



SoundBox

Critical Acclaim

48 Hills, [Courtney Bryan fills SF Symphony's Soundbox with Afrodiasporic ingenuity](#)

10 years in, SF Symphony's Soundbox remains one of San Francisco's freshest musical experiences—and definitely one of the hardest to pin down. Is it a backstage afterhours? A hyper-hip cocktail party? A hippie happening? An avant-garde extravaganza?

The regular night-time event, held in the cavernous SF Symphony rehearsal space, complete with floor cushions and thematic drinks, showcases cutting-edge contemporary music for a crowd that spans scruffy TL artists to sleek Pacific Heights patrons. Each installment usually invites a composer or musician to program an entire evening with their wildest musical fantasies: I've seen everything from hypnotic classics generated from two hands clapping to entire pieces composed from playing a giant video game, as well as entrancing new takes on solid classics like Bach and Debussy.

San Francisco Classical Voice, [Family Ties Make for Great Music at SoundBox](#)

Three years ago this month, the San Francisco Symphony debuted its immersive performance space and intermittent concert series SoundBox. Of all the delights this repurposed rehearsal hall and purpose-driven programming has delivered, from new audiences to a vital new way of hearing and “seeing” music — wall and ceiling projections are an integral component of the experience — perhaps the most striking one is how fresh it still feels.

CBS News [VIDEO], [Orchestras experiment with innovative ways to reach audiences](#)

“SoundBox is a way of bringing people into a space that is in many ways more comfortable and more diverting for them,” Thomas said. “They can move around. They can get drinks, they can use their mobile devices. I think it’s been very surprising for us that the attention of the audience in this situation, in fact, has been more focused, more quiet, more attentive than many of the ‘regular’ subscription concerts.”

Associated Press [VIDEO], [Orchestra targets younger audience with hip club](#)

[SoundBox] offers an alternative to the traditional concert hall experience. A Vegas-style nightclub with high-tech light and sound, video screens and several stages has become San Francisco's hottest venue for classical music.

KQED [VIDEO], [Playing in the SoundBox with the San Francisco Symphony](#)

The crowd sipping cocktails and lounging on couches in the San Francisco Symphony's cavernous rehearsal space may not know much about classical music, but that's the point of SoundBox: to bring people into a casual, club-like setting and then catch them by surprise.

WIRED [VIDEO], [Enter the SoundBox: How the SF Symphony turned a dreadful room into sonic paradise](#)

But today the hottest ticket in San Francisco classical music is around the corner at SoundBox, a new performance venue, launched by the Symphony in 2014, that has turned a decidedly unglamorous, acoustically dreadful building into a place designed to attract an entirely new audience to the

symphony. At SoundBox, the 500-person audience sits on low-slung ottomans and benches—or simply stands. You can get fancy cocktails and snacks like bacon caramel popcorn at the bar, any time. Looking for a printed program? Nope—just look at the SoundBox site on your phone.

KQED The California Report [AUDIO], [S.F. Symphony Entices New Audiences With SoundBox Venue](#)
It's got that underground club vibe. In fact, it feels less like a music club than a happening from the '60s, with videos on big screens and sound sculptures....It's definitely not your grandmother's concert hall.

The New Yorker, [Wizards of Sound](#)

Like many American orchestras, the San Francisco Symphony is seeking to diversify its offerings and capture the attention of a younger audience. With SoundBox, it has hit on a winning formula.

San Francisco Chronicle, [S.F. Symphony's SoundBox great addition to area venues](#)

And just like that, San Francisco has a superb new performance venue for music. Saturday night's tremendous opening event of SoundBox ... was as exciting for what it offered as for what it promised. But just as thrilling as this event was the sense of anticipation about what might yet be done here — namely, pretty much anything... On the evidence of Saturday's concert, SoundBox may yet prove to be the killer app of local music...the venue unveiled on Saturday had the spacious charm of a funky but well-heeled nightclub...The results could be seen at the most casual glance around the audience, which suggested — unscientifically but unmistakably — a median age something like two decades younger than that of an average Symphony subscription concert. These are the listeners for whom Edgard Varèse is — to paraphrase one overheard snippet of conversation — that guy that Frank Zappa liked...For now, the possibilities seem unlimited.