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SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY AND ESA-PEKKA SALONEN ANNOUNCE 2023–24 SEASON

Esa-Pekka Salonen’s fourth season as Music Director includes 12 Orchestral programs, four world premiere performances, SoundBox, continued partnerships with Peter Sellars and Alonzo King LINES Ballet, and a celebration of the spirit of California including California Festival & tour of Southern California

- Esa-Pekka Salonen leads world premiere performances of new works by Anders Hillborg, 2022 Emerging Black Composers Project winner Jens Ibsen, Jesper Nordin, and Terry Riley
- Salonen and the Orchestra partner with Alonzo King LINES Ballet for Maurice Ravel’s complete *Mother Goose*; program also features Arnold Schoenberg’s one-act opera *Erwartung*, directed by Peter Sellars and featuring soprano Mary Elizabeth Williams
- Salonen conducts Alexander Scriabin’s *Prometheus, The Poem of Fire* with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet and Béla Bartók’s *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle* with mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung and baritone Gerald Finley
- Programs featuring acclaimed soloists: pianists Emanuel Ax (Anders Hillborg’s Piano Concerto) and Yefim Bronfman (Robert Schumann’s Piano Concerto), cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason (Dmitri Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 1), and violinist Leonidas Kavakos (Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto)
- Salonen conducts San Francisco Symphony’s Opening Night Gala on September 22 and annual All San Francisco concert on September 23

- Salonen and the Orchestra are joined by violinist Lisa Batiashvili for three-concert Southern California Tour to Costa Mesa, Palm Desert, and Los Angeles, March 20–22
- Salonen curates his first live SoundBox program in March 2024

California Festival: A Celebration of New Music – November 3–19, 2023

- California Festival is a two-week, statewide festival featuring more than 50 organizations and ensembles celebrating the most innovative and compelling music composed around the world in the last five years
- Esa-Pekka Salonen leads two San Francisco Symphony California Festival programs, conducting world premieres of Jens Ibsen’s *Drowned in Light* and Terry Riley’s *City Lights: Aquatic Park*, his own *Kinēma* featuring San Francisco Symphony Principal Clarinet Carey Bell, Gabriella Smith’s *Breathing Forests* featuring organist James McVinnie, and two works by Igor Stravinsky
- San Francisco Symphony California Festival programming also includes the United States premiere of Betsy Jolas’s *Latest*, conducted by Ludovic Morlot; a Chamber Music program with members of the Orchestra; and a San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra concert

Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony release first official recordings together in 2023

- Salonen and the Orchestra partner with Apple for the launch of new classical music streaming app Apple Music Classical by releasing exclusive spatial audio recordings of György Ligeti’s *Clocks and Clouds, Lux Aeterna*, and *Ramifications*—available now
- Future new San Francisco Symphony releases on Apple Music Classical include live concert recordings of works by Anders Hillborg, Elizabeth Ogonek, Ottorino Respighi, Jean Sibelius, and Igor Stravinsky
- Esa-Pekka Salonen, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and the San Francisco Symphony release new album recording of Béla Bartók’s three piano concertos with classical music label PENTATONE in August 2023

Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas

- Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas conducts four weeks of Orchestral Series programs, including performances of Ludwig van Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 5, Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4, and Igor Stravinsky’s *Pulcinella*
- Programs also include works by Max Bruch, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Arnold Schoenberg, and Olly Wilson

Conductors in their Orchestral Series Debuts

- Ryan Bancroft makes his Orchestral Series debut with a program featuring the United States Premiere of Unsuk Chin’s *Alaraph ‘Ritus des Herzschlags’*

- Jonathan Cohen conducts the San Francisco Symphony's annual holiday performances of Handel's *Messiah*
- Marta Gardolińska conducts works by Grażyna Bacewicz, Edward Elgar, and Felix Mendelssohn

Returning Guest Conductors

- Thomas Adès conducts his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, featuring Kirill Gerstein, and works by Per Nørgård and Jean Sibelius
- Conductor Laureate Herbert Blomstedt conducts Franz Schubert's Symphony No. 6 and Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 7
- Karina Canellakis conducts a program of works by Richard Strauss and Maurice Ravel
- Gustavo Dudamel joins the San Francisco Symphony for works by Gabriela Ortiz, Gonzalo Grau, and Johannes Brahms
- Gustavo Gimeno conducts Dmitri Shostakovich, William Walton, and Sergei Prokofiev
- Daniel Harding conducts Gustav Holst's *The Planets* and Ralph Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* with tenor Andrew Staples
- Ludovic Morlot conducts United States premiere of Betsy Jolas's *Latest* on a program with works by Antonín Dvořák and Modest Mussorgsky
- Jaap van Zweden returns to the San Francisco Symphony for Ludwig van Beethoven's and Dmitri Shostakovich's Fifth Symphonies

Three "Inspirations" programs highlight art's journey from inspiration to implementation

- Three programs, each designed around single narrative theme, feature behind-the-scenes talks with performers and leading figures in arts and ideas, collaborations with local organizations, and curated lobby experiences
- "Inspirations" series include Ludovic Morlot conducting a program highlighting the connection between art and music featuring Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, inspired by the art of Viktor Hartmann; Thomas Adès curating a program inspired by a series of letters between composers spanning three generations; and Gustavo Gimeno conducting a program of works by composers who made their careers in film and classical music

Guest Artists Performing with the San Francisco Symphony

- Two San Francisco Symphony musicians take a turn as soloist this season: Principal Clarinet Carey Bell performs Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Kínēma* and Principal Viola Jonathan Vinocour performs William Walton's Viola Concerto
- Orchestral Series debuts by Dashon Burton, Seong-Jin Cho, Pablo Ferrández, Gerald Finley, Jorge Glem, Sheku Kanneh-Mason, James McVinnie, Andrew Staples, Heidi Stober, and Mary Elizabeth Williams

- Returning guest artists include Emanuel Ax, Lisa Batiashvili, Joshua Bell, Ben Bliss, Yefim Bronfman, Sasha Cooke, Michelle DeYoung, Julia Fischer, Kirill Gerstein, Augustin Hadelich, Jennifer Johnson Cano, Leonidas Kavakos, Tamara Mumford, Kelley O'Connor, Nicholas Phan, Luca Pisaroni, Michael Sumuel, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and Cédric Tiberghien, among others

Orchestral Series Premieres and Commissions

- Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts four world premieres, including Jesper Nordin's *Convergence*, written for Collaborative Partner Pekka Kuusisto, and three San Francisco Symphony commissions: a new piano concerto by Anders Hillborg, 2022 Emerging Black Composer Project winner Jens Ibsen's *Drowned in Light*, and Terry Riley's *City Lights*
- United States premieres of San Francisco Symphony-commissioned works by Unsuk Chin and Betsy Jolas
- First San Francisco Symphony performances of works by Thomas Adès, Sofia Gubaidulina, Gonzalo Grau, Jennifer Higdon, Wynton Marsalis, Per Nørgård, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Arnold Schoenberg, Dmitri Shostakovich, Gabriella Smith, and Ralph Vaughan Williams

SoundBox, Great Performers Series, Shenson Spotlight Series, and Film Series

- SoundBox returns for its 10th season with four programs curated by composer, conductor, and pianist Thomas Adès; Collaborative Partner and roboticist Carol Reiley; San Francisco Symphony Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen; and violinist, singer, and composer Mazz Swift
- Great Performers Series features pianists Yefim Bronfman, Evgeny Kissin, Daniil Trifonov, and Yuja Wang; violinist Ray Chen; Joshua Bell & the Academy of St Martin in the Fields; San Francisco Symphony Brass; and violinist Lisa Batiashvili, cellist Gautier Capuçon, and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet in a chamber music performance
- Four-concert Shenson Spotlight Series—featuring rising artists in their Davies Symphony Hall recital debuts—includes performances by violinist Stella Chen and pianist George Li; violinist Alexandra Conunova; pianist Eric Lu; and cellist Gabriel Martins with pianist Victor Santiago Asunción
- Film concerts feature live-to-picture performances of *Casino Royale*, *Encanto*, *Gladiator*, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and classic cartoons in Bugs Bunny at the Symphony

Standard and Compose Your Own Subscriptions available now; single tickets go on sale July 15, 2023

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—The San Francisco Symphony and Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen today announced details of the Orchestra's 112th season, Salonen's fourth as Music Director.

This season, Salonen and the Orchestra celebrate the spirit of California with the California Festival—a statewide celebration of new music featuring more than 50 organizations and ensembles—and a three-concert Southern California tour. Additional highlights include new partnerships and continued collaborations with luminaries from across classical music, dance, theater, visual art, and more; performances of four world premieres, two United States premieres, and 11 works new to the San Francisco Symphony; concerts featuring Collaborative Partners Pekka Kuusisto and Carol Reiley; four programs conducted by Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas; and performances throughout the season by audience-favorite guest conductors and prominent soloists.

“The reason for the existence of a symphony orchestra is not existence itself,” said Esa-Pekka Salonen. “The reason is the function of the symphony orchestra in the community. We serve the Bay Area community. We provide spiritual nourishment. We provide things that can be moving, can be exciting, can make you understand things about the world and yourself that you wouldn’t have necessarily understood before. But also, it can be just plain fun. It can be entertainment—the best kind. We’ve put together a season that has something for everyone. Each concert is going to be entertaining in the best sense of the word.”

“It’s been exciting to experience Esa-Pekka and the San Francisco Symphony developing their sound and identity together over the past several years and it is deeply inspiring to see our audiences embrace Esa-Pekka with enthusiasm and appreciation,” said SF Symphony CEO Matthew Spivey. “Our musicians are extraordinarily talented, and the Orchestra seems to reach new heights with each season. We look forward to continuing to build on that momentum with a 2023–24 season that matches the creative spirit of the Bay Area through bold programming and extraordinary performers, unique and distinct concert experiences, new music and fresh ideas, and energizing collaborations and partnerships.”

Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony

In Esa-Pekka Salonen’s fourth season as Music Director, he continues to develop and expand on the Orchestra’s close collaborative relationships with artists from a variety of backgrounds and expertise, including his ongoing partnership staging major works with director Peter Sellars; a fourth collaboration with choreographer Alonzo King and the San Francisco-based contemporary ballet company Alonzo King LINES Ballet; a world premiere performance with Collaborative Partner and violinist Pekka Kuusisto; a second artistic collaboration with animator Hillary Leben; and a world-class lineup of guest artists.

Salonen conducts four world premiere performances during the 2023–24 season, including Anders Hillborg’s Piano Concerto No. 2 with Emanuel Ax, Jens Ibsen’s *Drowned in Light*, Jesper Nordin’s *Convergence* with Kuusisto, and Terry Riley’s *City Lights: Aquatic Park*.

Salonen and the Symphony honor the spirit of California in the 2023–24 season with the two-week-long California Festival—a celebration of California and new music written within the past five years, presented in collaboration with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and San Diego

Symphony—and a three-concert Southern California tour, with performances in Costa Mesa, Palm Desert, and Los Angeles.

Opening Night Gala & All San Francisco Concert

The San Francisco Symphony's 2023–24 season begins in style with a celebratory opening week of performances conducted by Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen. On September 22, Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony present the Opening Night Gala. The evening begins with pre-concert libations followed by the opening night concert. Patrons can also reserve a Gala Package which includes a post-concert dinner and after-party. Proceeds from the event benefit the Symphony's education and community programs. For more information on Gala Packages, please email gala@sfsymphony.org.

The annual All San Francisco Concert, taking place this year on September 23, honors local social service and neighborhood organizations, in recognition of and gratitude for their work in serving and enriching the lives of Bay Area citizens. Attendees include community members, volunteers, and employees from a broad range of local organizations such as Asian Women's Shelter, AXIS Dance Company, Huckleberry Youth Programs, Openhouse, and SF Heritage, among many others. This year's All San Francisco Concert is guided by an advisory committee made up of local community leaders, with founder of the All San Francisco Concert, San Francisco Symphony Life Governor Ellen Magnin Newman, serving as honorary chair. Local organizations interested in receiving an invitation to the concert are encouraged to email allsf@sfsymphony.org.

Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos, and Collaborative Partner Pekka Kuusisto join Salonen and the Orchestra across three Orchestral Series weeks in September & October

Following the Opening Gala and All San Francisco concert, Esa-Pekka Salonen leads three weeks of programs featuring 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.

September 29–October 1, Salonen and the Orchestra are joined by violinist Leonidas Kavakos for Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. The program also features the San Francisco Symphony's first performances of Wynton Marsalis's *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah!*—which received its world premiere by the New Jersey Symphony in November 2022—and Richard Strauss's *An Alpine Symphony*, which depicts Strauss's day-long hike of an Alpine mountain.

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. Salonen also conducts John Adams' *Naïve and Sentimental Music*, inspired in part by Friedrich Schiller's essay, "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry."

October 12–14, Salonen, Emanuel Ax, and the San Francisco Symphony give the world premiere of a new piano concerto by one of Salonen’s longtime collaborators, composer Anders Hillborg. The program also includes Johannes Brahms’ Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn and Ludwig van Beethoven’s Symphony No. 2.

California Festival: A Celebration of New Music, November 3–19

[Announced in January 2023](#), the California Festival is a new two-week, statewide festival of music from around the world aimed at showcasing today’s most compelling and forward-looking voices in performances of works written within the past five years. The new festival—which features more than 50 California-based organizations and ensembles—was conceived by Esa-Pekka Salonen alongside LA Philharmonic Music & Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel and San Diego Symphony Music Director Rafael Payare as a festival that highlights the collaborative and innovative spirit that thrives in California.

As part of the California Festival, Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony perform two Orchestral Series programs featuring four works by composers with Bay Area ties. On November 10 at UC Berkeley’s Zellerbach Hall, presented by Cal Performances, and November 11 & 12 at Davies Symphony Hall, Salonen conducts a program featuring the world premiere of 2022 Emerging Black Composers Project winner Jens Ibsen’s *Drowned in Light* and Salonen’s own *Kinēma* (2021) with San Francisco Symphony Principal Clarinet Carey Bell as soloist.

November 17–18, Salonen conducts the world premiere of Terry Riley’s *City Lights: Aquatic Park*, a new work inspired by Riley’s early years in San Francisco as a young composer; and the San Francisco Symphony’s first performances of Gabriella Smith’s organ concerto, *Breathing Forests* (2021), which reflects on the complex relationship between humans, forests, climate change, and fire. Organist James McVinnie joins Salonen and the Orchestra for these performances.

Salonen’s programs also feature two works by Igor Stravinsky, another composer deeply inspired by his time in California. On November 10–12, the Orchestra performs Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, and November 17–18, it performs Steven Stucky’s arrangement of Stravinsky’s *Les Noces*, featuring animated shorts by Hillary Leben in the San Francisco Symphony’s second collaboration with the artist.

As a prelude to the California Festival, the San Francisco Symphony will also perform the United States premiere of Betsy Jolas’s *Latest* (2021) on a program conducted by Ludovic Morlot. Additionally, the San Francisco Symphony’s chamber music program on November 5 and the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra performance conducted by Daniel Stewart on November 19 will feature works written in the last five years, to be announced later this year.

“California holds a unique place in music and culture, not just in the United States but in the wider world as well,” said Gustavo Dudamel, Rafael Payare, and Esa-Pekka Salonen in a joint statement. “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.”

Béla Bartók’s *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle* and Alexander Scriabin’s *Prometheus, The Poem of Fire*, March 1–3, 2024

March 1–3, 2023, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Orchestra are joined by mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung and baritone Gerald Finley for a performance of Béla Bartók’s eerie one-act opera, *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle*, a psychological thriller that follows Bluebeard’s new wife Judith as she opens seven mysterious locked doors in Bluebeard’s castle.

“Bartók is one of my favorite composers, and *Bluebeard’s Castle* is one of his best works,” said Salonen. “It tells a bloodcurdling story with a rich and exciting musical language. I have performed it with Michelle and Gerald separately before, but this is the first time we’ll all do it together.”

Jean-Yves Thibaudet joins Salonen and the Orchestra to open the program with Alexander Scriabin’s *Prometheus, The Poem of Fire*. These performances include a modern-day exploration of sound-color synesthesia that reimagines the concept of the *clavier à lumières* (color organ), an instrument Scriabin invented for this piece.

Three-concert Southern California tour, March 20–22, 2024

In March 2024, Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony, along with violinist Lisa Batiashvili, embark on a three-concert Southern California tour with performances at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa on March 20, Palm Desert’s McCallum Theatre at the College of the Desert on March 21, and Los Angeles’ Walt Disney Concert Hall on March 22. In Costa Mesa and Palm Desert, Salonen conducts a program of works by the great Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, including *Finlandia*, the Violin Concerto with Batiashvili as soloist, and Symphony No. 1. In Los Angeles, Salonen pairs Sibelius’s Violin Concerto with John Adams’ *Naïve and Sentimental Music*.

San Francisco audiences will have the opportunity to hear the All-Sibelius program at Davies Symphony Hall in concerts on March 14–16.

“It’s exciting for me to take my new band to the Walt Disney Concert Hall to show off a bit,” said Salonen. “And especially in a Sibelius program, which for a Finnish conductor is a bit of an obvious thing to do, but I don’t think I’ve ever conducted a Sibelius-only program in my life. What’s especially inspiring is that we’re going to be collaborating with the great violinist Lisa Batiashvili. I’m really looking forward to this.”

Collaborations with Alonzo King LINES Ballet & Peter Sellars, June 7–9, 2024

June 7–9, 2023, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony partner with two creative visionaries—director Peter Sellars and choreographer Alonzo King. Alonzo King LINES Ballet opens the program, performing Maurice Ravel’s *Ma mère l’Oye* (*Mother Goose*), choreographed by King.

“I’m very happy to have found a partner in this city with whom I’m envisioning a long-term collaboration for many years to come: Alonzo King and his LINES Ballet,” said Salonen. “Alonzo is a master choreographer. His dancers are amazing, and he has an unusual sensitivity towards music. I’m excited about the prospect of creating a ballet with him to Ravel’s beautiful *Mother Goose*, which is, to me, a magic, perfect composition.”

These performances mark Salonen and the Symphony’s fourth collaboration with Alonzo King LINES Ballet: the Re-Opening Night concert in October 2021 saw the company perform Alberto Ginastera’s *Estancia* Suite; a concert film of Igor Stravinsky’s *The Soldier’s Tale*, featuring LINES Ballet dancer Adjí Cissoko, was released in June 2022; and a performance of Arvo Pärt’s *Spiegel im Spiegel* in Esa-Pekka Salonen’s digital SoundBox: *Patterns*, featured dancers Adjí Cissoko and Shuaib Elhassan performing choreography by Alonzo King, released in April 2021.

Peter Sellars directs the second half of the program—the San Francisco Symphony’s first performances of Arnold Schoenberg’s haunting one-act monodrama, *Erwartung*. The opera features a libretto by Marie Pappenheim that follows a woman searching for her lover in a forest at night. In these performances, soprano Mary Elizabeth Williams makes her Orchestral Series debut.

“Arnold Schoenberg’s astounding *Erwartung* is a searing portrait of a woman pushed right to the edge in dark times,” said Sellars. “Public violence, instability, anxiety, and betrayal hang in the air as she awaits her missing lover. Flashbacks, stolen moments, secrets, and sudden sharp, blazing epiphanies throng her heart and her churning thoughts. Danger is everywhere, and freedom is an elusive dream. The love is real.”

These performances are Sellars’ third collaboration with Salonen and the Symphony as part of a four-year partnership that was announced in March 2022. In June 2022, Sellars directed the Symphony’s performances of Igor Stravinsky’s *Oedipus rex* and *Symphony of Psalms*, and in

June 2023, he directs a new staged production of Kaija Saariaho's *Adriana Mater*, the composer's second opera, an intensely moving work exploring the relationship between a mother and her son as they navigate a world rumbling with the threat of violence. In 2025, Sellars, Salonen, and the Orchestra will perform Leoš Janáček's tragicomedy *The Cunning Little Vixen* featuring Collaborative Partner Julia Bullock in the title role.

Salonen and the Orchestra close the 2023–24 season with three weeks of programs

June 13–15, cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason joins Salonen and the Orchestra for his Orchestral Series debut, performing Dmitri Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1. Salonen also conducts Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini*, inspired by Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and the first San Francisco Symphony performances of Sofia Gubaidulina's *Fairytale Poem*, which draws on the fairytale *The Little Piece of Chalk* by Czech writer Mazourek.

June 21–23, Salonen and the Symphony are joined by Yefim Bronfman for Robert Schumann's Piano Concerto. Though they're frequent collaborators, this is the first time Salonen and Bronfman have performed Schumann's concerto, which Salonen called "one of the great jewels of the Romantic piano and orchestra repertoire." The second half of the program is devoted to Anton Bruckner's Symphony No. 4, *Romantic*.

Closing the 2023–24 season, June 28–30, Salonen conducts Gustav Mahler's epic Symphony No. 3 with mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, and the Pacific Boychoir. Mahler's Third Symphony played a pivotal role in Salonen's career when he stepped in for Michael Tilson Thomas on short notice to conduct the piece with the Philharmonia Orchestra in 1983. "I went to London and conducted the piece: it went well, and I enjoyed myself," Salonen said of this experience. "And following day I woke up and realized that I was a conductor, which was kind of bewildering, because I really was the same guy as I was five days earlier."

Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony recording projects

Apple Music Classical—exclusive recordings available today

In addition to sharing details of the 2023–24 season, the San Francisco Symphony is pleased to announce a new partnership with [Apple Music Classical](#)—a new app built for classical music, available in the App store starting today—with the release of three new spatial audio recordings of György Ligeti's *Clocks and Clouds*, *Lux Aeterna*, and *Ramifications*, exclusively available via the app. Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony previously released the Ligeti recordings as a [digital-only audio-visual performance](#) in January 2022 in partnership with renowned media artist Refik Anadol and SF Symphony Collaborative Partner and Artificial Intelligence entrepreneur Carol Reiley.

This summer, the San Francisco Symphony will also release several new live concert recordings in spatial audio exclusive to Apple Music Classical, including Anders Hillborg's *Kongsgaard Variations*, recorded October 2021; Elizabeth Ogonek's *Sleep & Unremembrance*, recorded

March 2022; Ottorino Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, recorded June 2022; Jean Sibelius's Symphony No. 5, recorded June 2022; and Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, recorded March 2022.

PENTATONE to release Béla Bartók's Piano Concertos Nos. 1–3 with Pierre-Laurent Aimard

In August 2023, renowned classical music label PENTATONE will release Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony's first album together, featuring live concert recordings of Béla Bartók's complete piano concertos, performed with pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard in June 2022 and February 2023. Further details will be announced at a later date.

Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas

Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) conducts the San Francisco Symphony in four concert programs during the 2023–24 season. On October 19 & 21–22, MTT conducts Olly Wilson's *Shango Memory* and Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, the latter of which features mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford, tenor Ben Bliss, and bass Dashon Burton. On January 18–20, MTT leads the Orchestra in Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 and Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3, performed by pianist Seong-Jin Cho in his Orchestral Series debut. On January 25–27, MTT conducts a program featuring Arnold Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra and Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 5. Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony's final 2023–24 season performances together take place February 23–25 and include Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Overture to *Le nozze di Figaro*; Ludwig van Beethoven's Romance No. 1 in G major and Max Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1, both featuring violinist Julia Fischer; and Igor Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, featuring mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Nicholas Phan, and baritone Luca Pisaroni.

Premieres and Commissions

The San Francisco Symphony's 2023–24 Orchestral Series features 16 works new to the Orchestra, including four world premieres, two United States premieres, and 11 works receiving their first San Francisco Symphony performances.

World premieres this season include a piano concerto by Anders Hillborg performed by pianist Emanuel Ax in concerts conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen, October 12–14; *Drowned in Light* by Jens Ibsen with Salonen conducting, November 10–12; *Convergence*, a violin concerto by Jesper Nordin, performed by Pekka Kuusisto and conducted by Salonen on October 6–7; and *City Lights: Aquatic Park* by Terry Riley with Salonen conducting, November 17–18.

United States premieres of San Francisco Symphony-commissioned works include Unsuk Chin's *Alaraph 'Ritus des Herzschlags'* with Ryan Bancroft making his Orchestral Series conducting debut, May 16–18, and Betsy Jolas' *Latest*, conducted by Ludovic Morlot, November 2–4.

The San Francisco Symphony will perform 11 additional works for the first time this season, including Thomas Adès' Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Gonzalo Grau's *Odisea: Concerto for Venezuelan Cuatro and Orchestra*; Sofia Gubaidulina's *Fairy Tale Poem*; Jennifer Higdon's

Air; Wynton Marsalis' *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah!*; Per Nørgård's Symphony No. 2; Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Kinēma*; Arnold Schoenberg's *Erwartung*; Dmitri Shostakovich's Funeral March from *The Great Citizen*, Opus 55; Gabriella Smith's *Breathing Forests*, and Ralph Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge*.

San Francisco Symphony Conducting Debuts and Returning Conductors

The San Francisco Symphony's 2023–24 Season features a dynamic lineup of international guest conductors bringing fresh and unique perspectives to the podium.

Three conductors make their Orchestral Series Debuts

Ryan Bancroft (Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales; Artist in Association, Tapiola Sinfonietta; and Chief Conductor Designate, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra) makes his debut with the San Francisco Symphony May 16–18 in a program featuring the United States premiere of Unsuk Chin's *Alaraph 'Ritus des Herzschlags'*. Bancroft also conducts Jennifer Higdon's *Air* and Henri Vieuxtemps' Violin Concerto No. 5 with Joshua Bell as soloist, and Claude Debussy's *La Mer*.

Jonathan Cohen (Artistic Director of Arcangelo, Music Director of Les Violons du Roy, Artistic Director of Tetbury Festival, Artistic Partner of Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and Artistic Director Designate of the Handel and Haydn Society) makes his Orchestral Series debut December 8–9 conducting the Orchestra's annual holiday performances of George Frideric Handel's *Messiah* featuring soprano Heidi Stober, mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnson Cano, tenor Nicholas Phan, and bass Michael Sumuel.

Marta Gardolińska (Music Director of Opera National de Lorraine and Principal Guest Conductor of Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona) is joined May 10 & 12 by Pablo Ferrández, also in his Orchestral Series debut, for Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto. Gardolińska also conducts the Orchestra in Grażyna Bacewicz's Overture and Felix Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3, *Scottish*. Gardolińska and the San Francisco Symphony perform this program at UC Davis' Mondavi Center on May 11.

Returning Guest Conductors

The 2023–24 season sees Conductor Laureate Herbert Blomstedt and guest conductors Thomas Adès, Karina Canellakis, Gustavo Dudamel, Gustavo Gimeno, Daniel Harding, Ludovic Morlot, and Jaap van Zweden make return appearances with the San Francisco Symphony.

Conductor Laureate **Herbert Blomstedt** returns February 2–4 to conduct Franz Schubert's Symphony No. 6 and Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 7.

Karina Canellakis (Chief Conductor of Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra) conducts the San Francisco Symphony April 18–20 in a program of works by Richard Strauss and Maurice Ravel. Canellakis is joined by pianist Cédric

Tiberghien for Ravel's virtuosic Piano Concerto for the Left Hand. The program also includes Strauss's *Don Juan* and *Death and Transfiguration*, and Ravel's *La Valse*.

Gustavo Dudamel (Music and Artistic Director Designate of the New York Philharmonic, Music and Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Music Director of Opéra National de Paris, and Music Director of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra) joins the San Francisco Symphony November 24–26 for a post-California Festival program featuring two works written in the last three years: Gabriella Ortiz's *Kaayumari* and Gonzalo Grau's *Odisea: Concerto for Venezuelan Cuatro and Orchestra*, featuring cuatro player Jorge Glem in his Orchestral Series debut. Dudamel also conducts Johannes Brahms' Symphony No. 2.

Daniel Harding (Music and Artistic Director of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Music Director Designate of the Orchestra and Chorus of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Conductor Laureate of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and Conductor in Residence of Orchestre de la Suisse Romande) conducts Gustav Holst's *The Planets* with the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, October 26–28. Harding opens the program with the Orchestra's first performances of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge*, featuring tenor Andrew Staples.

Jaap van Zweden (Music Director of the New York Philharmonic and Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic) returns January 11–13 to conduct Ludwig van Beethoven's and Dmitri Shostakovich's Fifth Symphonies.

Three returning conductors lead new “Inspirations” programs

This season, three new “Inspirations” programs focus on a single narrative framework, each revealing the different ways art goes from inspiration to implementation. The “Inspirations” concerts feature behind-the-scenes talks with performers and leading figures in arts and ideas, collaborations with local organizations, and special lobby experiences specific to each concert's narrative theme.

Ludovic Morlot (Music Director of the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Emeritus of the Seattle Symphony, and Associate Artist of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra) conducts the first program in the series, “Inspirations: Art/Music,” November 2–4, focusing on the connections between art and music with Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. The ten-movement piece depicts Mussorgsky's tour of an exhibition of artist, architect, and designer Viktor Hartmann's work following the artist's sudden death in 1873. The program will also feature new works of art created specifically for these performances and inspired by Mussorgsky's piece, further demonstrating the symbiotic, muse-like relationship between art and music. Morlot will also conduct the United States premiere of Betsy Jolas's *Latest* and Antonin Dvořák's Violin Concerto featuring Augustin Hadelich as soloist.

February 15–16 & 18, **Thomas Adès** (Artistic Partner of the Boston Symphony Orchestra) conducts a program titled “Inspirations: Letters/Legacies.” The program finds connections between composers of three generations—Jean Sibelius, Per Nørgård, and Thomas Adès—through their letters to one another. Adès will conduct Nørgård's Symphony No. 2; his own

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra featuring his close collaborator, pianist Kirill Gerstein; and Sibelius's Symphony No. 4.

April 25–27, **Gustavo Gimeno** (Music Director of Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Music Director of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and Music Director Designate of Teatro Real) leads “Inspirations: Film/Classical,” featuring works by three 20th-century composers who all wrote music for both films and the concert stage. The program opens with the Funeral March to Dmitri Shostakovich's score to the 1938 film *The Great Citizen*, followed by William Walton's Viola Concerto, featuring SF Symphony Principal Viola Jonathan Vinocour, and Sergei Prokofiev's Symphony No. 3.

Guest Artists Perform with the San Francisco Symphony

Guest artists making their San Francisco Symphony Orchestral Series debuts include sopranos Heidi Stober and Mary Elizabeth Williams; tenor Andrew Staples; baritone Gerald Finley; bass Dashon Burton; pianist Seong-Jin Cho; cellists Pablo Ferrández and Sheku Kanneh-Mason; cuatro player Jorge Glem, and organist James McVinnie.

Returning instrumental soloists include pianists Emanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, Kirill Gerstein, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and Cédric Tiberghien; and violinists Lisa Batiashvili, Joshua Bell, Julia Fischer, Augustin Hadelich, Leonidas Kavakos, and Pekka Kuusisto. Vocalists returning to perform with the San Francisco Symphony include tenors Ben Bliss and Nicholas Phan; mezzo-sopranos Sasha Cooke, Michelle DeYoung, Jennifer Johnson Cano, Tamara Mumford, and Kelley O'Connor; baritone Luca Pisaroni, and bass Michael Sumuel.

In June, Maurice Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye* (Mother Goose) Suite features returning ensemble Alonzo King LINES Ballet and choreographer Alonzo King, and Peter Sellars returns as director for Arnold Schoenberg's *Erwartung*. In November, Hillary Leben returns as animator for *Les Noces* by Igor Stravinsky (orchestrated by Steven Stucky).

This season, two members of the San Francisco Symphony appear as soloists: Principal Clarinet Carey Bell gives the first San Francisco Symphony performances of Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Kinēma*, and Principal Viola Jonathan Vinocour performs William Walton's Viola Concerto.

San Francisco Symphony Chorus performances

One of America's most distinguished choruses, the 152-member San Francisco Symphony Chorus is known for its precision, power, and versatility. During the 2023–24 season, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus is featured in four Orchestral Series programs, including performances of Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas; Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, conducted by Daniel Harding; Igor Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, orchestrated by Steven Stucky and conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen; and Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 3, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. The Chorus also performs on two film series programs: *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, composed by Howard Shore; and *Gladiator*, composed by Hans Zimmer and conducted by Justin Freer. The Chorus will give a

special performance of Carl Orff's iconic choral showpiece *Carmina burana* (performed without the San Francisco Symphony).

SoundBox

The San Francisco Symphony's groundbreaking SoundBox series returns for a tenth season with programs curated by violinist, singer, and composer Mazz Swift (December 8 & 9); conductor, composer, and pianist Thomas Adès (February 23 & 24); Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen (March 8 & 9); and Collaborative Partner and roboticist Carol Reiley (April 5 & 6), featuring performances by guest artists and members of the San Francisco Symphony, accompanied by unique video projections and lighting design. Launched in 2014 as an experimental, late-night concert series for culturally curious audiences, SoundBox is known for continuously pushing the envelope with adventurous programming, innovative design, and multimedia elements. SoundBox performances take place in a warehouse-like rehearsal space adjacent to Davies Symphony Hall, enhanced by a Meyer Constellation Sound System, which can alter the space's acoustics to accommodate a variety of musical styles and ensembles, providing ultimate versatility.

Lead support for SoundBox is provided by the Barbro and Bernard Osher SoundBox Fund.

Great Performers Series and Shenson Spotlight Series

The 2023–24 Great Performers Series includes an orchestral presentation with Academy of St Martin in the Fields led by violinist Joshua Bell; a chamber recital featuring violinist Lisa Batiashvili, cellist Gautier Capuçon, and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet; as well as a performance featuring members of the San Francisco Symphony brass section. Soloists presented in the series include violinist Ray Chen with pianist Julio Elizalde, and pianists Yefim Bronfman, Evgeny Kissin, Daniil Trifonov, and Yuja Wang.

The San Francisco Symphony's Shenson Spotlight Series, now in its third season, features ascendant artists in their Davies Symphony Hall debuts. Soloists presented in this series include pianist Eric Lu, cellist Gabriel Martins with pianist Victor Santiago Asunción, violinist Alexandra Conunova, and violinist Stella Chen in recital with pianist George Li.

Film Series

The 2023–24 Film Series features the San Francisco Symphony performing live accompaniment to iconic films as they are projected on a large screen above the stage. This year, the series includes Martin Campbell's *Casino Royale*, featuring music by David Arnold conducted by Nicholas Buc, February 8 & 9; Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* with music by Howard Shore, April 11–13; Victor Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz*, featuring music by Harold Arlen conducted by Constantine Kitsopoulos, May 1; Irvin Kershner's *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*, with music by John Williams conducted by Constantine Kitsopoulos, May 2–4; Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*, with music by Hans Zimmer conducted by Justin Freer; and Jared Bush & Byron Howard's *Encanto*, featuring music by Germaine Franco conducted by Sarah

Hicks. The Orchestra will also present Bugs Bunny at the Symphony, a program conducted by George Daugherty on February 10.

Día de los Muertos Celebration

On November 4, the San Francisco Symphony presents its 16th annual Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration, featuring a concert program of traditional and contemporary Latin American music conducted by Miguel Harth-Bedoya, preceded by a festive array of family-friendly activities. Curated by longtime San Francisco Symphony collaborator Martha Rodríguez-Salazar, a key element of the Symphony's Día de los Muertos event is the annual partnerships with local artists who transform the lobbies of Davies Symphony Hall with immersive art installations and altars to honor the living and the deceased. Patrons can also purchase a ¡Fiesta! VIP fundraising package that includes premium seating at the concert, as well as a post-concert reception and seated dinner, with proceeds benefiting the Symphony's education and community programs.

Lunar New Year Celebration

On February 17, the San Francisco Symphony celebrates the Year of the Dragon with the 24th annual Lunar New Year Concert. Conductor Mei-Ann Chen leads the San Francisco Symphony in the concert performance, which highlights vibrant Asian traditions through Eastern and Western repertoire and multimedia presentations. Patrons can also purchase a Lunar New Year Package, which includes special festivities and a stylish Banquet. Proceeds from Lunar New Year benefit the Symphony's artistic, education, and community programs.

Music for Families, Teen Night, and San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

The San Francisco Symphony provides unique opportunities for children, families, and young adults to engage with classical music through programs like the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra and Music for Families.

Music for Families

The Music for Families series is designed to bring children together with their families to engage with classical music through interactive themed performances. In 2023–24, Resident Conductor of Engagement and Education Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser conducts two concerts on December 2 and March 9.

Teen Night

Designed for teenagers 13 and up, Teen Night features interactive elements like games, trivia, and prizes alongside an eclectic program of music. In 2023–24, Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser leads the San Francisco Symphony in the third annual Teen Night on April 6.

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Led by Wattis Foundation Music Director Daniel Stewart, the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra opens their season on November 19, followed by their annual holiday performance of

Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* on December 10. Additional Youth Orchestra performances will take place March 17 and May 19.

The San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra provides a tuition-free orchestral experience of pre-professional caliber to talented young musicians from the greater Bay Area, with weekly rehearsals led by Daniel Stewart. Youth Orchestra members benefit from weekly coachings by San Francisco Symphony musicians and enjoy the opportunity to work with world-renowned artists and conductors performing with the San Francisco Symphony.

On Sale Dates

Subscription packages for the San Francisco Symphony's 2023–24 season go on sale Tuesday, March 28 at 10am PT and can be purchased online at www.sfsymphony.org/subscribe or by phone at (415) 864-6000.

For a limited time, patrons have the option to get 1 additional Orchestral Series concert free when buying a Davies Symphony Hall 4-concert or more subscription package; 4 additional Orchestral Series concerts free when buying an 8-concert or more package; 6 additional Orchestral Series concerts free when buying a 12-concert or more package; or 8 additional Orchestral Series concerts, an additional seat upgrade, and 2 complimentary beverage vouchers when subscribing to 18 or more concerts. Offer applies to all Fixed or CYO subscriptions totaling 4 or more concerts. Add-ons and special events do not count towards the total. **Offer expires on May 1, 2023.**

Single tickets for individual 2023–24 concerts will go on sale July 15, 2023.

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The San Francisco Symphony receives support from more than 9,500 individual donors and 160 partner institutions. We are especially grateful to the following major partners supporting the Symphony's myriad artistic, community, and engagement programs in the 2023–24 season:

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