



Home to Adventures: East Neuk Festival unveils 2019 programme

- Scotland's East Neuk Festival returns for its 15th festival
- From Wednesday 26 June – Sunday 30 June the 2019 ENF invites audiences on a musical adventure in beautiful and unique locations along East Neuk's picturesque coastline
- Percussionist Colin Currie and his new Colin Currie Quartet make ENF debuts performing the world premiere of a new work by Huw Watkins and teaming up with community musicians of the East Neuk for this year's Big Project for massed percussion
- Pianist Elisabeth Leonskaja, Pavel Haas Quartet and Belcea String Quartet come together to present a unique series of 5 concerts
- The first ever Bowhouse Series makes the most of this spectacular converted barn
- Welsh harpist Catrin Finch and Senegalese kora master Seckou Keita make their ENF debut with a 3-concert residency
- The Tullis Russell Mills Band (in its centenary year) opens the festival with music by Fife composer The Earl of Kellie
- A large-scale art installation in the grounds of the National Trust for Scotland's Kellie Castle celebrates the communal Drying Greens of yesteryear and culminates in an afternoon of family activities and pop up performances from the Tullis Russell Mills Band
- An evolution of the ENF Retreat sees two past Retreatants – violinist Benjamin Baker and violist Diyang Mei – return to the festival to play solo, chamber and concerto dates

Director of the East Neuk Festival, **Svend McEwan-Brown**, announces major artists, unique collaborations and a large-scale art installation for the 2019 ENF in an imaginative and wide-ranging programme which promises to surprise and delight as it fills the hidden corners of Scotland's coastal area of the East Neuk in Fife with music from Wednesday 26 June – Sunday 30 June 2019.

Festival Director, Svend McEwan-Brown, said:

"ENF is all about relationships: we love when our favourite musicians return, collaborate and take new directions at the festival – this year we are honoured that so many will be presenting special projects unique to us or for the first time. Experimenting is a risky business, and we are proud that artists of such stature trust us to support them as they do it. I believe that the excitement this generates is one of the most important attractions of the festival, and one of the most important contributions we can make to the artistic life of the country."

Now in its 15th year, ENF continues to be both local and international, and to pursue three key areas of activity, all of which culminate in the festival programme. Its core programme welcomes the finest artists from across the globe and creates opportunities for them to create unique and ambitious projects especially for ENF in beautiful and intimate locations across the fishing villages and towns of East Neuk's picturesque coastline. In 2019, old friends make welcome returns including **pianist Elisabeth Leonskaja**, the **Pavel Haas** and **Belcea String Quartets**, **John Wallace** with the **Tullis Russell Mills Band** and the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra**, whilst new faces also perform at the festival for the first time including **percussionist Colin Currie**, **pianist/composer Huw Watkins**, **harpist Catrin Finch** and **kora player Seckou Keita**. The festival supports young artists through its **ENF Retreat** programme and by championing young artists both within its own programme and elsewhere: this year **violinist Benjamin Baker** and **viola player Diyang Mei** feature in three concerts. ENF also commissions annual **Big Projects**: work from leading composers for performance by amateur and professional musicians side by side: **Graeme Leak** will create this new work in 2019.

Music by Fife composer **The Earl of Kellie** launches the carefully curated programme spanning the 17th to 21st Centuries: ENF 2019 sees masterpieces from Bach, Dvořák, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Haydn nestled amongst works by Britten, Halvorsen, Jörg Widmann, Helen Grime, Steve Reich, and the **world premiere** of a new work by **Huw Watkins** performed by the composer on the piano alongside **percussionist Colin Currie**.

Unique collaborations remain a mainstay of the festival with artists coming together to create one-of-a-kind musical experiences that can be heard nowhere else. Pianist **Elisabeth Leonskaja**, the **Pavel Haas Quartet** and **Belcea String Quartet** join forces to present a series of five concerts – solo, quartet, quintet and octet. Three ENF regulars appear with their new bespoke ensembles created especially for the festival: **Alec Frank-Gemmill** and **Alexander Janiczek's Camerata Janiczek** perform Mozart and Handel concerti on period instruments, and **Peter Whelan's** handpicked **Ensemble Marsyas** of wind players from all over Europe promises a magnificent performance of Mozart's *Serenade for 13 Winds*.

Intimate music making lies at the heart of ENF across the widest range of styles and traditions including the music of Erik Satie paired with the hot jazz of Stéphane Grappelli in a special concert from **pianist Euan Stevenson** and the **Tim Kliphuis Trio**, and a late-night performance of Senegalese music by **kora master Seckou Keita**. As part of their three-concert residency at the festival, Keita also joins **Welsh harpist Catrin Finch** for a concert featuring material from their award-winning latest album, *SOAR*, and Finch closes her stay in East Neuk with a solo recital of music of Debussy, Bach and Piazzolla.

ENF is firmly rooted in its local area of Fife and 2019 features ambitious projects to celebrate and explore the East Neuk's history and heritage and draw community participants to perform. The **Drying Green** is a **large-scale art installation** inspired by the communal drying greens of yesteryear – many of which can still be seen in the villages of East Neuk – set within the beautiful grounds of the National Trust for Scotland's **Kellie Castle**. It culminates in an afternoon of family activities and pop up performances from the **Tullis Russell Mills Band**. ENF also continues its tradition of bringing together professional artists with amateur and local performers and musicians with renowned Scottish percussionist **Colin Currie** teaming up with **massed percussionists of the East Neuk** to perform a set of sea interludes created by **Graeme Leak** reflecting the craggy coastline of the local area for ENF's 2019 Big Project.

Returning for its fifth year, **ENF Retreat** runs from 23 – 28 June 2019 and in an evolution of the programme and its relationship with its musicians, two past Retreatants who have gone on to establish internationally celebrated careers since their time at the Retreat – **violinist Benjamin Baker** and **violinist Diyang Mei** – return to the festival to take part in three concerts in the main festival programme.

Music is always carefully matched to every venue at ENF and following the successful launch of **The Bowhouse** as an ENF venue over the last two years, the festival presents a full series of concerts at the converted barn located in Anstruther.

Beyond the performances, ENF also offers ways for audiences to get closer to the music and in two special talks, the music critic of The Times, **Richard Morrison**, discusses the future of music education with John Wallace and asks members of the Belcea and Pavel Haas Quartets for the inside story of what life is like as a member of the world's top quartets.

ENF Founder and Chair, Donald MacDonald, said:

"When we founded ENF in 2004, we wanted to create a unique marriage of a beautiful place and wonderful music. As we launch this 15th festival, I am delighted to note the many different ways that ENF has made itself a part of the East Neuk community since then: in its partnerships with venues, schools and businesses, in its Big Projects that put East Neuk musicians on-stage and in the way it celebrates the history and heritage of this place. It gives the ENF its unique flavour and style and I look forward to sharing 2019's rich mix of events with our audience from near and far."

Paul Bush OBE, Director of Events at VisitScotland, said:

"EventScotland is delighted to be supporting the East Neuk Festival through our Beacon Programme, with specific funding towards the Drying Green. With a variety of performances and family-friendly activities on offer, this new arts installation is set to be a real highlight and will appeal to all ages. Scotland is the perfect stage for cultural events, and the festival with its diverse programme, set against the backdrop of East Neuk's stunning coastline, is sure to attract thousands of visitors from across the region and further afield."

Alan Morrison, Head of Music, Creative Scotland, said:

"For fifteen years, the East Neuk Festival has brought world-class music to some of the most atmospheric venues in the country. Woven into this excellent programme is an increasingly close relationship with local communities, which this year will see massed percussionists beating the drum for Fife alongside the amazing Colin Currie. It's also great to see the festival expand its international dimension with a residency from Welsh harpist Catrin Finch and Senegalese kora player Seckou Keita, as well as hosting global stars of the future through the Retreat programme."

Unique Collaborations

Musicians cross paths with each other every year at ENF, meeting old friends and making new connections. Since it was founded in 2005, the East Neuk Festival has nurtured unique collaborations between its visiting artists and in 2019 presents a number of bespoke and unique musical partnerships.

Over the past few years, two of the world's finest quartets – **Belcea** and **Pavel Haas** – and one of its greatest pianists – **Elisabeth Leonskaja** – have encountered each other at ENF, and this year they come together for a series of 5 concerts. Highlights include the nine extraordinary musicians joining forces for Dvořák's *String Quintet in E flat* and Brahms' *Piano Quintet in F minor*, the Belcea and Pavel Haas playing together for the first and only time in a programme of Haydn, Mendelssohn and Shostakovich, and Leonskaja presenting a very personal solo recital including the music of three composers who have been at the heart of her entire musical life – Mozart, Chopin and Schumann.

A harpist from Wales and a Kora player from Senegal is an unlikely marriage of traditions but Welsh **harpist Catrin Finch** and Senegalese **kora master Seckou Keita**, who have been on musical adventures together for the last six years, come to ENF for the first time with a three-concert residency performing individually and together, and playing a range of music that reaches from Bach to brand-new works.

Another bespoke creation for this year's festival includes ENF favourites **Alec Frank-Gemmill** and **Alexander Janiczek** taking a 'next step' with ENF by creating their own ensemble, **Camerata Janiczek**, to perform Mozart and Handel concerti using period instruments.

Also created especially for the ENF, **Peter Whelan** handpicks period-instrument wind players from all over Europe to perform Mozart's *Serenade for 13 Winds* in a unique programme which sees the music of Mozart paired with the film scores of Michael Nyman, performed by the **Tullis Russell Mills Band** led by **John Wallace** in the ensemble's centenary year.

In another unique collaboration, Scottish pianist **Euan Stevenson** and the **Tim Kliphuis Trio** pair the music of Erik Satie with one of the composer's Montmartre neighbours, Stéphane Grappelli; Stevenson bringing his unique take on the music of Satie and Tim Kliphuis Trio celebrating the hot jazz of Grappelli.

Drying Green art installation (23-30 June)

The history and beauty of the East Neuk landscape continues to inspire ENF's programming and this year the festival creates a **large-scale art installation** inspired by the communal drying greens of yesteryear set in the beautiful grounds of the National Trust of Scotland's **Kellie Castle**. Drying greens have been a feature of Scottish towns and villages for centuries and can still to be found in most villages in the East Neuk – communal places shared by a whole village or neighbourhood where clothes could be dried, but also where neighbours met, chatted and passed the time. To celebrate that sense of community and local heritage, ENF will create a special installation at Kellie Castle with colourful banners threading their way across the meadow creating an art installation which also becomes a maze, a playground for all ages and – on 29 June – the backdrop to a festive afternoon of informal and fun family friendly music and activities including pop up concerts from **the Tullis Russell Mills Band**.

Rooted in Scotland

Whilst ENF brings the best of international culture to Scotland it also showcases to the rest of the world Scotland's rich cultural offering. Fantastic internationally-renowned Scottish artists and ensembles take to the stage including the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** bringing the festival to a magnificent close, led by conductor **Joseph Swensen** who returns to ENF for the first time in a decade, and Scottish percussionist **Colin Currie** making his ENF debut.

ENF's location is central to its identity and every year it welcomes local residents and wider sections of the community to experience and participate in the festival. As part of his residency at the festival percussionist **Colin Currie** teams up with **massed percussionists of the East Neuk** to perform a set of sea interludes reflecting the craggy coastline of the local area created by **Graeme Leak** for ENF's 2019 Big Project.

Evolution of ENF Retreat

The East Neuk Festival remains committed to nurturing young and emerging talent and its celebrated chamber music seminar, the **ENF Retreat**, returns this year (23 – 28 June) to offer exceptional young musicians the opportunity to develop their musicianship under the guidance of senior figures in the music world, culminating in a public concert performance during the festival.

Since it was founded, a family of players has been built and the festival's investment in these young musicians continues beyond their time spent in the week-long seminar. In the ENF Retreat's fifth year there is an evolution of its programme and a development of its relationship with these talented artists. From the over 40 young musicians who have attended since 2015, two past Retreatants who have gone on to establish internationally celebrated careers since their time at the Retreat are invited to return and take part in three concerts within the main 2019 Festival programme. **Violinist Benjamin Baker** who took part in the very first ENF Retreat and **violist Diyang Mei** who joined the 2016 ENF Retreat take this next

step, giving a duo recital, joining a chamber ensemble performance with the 2019 Retreatants and playing Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Benjamin Baker commented: *I'm really excited to be returning to the East Neuk Festival this year. I feel very lucky to have been introduced to this beautiful part of the world and incredible musical family through the unique ENF Retreat in 2015. Since then it has come to feel like a real musical home; somewhere I can exist and express myself freely. I can't wait!*

Selected concerts will be recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3, bringing the festival's concerts to a global audience of more than 2 million listeners.

The East Neuk Festival gratefully acknowledges financial support of many private individuals, Trusts and Foundations, and sponsors. It is funded by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland's Open Project Fund. The Drying Green is supported by EventScotland's Beacon Programme. Huw Watkin's *Duo* is supported by the PRS Foundation's Beyond Borders programme. The opening concert is supported by Hedley G Wright.

The 2019 East Neuk Festival brochure can be viewed at www.eastneukfestival.com/media-press

For full details please visit eastneukfestival.com

Public booking opens on Tuesday 5 February via Hub Tickets:

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Notes to editors

East Neuk Festival was founded in 2004 to present world-class music in the beautiful coastal area of Scotland known as the East Neuk of Fife. It has 3 key areas of activity, all of which culminate in the festival programme. It presents a core programme of events by distinguished artists like the Alban Berg, Belcea and Tokyo String Quartets, Christian Zacharias, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, The Tallis Scholars and Paul Hillier's Theatre of Voices. It supports young artists through its ENF Retreat programme and by championing young artists both within its own programme and elsewhere. It commissions annual Big Projects: work from leading composers for performance by amateur and professional musicians side by side. www.eastneukfestival.com

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