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(High resolution images of the San Francisco Symphony's holiday performances and guest artists are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Press Kit](#).)

THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES HOLIDAY CONCERT SEASON, DECEMBER 5–31, 2021

Special guest performers include Mariachi Sol de México® de José Hernández in *A Merry-Achi Christmas*; Sheléa and the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir in *Holiday Soul*; John Mauceri and Alan Cumming in *The Nutcracker & The Mouse King*; Capathia Jenkins and Tony DeSare in *A Cool Yule Christmas—Holiday Favorites of Frank & Ella*; and Peaches Christ, Coco Peru, Thorgy Thor, Jamie Barton, Alex Newell, Jimmie Herrod, and Fou Fou Ha! in *Holiday Gaiety*

The SF Symphony performs live accompaniment to iconic holiday films *Love Actually* and *Home Alone*
Traditional Christmas music performed by the SF Symphony and Chorus includes Handel's *Messiah* and *Holiday Brass*

The SF Symphony Youth Orchestra performs *Peter and the Wolf* with guest narrator Vella Lovell

Darren Criss joins the San Francisco Symphony for a special New Year's Eve Event

Tickets for holiday concerts available now at sfsymphony.org/holiday

SAN FRANCISCO—The San Francisco Symphony's 2021 holiday season runs **December 5–December 31** at Davies Symphony Hall, offering a festive array of concerts including performances of traditional Christmas classical music, family-friendly events, holiday-themed film presentations, and a star-studded lineup of featured guest artists. Throughout the month of
ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

December, the lobbies of Davies Symphony Hall are transformed into a holiday wonderland, complete with towering trees decorated with handmade ornaments made by children and volunteers from local schools and non-profit community organizations.

The San Francisco Symphony's holiday season kicks off on **December 5** with two showings of **Deck the Hall at the Drive-In**, a digital family holiday program presented on the big screen at FORT MASON FLIX, hosted by the San Francisco Symphony's Resident Conductor of Engagement and Education Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser and featuring SF Symphony musicians and special holiday characters. Patrons attending the first showing at 4pm are encouraged to dress in their festive holiday best, while the 6:30pm showing encourages holiday pajama party attire. Sponsorship packages to this elevated event include drive-in parking and an exclusive Holiday Cheer Kit with delightful bites, crafts, games, and more. Deck the Hall at the Drive-In is chaired by Maria Hemphill and planned with the help of the San Francisco Symphony Junior Committee League, led by Junior Committee President Thayer Meicler. Proceeds from the event enable the San Francisco Symphony to continue its work in supporting music education in San Francisco's public schools through the Fisher Family Adventures in Music and Music and Mentors programs, and other initiatives that benefit schoolchildren throughout the Greater Bay Area. Additionally, a recording of the Deck the Hall at the Drive-In program will be shared with all SFUSD elementary schools.

On **December 8**, vocalist Sheléa* and the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir join forces with the San Francisco Symphony for an exuberant performance of soul, jazz, and Christmas classics in **Holiday Soul**, with Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser conducting. **Please note that the vocalist for this performance has changed from what was previously announced.*

On **December 10–11**, conductor Grant Gershon leads the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus in performances of **George Frideric Handel's *Messiah***, featuring soprano Rachele Gilmore and bass-baritone Christian Pursell in their SF Symphony debuts, as well as returning soloists mezzo-soprano Leah Wool and tenor Nicholas Phan.

On **December 12 at 2pm**, the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra presents its annual performance of Sergei Prokofiev's timeless musical fable ***Peter and the Wolf***, conducted by Wattis Foundation Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra Daniel Stewart and featuring Vella Lovell as narrator. Later that day, **December 12 at 8pm**, Mariachi Sol de México® de José Hernández returns to Davies Symphony Hall for a festive musical tribute to Mexico's Christmas traditions, performing Mexican and American holiday favorites in a **A Merry-Achi Christmas**. *The San Francisco Symphony does not appear in these performances.*

The holiday season includes screenings of holiday-inspired films, featuring the San Francisco Symphony performing the score live to picture as the films are projected onto a large screen above the stage. On **December 14–15**, Thiago Tiberio conducts the SF Symphony in Richard Curtis' ***Love Actually*** with music by Craig Armstrong, followed by performances of Chris Columbus' ***Home Alone*** featuring a score by John Williams, conducted by Joshua Gersen, **December 16 & 18**.

On **December 17**, the SF Symphony presents **Holiday Gaiety**—a fabulously festive holiday variety show co-emceed by conductor Edwin Outwater and San Francisco's premiere drag sensation Peaches Christ, featuring a star-studded lineup of iconic guests including drag performers Coco Peru and Thorgy Thor, mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton, vocalists Alex Newell and Jimmie Herrod, and dance troupe Fou Fou Ha!, with a special appearance by Sister Roma from The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

On **December 21**, conductor John Mauceri leads the San Francisco Symphony in ***The Nutcracker & The Mouse King***, starring Tony award-winning actor Alan Cumming as narrator. The production pairs E.T.A. Hoffmann's original story *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* with music from Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's tone poems, orchestral suites, and, of course, *The Nutcracker*.

On **December 22**, Broadway vocalist Capathia Jenkins and acclaimed jazz singer and pianist Tony DeSare join the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, led by conductor Steven Reineke, in **A Cool Yule Christmas—Holiday Favorites of Frank & Ella**, featuring performances of classic holiday hits and jazz standards by the legendary Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald.

On **December 23**, members of the San Francisco Symphony brass, percussion, and timpani sections, conducted by Edwin Outwater, present a mix of classical and popular holiday favorites in **Holiday Brass**.

The San Francisco Symphony's annual **New Year's Event** on **December 31** features award-winning actor, singer, and songwriter Darren Criss—a San Francisco native famed for his roles on television's *Glee* and *American Crime Story*—in a performance of hits and festive favorites, conducted by Bruce Anthony Kiesling.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Unless stated otherwise, all concerts take place at Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA.

Tickets are available at sfsymphony.org, by phone at 415-864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, on Grove Street between Van Ness Avenue and Franklin Street in San Francisco.

- Patrons have the option of saving up to 25% over full-priced single tickets by selecting three or more holiday concerts. Visit sfsymphony.org/Calendar/CYO/Holiday for a complete list of eligible Holiday concerts.
- Tickets for children under 12 are 50% off for performances of *Home Alone* and *Peter and the Wolf*.

Health & Safety

The San Francisco Symphony requires proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 for everyone ages 12 and up entering Davies Symphony Hall. Audience members under age 12 must show proof of a negative COVID-19 (PCR test taken within 72 hours of the event or antigen [rapid] test taken within 24 hours of the event).

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY'S 2021 HOLIDAY CONCERTS

SPECIAL EVENT

Deck the Hall at the Drive-In

FORT MASON FLIX at 2 Marina Boulevard, San Francisco

[Sunday, December 5, 2021 at 4pm \[In Your Holiday Best\]](#)

[Sunday, December 5, 2021 at 6:30pm \[Holiday Pajama Party\]](#)

[Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser](#) host

San Francisco Symphony

**Please note that because this event is outdoors and guests will be participating from their own personal cars, proof of vaccination will not be required. Please disregard the notice to this effect in the purchase path as it applies specifically to events in Davies Symphony Hall.*

HOLIDAY

Holiday Soul

[Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser](#) conductor

[Sheléa](#) vocalist*

[Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir](#), Terrance Kelly director

San Francisco Symphony

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL "Hallelujah" Chorus from *Messiah*

TRADITIONAL NEGRO SPIRITUAL (arr. William Henry Smith) "Ride the Chariot"

FRANZ GRUBER (arr. Terrance Kelly / Ben Heveroh) "Silent Night"

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

ADOLPHE ADAM (arr. Terrance Kelly / Ben Heveroh) "O Holy Night"

NORMAN HUTCHINS "Emmanuel"

DARWIN HOBBS "I Give You Praise"

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (arr. Mervyn Warren) "Hallelujah" from *Messiah: A Soulful Celebration*

DR. JUDITH CHRISTIE MCALLISTER "Everybody Dancin'"

VARIOUS

Shel a in concert with the San Francisco Symphony

**Please note that the vocalist for this performance has changed from what was previously announced.*

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAL SERIES

Handel's *Messiah*

[Friday, December 10, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Saturday, December 11, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Grant Gershon](#) conductor*

[Rachele Gilmore](#) soprano [Orchestral Series Debut]

[Leah Wool](#) mezzo-soprano

[Nicholas Phan](#) tenor

[Christian Pursell](#) bass-baritone [Orchestral Series Debut]

San Francisco Symphony

San Francisco Symphony Chorus

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL *Messiah*

**Please note that the conductor for these performances has changed since what was previously announced.*

YOUTH ORCHESTRA

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra: *Peter and the Wolf*

[Sunday, December 12, 2021 at 2pm](#)

[Daniel Stewart](#) conductor

Vella Lovell narrator

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

SERGEI PROKOFIEV *Peter and the Wolf*

HOLIDAY

A Merry-Achi Christmas with Mariachi Sol de M xico  de Jos  Hern ndez

[Sunday, December 12, 2021 at 8pm](#)

[Mariachi Sol de M xico  de Jos  Hern ndez](#)

The San Francisco Symphony does not appear in this performance.

FILM SERIES

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Love Actually—Film with Live Orchestra
[Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)
[Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Thiago Tiberio](#) conductor
San Francisco Symphony

CRAIG ARMSTRONG *Love Actually*

RICHARD CURTIS director

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FILM SERIES

Home Alone—Film with Live Orchestra
[Thursday, December 16, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)
[Saturday, December 18, 2021 at 2pm](#)

[Joshua Gersen](#) conductor
San Francisco Symphony

JOHN WILLIAMS *Home Alone*

CHRIS COLUMBUS director

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HOLIDAY

Holiday Gaiety
[Friday, December 17, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Edwin Outwater](#) conductor and co-emcee
[Peaches Christ](#) co-emcee and drag performer
[Alex Newell](#) vocalist
[Coco Peru](#) singer and drag performer
[Thorgy Thor](#) violinist and drag performer
[Jamie Barton](#) mezzo-soprano
[Jimmie Herrod](#) vocalist
[Fou Fou Ha!](#) dance troupe
[Sister Roma](#) from *The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence*
Kylie Minono drag performer
San Francisco Symphony

LEROY ANDERSON *A Christmas Festival*

MYKOLA LEONTOVICH (arr. Robert Wendel) "Carol of the Bells"

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (arr. Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn; adapted by Jeff Tyzik) Peanut Brittle Brigade
(March) from *The Nutcracker Suite*

LIOR ROSNER *T'was the Night*

CHARLES STROUSE (lyrics by Martin Charnin; arr. Thomas Lauderdale and S. Taylor) "Tomorrow" from *Annie*

DAVID FOSTER (lyrics by Linda Thompson-Jenner; orch. Larry Brown) "Grown-up Christmas List"

LEROY ANDERSON *Sleigh Ride*

FRANCESCO CILEA "Acerba Volutta" from *Adriana Lecouvreur*

JASON ROBERT BROWN "Surabaya-Santa" from *Songs for a New World*

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (arr. Ralph Greaves) Fantasia on *Greensleeves*

MADONNA (arr. Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser) "Vogue"

J.S. PIERPONT (arr. Peter Grunberg) "Jingle Bells"

MARIAH CAREY / WALTER AFANASIEFF (arr. Matthew Naughtin) "All I Want for Christmas is You"

PHILIP SPRINGER (arr. Donald Pippin; orch. Larry Blank) "Santa Baby"

ADOLPHE ADAM (arr. Matthew Naughtin) "O Holy Night"

HOLIDAY

The Nutcracker & The Mouse King

[Tuesday, December 21, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[John Mauceri](#) conductor

[Alan Cumming](#) narrator

San Francisco Symphony

HOLIDAY

A Cool Yule Christmas—Holiday Favorites of Frank & Ella

[Wednesday, December 22, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Steven Reineke](#) conductor

[Capathia Jenkins](#) vocalist

[Tony DeSare](#) vocalist

San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Ragnar Bohlin director

San Francisco Symphony

HOLIDAY

Holiday Brass

[Thursday, December 23, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Edwin Outwater](#) conductor

Members of the San Francisco Symphony

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (arr. Ralph Sauer) *Royal Fireworks Music*

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (arr. Paul Bhasin) *Gran Partita Suite* for Brass Ensemble, from Serenade No. 10 in B-flat major

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (arr. Roger Schmidt) Selections from *Vespers*

TIELMAN SUSATO (arr. John Iveson) Dance Suite

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (arr. Timothy Higgins) *Nutcracker* Suite

TRADITIONAL (arr. Timothy Higgins) *Fantasia on Greensleeves*

VICTOR HERBERT (arr. Bill Jr. Holcombe) *March of the Toys*

TRADITIONAL *Festival of Lights*

LEOPOLD MOZART (arr. Timothy Higgins) *Die musikalische Schlittenfahrt*

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (arr. Timothy Higgins) Troika from *Lieutenant Kijé* Suite, Opus 60

LEROY ANDERSON (arr. John Wasson) *Sleigh Ride*

HOLIDAY

New Year's Eve with Darren Criss

[Friday, December 31, 2021 at 7:30pm](#)

[Bruce Anthony Kiesling](#) conductor

[Darren Criss](#) vocalist

San Francisco Symphony

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Deck the Hall at the Drive-In is made possible in part through the generosity of Presenting Partner Louise M. Davies Foundation and Supporting Partner Bank of America.

Performances of Holiday Soul on December 8 and Peter and the Wolf on December 12 are presented in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

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