

WFMT Orchestra Series
A part of the WFMT Orchestra Series (WOS)
SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY
Broadcast Schedule — Spring 2025

Please note: the use of asterisks () in the listings below designate the piece(s) on which the soloist(s) perform. Single or dual asterisks are used to differentiate between performances for broadcasts that contain multiple soloists.*

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-41 / SFS 25-01

RELEASE: April 8, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony

CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen

SOLOISTS: Pekka Kuusisto*

Interplay: Pekka Kuusisto

Conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, soloist Pekka Kuusisto, and composer/developer Jesper Nordin's cutting-edge electronics come together in Nordin's radical reinvention of the violin concerto, *Convergence*. In *Naïve and Sentimental Music*, dedicated to Salonen, John Adams celebrates a similar creative impulse: spontaneity, the spirit of free play.

Jesper Nordin: *Convergence**

John Adams: *Naïve and Sentimental Music*

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-42 / SFS 25-02

RELEASE: April 15, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony

CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen

SOLOIST: Emanuel Ax*

Esa-Pekka Salonen & Emanuel Ax

In Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn, Brahms travels in time, using ancient musical forms to explore possible futures. In Beethoven's Second Symphony, anarchic glee subverts Classical elegance. Between the two big Bs, precisely in the present, Esa-Pekka Salonen debuts his longtime friend Anders Hillborg's witty and colorful new Piano Concerto, performed with genial sophistication by soloist Emanuel Ax.

Johannes Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Opus 56a

Anders Hillborg: Piano Concerto No. 2*

Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D major, Opus 36

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-43 / SFS 25-03
RELEASE: April 22, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Michael Tilson Thomas
SOLOISTS: Angel Blue, soprano; Tamara Mumford, mezzo-soprano;
Ben Bliss, tenor; Dashon Burton, baritone; SFS Chorus

Beethoven 9

Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas is joined by soprano Angel Blue, mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford, tenor Ben Bliss, and bass Dashon Burton with the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus to perform Beethoven's dramatic Symphony No. 9, which celebrates the bonds of humanity and the glory of the creator in its triumphant "Ode to Joy."

Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Opus 125

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-44 / SFS 25-04
RELEASE: April 29, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen
SOLOIST: Carey Bell, clarinet*

California Festival: To the Edge

In *kīnēma*, Esa-Pekka Salonen's lyrical imagination takes flight via five cinematic scenes for solo clarinet and chamber orchestra, performed here by Principal Clarinet Carey Bell. Emerging Black Composers Project winner Jens Ibsen grew up in the Bay Area, where he soaked up samba, soul, R&B, and progressive metal along with the music of Ghana and the African diaspora—all influences you might detect in *Drowned in Light*, a world premiere. Igor Stravinsky's turbulent Symphony in Three Movements, which he called his "war symphony," reflects the rampant destruction in Europe and Asia.

Esa-Pekka Salonen: *Kīnēma**
Jens Ibsen: *Drowned in Light*
Igor Stravinsky: Symphony in Three Movements

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-45 / SFS 25-05
RELEASE: May 6, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen
SOLOIST: James McVinnie, organ*; Hillary Leben, animation**;
Lauren Snouffer, soprano**; Kayleigh Decker, mezzo-soprano**;
Paul Appleby, tenor**; David Soar, bass**; SFS Chorus**

California Festival: From the Edge

Composer Gabriella Smith conjures the spaces and sounds of California in the organ concerto *Breathing Forests*, performed here by James McVinnie. Igor Stravinsky depicts a festive, folk-inflected Slavic wedding in his ballet *Les Noces*, augmented by Steven Stucky's orchestration. Stravinsky's Octet for Winds and Brass, a uniquely scored neoclassical work, was inspired by a late-night dream. Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts.

Igor Stravinsky: Octet for Wind Instruments [1952 revision]
Gabriella Smith: *Breathing Forests**
Igor Stravinsky
(Orch. Steven Stucky): *Les Noces***

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-46 / SFS 25-06
RELEASE: May 13, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Gustavo Dudamel
SOLOIST: Jorge Glem, cuatro*

Dudamel Conducts Brahms 2

Conductor Gustavo Dudamel's program opens with Gabriela Ortiz's *Kauyumari*, which refers to a magical blue deer, sacred to the Huichol people of Mexico. In the one-movement concerto *Odisea*, commissioned by Dudamel for Jorge Glem, Venezuelan composer Gonzalo Grau highlights his country's national instrument, the versatile, four-stringed cuatro. On the surface Johannes Brahms' Second Symphony seems like a sunny summer idyll, but shadows abound.

Gabriela Ortiz: *Kauyumari*
Gonzalo Grau: *Odisea* Concerto for Venezuelan Cuatro and Orchestra*
Johannes Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D major, Opus 73

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-47 / SFS 25-07
RELEASE: May 20, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Michael Tilson Thomas

MTT Conducts Mahler 5

Featuring many of his most rapturous melodies, the Fifth Symphony finds Mahler at his most joyous and life-affirming. It's the ideal vehicle for Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas, whose decades-long devotion to the Austrian visionary yielded the acclaimed Mahler recording project on SFS Media.

Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-48 / SFS 25-08
RELEASE: May 27, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen
SOLOIST: Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano*; Nicholas Phan, tenor*;
Luca Pisaroni, bass-baritone*; Julia Fischer, violin**

Esa-Pekka Salonen & Julia Fischer

Joining Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen, violinist Julia Fischer makes her long-awaited return to the San Francisco Symphony in Brahms' Violin Concerto. Mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Nicholas Phan, and baritone Luca Pisaroni—all regular collaborators with the San Francisco Symphony—sing in Stravinsky's cheeky neoclassical ballet *Pulcinella*, which the composer called “the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible.”

Igor Stravinsky: *Pulcinella**
Johannes Brahms: Violin Concerto in D major, Opus 77**

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-49 / SFS 25-09
RELEASE: June 3, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen
SOLOIST: Lisa Batiashvili, violin*

Salonen: All Sibelius

A Sibelius deep dive conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen: *Finlandia* is an anthem for a nascent nation still fighting for its very identity after a century of Russian rule. The Violin Concerto, here performed by Lisa Batiashvili, was a vehicle for Sibelius to channel all his virtuoso ambitions. The First Symphony would be Sibelius' international breakthrough. With deft touches of Tchaikovsky and Berlioz, it's easy to see why.

Jean Sibelius: *Finlandia*, Opus 26
Jean Sibelius: Violin Concerto in D minor, Opus 47*
Jean Sibelius: Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Opus 39

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-50 / SFS 25-10
RELEASE: June 10, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Gustavo Gimeno
SOLOIST: Jonathan Vinocour, viola

Inspirations: Film/Classical

Drama abounds in Shostakovich's score for *The Great Citizen*, a fictionalized biopic about a Bolshevik hero. In his Third Symphony, Prokofiev recycles music from his yet-to-be-staged supernatural opera *The Fiery Angel*. Walton's searing and sumptuous Viola Concerto polarized early listeners but ended up launching his career. Gustavo Gimeno conducts with Principal Viola Jonathan Vinocour as soloist.

Dmitri Shostakovich: Funeral March from *The Great Citizen* (Part 2), Opus 55
William Turner Walton: Viola Concerto
Sergei Prokofiev: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Opus 44

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-51 / SFS 25-11
RELEASE: June 17, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen
SOLOIST: Alonzo King Lines Ballet*; Mary Elizabeth Williams, soprano**

Ravel's *Mother Goose* & Schoenberg's *Erwartung*

Ravel's enchanting *Mother Goose* characters come to vivid life in a performance conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. Schoenberg described his monodrama *Erwartung* as a nightmare, a moment of psychological trauma enacted in slow motion. As The Woman, soprano Mary Elizabeth Williams leaps and plunges between emotional extremes: hopeful and terrified, enraged and miserable.

Maurice Ravel: *Mother Goose* – Music for the Ballet*
Arnold Schoenberg: *Erwartung*, Opus 17**

PROGRAM #: WOS 24-52 / SFS 25-12
RELEASE: June 24, 2025

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen
SOLOIST: Sheku Kanneh-Mason, cello*

Esa-Pekka Salonen & Sheku Kanneh-Mason

Sheku Kanneh-Mason makes his Orchestral Series debut with Dmitri Shostakovich's subtly sinister Cello Concerto No. 1. Sofia Gubaidulina's poignant *Fairy Tale Poem* portrays a small piece of chalk in the hand of a child who draws "castles, gardens with pavilions and the sea with the sun on the pavement." Also on this concert conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen: Tchaikovsky's Dante-inspired tone poem *Francesca da Rimini*.

Dmitri Shostakovich: Cello Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major, Opus 107*
Sofia Gubaidulina: *Fairy Tale Poem* for Orchestra

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *Francesca da Rimini*, Opus 32

PROGRAM #: **WOS 25-01 / SFS 25-13**

RELEASE: **July 1, 2025**

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony

CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen

SOLOIST: Yefim Bronfman, piano*

Esa-Pekka Salonen & Yefim Bronfman

Composed over four turbulent years, Robert Schumann's only piano concerto, here performed by Yefim Bronfman, features a lustrous intermezzo, blazing bravura passages, and encoded tributes to the composer's wife, muse, and finest interpreter. Bruckner's Fourth Symphony, the "Romantic," was his first major composition to earn real applause. Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts.

Robert Schumann: Piano Concerto in A minor, Opus 54*

Anton Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat major, *Romantic*