Friday, November 10, 2023, 8pm  
Zellerbach Hall

San Francisco Symphony  
Esa-Pekka Salonen, *music director*

Esa-Pekka Salonen, *conductor*

Carey Bell, *clarinet*

**PROGRAM**

Esa-Pekka SALONEN (b. 1958)  
*kinêma* (2021)
  
Dawn  
Theme and variations  
Pérotin dream  
J.D. in memoriam  
Return  

Carey Bell, *clarinet*

**INTERMISSION**

Jens IBSEN (b. 1995)  
*Drowned in Light* (2023, World Premiere  
and SF Symphony Commission)
  
Drowned in Light  
Nightswimming  

*Commissioned as part of the*  
Emerging Black Composers Project  

*The Emerging Black Composers Project is*  
*underwritten by Michèle and Laurence Corash.*

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)  
*Symphony in Three Movements* (1942–45)
  
Overture: Allegro  
Andante – Interlude; L’istesso tempo  
Con moto

Support for the San Francisco Symphony  
is provided by Fred Levin, The Shenson Foundation.
Esa-Pekka Salonen (b. 1958)  
**kinéma** (2021)  
*First SF Symphony Performances*

**Instrumentation:** solo clarinet and strings  
**Duration:** About 30 minutes

Esa-Pekka Salonen was a composer long before he was a conductor, and in fact first picked up a baton in service of his composing ambitions. He studied composition and horn at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and formed several new-music groups with his classmates Magnus Lindberg and Kaija Saariaho. As a young composer in the late 1970s, he was a disciple of the avant-garde, writing ambitiously brainy music that intentionally froze out the heart. “If I’d even mentioned emotion in my 20s, I’d have been kicked out of the gang,” he recalled in a 2007 interview with *The Guardian.*

But as his conducting career took off—leading classics as much as contemporary music—he opened a more expressive side in his writing. His tenure as music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, beginning in 1992, was as transformative for Salonen as it was for the LA Phil. His exposure to the diverse cultures of California, as well as to American classical styles (such as the post-minimalism of John Adams), remade his music. When he stepped down from the orchestra in 2009, he reduced his conducting to focus again for a time on composing, producing a series of orchestral works including Nyx (2011), Pollux (2018), and Castor (2019). His recent works still have a certain cerebral quality and an openness to surprise and sonic invention, but seem more expressive and transporting than simply provocative. In the words of the critic Paul Griffiths, “He is, in everything he does, a composer of dream landscapes, through which we are led to encounter things at once strange and familiar, and always full of character.”

Salonen has been a composer in residence with the New York Philharmonic and most recently Berlin Philharmonic. In 2014, he won the Nemmers Composition Prize, which included a residency at Northwestern University and performances by the Chicago Symphony. In 2011 his Violin Concerto won the Grawemeyer Award, and his early *Floof* won the UNESCO Rostrum Prize. Today his music is performed by major orchestras across the world, led both by Salonen himself and other leading conductors. (See page 14 for Esa-Pekka Salonen’s full biography.)

Salonen’s *kinéma* comprises five “scenes” for solo clarinet and string orchestra. It was commissioned and premiered in 2021 by the Finnish Radio Symphony and its principal clarinetist, Christoffer Sundqvist. The title comes from the Ancient Greek word for “movement,” which gives us the word “cinema” in English. Much of the material came from Salonen’s score for the 2021 Finnish film *Odutos* (*The Wait*), a romance set on a remote Baltic island. The piece’s small forces were influenced by pandemic-era constraints, though it has a precedent in Aaron Copland’s 1949 Clarinet Concerto, which is similarly scored. Salonen described:

I thought it would be nice to write a piece that didn’t require a huge orchestra, that could be played under more intimate conditions. [At first] I decided to call it “five scenes,” because the movements are not necessarily interconnected, and also they are more like spaces, where you can exist for a few minutes. The title *kinéma* comes from the fact that the material is based on film scores. Most of it is very lyrical, and you might imagine a romantic film—a triangle drama, say.
There’s a lot of music that could be characterized as “beautiful,” in the old-fashioned sense of the word. On the surface it doesn’t sound “modern.” The finale has different kinds of mood, different kinds of material, and then it ties everything together and quotes the very first movement of the piece.

—Benjamin Pesetsky

Benjamin Pesetsky is Associate Director of Editorial for the San Francisco Symphony. He has also written program notes for the Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, and Melbourne Symphony.

Jens Ibsen (b. 1995)

Drowned in Light (2023, World Premiere and SF Symphony Commission)

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets (2nd doubling bass clarinet), 2 bassoons (2nd doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle, trap set, glockenspiel, vibraphone, tubular bells, and marimba), harp, piano, electric guitar, and strings

Duration: About 15 minutes

Jens Ibsen is the 2022 winner of the San Francisco Symphony and San Francisco Conservatory of Music’s Emerging Black Composers Project. A composer and a tenor, he has also been commissioned by the Oregon Bach Festival Composer Symposium, Impulse New Music Festival, Mary Pickford Foundation, and the Kennedy Center’s Cartography Project. He has sung with the Choir of Trinity Wall Street in New York, OS Ensemble, and spent two-and-a-half years as a member of the Vienna Boys Choir.

Ibsen was born in Ghana to an American father, who was in the country to study West African Drumming, and a Ghanaian mother. “I literally exist because of an interest in world music,” he said in an interview for SFCM. When he was nine months old, his family moved to the United States, where they settled in Daly City. He locally with Ragazzi Boys Chorus, and then auditioned for the Vienna Boys Chorus, moving to Austria after being accepted. He later earned a bachelor of arts in music composition at Pepperdine University and a master of music from the Mannes School of Music. His composition teachers include Missy Mazzoli, Randall Woolf, Matthew Brown, and Matthew Cmiel.

Jens Ibsen writes:

All artists have obsessions, and some obsessions are life-long. A few of my own have been classical-era musical forms like sonata and rondo form, modern pop-song structures, bass-driven grooves, polyrhythm, and vernacular musical styles—in short, chasing after the sweet spot of what’s catchy and complex. This piece incorporates all of these elements; it is a concise distillation of my musical philosophy and my feelings about the San Francisco Bay Area, my home.

The title of the piece and its first movement is both an allusion to one of my favorite Rolo Tomassi tracks, A Flood of Light, and also from how the music appeared to me in my mind; I have various forms of synesthesia, so the imagery associated with the themes came to me like bright, overwhelming light. Musical material often comes to me spontaneously, I do much of my writing in my head and developed most of the first movement of this piece this way. At the time I was listening to a lot of Rolo Tomassi, a UK-based band that blends shoegaze and hardcore to make music that is both sensitive and exhilarating. I knew that to channel these hardcore sounds, I needed the proper instrumentation. I’ve written several pieces for acoustic instru-
ments imitating electric ones, but for this piece I knew I had to have the real thing. As a result, the first movement is very electric—guitar-forward, almost like a concerto. Structurally, it has a song-like form with a refrain introduced in the slow introduction that gradually is developed and expanded over the course of the piece, with various episodes foregrounding either the guitar or the ensemble. Drumming is integral to this style of music, so naturally there is a prominent drum-set part as well.

The second movement is much more sedate. The mental picture I have of the music contains deep hues of the night sky, hence the title “Nightswimming.” After being drowned in light, the listener comes up from the depths into a beautiful, azure evening. I wanted this piece to be imbued with the softer side of shoegaze and surf rock, giving it a nostalgic, yearning feeling. My many years of sunlit days and moonlit evenings growing up in the Bay have coalesced into the sounds of this work, my poem to the place I call home.

—B.P.

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)
Symphony in Three Movements (1942–45)
Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 3 clarinets (3rd doubling bass clarinet), 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, harp, piano, and strings
Duration: About 22 minutes

Except for the not-quite-one-minute Greeting Prelude for Pierre Monteux’s 80th birthday, the Symphony in Three Movements was Stravinsky’s last work for big orchestra and in the big-orchestra style. That was a style in which Stravinsky had not worked for years. At the work’s premiere, the densely packed orchestral sonority came in for a good deal of comment, as did the unbridled physical energy of the first and third movements. In the 1930s and 1940s, it was widely assumed that the old Stravinsky was dead, and the rugged sounds and exciting syncopations of the new Symphony raised hopes that the effete Russian neoclassicist had, thank heaven, reverted to his sacrale Russian roots. (Of course the brash—and so American—final chord was much remarked upon, disapprovingly.)

In 1907, when he was still studying with Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky wrote a symphony—in part, I suppose, to be respectable, in part as an exercise of craft. That early Symphony in E-flat is an attractive piece; but from the composer of Firebird and the Requiem Canticles and two or three dozen masterpieces in between, one expects so much more. It was years before Stravinsky wrote another symphony. Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1920) suggests “symphony,” but the composer really meant “symphonies” literally as “sounding together.” The Symphony of Psalms (1930) is obviously a special case, too. So the two real Stravinsky symphonies are the Symphony in C, begun in 1938 in France and finished in 1940 in this country, and the “all-American” Symphony in Three Movements.

Tautly concentrated and quite short, the Symphony in Three Movements nonetheless feels big, like a symphony. At the same time, Stravinsky achieves a sense of symphonic breadth and pace without making development of themes in the familiar sense the mainstay of his dialectic.

The work is made of blocks set unmitigated, unmodulated, side by side; here, in fact, is a connection with Stravinsky’s past. The first movement falls into three large divisions, roughly in the proportions 2:3:1. The first of these sections is in the big-band style; the second is more chamber—musical in character; the third reverts mainly to the manner of the first, but,
carrying over some elements of the second, functions as well as a synthesis of the opposing elements.

Within each section Stravinsky moves abruptly from point to point. In the first minute, the arresting opening gesture for almost the full orchestra is followed by a passage of stalking horn and trumpet calls against chugging clarinet chords, and that by a passage for strings and piano. But along with these jolts, or underneath them, Stravinsky sets things that bind, connections established by nicely placed reminders of certain harmonies or melodic contours or sonorities. Even the tempos of the tutti and concertoante middle sections, though they feel very different, share a common pulse.

Stravinsky stated that this first movement was designed originally as a work with an important solo piano part. In the second movement, Stravinsky gives a prominent part to the harp, and it becomes the task of the finale to provide a piano–harp synthesis.

In his program note for the premiere of the Symphony he insisted that the work was absolute music. But in 1963, in Dialogues and a Diary, he admitted specifically the influence of movies in the first and third movements, of a documentary on scorched-earth tactics in China in the former, of newsreel footage of goose-stepping soldiers in the latter. Moreover, the last part of the finale was associated in his mind with “the rise of the Allies after the overturning of the German war machine.”

Whatever the inner and outer sources, Stravinsky gave us a work of remarkable brilliance and power. The first movement rocks with a fierce accent, pungent harmony, and sapidly clangorous sound. In the Andante, Stravinsky follows (or perhaps doesn’t) Beethoven’s frequent example of offering something more of an intermezzo or a bridge than a fully worked movement. The finale is reached, without a break, by way of a seven-measure interlude that, with an amazing economy of means, sets the scene for the harmonies and textures to come. After the transparent sonorities of the second movement—they are too hard-edged to be called delicate—Stravinsky returns to the massive tones of the first movement. One of the finale’s mini-chapters is a fugue whose jagged intervals suddenly look ahead to the Stravinsky of the late 1950s and 1960s. Stravinsky, by the way, suggests the possibility that this fugue is in some way the continuation of the one started, then “abandoned . . . like a very hot potato,” in the corresponding movement of the Symphony in C. The abundant physical thrust of the first movement returns, too, and the finale, as Stravinsky’s “program” indicates, concludes in assertive triumph.

—Michael Steinberg

Michael Steinberg, the San Francisco Symphony’s program annotator from 1979 to 1999 and a contributing writer until his death in 2009, was one of the nation’s preeminent writers on music.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The San Francisco Symphony is 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 welcomed conductor and composer Esa-Pekka Salonen as its twelfth Music Director, embarking on a new vision for the present and future of the orchestral landscape. In their inaugural season together, 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 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.

Esa-Pekka Salonen is known as both a composer and conductor. He is the Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, where he works alongside eight Collaborative Partners from a variety of disciplines, ranging from composers to roboticists. He is the conductor laureate of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. As a member of the faculty of the Colburn School, he directs the preprofessional Negaunee Conducting Program. Salonen cofounded, and until 2018 served as the Artistic Director of, the annual Baltic Sea Festival.

Beginning with the Opening Night Gala, Salonen leads the San Francisco Symphony in twelve weeks of programming during the 2023–24 season. Highlights include world premieres from Jesper Nordin, Anders Hillborg, and Jens Ibsen; projects by Collaborative Partners Pekka Kuusisto and Carol Reiley; the launch of the inaugural California Festival; a tour of Southern California; and a program of Ravel and Schoenberg featuring choreography by Alonzo King and staging by Peter Sellars.

He will also conduct many of his own works this season around the world. Among them are a new work commemorating the 20th anniversary of Walt Disney Concert Hall, premiering with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; Karawane, also with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; his Sinfonia Concertante for Organ and Orchestra with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Philadelphia Orchestra; and kínēma with the San Francisco Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra.

Salonen has an extensive and varied recording career. Releases with the San Francisco Symphony include recordings of Bartók’s piano concertos, as well as spatial audio recordings of several Ligeti compositions. Other recent recordings include Strauss’s Four Last Songs, Bartók’s The Miraculous Mandarin and Dance Suite, and a 2018 box set of Salonen’s complete Sony recordings. His compositions appear on releases from Sony, Deutsche Grammophon, and Decca; his Piano Concerto, Violin Concerto, and Cello Concerto all appear on recordings he conducted himself.
Carey Bell joined the San Francisco Symphony as Principal Clarinet in 2007 and holds the William R. & Gretchen B. Kimball Chair. This week's concerts mark his seventh solo appearances with the orchestra, having previously performed Nielsen's Clarinet Concerto with Herbert Blomstedt, Debussy's Première Rapsodie and Bernstein's Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs with Michael Tilson Thomas, and Mozart's Clarinet Concerto on three occasions with Jaap van Zweden, Bernard Labadie, and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Cultivating a career in the Bay Area for over two decades, Bell has performed with numerous local orchestras and chamber ensembles. He is a former member of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and has participated in several other local contemporary music groups. His summer engagements have included appearances at the Marlboro Music Festival, Music@Menlo, Oregon Bach Festival, and Telluride Chamber Music Festival. Notable chamber performances include collaboration with violist Scott St. John and pianist Jonathan Biss for San Francisco Performances, and Lukas Foss's Echoi with Jeremy Denk, Peter Wyrick, and Jack van Geem, as part of the San Francisco Symphony's 2012 American Mavericks tour, culminating in a performance at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall.

Bell was born and raised in Eugene, Oregon, where he developed his musical skills as a pianist, singer, and composer. After taking up clarinet at age 12, he studied for several years with Cindi Bartels. He received several honors as a young clarinetist, and he wrote a symphonic overture performed by the Oregon Symphony in 1992. For his undergraduate work, he studied with Fred Ormand at the University of Michigan and pursued a composition degree with William Bolcom, Bright Sheng, Michael Daugherty, and Evan Chambers. As a student, he participated in summer fellowships at Tanglewood and the Music Academy in Santa Barbara. After graduating he continued his clarinet studies with Larry Combs, then principal clarinet of the Chicago Symphony.

Bell spent one year as a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago before winning his first audition for principal clarinet of the Syracuse Symphony in 1998. He became principal of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra in 2001, and has served as acting principal of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra and guest principal of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Bell teaches at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and formerly taught at Stanford University.
## SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

**Esa-Pekka Salonen, Music Director**

**Nicholas Brittel** • **Julia Bullock** • **Claire Chase** • **Bryce Dessner** • **Pekka Kuusisto** • **Nico Muhly** • **Carol Reiley** • **esperanza spalding**, Collaborative Partners

Michael Tilson Thomas, **Music Director Laureate**

Herbert Blomstedt, **Conductor Laureate**

Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, **Resident Conductor of Engagement and Education**

Jenny Wong, **Chorus Director**

Daniel Stewart, **San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra**

Wattis Foundation Music Director

Elias Brown, **Salonen Fellow**, Colburn School of Music, Ngageena Conducting Program

Vance George, **Chorus Director Emeritus**

### SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ROSTER

**FIRST VIOLINS**

- Alexander Barantschik, Concertmaster
- Nacum Blindo Chair
- Wyatt Underhill, Acting Associate Concertmaster
- San Francisco Symphony Foundation Chair
- Jeremy Constant, Acting Assistant Concertmaster
- Marko Smiley, Acting Assistant Concertmaster
- Paula & John Gambis Second Century Chair
- Melissa Kleinbart
- Katharine Hannahman Chair
- Nadya Tichman
- Yun Chu
- Naomi Kazama Hull
- In Sun Jung
- Yukiko Kurakata
- Catherine A. Mueller Chair
- Suzanne Leon
- Leor Malinski
- Sarah Oliver
- Florin Parvulescu
- Victor Romasevich
- Catherine Van Hoesen

**SECOND VIOLINS**

- Dan Carlson, Principal
- Dinner & Swig Families Chair
- Jessie Fellows, Acting Associate Principal
- Audrey Aris Aten-Hull Chair
- Olivia Chen, Acting Assistant Principal
- Kelly Leon-Pearce
- The Eucalyptus Foundation Second Century Chair
- Raashan Akhmedyarova
- David Chernavsky
- John Chisholm
- Cathryn Down
- Darlene Gray
- Starn & Lenora Davis Chair
- Amy Hiraga
- Kum Mo Kim
- Chunning Mo
- Polina Sedulku
- Isaac Stern Chair
- Chen Zhao

**VIOLAS**

- Jonathan Vinocour, Principal
- Yum Ji Liu, *Associate Principal
- Katie Kadarauch, Assistant Principal
- Kateryna Bryla
- Joanne E. Harrington & Larry I. Lockey Second Century Chair
- Gina Cooper
- David Gaudry
- David Kim
- Christina King
- Leonid Plashinov-Johnson
- Nanci Severance
- Adam Smyla
- Matthew Young

**CELLOS**

- Rainer Eudeikis, Principal
- Philip S. Boone Chair
- Amon Yang, Acting Associate Principal
- Peter & Jacqueline Hoffer Chair
- Sebastien Gingras, Acting Assistant Principal
- Kael & Lisa Urbanek Chair
- Peter Wyrrick
- Lyman & Carol Casey Second Century Chair
- Barbara Andrews
- The Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation Second Century Chair
- Raashan Akhmedyarova
- David Chernavsky
- John Chisholm
- Cathryn Down
- Darlene Gray
- Starn & Lenora Davis Chair
- Amy Hiraga
- Kum Mo Kim
- Chunning Mo
- Polina Sedulku
- Isaac Stern Chair
- Chen Zhao

**FLUTES**

- Yubeen Kim, Principal
- Caroline H. Hume Chair
- Blair Francis Pagonia, Associate Principal
- Catherine & Russell Clark Chair
- Linda Lukas
- Alfred S. & Debe Wiley Chair
- Catherine Payne, Piccolo
- The Rainbow Piccolo Chair

**OBOES**

- Eugene Izotov, Principal
- Edo de Waart Chair
- James Button, Associate Principal
- Pamela Smith
- Dr. William D. Clinite Chair
- Russ de Luna, English Horn
- Joseph & Pauline Seafahi Chair

**CLARINETTS**

- Carey Bell, Principal
- William R. & Gretchen B. Kimball Chair
- Matthew Griffith, Associate Principal
- Principal & E-Flat Clarinet
- Jerome Simas, Bass Clarinet

**BASSOONs**

- Stephen Paulson, Principal
- Steven Dühner, Associate Principal
- Justin Cummings

**HORNS**

- Robert Ward, Principal
- Mark Almond, *Associate Principal
- Jesse Cleveengert, Acting Assistant Principal
- Jonathan Ring
- Jessica Valeri
- Daniel Hawkins

**TRUMPETS**

- Mark Inouye, Principal
- William G. Irwin Charity Foundation Chair
- Aaron Schuman, Associate Principal
- Peter Pustrech Chair
- Anne L. & Charles B. Johnson Chair
- Jeff Biancalana

**TROMBONES**

- Timothy Higgins, Principal
- Robert L. Samter Chair
- Nicholas Platoff, Associate Principal
- Paul Welcomer

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**This program will be performed without intermission**

**This performance is made possible, in part, by Nadine Tang.**

**All compositions will be announced from the stage.**

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*Beginning January 2024*

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The San Francisco Symphony string section uses revolving seating. Players listed in alphabetical order change seats periodically.