

**KNAU Symphony Night**  
**SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY**  
Spring 2026

**May 18**

**Blomstedt Conducts Schubert & Brahms**

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony

CONDUCTOR: Herbert Blomstedt

Conductor Laureate Herbert Blomstedt leads two treasures of the German symphonic tradition, both indebted to earlier masters. Schubert spoke about the “haunting” influence of Mozart when he wrote his Fifth Symphony. Brahms worked on his First Symphony for more than 20 years, fretting obsessively about living up to Beethoven’s example.

Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major, D.485

Johannes Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68

**May 25**

**Esa-Pekka Salonen & Yuja Wang**

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony

CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen

SOLOIST: Yuja Wang

Esa-Pekka Salonen takes the podium for Debussy’s *Images*, a work that outlines a vivid realm of ancient dances, sun-splashed Spanish ballads, and intoxicating orchestral colors. Yuja Wang brings her dramatic flair and interpretive finesse to two piano concertos: Maurice Ravel’s dark and intense Piano Concerto for the Left Hand and Einojuhani Rautavaara’s post-modern Piano Concerto No. 1.

Claude Debussy: *Gigues* from *Images pour orchestre*

Claude Debussy: *Rondes de printemps* from *Images pour orchestre*

Maurice Ravel: Piano Concerto in D major for the Left Hand\*

Einojuhani

Rautavaara: Piano Concerto No. 1, Opus 45\*

Claude Debussy: *Ibéria* from *Images pour orchestre*

**June 1**

**Chan Conducts All-Tchaikovsky**

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony

CONDUCTOR: Elim Chan

Elim Chan leads selections from Tchaikovsky’s ethereal and primal fairy tale, *Swan Lake*. Tchaikovsky’s Sixth Symphony, *Pathétique*, inhabits a mood of exquisite longing. He called it “the best thing I ever composed or shall compose.”

Pyotr Ilyich  
Tchaikovsky:            Selections from *Swan Lake*, Opus 20  
                                 *Act II: No. 10 Scene Moderato*  
                                 *Act I: No. 2 Valse*  
                                 *Act II: No. 13 Danse des cygnes (IV) Allegro moderato – Pas d'action (V)*  
                                 *Andante*  
                                 *Act IV: No. 29 Scène finale*

Pyotr Ilyich  
Tchaikovsky:            Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Opus 74, *Pathétique*

### **June 8**

#### **Alsop Conducts Music of the Americas**

ORCHESTRA:            San Francisco Symphony  
CONDUCTOR:            Marin Alsop  
SOLOIST:                Gabriela Montero, piano\*

Conductor Marin Alsop guides the SF Symphony through an exhilarating journey that spans the United States, Venezuela, and Mexico. Gabriela Ortiz's playfully seductive *Antrópolis* sets the stage while the Venezuelan composer and pianist Gabriela Montero performs her Piano Concerto No. 1, *Latin*. Paired fanfares by Aaron Copland and Joan Tower join with Samuel Barber's primal and propulsive Symphony No. 1.

Gabriela Ortiz:        *Antrópolis*  
Gabriela Montero:    *Latin Concerto*  
Aaron Copland:       *Fanfare for the Common Man*  
Joan Tower:            Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No. 1  
Samuel Barber:        Symphony No. 1, Opus 9

### **June 15**

ORCHESTRA:            San Francisco Symphony  
CONDUCTOR:            Giancarlo Guerrero

Conductor Giancarlo Guerrero brings out all the Technicolor glory of Ottorino Respighi's vivid Roman postcards, *Fountains of Rome* and *Pines of Rome*. Stravinsky's ballet *Petrushka* is equally dramatic, placing us amid the hurly-burly of a Russian carnival where a trio of magical puppets comes to life. Kicking off the concert is Kaija Saariaho's astronomical *Asteroid 4179: Toutatis*.

Kaija Saariaho:        *Asteroid 4179: Toutatis*  
Igor Stravinsky:       *Petrushka* (1947 version)  
Ottorino Respighi:    *Fountains of Rome*  
Ottorino Respighi:    *Pines of Rome*

## June 22

### Salonen Conducts *The Firebird*

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony  
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen  
SOLOIST: Isabelle Faust, violin\*

Igor Stravinsky's wild Russian folk-fable of a ballet *The Firebird*, retains the power to shock and enthrall into its second century. Kicking off this program conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen is Magnus Lindberg's 2002 Bach-inspired piece *Chorale*. Alban Berg's famed *Violin Concerto*—played here by Isabelle Faust—functions both as an elegy for a surrogate daughter who died too soon, and as a requiem for himself.

Magnus Lindberg: *Chorale*  
Alban Berg: *Violin Concerto\**  
Igor Stravinsky: *The Firebird*

## June 29

### Salonen Conducts *Sibelius 7*

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony  
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen

Bookended by two spectacular Richard Strauss tone poems, Esa-Pekka Salonen leads *Rewilding*, the SF Symphony's first commission from Gabriella Smith, reflecting her passion for conservation and ecological reform. Jean Sibelius's final symphony, the Seventh, distills symphonic form to its bare essentials.

Richard Strauss: *Don Juan*, Opus 20  
Jean Sibelius: *Symphony No. 7 in C major*, Opus 105  
Gabriella Smith: *Rewilding*  
Richard Strauss: *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, Opus 28

## July 6

### Salonen Conducts *Mahler 2*

ORCHESTRA: San Francisco Symphony  
CONDUCTOR: Esa-Pekka Salonen  
SOLOIST: Heidi Stober, soprano\*; Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano\*;  
SFS Chorus

In his final program as San Francisco Symphony Music Director, Esa-Pekka Salonen leads Mahler's *Second Symphony*—a San Francisco Symphony staple. Reinforcing its theme of spiritual transcendence, Mahler wrote his own text for the finale: "Rise again . . . What you have conquered, will bear you to God!"

Gustav Mahler:      Symphony No. 2 in C minor\*