

philharmonia orchestra

Esa-Pekka Salonen
Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor

Press release

9 September 2019

WEIMAR BERLIN: BITTERSWEET METROPOLIS AT SOUTHBANK CENTRE, A SERIES OF CONCERTS, CABARET, FILMS AND TALKS ABOUT WEIMAR GERMANY 100 YEARS ON PRESENTED BY THE PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED [HERE](#)

In September 2019, the **Philharmonia Orchestra** and **Esa-Pekka Salonen** present turbulent times with the second half of their series [Weimar Berlin: Bittersweet Metropolis](#) at **Southbank Centre**. This new series, which began in June, is an ambitious journey through the music, science and culture of a period of intense political turbulence and explosive creativity in Germany and beyond.

The second half of the programme kicks off with Salonen conducting a specially-created **cabaret** programme at **Queen Elizabeth Hall** (23 September) directed and curated by **Gerard McBurney** and starring vocalists **Dagmar Manzel and Loré Lixenberg**. The piece explores the origins of cabaret and features songs by leading composers from Kurt Weill to Friedrich Hollaender, accompanied by moving imagery. Following the concert the **Raze Collective** will present a free extravaganza of contemporary queer cabaret from across London in the Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer space. Hosted by cabaret legends **Bourgeois & Maurice**, there will be new work by **Sadie Sinner & Rudy Jeevanjee**, and **Alicia Jane Turner & Rodent**, created in collaboration with Philharmonia musicians.

At Royal Festival Hall, Salonen conducts two more programmes, including Berg's Violin Concerto and Hindemith's Symphony *Mathis der Maler* (26 September); and Weill's Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra and Berg's *Lulu Suite*, with soprano **Rebecca Nelsen** (29 September). Violin virtuoso **Christian Tetzlaff** is the soloist for both concertos, and also joins **Series Advisor Gavin Plumley** for a musically illustrated exploration of Alban Berg's Violin Concerto in a free Insights event on 26 September (6pm).

The series closes on 29 September with an in-depth **Insights Day** (12pm – 4pm) at the Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall. Discussions led by Gavin Plumley will be interspersed with live music from Philharmonia players and young artists. Plumley also presents a series

of **films** about Weimar Germany, shot on location in Berlin, Weimar and Dessau, which will be released via the Philharmonia's popular [YouTube channel](#) throughout the series.

Under Esa-Pekka Salonen a series of flagship, visionary projects at Royal Festival Hall – distinctive for both their artistic scope and supporting live and digital content – have been critically acclaimed. Projects including *City of Light: Paris 1900-1950* (2015), *City of Dreams: Vienna 1900 -1935* (2009), Bill Viola's *Tristan und Isolde* (2010) and *Infernal Dance: Inside the World of Béla Bartók* (2011) were followed in 2016 by the major, five-concert series *Stravinsky: Myths & Rituals*. The series won a South Bank Sky Arts Award, and prompted Fiona Maddocks to write in the Observer: "[Esa-Pekka Salonen] is one of the UK's greatest musical assets – words not said lightly."

END

NOTES FOR EDITORS

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Credits:

- Esa-Pekka Salonen: Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor
- Gerard McBurney: Creative Consultant
- Gavin Plumley: Series Advisor
- BFI Southbank: Series Partner

The Philharmonia is proud to be supported using public funding by Arts Council England. A registered charity, the Orchestra relies on individual and corporate generosity to deliver its programme. The Philharmonia's Principal International Partner is Wuliangye.

Links:

- Full series details:
https://www.philharmonia.co.uk/concerts/series/82/weimar_berlin_bittersweet_metro_polis

- Esa-Pekka Salonen: <http://www.esapekkasalonen.com/>
- Southbank Centre: <https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/festivals-series/classical-season/philharmonia-orchestra>
- BFI Southbank: <https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp>

Biographies:

Philharmonia Orchestra

The Philharmonia Orchestra is a world-class symphony orchestra for the 21st century. Led by its Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor Esa-Pekka Salonen, the Philharmonia has a pioneering approach to the role of the modern-day symphony orchestra, reaching new audiences and participants through audience development, digital technology and learning and participation programmes. Based in London, with residencies in cities throughout England, a thriving international touring programme and global digital reach, the Philharmonia engages with a worldwide audience.

The Orchestra's home is Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall in the heart of London, where the Philharmonia has been resident since 1995 and presents a season of over 50 performances each year. Orchestral programming is complemented by series including *Philharmonia at the Movies*, *Music of Today*, the Philharmonia Chamber Players and an Insights Talks programme.

Under Salonen and other key conductors, the Philharmonia has created a series of critically-acclaimed, visionary projects at Royal Festival Hall – distinctive for both their artistic scope and supporting live and digital content. Bill Viola's *Tristan und Isolde* (2010); *Infernal Dance: Inside the World of Béla Bartók* (2011); and *City of Light: Paris 1900-1950* (2015), were followed in 2016 by the major, five-concert series *Stravinsky: Myths & Rituals*, which won a South Bank Sky Arts Award.

Continue reading at: <http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/orchestra/about>

Esa-Pekka Salonen

Esa-Pekka Salonen's restless innovation drives him constantly to reposition classical music in the 21st century. He is known as both a composer and conductor and is currently the Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor for the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Conductor Laureate for both the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was Music Director from 1992 until 2009. In 2020, he will become the Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony. He is the Artist in Association at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, where he will conduct his first full *Ring* cycle in future seasons, and *Pelléas et Mélisande* this season. Salonen co-founded the annual Baltic Sea festival, serving as Artistic Director from 2003 to 2018.

This season, thirteen of Salonen's works are programmed around the world, from playful early pieces to his melodically and rhythmically complex new works. Among them are *Homunculus*, for string quartet; *Helix*, at the Minnesota Orchestra and Oslo Philharmonic; and *LA Variations* at the LA Phil. He also conducts his own *Pollux* at the Helsinki Festival and Maggio Fiorentino, and his cello concerto on tour with the Philharmonia and at the Baltic Sea Festival, with Truls Mørk as soloist. Last

year the New York Philharmonic and the Barbican Centre shaped their programming around Salonen's music as part of his composer-in-residence in New York and a season-long Salonen focus in London.

2018-19 sees Salonen conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra on tour across Europe, the US, and Asia. Salonen will also direct a new Ivo Van Hove production of Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival in summer 2019. Recent years have seen Salonen experiment with groundbreaking ways to present music, with the first major virtual-reality production from a UK symphony orchestra; the award-winning *RE-RITE* and *Universe of Sound* installations, and the much-hailed iPad app, *The Orchestra*.

As the Music Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic for 17 years, Salonen is widely credited with revitalising the organization. He was instrumental in helping the orchestra to open Walt Disney Concert Hall; presided over countless premieres of contemporary work; began the Esa-Pekka Salonen Commissions Fund, and made the orchestra one of the best-attended and funded in the USA. In spring 2019 he brings a series that he created at the Philharmonia to the LA Phil, presenting programmes of Stravinsky's "Myths," "Rituals," and "Faith."

Salonen has an extensive and varied recording career. An album of Henri Dutilleux's *Correspondances*, recorded with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France in the presence of the composer, was released in 2013 by Deutsche Grammophon on the composer's 97th birthday. Also that year, Sony completed a project that began with Salonen and the LA Phil nearly 30 years before: a two-disc set of the orchestral works of Witold Lutosławski, released in what would have been the composer's 100th year. An album of five of his orchestral works is available on Sony. Salonen's most recent recordings include a disc of Stravinsky's *Persephone*, released by Pentatone Music, and a 61-disc box set of all Salonen's recordings for Sony. 2019 sees a much-anticipated release for Salonen's cello concerto.

Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 17 acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It's also home to four Resident Orchestras - the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment - as well as four Associate Orchestras - Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk