



## About the San Francisco Symphony

### Long biography

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 12th 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 Mr. 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 2023–24 season reflects a spirit of collaboration, experimentation, and renewed dialogue through live music.

The San Francisco Symphony presents more than 200 concerts and presentations annually for an audience of nearly 350,000 in its home of Davies Symphony Hall and through its active national and international touring. A cornerstone of the organization's mission, the San Francisco Symphony provides some of the most extensive education and community programs offered by any American orchestra. The Symphony's free music education experiences engage students in grades 1–12 throughout the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). The Fisher Family Adventures in Music (AIM) program, one of the longest-running education programs of its kind in the country since its launch in 1988, serves every child in grades 1–5 in San Francisco's public schools and engages more than 21,000 students annually. The Music and Mentors program supports SFUSD's band and orchestra programs in grades 6–12 with professional musicians who coach students weekly, and provides instrument supplies and concert tickets. The Symphony's online educational resources include a variety of digital programs that offer lessons and activities designed to support schools and promote music education at home.

Since Esa-Pekka Salonen became Music Director in 2020, the San Francisco Symphony has released several digital audio recordings, including Collaborative Partner Nico Muhly's *Throughline*, released on SFS Media in August 2021 and featuring all eight Collaborative Partners; and Kev Choice's *Movements*, released on SFS Media in September 2021. In 2023, Salonen and the Symphony partnered with Apple for the launch of a new classical music streaming app Apple Music Classical, releasing several exclusive spatial audio recordings of live concert performances. In September 2023, Salonen and the Symphony released a new album recording of Béla Bartók's three piano concertos with classical music label PENTATONE.

Innovation is a central theme of the San Francisco Symphony's artistic vision and programming initiatives. In 2001, the SF Symphony became the first American orchestra to launch its own in-house record label SFS Media. Recorded live in concert and engineered at Davies Symphony Hall, SFS Media recordings showcase music by American composers as well as core classical masterworks, reflective of the Symphony's broad range of programming. San Francisco Symphony radio broadcasts, the first in the nation to feature symphonic music when they began in 1926, today carry the Orchestra's

concerts across the country. In 2004, the SF Symphony launched the groundbreaking multimedia *Keeping Score* series on PBS-TV and the web; the series was made available for unlimited free streaming on the Symphony's YouTube channel in 2020. In 2014, the San Francisco Symphony inaugurated SoundBox, an experimental and eclectic live music series, which takes place in an alternative performance space located backstage at Davies Symphony Hall. In recent seasons the Symphony expanded its slate of original video content and experiences, producing all-new digital SoundBox programs, CURRENTS episodes, chamber music performances, and other signature digital projects, such as Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* and *LIGETI: PARADIGMS*. For its adventurous programming, the Symphony has been honored 19 times by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, and the Symphony's recordings have garnered France's Grand Prix du Disque and Britain's *Gramophone* Award, as well as 16 Grammy Awards.