gidon Kremer, pianist Keith Jarrett, and more. The result of this close creative relationship of more than 30 years has been a significant number of recordings—completed with the active involvement of the composer—available on the ECM label.

**Thursday, October 23 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman**

## **Estonian Festival Orchestra**

**Paavo Järvi**, Artistic Director and Conductor

**Midori**, Violin

**Hans Christian Aavik**, Violin

**Nico Muhly**, Piano

**Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**

**Tõnu Kaljuste**, Director

ALL-ARVO PÄRT PROGRAM

*Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten; Perpetuum mobile; La Sindone; Adam's Lament; Tabula Rasa; Fratres; Swansong; Credo*

This concert is made possible, in part, by an endowment fund for choral music established by S. Donald Sussman in memory of Judith Arron and Robert Shaw.

**Friday, October 24 at 7:30 PM | Zankel**

## **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**

**Tallinn Chamber Orchestra**

**Tõnu Kaljuste**, Artistic Director and Chief Conductor

ALL-ARVO PÄRT PROGRAM

*Für Lennart in memoriam; L'abbé Agathon; Stabat Mater; Magnificat; Te Deum*

**Tuesday, October 28 at 7:30 PM | Weill**

## **Ensemble Connect**

Program to include

ARVO PÄRT *Da pacem Domine*

Ensemble Connect is a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute in partnership with the New York City Department of Education.

Lead funding has been provided by Max H. Gluck Foundation, the Hearst Foundations, The Kovner Foundation, Phyllis and Charles Rosenthal, The Edmond de Rothschild Foundations, Beatrice Santo Domingo, and Hope and Robert F. Smith.

Global Ambassadors: Michael ByungJu Kim and Kyung Ah Park, Hope and Robert F. Smith, and Maggie and Richard Tsai.

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Public support is provided by the New York City Department of Education.

Ensemble Connect is also supported, in part, by endowment grants from The Kovner Foundation and the Estate of Eleanor Doblin Unger.



In 2010, Pärt returned to Estonia, where he resides today. The same year, the Arvo Pärt Centre (which holds Pärt's personal archive) was established in Laulasmaa, near Tallinn, by the composer's family. The Centre has collaborated with Carnegie Hall in the curation of this season-long Debs Composer's Chair retrospective.

Throughout the last 57 years, works by Pärt have been included on Carnegie Hall programs close to 80 times. Carnegie Hall audiences first heard his music in May 1967 when Lukas Foss led the Buffalo Philharmonic in the US premiere of Pärt's *Perpetuum mobile*. The evening's program book noted that it was the first time any work by Pärt had been performed in the Western Hemisphere.

**Tuesday, November 18 at 7:30 PM | Weill**

## **Nicolas Altstaedt, Cello**

## **Thomas Dunford, Lute**

MARAIS "La Rêveuse," "Fêtes Champêtres," "Le Badinage," "Couplets de folies," "Les voix humaines," "Grande Ballet," and "Le Tourbillon" from *Pièces de viole*

A. FORQUERAY "La Leclair" and "La Buisson" from *Pièces de viole*

J. S. BACH Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major (arr. Thomas Dunford); Cello Suite No. 5 in C Minor

ARVO PÄRT *Spiegel im Spiegel* (transcr. Thomas Dunford)

DUPARC Lento from Cello Sonata in A Minor

**Thursday, December 4 at 7:30 PM | Zankel**

## **Gidon Kremer: A Tribute to Arvo Pärt**

**Gidon Kremer**, Violin

**Giedrė Dirvanauskaitė**, Cello

**Georgijs Osokins**, Piano

ARVO PÄRT *Für Alina; Fratres; Mozart-Adagio*

KANCHELI *Middelheim*

RACHMANINOFF *Trio élégiaque*

**Thursday, February 5 at 7:30 PM | Zankel**

## **The Knights**

**Colin Jacobsen**, Artistic Director and Violin

**Eric Jacobsen**, Artistic Director

HAYDN Symphony No. 8, "Le soir"

OSVALDO GOLIJOV *Ever Yours* (NY Premiere)

ARVO PÄRT *In spe*

FELIX MENDELSSOHN Octet

**Part of Zankel Hall Center Stage.**

**Friday, February 6 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman**

## **Budapest Festival Orchestra**

**Iván Fischer**, Music Director

**Maxim Vengerov**, Violin

ARVO PÄRT *Summa*

SIBELIUS Violin Concerto

BRAHMS Symphony No. 2

**Perspectives: Maxim Vengerov**