

2019 PÄRNU MUSIC FESTIVAL / TRANSLATED QUOTES

Paavo Järvi has created something very special here, bringing musicians from around the world together to play in such a relaxed, picturesque environment where music - rather than commercial sponsorship - is the driving force.

Mark Pullinger , bachtrack.com, 22 July 2019

Youth is a key factor behind the ethos of the Pärnu Music Festival. The Järvi Academy brings young Estonian musicians together, giving them the opportunity to work with international artists and members of the Estonian Festival Orchestra. In addition, there are conducting masterclasses where young participants from around the world study with the Järvi dynasty - Neeme, Paavo and Kristjan - and Leonid Grin ... The opportunity to view so many young conductors developing their craft alongside such spirited playing from the Järvi Academy Youth Symphony Orchestra made for an uplifting evening that bodes well for the future of classical music in Estonia and beyond.

Mark Pullinger, bachtrack.com, 21 July 2019

With its long stretch of white beach and dotted about with spa hotels, Pärnu is truly Estonia's summer capital. Families have holidayed here for years, including Estonia's great musical dynasty, the Järvis. Neeme would bring his wife and children here and it was in Pärnu that a young Paavo Järvi first met Dmitri Shostakovich. The great violinist David Oistrakh would invite young musicians to play with him in the dacha he rented each summer and it is in this spirit that, in 2011, Paavo created a music festival to foster - and celebrate - young Estonian musical talent.

Mark Pullinger , bachtrack.com, 19 July 2019

The Pärnu Festival cannot be compared to traditional music events ... what the Järvi family has built up here is inimitable. From a structure that includes an Academy for young musicians and conductors, performances by the Estonian Festival Orchestra and various chamber ensembles to the discovery of dramaturgy, alongside previously unfamiliar classical music works.

The family-friendly and intimate character of the festival underscores the possibility of daily encounters with musicians, for whom Pärnu is not only hard work, but also an opportunity to get to know each other and talk to colleagues.

Alena Sojková, Harmonie Magazine, Czech Republic 13 September 2019

Located on the Baltic Sea, just north of the Gulf of Riga, the Estonian Pärnu has the quiet and vaguely quaint charm of a seaside town; one can guess that its wooden dachas were once the happy recreation ground of many Soviet apparatchik. Its festival is primarily a family affair. Paavo Järvi, the director, together with his father Neeme and his brother Kristjan, leads a conducting master-class and an orchestra comprising young Estonian musicians also benefits from instrumental master-classes ... **It's also about friends. Paavo Järvi brings together his Estonian Festival Orchestra which he composes ad hoc, of handpicked musicians. Immediately sensitive, the complicity between instrumentalist and conductor allowed a remarkable economy of rehearsals and injected the concert with a truly breathtaking energy and virtuosity.**

Add to that variable geometry chamber ensembles, a composer-in-residence (Erkki-Sven Tüür), a choir, educational activities in a sumptuous Jugendstil villa, and you get one of those festivals where you simply find real enjoy. Not only do you hear beautiful music played by amazing musicians, but you discover works through the inventive programming.

Paul de Louit, Diapason, 7 August 2019

The sky is blue, the larch and birch trees shimmer on the straight road as green as the meadows. You can almost smell the Baltic Sea. Ideal Pärnu weather ... and not only the weather is ideal for beach, so is the music and more.

Paavo Järvi should even consider being employed as a city promoter: "This is the most beautiful, but also the most intense time of my year. Family, friends and a lot of music, as I want to program it. I usually only sleep here for three hours, if at all, but it tastes wonderful." And it also tastes wonderful to the numerous visitors, not only the Estonian cognac served in the foyer of the Pärnu Concert Hall and the abundantly distributed orange pralines, but also the tonal cuisine. From short trousers to bow tie, trainers to Tyrolean leather jackets, along with the local costume and a lot of mixed patterns, the audience is as colourful as age-wise diverse. And totally relaxed. After all, the majority of people come from sunbathing and their swimming costumes, whether in the sea or in one of the many spas. And at the end there are cheers and standing ovations as if this is one of the popular local singing festivals.

Manuel Brug, Brugs Klassiker, 19 July 2019

Today Pärnu remains the favourite holiday destination for Estonians. It has abundant parks, tourist attractions, such as its medieval red Tower, the Baroque Church of Santa Isabel or the Jugendstil Villa Ammende (now converted into a luxury hotel) alongside several spas. But it has also become the headquarters of an important classical music festival. It is something that comes from the Soviet years. The legendary violinist David Óistraj spent his summer vacation here, between 1955 and 1970, in a simple green dacha located at no. 1 Toominga Street. You can see it, still today, with its wooden plaque. There he used to gather colleagues and students in a friendly environment to make music together. And from those meetings, in 1970, the embryo of the current festival emerged, which was occasionally called "Beethoven Musical Days", in commemoration of the composer's bicentennial. Later it was renamed the David Óistraj Festival, after the death of the violinist, in 1974. And it continued, with some interruptions, until the commemoration of his centenary, in 2008. But here also the composer Dmitri Shostakovich spent some summer vacations at the end of his life . In Pärnu he composed, for example, his Six poems by Marina Tsvetáyeva, in August 1973. And there is a photograph that documents that visit. In it we can see the composer, along with the two main current drivers of the festival who, like good Estonians, also spent their summer break in Pärnu: the conductor Neeme Järvi and his son Paavo, who was nine years old at the time.

Pablo Rodriguez, El Pais, 23 July 2019