



Makers of the Estonian Dance and Song Celebration

Heli Jürgenson is welcomed and appreciated as a conductor at the Estonian Song Celebrations. She has been the artistic director of the Finnish-Estonian Song Festival and the artistic director for the Festival of Sacred Music several times. In 2013 Heli was awarded the Scholarship of Gustav Ernesaks Foundation and was given the title of Choir Conductor of the Year by the Estonian Choral Society. In 2017 Heli was elected to hold the post of artistic director and conductor of the 12th Youth Song Celebration 'Here I'll Stay'.

Rasmus Puur is one of the authors of the concept "Here I'll Stay" of the 2017 celebration, which focuses on the connection between the younger generation and its land, culture and the older generations. Puur, born in 1991, is a young Estonian composer, making a debut as a conductor of the song celebration this year.

Veiko Tubin is the co-author of the concept "Here I'll Stay" of the 2017 celebration. He is an Estonian actor and poet working in Tallinn City Theatre since 2006 as a troupe and project manager.

Kaspar Mänd was awarded the title of the Young Conductor of the Year in 2012. Next to choir conducting [Mänd](#) also studied oboe and has started conducting a symphony orchestra.

Küllli Kiivet teaches signing at the Tallinn Music High School (TMHS) and is the conductor of TMHS Boys' Choir, as well as of the chamber choir Head ööd, vend (Good Night, Brother). She is also the artistic director and conductor of the girls' choir Leelo. As a singer, she has participated in several operas, musicals and choir competitions in Estonia and abroad. As the Estonian TV youth choir director (2006-2010) she gained prizes in both Estonian and international competitions (Preveza, Greece in 2007; Montreux, Switzerland, in 2009; Llangollen, Wales, in 2009).

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. In 2015 she was given the Award of the Best Jazz Musician of the Year by Danske Bank at Jazzkaar festival. In 2014 she was given a prominent Estonian Music Council Award.

Maret Alango is a conductor, composer and singer. As a composer, he has won

awards at Uno Naissoo Competition and at Song Competition “My Fatherland, My Happiness and Joy”. In 2007, she founded the chamber choir Young Estonian Voices, which mainly focuses on contemporary Estonian choral music and since 2008 Alango has conducted many Estonian youth choirs. In 2009 Maret Alango solo album was released (“Pilvede piirile, ilma äärele”).

Hirvo Surva is the choirmaster of the National Opera “Estonia”, professor at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and conductor of many choirs. Surva’s ties with the Song Celebrations started when he was 17 and took his own first choir to the celebration in 1980. He has conducted at the Song Celebration since 1990s.

Aarne Saluveer is one of the most active figures in the Estonian children’s and youth music scene, a teacher, conductor and educator. Currently he conducts the Estonian TV Girls’ Choir. [Saluveer](#) has worked and shared the stage with the world’s best artists in different styles from pop-rock (Michael Jackson, Imogen Heap etc.) to classical-contemporary (Arvo Pärt, Veljo Tormis, Roxanna Panufnik).

Kaie Tanner is a choral conductor and manager. She is the Secretary General and acting director in the Estonian Choral Association and since 2010 has conducted the children’s choir and preparatory choir in Children’s Music Studio of Estonian Radio. She is also chief conductor of the Children’s Choir of Estonian Church Music Union. [Tanner](#) has conducted the young children’s choirs at the Song Celebration several times and works with the participating choirs on grass root level throughout the preparation. She is a member of board of the European Music Council and Europa Cantat.

Tauno Aints has created choir music, children’s songs, theatre and film music, orchestra and chamber music. His arrangement of Veljo Tormis’ choir music for the heavy metal band “[Metsatöll](#)” and Estonian National Male Choir caused quite a stir. Two of his songs will be performed at this celebration. He has composed the music for a brand new arrangement for this celebration “Buratino is back in action”, suite for youth orchestra.

For background

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.

Rein Veidemann is an Estonian literary historian, journalist, writer and lecturer. He is Professor Emeritus of Tallinn University Institute of Humanities and is a member Estonian Writers' Union since 1981. Veidemann believes there is a close connection between Estonian independence movement in the end of 1980-s and Estonian singing traditions. He says the Singing revolution showed how during the difficult moments the Estonian "mystical spirit" keeps the nation together. Veidemann will be present at the Celebration press conference.

NB! This is not a comprehensive list of everyone involved at the Song and Dance Celebration. It should just give you some ideas for interview partners and possible storylines.

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