

## ESA-PEKKA SALONEN

Music Director

Walt and Lilly Disney Chair

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, the 10th conductor to head the Los Angeles Philharmonic, is now in his 16th season as Music Director. His current tenure is the second-longest in the Philharmonic's history. Salonen, who was born in Helsinki in 1958, studied at the Sibelius Academy in Finland. In 1979, he made his conducting debut with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, and his American debut conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1984. He was recently appointed Principal Conductor of London's Philharmonia. In addition, Salonen has won acclaim for his work as a composer.

Among the many highlights of Salonen's career with the Los Angeles Philharmonic have been world premieres of works by composers John Adams, Franco Donatoni, Anders Hillborg, William Kraft, Magnus Lindberg, Witold Lutoslawski, Bernard Rands, Kaija Saariaho, Rodion Shchedrin, Steven Stucky, Tan Dun, and Augusta Read Thomas, as well as his own works. He has led critically acclaimed festivals of music by Ligeti, Schoenberg, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Berlioz, and Beethoven, and the Tristan Project. He and the Philharmonic have toured extensively since 1992. In October of 2003, Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic opened Walt Disney Concert Hall, designed by Frank Gehry.

In March 2003, Salonen signed an exclusive four-year recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. The following year, DG released a disc devoted to his recent orchestral works, featuring *Foreign Bodies*, *Insomnia*, and *Wing on Wing*. In January 2006, Salonen and the Philharmonic recorded their first CD together for DG, the first live recording from Walt Disney Concert Hall. (Salonen and the Philharmonic also have four live concert recordings available for download on iTunes from DG Concerts.) Before signing with DG, Salonen recorded regularly with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for Sony Classical.

Salonen is the recipient of several major awards including the Siena Prize from the Accademia Chigiana in 1993, the first conductor ever to receive the prize; the Royal Philharmonic Society's Opera Award in 1995; and their Conductor Award in 1997. In 1998, he was awarded the rank of Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government. *Musical America* named him 2006 Musician of the Year.