



## Violinist Yevgeny Kutik Makes Debut at Ravinia Festival Presented by Ravinia's BGH Classics Series

Performing music by Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Strauss, and Mahler  
Plus Midwest premieres by Andrea Pinto Correia and Gity Razaz  
with Randall Hodgkinson, piano

Saturday, September 7, 2019 at 6pm (gates open at 5pm)  
Bennett Gordon Hall | 201 St Johns Ave | Highland Park, IL 60035  
Tickets (\$12) and information available at [www.ravinia.org](http://www.ravinia.org)

“polished dexterity and genteel, old-world charm” – *WQXR*

[Watch Yevgeny Kutik perform Mendelssohn](http://www.yevgenykutik.com)  
[www.yevgenykutik.com](http://www.yevgenykutik.com)

Photo by Corey Hayes in high resolution  
at [www.jensenartists.com/yevgeny-kutik](http://www.jensenartists.com/yevgeny-kutik)

Highland Park, IL — On **Saturday, September 7, 2019** at **6pm**, Russian-American violinist **Yevgeny Kutik**, known for his “dark-hued tone and razor-sharp technique” (*The New York Times*), makes his debut at the **Ravinia Festival**. Yevgeny Kutik’s recital, performed with pianist **Randall Hodgkinson**, is part of Ravinia’s BGH Classics series at **Bennett Gordon Hall** (201 St. Johns Avenue). Kutik has captivated audiences worldwide with an old-world sound that communicates a modern intellect. Praised for his technical precision and virtuosity, he is also lauded for his poetic and imaginative interpretations of standard works as well as rarely heard and newly composed repertoire.

Yevgeny Kutik and Randall Hodgkinson open the program with Stravinsky’s Duo Concertante and Prokofiev’s Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 94b. After intermission, Kutik presents the Midwest premieres of two works that are part of his commissioning project, *Meditations on Family: New Works Inspired by Memories and Tradition* – **Gity Razaz’s Cadenza for the Once Young** (for solo violin) and **Andrea Pinto Correia’s Litanía**, commissioned by Washington Performing Arts. Kutik and Hodgkinson close the program with Mahler’s “Adagietto” from Symphony No. 5 (arr. R. Wittinger) and Richard Strauss’ Violin Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 18.

When Yevgeny Kutik was five years old, he and his family emigrated from the deteriorating Soviet Union to the United States with the help of the Jewish Federations of North America. Although they had to leave most of their possessions behind and fit everything else into just two suitcases, Kutik’s mother, a violin teacher, filled one of the suitcases with sheet music from the family’s collection, believing that their music was a significant part of their family’s musical history. Years later, Kutik began to explore the music from the suitcase and was enthralled with the pieces he discovered. He recorded a selection of this music on his critically acclaimed 2014 album, *Music from the Suitcase: A Collection of Russian Miniatures* (Marquis Classics), which debuted at No. 5 on the Billboard Classical chart and was featured on NPR’s *All Things Considered* and in *The New York Times*.

He says, “As I continued to explore this music, they began to organize themselves into a distinct array of moods and themes, suffused with the character of Russian folklore, fantasy, and poetry...The pieces on this album carry with them a simplicity and directness, and with this immediacy, a striking beauty...It reminds me of what we went through and how far we have come.”

As an extension of *Music from the Suitcase*, Kutik commissioned a diverse group of today’s leading composers for *Meditations on Family*. “I wanted to continue this exploration of family, tradition and heritage using a wider array of

music as my vehicle. For my *Meditations on Family* project, I have so far commissioned eight different voices in composition today to help build a living archive devoted to family. Each composer has translated an old family photograph of theirs into a short miniature for violin as part of this project.”

Featured composers include Joseph Schwantner, Andreia Pinto Correia, Gity Razaz, Timo Andres, Chris Cerrone, Kinan Azmeh, Gregory Vajda, and Paola Prestini. Kutik recorded each of the new pieces for weekly digital release online as singles on Marquis Classics, starting in January 2018 with the full EP released on March 22, 2019. Kutik’s other recordings include his debut album, *Sounds of Defiance* (Marquis 2012), and *Words Fail* (Marquis 2016), both released to critical acclaim.

Yevgeny Kutik made his debut at the Kennedy Center, presented by Washington Performing Arts in April 2019. He made his major orchestral debut in 2003 with Keith Lockhart and The Boston Pops as the First Prize recipient of the Boston Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Competition. He was a featured soloist in Joseph Schwantner’s *The Poet’s Hour – Soliloquy for Violin* on episode six of Gerard Schwarz’s *All-Star Orchestra*, a made-for-television classical music concert series released on DVD by Naxos and broadcast nationally on PBS.

Throughout the United States, Kutik has performed with orchestras including the Rochester and Dayton Philharmonics, Tallahassee, New Haven, Asheville, Wyoming, and La Crosse symphony orchestras, as well as Florida’s SYMPHONIA, New York City’s Riverside Symphony and Park Avenue Chamber Symphony, and the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston. Abroad, he has appeared as guest soloist with Germany’s Norddeutsche Philharmonie Rostock and WDR Rundfunk Orchestra Köln, Montenegro’s Montenegrin Symphony Orchestra, Japan’s Tokyo Vivaldi Ensemble, and the Cape Town Philharmonic in South Africa. He has appeared in recital as a part of the Dame Myra Hess Concerts Chicago, Peoples' Symphony Concerts, Merkin Hall Tuesday Matinee Series, and National Sawdust in New York City, the Embassy Series and The Phillips Collection in Washington D.C., and at the Lobkowicz Collections Prague presented by Prince William Lobkowicz. Festival performances have included the Tanglewood Music Festival, Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival, Pennsylvania’s Gretna Music, Germany’s Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, and the Verbier Festival in Switzerland.

Passionate about his heritage and its influence on his artistry, Kutik is an advocate for the Jewish Federations of North America, the organization that assisted his family in coming to the United States, and regularly speaks and performs across the United States to both raise awareness and promote the assistance of refugees from around the world. He was a featured performer for the 2012 March of the Living observances, where he played for audiences at the Krakow Opera House and for over 10,000 people at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Yevgeny Kutik began violin studies with his mother, Alla Zernitskaya, and went on to study with Zinaida Gilels, Shirley Givens, Roman Totenberg, and Donald Weilerstein. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Boston University and a master’s degree from the New England Conservatory and currently resides in Boston. In 2006, he was awarded the Salon de Virtuosi Grant as well as the Tanglewood Music Center Jules Reiner Violin Prize. Kutik’s violin was crafted in Italy in 1915 by Stefano Scarampella.

For more information, please visit [www.yevgenykutik.com](http://www.yevgenykutik.com).

**Ravinia**, located just north of Chicago, is North America’s oldest and most diverse music festival, presenting over 140 different events every summer, including the annual residency the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the festival’s year-round **BGH Classics series**. These concerts, like their highly successful summertime counterparts, are held in the intimate, indoor, 450-seat Bennett Gordon Hall, and reserved seats are priced at just \$12 each. As a nonprofit organization, Ravinia provides arts programs for over 85,000 people in communities within Cook and Lake Counties through its Reach\*Teach\*Play education programs. Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute is a summer music conservatory which awards 60–65 fully funded fellowships each year to the most talented young professional musicians from around the world to work with an esteemed faculty and the headliners who frequent the festival. For information, visit [www.ravinia.org](http://www.ravinia.org).