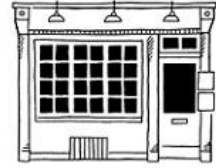


philharmonia orchestra

The
Corner Shop



PRESS RELEASE – Thursday 30 August 2018

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THE PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA BRINGS FREE VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE TO THE SOUTHBANK CENTRE THIS SEPTEMBER

- **TWO NEW IMMERSIVE VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCES, PRESENTED IN A SPECIALLY CREATED SPACE FOR AUDIENCES WILL REPLICATE THE FULL 3D AUDIO MODEL OF THE ORCHESTRA**
- **VR SOUND STAGE RUNS AT THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL BETWEEN 27 – 30 SEPTEMBER**

A new digital partnership between the **Philharmonia Orchestra** and **Southbank Centre** is set to open on 27 September with two immersive, surround-sound Virtual Reality (VR) experiences presented in a custom-built sound studio in the Royal Festival Hall foyer at Southbank Centre. It will run between 27 – 30 September alongside the first two concerts of the Philharmonia's new season, with tickets available to book from 4 September.

VR Sound Stage, the latest of the Orchestra's pioneering virtual reality projects, and the most high-tech experience to date, invites audiences to take a seat inside the *VR Sound Stage*, put on a VR headset, and experience Beethoven and Mahler's music in ground-shaking detail. Inside a seven-metre custom built space, audiences of up to six at a time will begin 'seated' in the heart of the Orchestra, right in front of conductor **Esa-Pekka Salonen** (the Philharmonia's Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor), and take a journey all the way to outer space whilst the Orchestra's full-bodied sound will be replicated by the circular 18-speaker array.

The first film - *Beethoven's Fifth* - won a Raindance Film Festival Award for Best VR Music Experience in 2017. Commissioned by Google Daydream in partnership with NASA, it commemorates the launch of the Voyager 1 spacecraft in 1977 which became the first human-made object to leave the solar system and is still travelling today. Mounted to the spacecraft is a gold-plated phonograph record, featuring images, recorded greetings, and the Philharmonia Orchestra playing the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The film which cuts together scenes from interstellar space along with footage of Salonen, is directed by leading VR filmmaker **Jessica Brillhart**.

Mahler's Third, a UK premiere, captures the final ten minutes of Mahler's epic Third Symphony, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen in front of a live audience at the Royal Festival Hall on 1 October 2017.

Luke Ritchie, Head of Innovation and Partnerships at the Philharmonia Orchestra, said: "The *VR Sound Stage* represents the next exciting step in the Philharmonia's journey with Virtual Reality. These new experiences, presented in the UK for the first time, bring audio to the fore in a powerfully fresh format. Audiences can see and hear the Philharmonia and Esa-Pekka Salonen in a completely new way."

The Philharmonia Orchestra has been at the forefront of technology, since its inception in 1945 to capitalise on the then revolutionary development of recorded music. The Orchestra continues to remain a pioneer by creating cutting-edge digital projects to nurture interest in orchestral music and build new audiences. Their large-scale digital productions [RE-RITE](#) and [Universe of Sound](#) have been putting people at the heart of a symphony orchestra for years and VR is the next step in this concept. The Orchestra began experimenting with it in early 2015, and has now worked on three public VR projects to date – *The Virtual Orchestra* (2016), *Beethoven's Fifth* (2017) and *Mahler's Third* (2018). The Orchestra's in-house Digital team have also worked with some leading technology firms to develop their VR projects, including Sony and Google, with whom they are now formal partners.

Esa-Pekka Salonen opens the season (27 and 30 Sep) with two concerts that each combine a Bruckner Symphony (Six and Seven respectively) with a Wagner prelude and Schoenberg masterpiece. **Camilla Nylund** is the soprano soloist in *Erwartung* (27 Sep) and Salonen conducts *Verklärte Nacht* (30 Sep).

VR Sound Stage is presented in partnership with 3D audio production company **Mixed Immersion** and 360-degree projection environment specialists **Igloo Vision**.

VR Sound Stage launches Southbank Centre's 2018/19 Classical Season on 27 September.

-ENDS-

For further information please contact The Corner Shop PR on 020 7831 7657 or email [Maisie Lawrence](#)

LISTINGS

VR SOUND STAGE

Thursday 27 – Saturday 29 Sep 2018

9am – 5pm with slots every 20 minutes, booking from 4 September

NB: Suitable for accompanied children aged seven and over.

BRUCKNER, WAGNER & SCHOENBERG PART I

Thursday 27 Sep 2018, 7.30pm

Royal Festival Hall, London

Esa-Pekka Salonen conductor

Camilla Nylund soprano

WAGNER *Götterdämmerung*: Siegfried's Death and Funeral March

SCHOENBERG *Erwartung*

BRUCKNER Symphony No. 6

BRUCKNER, WAGNER & SCHOENBERG PART II

Sunday 30 Sep 2018, 7.30pm

Royal Festival Hall, London

Esa-Pekka Salonen *conductor*
WAGNER Prelude and Liebestod, *Tristan und Isolde*
SCHOENBERG *Verklärte Nacht*
BRUCKNER Symphony No. 7
www.philharmonia.co.uk/concerts/venue/southbank_centre

- [Concert listings, full 2018/19 London Season](#)
- [Esa-Pekka Salonen](#)
- [Music of Today](#)
- [Virtual Reality projects](#)
- [Southbank Centre](#)

PARTNERS

Southbank Centre are a key long-term partner for the Philharmonia Orchestra, who are one of the Centre's resident orchestras. This will be the third year in a row that a Philharmonia VR film will be presented alongside the start of the Classical season.

Google have been a key partner for the Philharmonia during the creation of their last two films. Beethoven's Fifth was commissioned and produced by Daydream, directed by Jessica Brillhart, who was Principal VR Filmmaker for Google at the time.

Mahler's Third was only made possible through several partnerships. Google Arts & Culture, with whom the Philharmonia Orchestra is now a partner. This allowed the Orchestra to use a Google Jump Odyssey VR camera to film the performance in October 2017.

Post-production and stitching for *Mahler's Third* was provided by Satore Studios (<http://satorestudio.com/>), a leading creative VR company based in London.

The VR Sound Stage – Audio Design

The design and configuration of the 18-speaker ambisonic array was led by Mixed Immersion, ambisonic audio specialists and Audio FX company, based in London: <http://www.mixedimmersion.com/>

This speaker system is at the core of the VR Sound Stage, coupled with a bespoke software system created by the Philharmonia Orchestra, which allows multiple VR headsets to play in sync to the ambisonic audio playing through the large speaker array.

London showcase – Igloo Vision projection system

During the showcase at the Royal Festival Hall in London between 27 – 30 September 2018, the speaker array will be concealed inside a beautiful 8K projection cylinder, created by British company Igloo Vision (<https://www.igloovision.com>), who are world leaders at shared VR experiences.

Igloo Vision worked as a partner with the Philharmonia during the premiere of Beethoven's Fifth at SXSW in March 2018. This projection cylinder will itself be hidden within a soundproof 7m x 7m 'black box'.

CREDITS

Mahler's Third – VR film

Performed live at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, London, on Sunday October 1st 2017.

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen
Mezzo-Soprano: Michelle DeYoung

Philharmonia Orchestra
Philharmonia Voices (Ladies)
Tiffin Boys' Choir

This production was only possible thanks to:

- Funding from The Space, supported by public funding from Arts Council England.
- Partnership with Google Arts & Culture

Directed by: Luke Ritchie Produced by:
Dan Munslow & Thomas Gillet
Director of Photography: Peter Collis

Sound Engineer: Mike Hatch
Ambisonic Audio Mix created by Mixed Immersion
Executive Producer for The Space: Helen Spencer

Beethoven's Fifth

Commissioned by Google & Daydream VR Supported by NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratories

Director: Jessica Brillhart
Producer: Lauren Simpson

Associate Producers: Luke Ritchie, Esa-Pekka Salonen
Cinematographer: Aaron Wesner
Sound Recordist: Luke Allen

Editor: Jessica Brillhart Greencard

Greencard Pictures
Producer: Chazz Cafora

Endless
Collective Visual Effects: Endless Collective
Visual Effects Supervisor: Duncan Ransom

Koncept VR
Silvr
Sound Design and Mix: Luke Allen
Sound Editor: Robin Shore

Special Thanks

Ann Druyan
Jon Lomborg
Dr. Edward Ston

ABOUT 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.

In 2017/18, Vladimir Ashkenazy leads a focus on the 100th anniversary of the Soviet Revolution in *Voices of Revolution: Russia 1917*.

ABOUT ESA-PEKKA SALONEN

Esa-Pekka Salonen's restless innovation drives him constantly to reposition classical music in the 21st century. He is currently the Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor for the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Conductor Laureate for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was Music Director from 1992 until 2009. This season is his second of three as the Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic, and his first of five years as Artist in Association at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet. Additionally, Salonen is Artistic Director and cofounder of the annual Baltic Sea Festival, now in its 14th year, which invites celebrated artists to promote unity and ecological awareness among the countries around the Baltic Sea.

Salonen's works move freely between contemporary idioms, combining intricacy and technical virtuosity with playful rhythmic and melodic innovations. His pieces for symphony orchestra include *Giro* (1982), *LA Variations* (1996), *Foreign Bodies* (2001), *Insomnia* (2002) and *Nyx* (2011), as well as two concertos: for pianist Yefim Bronfman and for violinist Leila Josefowicz. The latter won the prestigious Grawemeyer Award, is performed on three continents this year and was featured in a 2014 international Apple ad campaign for iPad. Salonen's most recent composition, *Karawane*, for orchestra and chorus, premiered during his time as the first-ever Creative Chair at the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, while his cello concerto for Yo-Yo Ma premiered with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra last spring under Salonen's own direction, before going to the New York Philharmonic, which also gave the New York premiere of his *Wing on Wing*.