

SIBELIUS ACADEMY

Contact: Jennifer Wada Communications
718-855-7101

jennifer@wadacommunications.com
www.wadacommunications.com

✕ UNIARTS HELSINKI

The Sibelius Academy’s “Finland 100” Collaboration with The Juilliard School – Concerts by a Joint Student Orchestra in Helsinki, Stockholm, and New York, Led by Esa-Pekka Salonen, in August and September 2017 – Is the Latest International Partnership for Finland’s Performing Arts University, One of the Finest in the World

“We live in times of growing isolationism. International cooperation in all fields is of utmost importance.”

-Esa-Pekka Salonen



Sibelius Academy Symphony Orchestra ([photo](#) by Heikki Tuuli); Esa-Pekka Salonen ([photo](#) by Minna Hatinen)

One of the most high profile events in “Finland 100,” the year-long celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Finland’s independence, is a collaboration between two of the world’s top performing arts universities, The Juilliard School of New York and the Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki – both consistently included in the top ten such institutions in the QS World University Rankings.

The Sibelius Academy is regarding this latest of its collaborations with music schools around the globe as a catalyst to take its program of such partnerships to an even higher level.

An orchestra comprised of 90 of the schools’ best students – half from each school – will gather in Helsinki on August 22, and will perform a program of Finnish and American music at concerts in Helsinki (August 26), at the Baltic Sea Festival in Stockholm (August 28), and at Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall in New York (September 5), all led by Sibelius Academy alumnus Esa-Pekka Salonen. (Full concert information follows below.)

Conductor and composer Salonen, one of the most in-demand artists in the world, is one of an illustrious group of international stars that the Sibelius Academy (currently marking its 135th anniversary) has produced, including conductors Osmo Vänskä, Sakari Oramo, Susanna Mälkki, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and Mikko Franck; singers Karita Mattila, Soile Isokoski, and Matti Salminen; pianists Olli Mustonen and Juho Pohjonen; and composers Einojuhani Rautavaara and Kaija Saariaho, to name a few (a list made even more impressive relative to the country’s total population of 5.5 million).

Reflecting on the current collaboration, Salonen says, “We live in times of growing isolationism. And for a small country like Finland, active international cooperation in all fields is of utmost importance. This joint project with a famous American institution is, both symbolically and practically, exactly the right thing to do.” (Read more in the article ["Esa-Pekka Salonen Is Demolishing Walls."](#))

Kaarlo Hildén, Dean of the Sibelius Academy, said, “We have seen the immense impact these collaborative, cross-cultural projects can have in our students and the value it offers to everyone involved. We will be creating a new generation of cultural ambassadors by giving these young talented musicians an opportunity like this – not only will this cooperation provide creative inspiration to our young participants, it also gives them a chance to build a network with their peers overseas. I am certain this project will also inspire audiences in Finland, Sweden and the U.S.”

Recent Collaborations in the U.S.

The Sibelius Academy’s international partnerships have taken various forms – from student and faculty exchanges to distance-learning projects, orchestra visits, and even joint opera production. Among the most notable: In 2007 the Sibelius Academy Symphony Orchestra was invited by Esa-Pekka Salonen, then the music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to participate in that orchestra’s Young Musicians’ Initiative with a performance at Walt Disney Concert Hall; Salonen also led a series of master classes at the Colburn School with the legendary Finnish conducting pedagogue, and Salonen’s teacher, Jorma Panula, and joint concerts with the Colburn School orchestra.

And in 2009, the opera program of the Sibelius Academy created a joint production of Rautavaara’s *House of the Sun* with Butler Opera of the Sarah and Ernest Butler School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin that was performed in both Austin and Helsinki by singers and orchestras from both universities.

Distance learning has also been established as an integral part of the Sibelius Academy’s teaching activities, with the Manhattan School of Music’s Global Conservatory Videoconference Program as a major partner.

The list of additional U.S. music schools with which the Sibelius Academy has created a variety of working partnerships includes the Eastman School of Music; the Thornton School of Music of the University of Southern California; the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance; the Cleveland Institute of Music; the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, and the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, among others.

Collaboration between the Sibelius Academy and The Juilliard School was launched in 2005 with a visit from the Juilliard orchestra to Helsinki as part of that school’s centenary tour. A project in 2013 involved performances by a chamber orchestra with students from both universities in New York and Helsinki led by Sibelius Academy alumna Susanna Mälkki.

Tour Program Features Sibelius, Salonen, and Stucky

The program that the joint orchestra will perform in the three cities this fall features American and Finnish music: the orchestral classic *Four Legends From the Kalevala (Lemminkäinen Suite, Op. 22, by Jean Sibelius; Mania by Esa-Pekka Salonen (2000); and Radical Light (2006-7), a work inspired by Sibelius’s Fourth and Seventh Symphonies by late composer and Juilliard faculty member Steven Stucky. The young Finnish-Dutch cellist Jonathan Roozeman, who received early training at the Sibelius Academy Youth Department, is the soloist in Salonen’s work.*

The 2017 tour is made possible by a substantial grant from the Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation. The tour is a part of the program for the centenary celebrations in Finland. The Sibelius Academy Foundation and Wärtsilä are also sponsoring the tour.

Saturday, August 26, 2017, at the Music Centre in Helsinki:

<http://www.uniarts.fi/en/events/tue-24012017-1311/salonen-next-generation-sibelius-academy-and-juilliard-school-symphony>

Monday, August 28, 2017, at the Baltic Sea Festival in Stockholm:

<http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=3430&artikel=6385875>

Tuesday, September 5, 2017, at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, in New York City:

<http://www.lincolncenter.org/show/sibelius-academy-symphony-orchestra-and-juilliard-orchestra>

Documentary Miniseries

This project will be included in a documentary miniseries that centers around stories of a few Sibelius Academy students, and it will show the orchestra during rehearsals, breaks, and concerts both in Helsinki and New York. The series will consist of four episodes, each about four minutes each, and will be launched later in the fall on the Sibelius Academy’s YouTube channel. Here is a link to the trailer: <http://www.uniarts.fi/en/sibajuilliard2017#Videos>

The Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki is one of the largest music academies in Europe and the only university-level music institution in Finland. Its mission is to train artists who will evolve into musicians with a distinct creative identity.

A cornerstone of Finnish music, the academy was established in 1882 and bears the name of the great Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. In addition to classical music education, the academy has added other genres to its palette: jazz and folk music have been taught since the early 1980s and music technology since the early 1990s. Today the Sibelius Academy is a creative community of 1,400 students and over 1,000 staff.

Ranked among the ten best performing arts schools in the world in the QS World University Rankings, the Sibelius Academy offers nine degree programs at Bachelor and Master level as well as Doctoral education. The academy’s 700 annual concerts form the majority of the concert selection in the Helsinki Metropolitan Region, and also include international projects.

At the beginning of 2013, the Sibelius Academy merged with the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts and the Theatre Academy to form the University of the Arts Helsinki (Uniarts Helsinki). The university offers education in fine arts, music, theatre, and dance. <http://www.uniarts.fi/en>
Sibelius Academy global Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SibeliusAcademy/>

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 London’s Philharmonia Orchestra and the conductor laureate for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was music director from 1992 until 2009. This is his final of three seasons as the Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic and his second of five as artist in association at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, where he will conduct his first full *Ring* cycle in future seasons. Additionally, Mr. Salonen is artistic director and cofounder of the annual Baltic Sea Festival, now in its 15th year, which invites celebrated artists to promote unity and ecological awareness among the countries around the Baltic Sea. He serves as an advisor to the Sync Project, a global initiative to harness the power of music for human health. www.esapekkasalonen.com

August 22, 2017