



Elim Chan, San Francisco Symphony Music Director Designate

Conductor Elim Chan embodies the spirit of contemporary orchestral leadership with her crystalline precision and expressive zeal. In May 2026 she was announced as the San Francisco Symphony's next Music Director, a position she will begin in September 2027. She was recently appointed Artistic Partner with the Vienna Symphony for the 2026–27 and 2027–28 seasons, following her designation as Portrait Artist at the Musikverein in the 2022–23 season. Chan served as Principal Conductor of the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra from 2019–2024 and Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra between 2018–2023.

Chan made her San Francisco Symphony debut during the 2022–23 season in a program that included the world premiere of Elizabeth Ogonek's *Moondog*, a Symphony commission. In June 2026, she made her first appearances as Music Director Designate, conducting two sold-out concerts featuring works by Wagner and Berlioz, and Debussy's *La Mer*.

During the 2026–27 season, Chan will conduct the San Francisco Symphony in three programs in October, January, and June, including the Orchestra's first performances of John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* Symphony, Noriko Koide's *Swaddling Silk and Gossamer Rain*, and Augusta Read Thomas's *Sunlight Echoes*. Her programs will also feature the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, soloists Renaud Capuçon and Yefim Bronfman, and Concertmaster Alexander Barantschik (Naoum Blinder Chair) and Principal Viola Jonathan Vinocour with works by Brahms, Elgar, Pärt, Prokofiev, Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Rachmaninoff.

A sought-after guest conductor, Chan will make her Berlin Philharmonic debut in the 2026–27 season, alongside first appearances with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, NHK Symphony Orchestra, and Dallas Symphony Orchestra. She conducts her first staged opera with John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* at Zurich Opera House in a new production. In 2028, she will make her Vienna Philharmonic debut.

Recent debuts and upcoming re-invitations include performances with leading orchestras such as the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Pittsburgh Symphony in the United States, and the Toronto Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden, Munich Philharmonic, Bamberg Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, and Hong Kong Philharmonic internationally.

Chan appeared at both the Lucerne and Salzburg festivals and conducted the First Night of the Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in 2024 and returned in 2025 to conduct the Last Night of the Proms. With the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, she recorded *All These Lighted Things* for Alpha Classics, pairing the titular Elizabeth Ogonek work with works by Prokofiev and Ravel.

Born in Hong Kong, Elim Chan studied at Smith College in Massachusetts and at the University of Michigan. In 2014, she became the first female winner of the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition and went on to spend her 2015–16 season as Assistant Conductor at the London Symphony Orchestra. In the following season, Chan joined the Dudamel Fellowship program of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. She also owes much to the support and encouragement of Bernard Haitink, whose masterclasses she attended in Lucerne in 2015.