

PROGRAM INFORMATION

SF SYMPHONY AND SALONEN

Thursday, June 24, 2021 & Friday, June 25, 2021

THE CONCERT

Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting
San Francisco Symphony

GIOVANNI GABRIELI (arr. Timothy Higgins)
from *Sacrae symphoniae* ca. 1597 | 11 mins

Canzon per sonar septimi toni, No. 2
O magnum mysterium
Canzon per sonar septimi toni, No. 1

RICHARD STRAUSS
Metamorphosen 1944 | 26 mins

ROBERT SCHUMANN
Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Opus 97, *Rhenish* 1850 | 32 mins

Lebhaft (Lively)
Scherzo: Sehr mässig (Very moderate)
Nicht schnell (Not fast)
Feierlich (Solemn)
Lebhaft (Lively)

This program will be performed without intermission.

This concert is sponsored by Emirates Airline.



ARTISTS

San Francisco Symphony Music Director **Esa-Pekka Salonen** has, through his many high-profile conducting roles and work as a leading composer, shaped a unique vision for the present and future of the contemporary symphony orchestra. Salonen is currently the Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor for London's Philharmonia Orchestra and is Artist in Association at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet. He is a member of the faculty of the Colburn School in Los Angeles, where he developed and directs the pre-professional Negaunee Conducting Program. Salonen is the Conductor Laureate for both the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was Music Director from 1992 until 2009. Salonen co-founded—and from 2003 until 2018 served as the Artistic Director for—the annual Baltic Sea Festival. [Learn more about Esa-Pekka Salonen here.](#)

The **San Francisco Symphony** is widely considered to be among the most artistically 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 welcomes conductor and composer Esa-Pekka Salonen as its twelfth Music Director and embarks on a new vision for the present and future of the orchestral landscape. This exciting artistic future builds on the remarkable 25-year tenure of Michael Tilson Thomas as the San Francisco Symphony's Music Director. Tilson Thomas continues his rich relationship with the Symphony as its first Music Director Laureate. In their inaugural season together, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony introduce 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 joins with Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony to chart a new course of experimentation by collaborating on new ideas, breaking conventional rules, and creating unique and powerful experiences. February 2021 saw the launch of SFSymphony+, the San Francisco Symphony's on-demand video streaming service.

Learn more about the musicians of the San Francisco Symphony [here](#).

AT A GLANCE

When **Giovanni Gabrieli** (ca. 1554–1612) worked in Venice, that city was a hotbed of musical invention. Beginning in 1585, he held positions at two of the city's most prestigious venues, the Basilica di San Marco and Scuola Grande di San Rocco. When he died in 1612, of a kidney stone, he left a rich legacy of motets, madrigals, organ works, canzonas, and sonatas. Particularly at San Marco, composers developed a "surround sound" approach that stationed performers in balconies around the church, yielding a repertoire of antiphonal music that has rarely been matched for sheer splendor. The two eight-voiced *canzone per sonar* played here (their designation "*septimi toni*" refers to the chant mode—a specific ordering of notes—in which they are written) were originally conceived as instrumental pieces, published in Gabrieli's 1597 *Sacrae symphoniae*. *O magnum misterium* was a motet for two choirs sung at the Matins service on Christmas Day, here arranged for brass ensemble by San Francisco Symphony Principal Trombone Timothy Higgins.

During the early years of his long career, **Richard Strauss** (1864–1949) complained that he could not come up with ideas unless spurred by some poetic or dramatic scenario. But in his final

decade his mindset changed. His later years gave rise to several apparently abstract instrumental works, including his *Metamorphosen* (Metamorphoses) for Twenty-Three Solo Strings. He began working on it in earnest shortly after marking his 80th birthday in the summer of 1944. In this single movement of nearly a half-hour's duration, twenty-three string instruments weave their independent strands into a dazzling tapestry, each thread being assigned (for the most part) to a single player. Though not despairing, it is a contemplative work. A motif from the second-movement funeral march of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony seems to inspire Strauss's principal theme and appears verbatim at the end of *Metamorphosen*, adding a layer of meaning (or perhaps ambiguity) to this autumnal masterpiece.

After a flurry of symphonic writing in 1841, **Robert Schumann** (1810–56) focused his attention on other genres for several years, returning to the orchestra to write his Second Symphony in 1845–46 and his Third in 1850. The Third's subtitle, *Rhenish*, bears tribute to the Rhine River, the waterway of Germany's western spine. The Schumanns had recently moved to the Rhineland, where Robert took a position as municipal music director of Düsseldorf. This is a thoroughly German symphony; in fact, Schumann here used German-language movement markings for the first time in his symphonies and he crafted themes that clearly evoked the landscape, such as the Ländler-like folk-waltz of the Scherzo movement, which he initially intended to title "Morning on the Rhine." The Cologne Cathedral, the Gothic crown of a Rhine city, makes an appearance in the fourth movement, which (Schumann wrote) should be "like the musical accompaniment for a solemn ceremony."