

Contact:

Public Relations

San Francisco Symphony

(415) 503-5474

publicrelations@sfsymphony.org

www.sfsymphony.org/press

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MUSIC DIRECTOR ESA-PEKKA SALONEN LEADS THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY IN THREE PROGRAMS AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL, SEPTEMBER 29–OCTOBER 14, 2023

September 29–October 1 concerts include West Coast premiere of Wynton Marsalis’s *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah!*, Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto with Leonidas Kavakos, and Richard Strauss’s *An Alpine Symphony*

October 6 & 7 concerts feature world premiere of Jesper Nordin’s SF Symphony-commissioned *Convergence* with violinist and San Francisco Symphony Collaborative Partner Pekka Kuusisto and John Adams’ *Naïve and Sentimental Music*

October 12–14 concerts include world premiere of Anders Hillborg’s SF Symphony-commissioned Piano Concerto No. 2, featuring Emanuel Ax, Johannes Brahms’ Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn, and Ludwig van Beethoven’s Symphony No. 2

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen leads the San Francisco Symphony in the first three Orchestral Series programs of the 2023–24 season, September 29–October 1, October 6 & 7, and October 12–14, at Davies Symphony Hall. The programs feature acclaimed guest artists Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos, and Collaborative Partner Pekka Kuusisto, as well as world premiere performances of new works by Anders Hillborg and Jesper Nordin, and the West Coast premiere of a work by Wynton Marsalis.

These performances follow the Salonen and the Orchestra's [Opening Night Gala and All San Francisco concerts](#) on September 22 and 23 featuring Richard Strauss's picaresque *Don Juan*; Gustav Mahler's love-sick *Songs of a Wayfarer*, featuring baritone Simon Keenlyside in his San Francisco Symphony debut; Anders Hillborg's *Rap Notes*, featuring Oakland-based musician, educator, and activist Kev Choice, conceiver and creator of Freestyle Love Supreme Anthony Veneziale (Two-Touch), and soprano Hila Plitmann; and Maurice Ravel's captivating and hypnotic *Boléro*.

September 29–October 1: Salonen conducts *An Alpine Symphony*

September 29–October 1, Salonen and the Orchestra are joined by violinist Leonidas Kavakos for Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, one of the most popular and beloved works in the genre. The program also features the West Coast premiere of Wynton Marsalis's *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah!*, a fanfare for brass and percussion which received its world premiere by the New Jersey Symphony in November 2022. Richard Strauss's *An Alpine Symphony*, which depicts a teenaged Strauss's day-long hike of an Alpine mountain, closes the program. One of Strauss's most grandly scaled works, *An Alpine Symphony* features expansive woodwind, brass, and percussion sections, including an offstage ensemble of twelve horns, two trumpets, and two trombones to represent a hunting party near the work's beginning.

Prior to and during intermission of this program, audiences can see several rare and historic horns from San Francisco Symphony Principal Horn Robert Ward and section horn Jonathan Ring's personal collections on display in the Davies Symphony Hall lobbies. On Friday, September 29, at 6:30pm, Ward and Ring will participate in a preconcert discussion about Strauss's relationship with the horn. (Free to all ticket holders.)

October 6 & 7: Salonen conducts the world premiere of Jesper Nordin's *Convergence* with Pekka Kuusisto

Pekka Kuusisto joins Salonen and the Orchestra for the world premiere of composer and developer Jesper Nordin's violin concerto *Convergence*, October 6 & 7. Kuusisto and Nordin, along with members of the San Francisco Symphony, premiered a portion of *Convergence* at their jointly curated SoundBox performances in February 2023. *Convergence* features Reactional Music, an electronic instrument invented by Nordin that Salonen will play while conducting the piece, with Kuusisto performing and improvising alongside him. The performance will feature video projections by French visual artist Thomas Penanguer, created live during each performance. Before each performance of *Convergence*, Nordin and Salonen will give an in-concert demonstration and discussion of Reactional Music from the stage.

The second half of the program features John Adams' *Naïve and Sentimental Music*, inspired in part by Friedrich Schiller's essay, "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry." Adams dedicated the work to Esa-Pekka Salonen, who conducted the world premiere of the work with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1999.

October 12–14: Emanuel Ax performs the world premiere of Anders Hillborg's *Piano Concerto No. 2* with Salonen and the SF Symphony

October 12–14, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Emanuel Ax, and the San Francisco Symphony give the world premiere Anders Hillborg's witty and colorful new Piano Concerto No. 2, a San Francisco Symphony commission which the composer wrote expressly for Ax. Salonen and Hillborg are longtime friends and collaborators, and Salonen has conducted upwards of 10 world premieres by the composer. The program also includes Johannes Brahms' Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn, one of the first set of orchestral variations in music history, and Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 2.

On Thursday, October 6, at 6:30pm, composer Anders Hillborg will participate in a preconcert discussion of his work on stage at Davies Symphony Hall. (Free to all ticket holders.)

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Tickets:

Tickets for concerts at Davies Symphony can be purchased via sfsymphony.org or by calling the San Francisco Symphony Box Office at 415.864.6000.

Location:

Davies Symphony Hall is located at 201 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

Health & Safety Information

Davies Symphony Hall is currently operating at full audience capacity. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination and masking are no longer required for entry to Davies Symphony Hall. However, patrons are encouraged to wear masks and maintain up-to-date COVID vaccinations to protect themselves. These policies are subject to change. Visit sfsymphony.org/safety for the San Francisco Symphony's complete up-to-date health and safety protocols.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAL SERIES

Salonen Conducts *An Alpine Symphony*

Friday, September 29, 2023, at 7:30pm

Saturday, September 30, 2023, at 7:30pm

Sunday, October 1, 2023, at 2pm

Esa-Pekka Salonen conductor

Leonidas Kavakos violin

San Francisco Symphony

WYNTON MARSALIS *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah!* [West Coast Premiere]

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Concerto

RICHARD STRAUSS *An Alpine Symphony*

Tickets: \$25-\$169

Ticket link: <https://www.sfsymphony.org/Buy-Tickets/2023-24/AN-ALPINE-SYMPHONY>

Broadcast / Archived Stream: A broadcast of these performances will air Sunday, October 15, at 7pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and [kdfc.com](https://www.kdfc.com) where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

Preconcert talk: Learn more about Strauss and the horn in a preconcert discussion with SF Symphony Principal Horn Robert Ward and section horn Jonathan Ring on September 29 at 6:30pm. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

Lobby Exhibition: Audience members can view several historic horns from SF Symphony Principal Horn Robert Ward and section horn Jonathan Ring's personal collections on display in the Davies Symphony Hall lobbies.

Themed beverages: Head to the lobby bar to experience beer from Germany.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAL SERIES

Interplay: Pekka Kuusisto

Friday, October 6, 2023, at 7:30pm

Saturday, October 7, 2023, at 7:30pm

Esa-Pekka Salonen conductor

Pekka Kuusisto violin

Jesper Nordin electronica

San Francisco Symphony

JESPER NORDIN *Convergence* [San Francisco Symphony Commission and World Premiere]

JOHN ADAMS *Naïve and Sentimental Music*

Tickets: \$25-\$75

Ticket link: <https://www.sfsymphony.org/Buy-Tickets/2023-24/INTERPLAY-PEKKA-KUUSISTO>

Broadcast / Archived Stream: A broadcast of these performances will air Sunday, October 22, at 7pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and kdfc.com where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAL SERIES

Esa-Pekka Salonen & Emanuel Ax

Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 10am [Open Rehearsal]

Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 7:30pm

Friday, October 13, 2023, at 7:30pm

Saturday, October 14, 2023, at 7:30pm

Esa-Pekka Salonen conductor

Emanuel Ax piano

San Francisco Symphony

JOHANNES BRAHMS Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn

ANDERS HILLBORG Piano Concerto No. 2 [San Francisco Symphony Commission and World Premiere]

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 2

Tickets: \$25-\$169

Ticket link: <https://www.sfsymphony.org/Buy-Tickets/2023-24/SALONEN-AX>

Broadcast / Archived Stream: A broadcast of these performances will air Sunday, October 29, at 7pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and kdfc.com where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

Preconcert Talk: Hear from composer Anders Hillborg in a preconcert discussion from the stage on Thursday, October 12, at 6:30pm. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

Pre-rehearsal Talk: Sarah Cahill will give a pre-rehearsal talk from stage one hour prior to the October 12 rehearsal. Free to all ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

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ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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The September 29–October 1 concerts are generously sponsored by the Athena T. Blackburn Endowed Fund for Russian Music.

The October 6 & 7 performances of Jesper Nordin's Convergence and John Adams' Naïve and Sentimental Music are supported by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for New Works of Music.

Anders Hillborg's Piano Concerto was commissioned for Emanuel Ax by the San Francisco Symphony with the generous support of a private patron.

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