



**Announcing the California Festival: A Celebration of New Music  
A Two-Week Statewide Festival Celebrating the  
Most Innovative and Compelling Music Composed  
Around the World in the Last Five Years**

**Music Directors of the Los Angeles Philharmonic,  
San Diego Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony Join Forces  
to Conceive of Sweeping Program**

**November 3–19, 2023**

**San Francisco, CA**—The Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Diego Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony today announced the launch of the **California Festival: A Celebration of New Music**. The two-week, statewide festival of music from around the world will showcase today’s most compelling and forward-looking voices in performances of works written within the past five years. The California Festival was conceived by LA Phil Music & Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel, San Diego Symphony Music Director Rafael Payare, and San Francisco Symphony Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen as a festival that highlights the collaborative and innovative spirit that thrives in California.

The California Festival will take place November 3–19, 2023, and brings together organizations and ensembles from throughout the state of California, including symphony orchestras, chamber music groups, jazz ensembles, choirs, and more, all performing new music as part of their broader season programs. Performances will take place in concert halls, educational institutions, auditoriums, clubs, and alternative spaces throughout all of California. More than 50 organizations from across the state have already confirmed participation. The full roster of participants will be announced later this year.

A dedicated [website](#) established by the three organizing partner orchestras will highlight the two-week festival’s participating organizations and composers, as well as provide a broader context for new music in California.

The California Festival will spotlight works written in the last five years that resonate with the curiosity and joyful experimentation that permeate the history of music in California. While the festival will be grounded in live performance, it aims to give a voice to artists from all kinds of media and to invite aesthetic invention and multidisciplinary work, with music at the center of its creation. Each participating organization will curate its own program or project under the festival umbrella, making this massive new survey as eclectic, exciting, and kaleidoscopic as it is insightful and thought-provoking. The festival invites multiple points of view to emphasize inclusivity and diversity in all its forms and to create a program that is meaningful to the communities that comprise California and the world at large.

California is both a home and a source of inspiration for music directors Gustavo Dudamel, Rafael Payare, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. In a joint statement, they said:

“California holds a unique place in music and culture, not just in the United States but in the wider world as well. It brings out the unexpected and illuminates the unseen, moving even the most reserved among us.

For more than a century, California has been a home for musical experimentation. It is where countless composers came, fleeing war and intolerance, and found stability and freedom of expression that allowed them to transcend the strict artistic boundaries they had constructed for themselves. It is where a film industry founded by outcasts and refugees became a global cultural center, creating a constant demand for ever-more-creative musical compositions that have evolved into a genre in its own right. And it is where American composers are transforming the way music is composed, performed, and heard. Today, California—a state with the economic power of a country, the ecological diversity of a continent, and the cultural diversity of the planet—represents a powerful vision for classical music.

Our three orchestras, in partnership with other arts organizations from throughout this state, have come together to celebrate the sheer magnitude of California’s contributions to classical music and to dream of new ways that we can work together to express our deep appreciation for the environment, communities, and technological innovation that make this state so deeply unique.”

“California’s musical organizations are integral to the spirit and the fabric of the Golden State,” said **Jonathan Moscone, Executive Director of the California Arts Council**. “Our musicians, orchestras, festivals, presenters, spaces and performing arts venues center California as a creative cornerstone of America. We applaud the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Diego and San Francisco Symphonies, and the countless other participating organizations for their joint vision in sharing with the world the inclusivity and innovation that people from across the world continue to seek here in California.”

The California Festival is supported by the [Association of California Symphony Orchestras](#), providing outreach to arts organizations in its network, informing them about the Festival, and encouraging them to participate.

### **About the LA Phil**

Under the leadership of Music & Artistic Director [Gustavo Dudamel](#), the [LA Phil](#) offers live performances, media initiatives, and learning programs that inspire and strengthen communities in Los Angeles and beyond. The Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestra is the foundation of the LA Phil's offerings, which also include a multi-genre, multidisciplinary presenting program, and such youth development programs as [YOLA](#) (Youth Orchestra Los Angeles). Performances are offered on three historic stages—[Walt Disney Concert Hall](#), the [Hollywood Bowl](#), and [The Ford](#)—as well as through a variety of media platforms. In all its endeavors, the LA Phil seeks to enrich the lives of individuals and communities through musical, artistic, and learning experiences that resonate in our world today.

### **About the San Diego Symphony**

Founded in 1910, the San Diego Symphony is the oldest orchestra in California and one of the largest and most significant cultural organizations in San Diego. The Orchestra performs for more than 250,000 people each season, offering a wide variety of programming at its two much-loved venues, Copley Symphony Hall at Jacobs Music Center in downtown San Diego (now under renovation) and The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park on San Diego Bay. In early 2018, the San Diego Symphony announced the appointment of Rafael Payare as music director. Payare leads the orchestra's 82 full-time musicians, graduates of the finest and most celebrated music schools in the United States and abroad. The San Diego Symphony also serves as the orchestra for the San Diego Opera each season, as well as performing at several regional performing arts and community centers. For more than 30 years, the San Diego Symphony has provided comprehensive learning and community engagement programs reaching more than 65,000 students annually and bringing innovative programming to San Diego's diverse neighborhoods and schools. For more information, visit <https://www.sandiegosymphony.org/>.

### **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 twelfth 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 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 2022–23 season reflects a spirit of collaboration, experimentation, and renewed dialogue through live music.

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