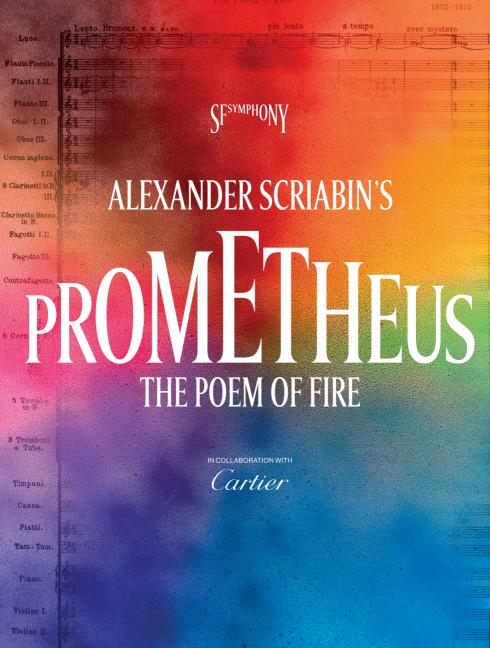
PROMETHEUS

The Poem of Fire

Mexander Scriabin, Op. 60



MARCH 1-3, 2024

Contrabasso

Viola.

Violoncello

Alexander Scriabin wrote *Prometheus, The Poem of Fire* to illustrate one of ancient Greece's most dramatic myths, where the Titan steals the sacred fire from the gods and offers it to humanity, granting access to another level of being.

Scriabin thought of musical creation not only as highly evocative, even descriptive, but also multisensorial: music, colors, and fragrances. For Prometheus, he described precisely which color should be paired with which moments in the music. But he did not explain which fragrances would appear, when, or for how long.

Jean-Yves Thibaudet and Esa-Pekka Salonen were inspired by Scriabin's multisensory vision to complete the missing part by adding fragrance to the unfinished score.

They contacted Mathilde Laurent, asking if she could create an olfactive "melody" that matches the music. Mathilde immediately agreed and took up the challenge: both to create scents that belong to the work, and to devise a method of diffusion in a vast concert hall that is sufficiently strong to be perceived without disturbing the overall experience, nor lasting too long. None of us knew at the outset what might emerge.

I remember listening to this poem as a group, with Jean-Yves reading the comments Scriabin had written about the Prometheus story. Primordial chaos, the appearance of humans, the moment when fire is given to them-powerful images emerged from which Mathilde, in dialogue with Esa-Pekka and Jean-Yves, imagined three olfactive scenes. Meanwhile it took time to develop a system of diffusion that was simple and reliable enough to deploy. It was amazing to see this endeavor taking shape.

This unique collaboration has produced an extraordinary experience of music. A music you can see, feel, and smell. Images and fragrances one can hear. It would not have been possible without the vision of a genius composer and these amazing artists willing to join forces to continue his work with the San Francisco Symphony. I can imagine Scriabin smiling happily when discovering this piece.

CYRILLE VIGNERON
CEO and President. Cartier SA

ALEXANDER SCRIABIN'S

THE POEM OF FIRE

OPUS 60 (1910) | 20 MINS

PROGRAM

FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2024 at 7:30pm

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 2024 at 7:30pm

SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024 at 2:00pm

ARTISTS

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN Conductor JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET Piano MATHILDE LAURENT *Perfumer* SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY CHORUS **JENNY WONG** Chorus Director

13'30" UNTIL THE END

NOTE «LAXIIIE HEURE»

the offering of fire by Prometheus of the arts. The scent is diffused at the climax of the piece,

accord created by Mathilde Laure hesperidic notes, bergamot, verbe

The third accord, "After'

NOTE «L'APRÈS»

NOTE «L'AVANT»

the sensation of being close to earth, rain, storm, and thunder, with notes evoking earth, ice, ozone,

BEGINNING TO 13'30"

SYMPHONIES OF AROMAS AND TOUCHES

SCRIABIN ON THE ART OF THE FUTURE

Adapted from an essay by Jenny Judge.

Jenny Judge explores the resonances between music and the philosophy of mind. She is a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Melbourne and holds PhDs in musicology and philosophy from the University of Cambridge and New York University.

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n the last years of his short life, Alexander Scriabin was consumed with the idea of creating a work of art unlike any the world had ever seen. The Mysterium, or Mystery, was to be performed in an orgiastic, multisensory Bacchanal unfolding over seven days and seven nights in the foothills of the Himalayas. As Scriabin described it to his friend and biographer Leonid Sabanayev, the *Mysterium* would take place in a purpose-built cathedral whose architectural forms would appear to shift and flicker as the work progressed, with this effect to be achieved by means of mists and lights. Music set to poetry of Scriabin's own devising would meld with color. these correspondences could be leveraged to amdance, and "symphonies of aromas and touches" to intoxicating effect.

Like Richard Wagner, Scriabin was convinced that the future of art lay in the synthesis of the arts. Only by this means could the audiences of the various art forms be brought together, and art itself imbued with the deep spiritual significance that was its birthright, but that eluded it in the artistic tools, by means of which all manner of new

spectacles, designed to be beheld by more or less passive audiences, Scriabin intended to eliminate the distinction between performer and audience entirely. (The Mysterium was intended less as a work to be performed than as a rite to be enacted by everyone present.) In addition, Scriabin thought that the multisensory elements of the Mysterium would give it an expressive immediacy that would exceed anything Wagner's music-dramas could provide. Scriabin was convinced that there existed deep correspondences between different sensory qualities-color, pitch, fragrance, and so on-to which we are all at some level sensitive, and that plify the expressive power of art. (Scriabin himself reported experiencing different musical keys as having distinct colors.) Thus, in adding colored light (for example) to music, as he had already done in Prometheus, The Poem of Fire, Scriabin didn't take himself merely to be adding some of the tools of another art form to those of music. As he saw it, he was forging new, constitutively multisensory modern age. But while Wagner's music-dramas are feelings, ideas, and sensations might be conveyed directly without the mediation of plot, or characterization, or any of the other dramatic means on which Wagner relied.

Scriabin's ideas about multisensory correspondences attracted disparagement in his own day, but things look very different now. Since the 1980s, there has been an explosion of research into synesthesia: the phenomenon whereby experiences in one sensory modality reliably give rise to involuntary experiences, often from another sensory modality, that would not ordinarily be associated with the stimulus in question. Sound-color synesthesia, the version which Scriabin claimed to have had, is now recognized as one of the most common forms. Another is grapheme-color synesthesia, which the writer Vladimir Nabokov had: he saw individual letters as differently colored.

Synesthesia is a startling phenomenon—but it's rare, affecting only three to five percent of the population. Still, even if most of us don't tend to experience multisensory correspondences in the vivid way synesthetes do, an increasing weight

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of evidence suggests that most of us do at least recognize a wide array of such correspondences. In 2001, V. S. Ramachandran and Edward Hubbard presented evidence of a robust sound-shape association across a representative cross-section of the population. They reported that, when shown a rounded shape and a spiky shape and asked to say which shape was "bouba" and which was "kiki", most people match "bouba" to the rounded shape and "kiki" to the spiky shape. Since then, researchers have found evidence of associations between color and odor, lightness and loudness, pitch and smell, smell and shape, shapes and flavors, and even sound and smell-and the list continues to grow.

Whether these multisensory correspondences will augment the expressive power of music, as Scriabin thought they would, remains to be seen. The proof will be in the pudding. But the prospect that they might is live, and tantalizing. In this, Scriabin may have truly been the visionary he believed himself to be.

REALIZING SCRIABIN'S VISION

ARTISTS IN DIALOGUE



he myth of Prometheus describes a central moment in the mythological history of hufrom his fellow gods on Mount Olympus and gifted it to humankind, thereby en- time, but today we have the possibility." dowing mortals with the knowledge vital for civilization. In Greek mythology, Prometheus For Esa-Pekka Salonen, the involvement of scent is a rebel who was condemned to an eternal punishment. Subsequent poets, artists, and composers have more often focused on the symbolic role Prometheus plays in unleashing human potential and creativity.

Artists approaching Scriabin's synesthetic vision of the Prometheus story bring their own responses to generate a unique live performance. Pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, and perfumer Mathilde Laurent each have a particular perspective on the project.

"One of Scriabin's dreams was to add more senses to the score, including scent. This idea has always mankind. The Titan Prometheus stole fire fascinated me," comments Jean-Yves Thibaudet. "The technology was not available to him at the

> in the production is a way of speaking to common human experience. "Mathilde Laurent has identified the moments where a particular scent will trigger a particular psychological association, based on science and evolutionary psychology, on physiology and neurology. When I met Mathilde for the first time, I realized that she is an artist. Her approach is about imagining a scent. This is not an interpretation of how one particular person feels. This is based on us as a species." Delivering scent in the performance requires a creative approach to technology. In an era when humans fear

their own extinction at the hands of technology, Salonen adds that this synesthetic collaboration reveals a positive element of Prometheus's doubleedged gift. "It shows that technology can be used for very noble purposes, for art and enhancing people's natural sensory experiences in this world. Prometheus paid dearly, but we don't have to-it's up to us to decide."

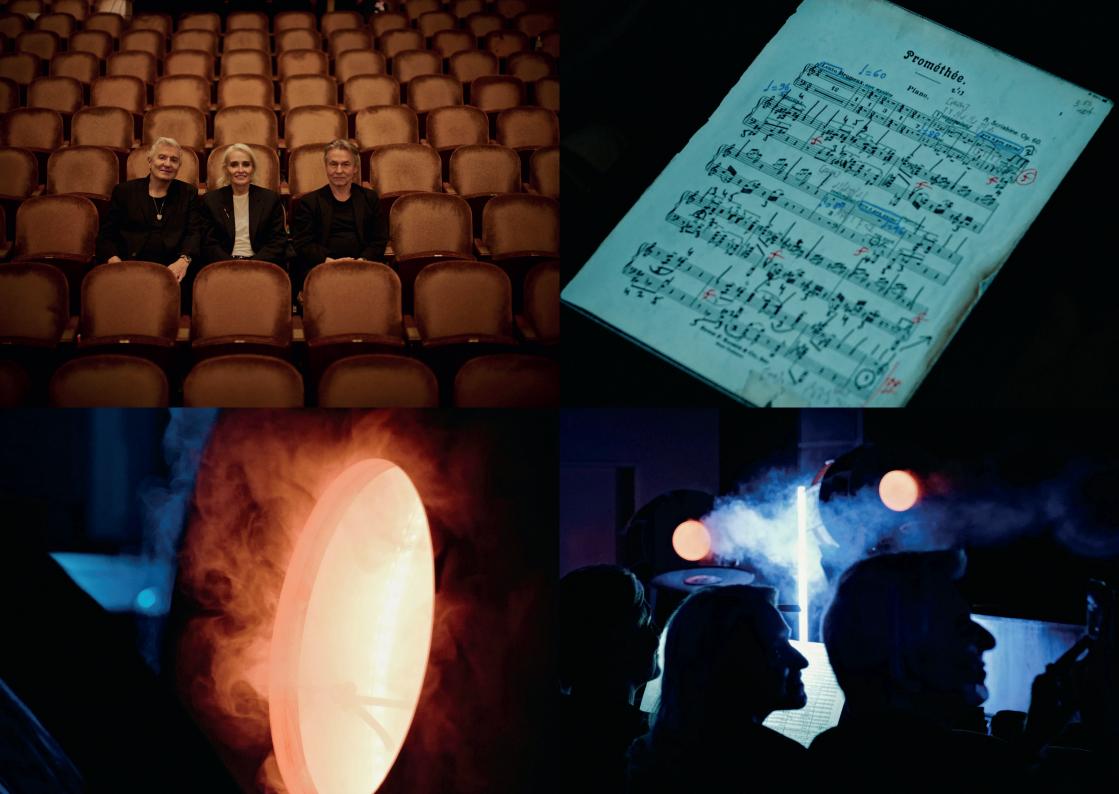
For Mathilde Laurent, the myth of Prometheus is profoundly linked to the creation of art. "It tells us that fire corresponds to the dawn of human development as we know it today. So fire will enable man to create the arts." She finds a powerful connection of the myth to her own art form of perfumery, and to the wider creative mission of Cartier.

"Fire is really the origin of perfume, from which the name stems, per fumum, Latin for 'through

smoke.' But it's also the origin of jewelry, and that's where the Prometheus myth makes absolute sense for Cartier." Creation at Cartier is, indeed, an act of transformation. Craftsmen and artists of the Maison capture and reflect the beauty of the universe wherever it may lie, to elevate humanity.

In Scriabin's music, the moment that man acquires fire is depicted two-thirds of the way through the piece. In dialogue with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, Laurent identified three different scents to be introduced during the course of the music: before the fire, the arrival of fire, and after the fire.

In this project, Laurent brings her artistry to Scriabin's score, in order to create a synesthetic artistic experience. Perfumery is an art and its place is among the other arts.



CREATING SCENTS FOR PROMETHEUS

The creation of a new scent begins with deep reflection.
In the world of perfume, you never start with the ingredients. Intuition, the sense of the moment, and the culture of the Maison all have to be allowed to speak.

Following Scriabin's vision, my ultimate goal is to create the condition of synesthesia for everybody. A synesthetic moment can be lived in which all the senses are solicited and make our minds, hearts, and even our guts vibrate in unison.

This way, we can experience the transcendence and elevation which art endows humanity.

Through listening to and discussing the piece with Jean-Yves and Esa-Pekka, we identified three different sequences in which symbolic moments could be olfactory.

The first sequence speaks of earthly existence before fire. Man struggles to survive in a cold, stormy, violent nature. The scent accord gives sensations of being close to earth, rain, storm, thunder, with notes evoking earth, ice, ozone, and vegetation.

The second sequence is the climax of the piece, the offering of fire by Prometheus to humanity. The myth teaches us that fire allowed the birth of the arts.

And specifically, perfumery and jewelry are arts born from fire. This is why the myth of Prometheus is so relevant for Cartier. The scent accord at this moment is a perfume named "La XIIIe Heure" which I created 10 years ago as a tribute to the creative power of fire and its role in the origin of perfume: per fumum means "through smoke" from Latin. In this scent there are notes of smoke and burnt wood.

Finally, the third moment describes man becoming human and collectively mastering his destiny. We contemplate spiritual elevation, and the advancement of skills and learning—humanity's transfiguration by the transcendence allowed from the arts.

In this scent accord hesperidic notes, bergamot, lemon, verbena, fresh grass, sun, light, and warmth are here to generate emotions of joy and hope.

For *Prometheus*, my task was to ensure that the scent stirred a primary, universal, and instinctive emotion, far removed from any aesthetic aim. I investigated data that linked perfumery ingredients with emotions. I wanted to bolster and consolidate the feelings instilled by music, by focusing—through olfaction—on the ancestral instinct of every spectator, to get them to engage emotionally and physically with the music without ever overshadowing or competing with its aesthetic.

MATHILDE LAURENT
Perfumer

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN

Esa-Pekka Salonen is known as both a composer and conductor. He is the Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, where he works alongside eight Collaborative Partners from a variety of disciplines, ranging from composers to roboticists. He is the Conductor Laureate of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. As a member of the faculty of the Colburn School, he directs the pre-professional Negaunee Conducting Program. Salonen cofounded, and until 2018 served as the Artistic Director of, the annual Baltic Sea Festival.

Highlights from Esa-Pekka Salonen's 2023–24 San Francisco Symphony season include world premieres from Jesper Nordin, Anders Hillborg, and Jens Ibsen; projects by Collaborative Partners Pekka Kuusisto and Carol Reiley; the launch of the inaugural California Festival; a tour of California; and a program of Ravel and Schoenberg featuring choreography by Alonzo King and staging by Peter Sellars.

Salonen also conducts many of his own compositions around the world this season. Among them are *Tiu*, a new work commemorating the 20th anniversary of Walt Disney Concert Hall, premiered



by the Los Angeles Philharmonic; *Karawane*, also with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; Salonen's Sinfonia Concertante for Organ and Orchestra with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Philadelphia Orchestra; and *kinēma* with the San Francisco Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra.

Salonen has an extensive and varied recording career. Releases with the San Francisco Symphony include recordings of Bartók's piano concertos, as well as spatial audio recordings of several Ligeti compositions. Other recent recordings include Strauss's Four Last Songs, Bartók's *Miraculous Mandarin* and Dance Suite, and a 2018 box set of his complete Sony recordings. His compositions appear on releases from Sony, Deutsche Grammophon, and Decca; his Piano Concerto, Violin Concerto, and Cello Concerto all appear on recordings he conducted himself.

Biography

JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET

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Biography

MATHILDE LAURENT

"To live is to breathe, to breathe is to smell,"



one of the world's finest pianists. He is especially known for his diverse interests including numerous collaborations in film, fashion, and visual art. A most recent solo album, Carte Blanche, features a prolific recording artist, he appears on more than 70 albums and six film scores. He is a devoted educator, and is the first artist in residence at the recordings of Ravel's complete solo piano works Colburn School, which awards several scholarships and Saint-Saëns's piano concertos No. 2 and No. in his name.

Thibaudet appears as soloist this season in Gershwin's Concerto in F. Saint-Saëns's Piano Concerto No. 5. Khachaturian's Piano Concerto. Ravel's Concerto in G, Debussy's Fantaisie, and Messiaen's *Turangalîla* Symphonie. He also continues his multi-season focus on Debussy's Préludes, performing both books in recitals throughout Europe. With Michael Feinstein, he continues the acclaimed program Two Pianos: Who Could Ask

Jean-Yves Thibaudet has earned a reputation as for Anything More?, presenting works by Gershwin, Rodgers, and others.

Thibaudet records exclusively for Decca. His collection of deeply personal solo piano pieces. Other highlights include the Grammy-nominated 5. He is the soloist on Wes Anderson's film The French Dispatch, and his playing can also be heard in Pride and Prejudice, Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close, Wakefield, and the Oscar-winning Atonement. His concert wardrobe is designed by Vivienne Through her Corsican background, Mathilde Laurent, Cartier in-house perfumer, inherited both a love of nature and the courage to fight for beautiful causes, such as the reconciliation of art with the sense of smell and perfumery.

The art of fragrance has been assimilated to the idea of scent and an animalistic facet of human beings. As a result, this craft has barely developed, leaving the industry to be the primary guiding force.

Laurent strives to balance this preeminence by adding a touch of poetry, art, and the sacred to each of her creations to encourage a love of olfaction and perfume, with all they awaken and elevate in us, just as we would explore art through music, painting, or sculpture.

She has devoted herself to this research within various leading Maisons: first Guerlain, followed by Cartier—a Maison that values art and is driven by a desire for timelessness and style—where she has been the first female in-house Perfumer and Creative Director since 2005.

and daring style into fragrance and elevate perfumery to its highest level. Her creations are not bound by any consensus and soulfully relate the history of in Paris. perfumery art to the history of the Maison. What sets Laurent apart is also the way she considers molecular perfumery as a noble discipline. For her, beauty is not limited to nature. Synthetic compounds are responsible for some of the greatest masterpieces of modern and contemporary perfumery.

Convinced of the intrinsic link between perfume and art, she led the opening of new fields of experimentation for Cartier: USO or "Unidentified Scented Objects," experimental installations, born out of a desire to "take perfume out of its bottle and allow



the public to experience the unexpected power of olfaction." The first iteration was created in 2017 outside the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, before being Laurent seeks to translate Cartier's imaginative exhibited at the Louvre Abu Dhabi in 2019 as part of the "10,000 Years of Luxury" exhibition. In 2022, USO 2, entitled "The Scented Myth," was presented

> Mathilde Laurent's creations include La XIIIe Heure (2009) from the collections Les Heures de Parfum, honored with the Creative Perfumers Award and the Specialist Award by the Fragrance Foundation France: Baiser Volé (2011): La Panthère (2014), for which she was awarded the Olfactorama Prize in 2015; Les Épures de Parfum (2020); and Rivières de Cartier (2021), a collection awarded two prizes for responsible innovation by the Fragrance Foundation France and the Accademia del Profumo, Italy (2022), among others.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

The San Francisco Symphony is among the most artistically adventurous and innovative arts institutions in the United States, celebrated for its artistic excellence, creative performance concepts, active touring, award-winning recordings, and standard-setting education programs. In the 2020–21 season, the San Francisco Symphony welcomed conductor and composer Esa-Pekka Salonen as its 12th Music Director, embarking on a new vision for the present and future of the orchestral landscape. In their inaugural season together, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony introduced a groundbreaking artistic leadership model anchored by eight Collaborative Partners from a variety of cultural disciplines: Nicholas Britell, Julia Bullock, Claire Chase, Bryce Dessner, Pekka Kuusisto, Nico Muhly, Carol Reiley, and esperanza spalding. This group of visionary artists, thinkers, and doers, along with Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony, have set out to explore and develop new ideas inspired by the Partners' unique areas of expertise, including innovative digital projects, expansive and imaginative performance concepts in a variety of concert formats, commissions of new music, and projects that foster collaboration across artistic and administrative areas.

Esa-Pekka Salonen. Music Director Nicholas Britell · Julia Bullock · Claire Chase · Bryce Dessner · Pekka Kuusisto · Nico Muhly · Carol Reiley · esperanza spalding, Collaborative Partners Jenny Wong, Chorus Director Elias Brown · Aleksandra Melaniuk, Salonen Fellows, Colburn School of Music, Negaunee Conducting Program

> Priscilla B. Geeslin, Chair Matthew Spivey, Chief Executive Officer

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Yun Chu Naomi Kazama Hull In Sun Jang Suzanne Leon Leor Maltinski Sarn Oliver Florin Parvulescu Victor Romasevich Catherine Van Hoesen

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Stan & Lenora Davis Chair Amy Hiraga Kum Mo Kim Chunming Mo Polina Sedukh Isaac Stern Chair Chen Zhao

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VIOLAS

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Century Chair

Barbara Bogatin

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CLARINETS

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BASSOONS

Stephen Paulson, Principal Steven Dibner, Associate Principal Justin Cummings Vacant, Contrabassoon

HORNS

Vacant, Principal Mark Almond, Associate Principal Jesse Clevenger[†], Acting Assistant Principal Jonathan Ring Jessica Valeri **Daniel Hawkins**

TRUMPETS Mark Inouye, Principal William G. Irwin Charity Foundation

Chair Aaron Schuman, Associate Principal Peter Pastreich Chair **Guy Piddington** Ann L. & Charles B. Johnson Chair Jeff Biancalana

TROMBONES

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TUBA

Jeffrey Anderson, Principal James Irvine Chair

HARP Katherine Siochi, Principal

TIMPANI

Edward Stephan, Principal Marcia & John Goldman Chair Michael Kemp†, Acting Assistant Principal

PERCUSSION

Jacob Nissly, Principal Michael Kemp† James Lee Wyatt III

LIBRARIANS

Margo Kieser, Principal Nancy & Charles Geschke Chair Matt Holland-Gray, Assistant Matthew Searing, Assistant

†Substitute Musician

Christopher Wood, Stage Manager Michael "Barney" Barnard, Stage Technician Jon Johannsen, Recording Engineer/ Stage Technician Tim Wilson, Stage Technician

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BASSES Adam Cole Harlan J. Hays Clayton Moser Matthew Peterson Chung-Wai Soong Michael F. Taylor David Varnum Nick Volkert

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CREDITS

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ABOUT CARTIER

Cartier's raison d'être is intertwined with art & culture, standing out with its creations and revealing beauty wherever it may lie. It prompts the Maison to value and support the power of original creation and share our passion for artistic and creative talent, spanning from artisanal craftsmanship to contemporary art, from architecture to music. Cartier supports and collaborates with a strong and diverse community of artists, including extraordinary talents from the world of music. Since 2017, the Maison curates olfactory cultural projects led by its in-house perfumer Mathilde Laurent, to promote olfaction as a medium of creation.

SESAMPHONA

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN CONDUCTOR JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET PIANO MATHILDE LAURENT PERFUMER