



**Esa-Pekka Salonen**  
**Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony**

Esa-Pekka Salonen assumes his post as the San Francisco Symphony's twelfth Music Director in the 2020–21 season, embarking on a new vision for the present and future of the orchestral landscape. In their inaugural season together, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony introduce 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 joins with Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony to embark on a future of experimentation by collaborating on new ideas, breaking conventional rules, and creating unique and powerful experiences.

Salonen first appeared with the San Francisco Symphony in 2004, returning as guest conductor in 2012 and 2015. In December 2018, the SF Symphony announced the appointment of Salonen as its Music Director Designate. Since that time, he has led the SF Symphony in programs featuring works by R. Strauss, Sibelius, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Stucky, Ravel, Britten, Nielsen, Beethoven, and Salonen's own Violin Concerto performed by violinist Leila Josefowicz. The Violin Concerto, which won the Grawemeyer Award, was featured in a 2014 international Apple ad campaign for iPad.

Esa-Pekka Salonen's restless innovation drives him constantly to reposition classical music in the 21st century. He is known as both a composer and conductor and currently serves as the Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor for London's Philharmonia Orchestra and is the Artist in Association at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet. He recently joined the faculty of the Colburn School in Los Angeles, where he developed, leads, and directs the pre-professional Negaunee Conducting Program. Salonen is the Conductor Laureate for both the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was Music Director from 1992 until 2009. He also co-founded—and from 2003 until 2018 served as the Artistic Director for—the annual Baltic Sea Festival, which invites celebrated artists to promote unity and ecological awareness among the countries around the Baltic Sea. As Music Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic for seventeen years, Salonen is widely credited with revitalizing the organization. He was instrumental in helping the orchestra open Walt Disney Concert Hall, began the Esa-Pekka Salonen Commissions Fund, and presided over countless premieres of contemporary works.

Salonen has an extensive and varied recording career. An album of Henri Dutilleux's *Correspondances*, recorded with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France in the presence of the composer, was released in 2013 by Deutsche Grammophon on the composer's ninety-seventh birthday. Also that year, Sony released a two-disc set with Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic of the orchestral works of Witold Lutosławski, to honor the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth. Salonen's most recent recordings include a release of his Cello Concerto with Yo-Yo Ma, released by Sony, a disc of Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, released by Pentatone Music, and a sixty-one-disc box set comprising all of Salonen's recordings for Sony.

In recent years, Salonen has experimented with groundbreaking ways to present music, with the first major virtual-reality production from a UK symphony orchestra; the award-winning *RE-RITE* and *Universe of Sound* installations, which have allowed people all over the world to conduct, play, and step inside the orchestra through audio and video projections, and the much-hailed app for iPad, *The*

*Orchestra*, which allows the user unprecedented access to the internal workings of eight symphonic compositions. In 2015 he addressed the Apple Distinguished Educator conference on the uses of technology in music education.

Salonen is the recipient of many major awards, including the UNESCO Rostrum Prize for his work *Floof* in 1992 and the Siena Prize, given by the Accademia Chigiana, in 1993—becoming the first conductor to receive it. In 1995 he received the Royal Philharmonic Society's Opera Award and two years later, its Conductor Award. Salonen was awarded the Litteris et Artibus medal, one of Sweden's highest honors, by the King of Sweden in 1996. In 1998 the French government awarded him the rank of Officier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Salonen was also honored with the Pro Finlandia Medal of the Order of the Lion of Finland and the Helsinki Medal. He was honored with the 2014 Nemmers Composition Prize, which included a residency at the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University and performances by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. To date, Salonen has received seven honorary doctorates in four different countries. *Musical America* named him its Musician of the Year in 2006, and he was elected an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2010.