

*“It is enough when a single
note is beautifully played.”*

Arvo Pärt

DISCOVERING A
LIVING LEGEND

Four webinars and a field
trip to the Arvo Pärt
Centre in Estonia.

Photo: Pritt Grepp

o/modern
ACADEMY

Hugo Ticciati | Artistic Director

“I could compare my music to white light which contains all colours. Only a prism can divide the colours and make them appear; this prism could be the spirit of the listener.”

O/Modernt Academy

O/Modernt is the hub not only of a core group of very special musicians but also artists and thinkers from many disciplines. O/Modernt Academy is an educational platform where young musicians are mentored by world-class professionals in their respective instruments as well as by the leading thinkers and voices of our time: historians, philosophers, ecologists, theologians, monks and poets to name just a few.

With its aesthetic ideals echoing those of the ancient Greek academies, the O/Modernt Academy aims to nurture the artists of tomorrow to become what the citizens of Ancient Greece called ‘musicians’ – honest, well-rounded, cultured, intellectually open and creative members of society. The academy’s broad range of subjects, teachers and speakers reflects O/Modernt’s philosophy that music, which has its roots in an interconnected web of diverse activities, should be regarded as an arena for **Interconnected Musicking**.

omodernt.com/academy



Tatjana Grindenev, Jidan

“The silence must be longer. This music is about the silence. The sounds are there to surround the silence.”

Arvo Pärt

The music of Arvo Pärt is a necessity. Emerging from silence, it speaks in a voice of profound simplicity and seriousness to our fundamental human nature. Pärt's music is addressed to the spirit. Like Bach, Pärt creates music that stands on the edge of eternity, and teaches us to contemplate that ultimate unknown with a deep sense of humanity. In an age of crisis, when the need for humans to reconnect with their essential selves is urgent beyond compare, Pärt unerringly lights the way.

Born in 1935 in Soviet-run Estonia, Pärt's early career was a story of conflict with the authorities that culminated in 1968 with the choral work *Credo*, in which he affirms his Christian beliefs. Eschewing further friction, he withdrew into a prolonged period of silence, during which he returned to Gregorian chant. Immersed in this primal religious form, Pärt discovered the technique that he called 'tintinnabular', referring to the bell-like sounds that he associated with basic musical triads and with the confession of faith. The deadlock was broken, and there followed a succession of superb creations, beginning in 1976–7 with his memorial to Benjamin Britten, along with *Fratres*, *Summa* and the aptly named *Tabula Rasa* ('blank slate').

For forty years Pärt has captivated us with works in a multitude of genres. Perhaps the most impressive fact about Pärt is that his attitude of deep seriousness, scrupulous attention to detail and almost austere commitment to musical logic has caught the public imagination in a way that eludes other living composers of overtly classical music. It's no accident that his music has been heard in 100 films, and it's a tribute to the compelling power of his imagination that, among the most popular of his works to make the transition to the big screen is *Spiegel im Spiegel* (1978), a spiritual meditation upon the metaphysics of infinity.

This brings us – Pärt-like – back to the beginning. The music of Arvo Pärt, built on a profound respect for the past and suffused with the import of silent contemplation, cuts through the noise of our age to speak with tranquillity of our most pressing human needs.

arvopart.ee

*“I had to get rid of everything unnecessary...
in order to save myself.”*

Approaching Pärt: Four Webinars

Four webinars use diverse techniques and foundational concepts to explore the capacity of Pärt's music to touch individual listeners and performers. Where [Jaanika Peerna](#) teaches us how to use our bodies as responsive instruments, [Gareth Lubbe](#) focuses on the expressive power of the voice that is revealed through overtone singing. [Peter Bouteneff](#) discusses how Pärt's music is able to be both spiritual and religious, while [Paul Hillier](#) explores the changing impact of Pärt's notation.

Friday 7 May 17.30

EMBODIED LISTENING

Jaanika Peerna

In this experiential workshop, we will harness our senses to turn our whole bodies into listening instruments, discovering the many ways in which movement and drawing can help us tune into sounds and alert us to silences. By listening and touching we will transform the spaces around us into surfaces onto which we can notate what we are hearing. Passages from Arvo Pärt's compositions will be used as navigational aids to help us negotiate the listening experience together.

Wednesday 12 May 17.30

ARVO PÄRT: A SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS CONVERGENCE

Peter Bouteneff

It is common in this secular age to hear people say that they are 'spiritual but not religious'. The implication is that organised religion is an impediment to genuine spirituality, which is conceived of as being beyond its reach. How then can a religious composer produce music that speaks spiritually to non-religious listeners? Arvo Pärt's ability to succeed in this delicate undertaking is almost unique among modern composers. This webinar will explore how his music manages to bridge the divide.

Friday 21 May 17.30

HARMONIC SINGING AND THE PRISMATIC SELF

Gareth Lubbe

Arvo Pärt famously compared his music to white light that splits into its component colours when the spirit of the listener acts upon it like a prism. This workshop on harmonic singing will awaken students to the fact that our voices are also like white light, and that the many colours of which they are formed are revealed when we learn to use our vocal tracts like prisms. Releasing the vibratory cycles of voice production, harmonic singing makes our own individual sound spectrums into multiphonic, audible realities.

Friday 28 May 17.30

PÄRT NOTATED: THE COMPOSER, THE PERFORMER AND THE MUSICAL SCORE

Paul Hillier

A performer's principal means of understanding how a piece of music should be performed is the written score, which is far more than a mere logbook of the notes to be played. The score speaks to the performer, giving detailed insights into the composer's ideas and intentions. It describes the emotional trajectory of the music and provides artistic guidance on how that can be realised. Accordingly, the notation that composers use reveals an immense amount about how they expect performers to conceive of their music and bring it to the audience. Arvo Pärt's notation has changed significantly over the years, and those changes tell a fascinating story about his relationship with those who perform his music.

Guest Speakers

JAANIKA PEERNA jaanikapeerne.net

Photo: Annette Solakoglu



Jaanika Peerna is an Estonian-born artist and educator who has lived and worked in New York since 1998. Her work encompasses drawing, installation and performance, and is often based on transitions in light, air, water and other natural phenomena. Reflecting on the climate crisis, her performances include audience participation, while her practice more generally starts with the corporeal experience of existence and reaches towards an enhanced awareness of the fragility, interconnectedness and wonder of life. She has exhibited and performed extensively all around the world, and her work is represented in numerous private and public collections internationally. She is represented in the USA by JHB Gallery and ARC Fine Art, and globally by IdeelART. In 2016 she was awarded the FID Grand Prize for drawing, and she has been a teaching artist at the Dia Art Foundation for many years. She is currently the cultural attaché for Estonia in New York.

GARETH LUBBE



Gareth Lubbe is professor of viola at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, Germany. For several years, he was principal violist in the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig under Riccardo Chailly, while teaching at the Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Conservatory. Gareth performs internationally as a soloist and chamber musician, and as an overtone singer he performs and gives interactive lectures around the world, demonstrating the possibilities of multiphonic voice production. Born in Johannesburg, Gareth studied the piano and violin from the age of four, and in 1994 he performed at the presidential inauguration of Nelson Mandela in Pretoria. After finishing school, he went to study in Germany, but regularly returns to Africa to perform and teach. In the late 1990s Gareth studied overtone singing in the Republic of Tuva in south Siberia, high in the Altai Mountains. It was, he says, 'a positively life-changing experience' that required him to listen to his own voice more deeply than he had ever done before.

PETER BOUTENEFF peterbouteneff.com



A professor of theology and a conservatory-trained musician, Peter Bouteneff teaches courses in theology, spirituality and the arts at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York, where he is professor of systematic theology and founding director of the Institute of Sacred Arts. His close kinship with the music of Estonian composer Arvo Pärt has led to the seminary's Arvo Pärt Project, which includes high-profile concerts, conferences and publications. Bouteneff, who has edited and co-edited many books, has published dozens of scholarly essays and book chapters, as well as articles in popular theological and music journals. Most recently, he co-edited *Arvo Pärt: Sounding the Sacred* (2020). His other books include *Arvo Pärt: Out of Silence* (2015) and *How to Be a Sinner* (2018). He directs his parish choir and remains active as a jazz bassist.

PAUL HILLIER theatreofvoices.com/paul-hillier



Photo: Ditte Capion

Paul Hillier's career has embraced singing, conducting, composing and writing about music. He was the founding director of the Hilliard Ensemble, and subsequently founded Theatre of Voices. He has taught in the USA at the University of California campuses at Santa Cruz and Davis, and from 1996 to 2003 was Director of the Early Music Institute at Indiana University. He was Principal Conductor of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir (2001–7) and has been Chief Conductor of Ars Nova Copenhagen since 2003. He has recorded more than 100 CDs, including seven solo recitals, and has written books about Arvo Pärt and Steve Reich, and edited numerous anthologies of choral music. In 2006 he was awarded an OBE for services to choral music, and in 2007 he received the Order of the White Star of Estonia, and won a Grammy for Best Choral Recording. In 2008 he became Chief Conductor of Chamber Choir Ireland and was also appointed artistic director of the newly formed Coro Casa da Música in Porto. The following year he was artist-in-residence at Yale University's Institute for Sacred Music. In 2010 he won his second Grammy – for David Lang's *The Little Match Girl Passion*. In 2013 he was awarded the Order of Dannebrog (the Danish knighthood) by Her Majesty The Queen of Denmark.

Musical Field Trip to the Arvo Pärt Centre in Estonia

To complement the series of webinars taking place in May 2021, we will travel to the Arvo Pärt Centre in Estonia to pursue our study of Pärt's music and his complex spiritual and intellectual universe. This state-of-the-art venue, which holds the composer's personal archive, is also an information and music centre. The trip will take place between 20 and 25 September 2021, subject to COVID-19 restrictions.

Located in the wonderful coastal village of Laulasmaa, some 35 km to the west of Tallinn, the Arvo Pärt Centre was founded by Arvo Pärt and his family to preserve the composer's creative heritage and to provide research opportunities in the context of his native language and culture. The centre is an open meeting place for musicians, researchers and music lovers, and for anyone who is interested in Arvo Pärt's music and his world of ideas.

Working in partnership with the Arvo Pärt Centre, the O/Modernt Academy will take a group of selected students on a field trip to Estonia to participate in a programme of events and educational activities focused on the work, life and legacy of Arvo Pärt. The visit will include lectures and wide-ranging conversations with the creators of the centre and Arvo Pärt scholars. Workshops and musical encounters with prominent Estonian musicians will culminate in a joint closing concert. Most excitingly, there is every chance that Arvo Pärt himself will be around!

Photo: Tõnu Tunnel, Arvo Pärt Centre



How to Apply

WEBINARS

To apply for one or more webinars, please write to Elisa Tabò at academy@omodernt.com

Closing date for applications: [3 May 2021](#)

FIELD TRIP TO THE ARVO PÄRT CENTRE

Dates: [20–24 September 2021](#)

- Full costs: €350 to include on-site hotel accommodation and subsistence during your stay in Estonia (travel not included)
- A limited number of scholarships will be offered to selected participants:
 - /Modernt Full Scholarship: €350 and economy travel costs
 - /Modernt Complementary Scholarship: €200

To apply for a place on the field trip, please write to Elisa Tabò at academy@omodernt.com

Closing date for applications: [30 May 2021](#)

Your application should include:

- A short essay of about 500 words reflecting in any way you like on one or more of the webinars you attended
 - Short CV and details of how you would like to take part in the programme, for example as an instrumentalist, composer or researcher
 - In addition, those applying for a full or complementary scholarship should provide relevant information about their financial circumstances
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