



PR Contacts:

Pentatone:

Allie Summers, Marketing & PR Manager

+31 35 548 07 26 | allie.summers@pentatonemusic.com

www.pentatonemusic.com

San Francisco Symphony:

(415) 503-5474 | publicrelations@sfsymphony.org

www.sfsymphony.org/press

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / AUGUST 17, 2023



PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD, SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, AND ESA-PEKKA SALONEN PRESENT: *BARTÓK PIANO CONCERTOS*, RELEASED ON PENTATONE SEPTEMBER 2023

***Bartók Piano Concertos* will be available for physical release in September 2023 and digital release on September 15**

Album released as 1 SACD and in digital formats for streaming and high-resolution downloads

Audio resolution for digital files: Spatial Audio 192/24, Spatial Audio 192/24 Stereo & 44.1/16 PCM Stereo

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard, the San Francisco Symphony, and Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen announce the release of *Bartók Piano Concertos* on PENTATONE, available for physical release in September 2023 and digital release on September 15, 2023. The new album features live concert recordings of Béla Bartók's complete piano concertos, performed with Aimard at Davies Symphony Hall in June 2022 and February 2023.

About *Bartók Piano Concertos*

Pianist **Pierre-Laurent Aimard** joins forces with the **San Francisco Symphony** and Music Director **Esa-Pekka Salonen** for a recording of Bartók's complete piano concertos. A pianist himself, Bartók imbued his three concertos with multiple aspects of his compositional persona, ranging from complex and innovative (the First) to exuberant (the Second) and serene (the Third). The result is a fascinating slice of his musical life. This all-Bartók release marks the first Pentatone collaboration between Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony, an ensemble he continues to reshape through creative performance concepts and expansive new media projects.

A renowned champion of twentieth-century music, Pierre-Laurent Aimard has released multiple acclaimed albums in his exclusive contract with Pentatone, including Messiaen's *Catalogue d'Oiseaux* (2018) and *Visions de l'Amen* (2022), along with Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata & Eroica Variations* (2021). He also joined Tamara Stefanovich in *Etudes and Frames* (2023), with music by Vassos Nicolaou. Salonen returns to the label for the first time since his recording of Stravinsky's *Perséphone* (2018); the San Francisco Symphony previously appeared on the 2005 Pentatone release *Young America*.

From Pierre-Laurent Aimard

"Bartók's own recordings teach us the extent to which every musical dimension nourishes every moment of his works - including his virtuosity. By this, I mean the extent to which everything in his work is melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, architectural, and also phrased, pulsed, spoken, sung and experienced.

"Hungary attracted me so much in my younger years: I spent a lot of time with Hungarians and their country. It was not only a privilege but also a choice to work in depth with great Hungarian masters such as György Kurtág, Simon Albert, and Péter Eötvös. And nothing could have brought me closer to such linguistically singular music than learning the Hungarian language.

"For me, Bartók's piano concertos are among the most demanding in the repertoire, due to their combination of instrumental challenge and musical significance. Their intensity is incandescent."

BARTÓK PIANO CONCERTOS TRACK LISTING & RELEASE DETAILS:

Bartók Piano Concertos Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in A Major, Sz. 83

1. I. Allegro moderato —Allegro
2. II. Andante —attacca**
3. III. Allegro molto

Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Major, Sz. 95

4. I. Allegro
5. II. Adagio —Presto —Più adagio
6. III. Allegro molto

Piano Concerto No. 3 in E Major, Sz. 119

7. I. Allegro*
8. II. Adagio religioso
9. III. Allegro vivace

**To be released on August 18 as instant gratification track & Spotify single*
*** To be released on September 1 as instant gratification track & Spotify single*

PHYSICAL RELEASE:

September 2023 (August 2023 on pentatonemusic.com)

DIGITAL RELEASE DATE:

September 15, 2023

Released as 1 SACD and in digital formats for streaming and high-resolution downloads

AUDIO RESOLUTION FOR DIGITAL FILES: Spatial Audio 192/24, Spatial Audio 192/24 Stereo & 44.1/16
PCM Stereo



Photo by Kristen Loken

About Pierre-Laurent Aimard

Pierre-Laurent Aimard is widely acclaimed as a key figure in the music of our time and has had close collaborations with many leading composers, including György Ligeti, whose complete works for piano he has recorded. He has also worked with Karlheinz Stockhausen, George Benjamin, and Pierre Boulez who appointed Aimard to become the Ensemble intercontemporain's first solo pianist at the age of 19. Praised by *The Guardian* as "one of the best Messiaen interpreters around" Aimard had a close association with the composer himself and Yvonne Loriod, with whom he studied at the Paris Conservatory.

In recital and chamber projects, Aimard remains committed to championing contemporary composers, performing works this season by Klaus Ospald and Mark Andre. He will also give performances of Messiaen's *Vingt Regards* at Philharmonie de Paris and Concertgebouw Amsterdam and collaborate with leading instrumentalists Mark Simpson and Jean-Guihen Queyras for trio recitals, including works by Helmut Lachenmann at the Auditorio Nacional de Música and Elbphilharmonie.

Deemed an "extraordinary visionary" by the *Washington Post* and a pioneer artist renowned for his revelatory insights, Aimard was awarded the prestigious 2017 International Ernst von Siemens Music Prize in recognition of a life devoted to the service of music. In the 2020–21 season when Aimard created a unique and personal take on Beethoven's legacy in a recital program called 'Beethoven the Avant-gardist,' developed in response to the composer's 250th anniversary year. The juxtaposition of Viennese classics with compositions of the avant-garde revealed surprising cross-references, with Zachary Woolfe in the *New York Times* commenting, "[Mr Aimard's] overarching agenda came through with clarity, attesting to the strength of his vision and the savvy of his juxtapositions." Other highlights of the season included recitals in Paris featuring J.S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, and appearances at Kunstfestspiele Herrenhausen for Harrison Birtwistle's *Keyboard Engine* for two pianos and the BBC Proms for Maurice Ravel's Concerto in G major alongside Sir George Benjamin and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra.

About Esa-Pekka Salonen

Esa-Pekka Salonen is known as both a composer and conductor. He is the Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, where he works alongside eight Collaborative Partners from a variety of disciplines, ranging from composers to roboticists. He is the Conductor Laureate of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. As a member of the faculty of the Colburn School, he directs the pre-professional Negaunee Conducting Program. Salonen co-founded, and until 2018 served as the Artistic Director of, the annual Baltic Sea Festival.

Beginning with the Opening Night Gala, Salonen will lead the San Francisco Symphony in twelve weeks of programming in the 2023–24 season. Highlights include world premieres from Jesper Nordin, Anders Hillborg, and Jens Ibsen; projects by Collaborative Partners Pekka Kuusisto and Carol Reiley; the launch of the inaugural California Festival; a tour of southern California; and a program of Ravel and Schoenberg featuring choreography by Alonzo King and staging by Peter Sellars.

He will also conduct many of his own works this season. Among them are a new work commemorating the 20th anniversary of Walt Disney Concert Hall, premiering with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; *Karawane*, also with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; his *Sinfonia Concertante* for Organ and Orchestra with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Philadelphia Orchestra; and *kínēma* with the San Francisco Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra.

Salonen has an extensive and varied recording career. Releases with the San Francisco Symphony include recordings of Bartók's piano concertos, as well as spatial audio recordings of several Ligeti compositions. Other recent recordings include Strauss's *Four Last Songs*, Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin* and *Dance Suite*, and a 2018 box set of his complete Sony recordings. His compositions appear on releases from the Sony, Deutsche Grammophon, and Decca labels; his Piano Concerto, Violin Concerto, and Cello Concerto all appear on recordings he conducted himself.

About the San Francisco Symphony

The San Francisco Symphony is among the most adventurous and innovative arts institutions in the United States, celebrated for its artistic excellence, creative performance concepts, active touring, award-winning recordings, and standard-setting education programs. In the 2020–21 season, the San Francisco Symphony welcomed conductor and composer Esa-Pekka Salonen as its 12th Music Director, embarking on a new vision for the present and future of the orchestral landscape. In their inaugural season together, Mr. Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony introduced a groundbreaking artistic leadership model anchored by eight Collaborative Partners from a variety of cultural disciplines: Nicholas Britell, Julia Bullock, Claire Chase, Bryce Dessner, Pekka Kuusisto, Nico Muhly, Carol Reiley, and esperanza spalding. This group of visionary artists, thinkers, and doers, along with Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony, have set out to explore and develop new ideas inspired by the Collaborative Partners' unique areas of expertise, including innovative digital projects, expansive and imaginative performance concepts in a variety of concert formats, commissions of new music, and projects that foster collaboration across artistic and administrative areas. Shaped by the dynamic partnership and shared vision of Mr. Salonen, the Collaborative Partners, and the Orchestra and Chorus, the San Francisco Symphony's 2023–24 season reflects a spirit of collaboration, experimentation, and renewed dialogue through live music.

Connect with the San Francisco Symphony on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), and [Soundcloud](#):



The San Francisco Symphony receives support from more than 9,500 individual donors and 160 partner institutions.

San Francisco Arts Commission is Lead Municipal Partner of the San Francisco Symphony.

Chevron is the inaugural Second Century Partner of the San Francisco Symphony.

Grants for the Arts is a Season Partner of the San Francisco Symphony.

The San Francisco Symphony's Official Radio Partner is KDFC, The Bay Area's Radio Home for Classical Music and the Arts.

San Francisco Chronicle is the Official Media Partner of the San Francisco Symphony.

- San Francisco Symphony -