



## Makers of the Estonian Song and Dance Celebration 2019

**Peeter Perens** is the artistic director of the Song Celebration 2019. Peeter is the main conductor of TalTech Academic Male choir and the Chamber Choir of the Bank of Estonia. He has studied choir conducting and classical song at Estonian Music Academy. Peeter has conducted at several Song Celebrations from 2007 to 2011. Perens comes from a family of choir musicians and remembers his first song celebration as a four-year-old in the procession, on the shoulders of his father, also a choir conductor. With the conductor's baton of the Song Celebration he now has reached the top of the pyramid of choir music. Read more [here](#).

**Vaike Rajaste** is the artistic director of the Dance Celebration 2019. She has brought hundreds of dancers to earlier Celebrations, is teaching folk dance to prospective dance teachers in Viljandi and heading several dance groups. Vaike has created several new dances that have reached the Dance Celebration lawn. Vaike explains this year's topic "My Love" with a childhood memory from her grandmother's meadow, where she made her first dance steps.

**Rasmus Puur** - conductor of mixed choirs, author of the song "The Land that I Love" 2019

conductor, author of the concept and assistant of artistic director of the song celebrations 2017 and 2019, author of composition "Sprouting" for joint orchestra and "We" for combined choirs (2017). Born in 1991 Puur is one of the youngest composers and conductors of the celebration. Read more [here](#).

**Pärt Uusberg** - conductor of combined choirs performing his new song "The Winds of Eternity". Uusberg (b. 1986) describes the Song Celebration as elixir of friendship and euphoria. His song is expected to be the highlight of this year's celebration.

**Riho Esko Maimets** (b. 1988, Toronto, Canada), composer of two works performed at the 2019 Song Celebration. Praised for its "nearly unbearable brilliance" (Peter Dobrin, *Philadelphia Inquirer*) the music of Riho Esko Maimets has been receiving an increasing number of performances around the world. Having recently completed a Diploma in Composition at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Maimets now resides in Tallinn, quietly delving into his craft. He composes mainly choral and chamber music as well as orchestral works. Maimets' piece "Mu arm" /My Love/ will be performed by the male choirs on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

**Kadri Voorand** is a jazz singer and composer, whose original music and expression has brought her a number of prizes and performances in Estonia as well as abroad. In 2017 she has been awarded by Estonian Music Awards as the Best Female Artist of the Year and her album “Armupurjus” (“Love Intoxication”) was given the Award of the Best Jazz Album of the Year. Voorand (b. 1986) has composed two songs for the 2019 celebration: “Õnn ei tule pikutades” for children’s choirs and “Ära lase mind lahti” /Don’t let me go/ for mixed choirs.

**Triin Koch** - general conductor of mixed choirs and conductor of the opening concert "To the Teacher". Koch has been a conductor of song celebrations 2007–2017, 2019. She was also the artistic director of Tartu Song Festival in June 2019.

**Tõnu Kaljuste** - conductor of the opening concert "To the Teacher", conductor of song celebrations 1993, 1997–2004, 2009, and 2014. Kaljuste is the co-founder the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir (EPCC) (1981), the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra (TCO) (1993), the Nargen Opera project theatre (2004) and the Nargen Festival (2006). He is the winner of several prizes for recordings (Diapason d'Or de l'Annee 2000, Cannes Classical Award, Edison Prize, Brit Award 2003, Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance 2014). Kaljuste has recorded a number of prize-winning recordings of the music by Arvo Pärt.

**Marju Lauristin** played a crucial role in Estonian independence movement in the end of 1980-s. [Marju Lauristin](#) is professor in social sciences and one of the establishers of modern journalism education in Estonia. She was elected a member of the European Parliament in the 2014 election. Lauristin led a major research project on the Song Celebrations in 2013. The key findings are as following: half of the population of Estonia has at least once been either a dancer or a singer at the Celebrations; the Celebrations bear a crucial role in the development of Estonian democracy; the Celebrations are a collective ritual that strengthen and recreate the national identity. Lauristin will be present at the Celebration press conference on 7<sup>th</sup> July at 12 at the Oru hotel.

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