

# Esa-Pekka Salonen

## Quotes

*Thinking, Ideas, People, Years, Conducting, Way, Art, Kind, Trying, World, Two, Composing, Play, Giving, Firsts, Doe, Careers, Masters, Orchestra, War*

Once you get over the first hill, there is always a new, higher one lurking, of course.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

There will have to be times when I'm not conducting because I'm composing. I haven't solved that problem, and perhaps I never will.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

As we watch TV or films, there are no organic transitions, only edits. The idea of A becoming B, rather than A jumping to B, has become foreign.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Orchestras have become used to the emphasis on the separation of layers, of the ultimate precision and clarity.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The act of conducting in itself, of waving my arms in the air and being in charge, I didn't miss. I missed the sensual pleasure of being in contact with music.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Pulse as an active means of expression, Stravinsky and Beethoven are the two masters of that.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

This conducting thing happened. In 1983 I was sucked into this international career, which was a very scary experience.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I discovered that the people of the North are different and there's no way you can make a person from the North similar to a Southerner. They're two different worlds.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I feel very free and very happy to be a composer.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The underlying process in Northern music tends to be slower and continuous, whatever's happening on the surface; in Southern music the underlying process is always faster.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I've learned a lot from the masters of orchestration, like Ravel and Stravinsky.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

My music wouldn't sound the way it does if I hadn't had the experience of conducting.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

With American orchestras, in particular, because they play in such huge halls, getting a true pianissimo is very hard.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I'm still disturbed if a chord isn't together, but your priorities change as you get older.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

In the range of music that we play - roughly 300 years' worth-there really are more similarities than differences.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

This country, and the West Coast, especially, is bad at preserving any cultural legacy.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I don't believe in an annual dose of film music for the sake of it being film music. If we program film music, it will be because there is a real

artistic reason for doing so.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I always had, deep down, a slight aversion toward the purely cerebral in music.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I love a visceral sound, the kind that hits you in the belly.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

After 30 years I have realized the greatest pleasure I can get is to have learnt.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Orphei Drängar possesses a combination of power, energy, and culture. Joy of discovery combined with professional technical and musical prowess.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The classical music industry, has been an industry of covers. So we do covers, and if I compare this with the rock and pop side, what is the most exciting event?

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Stravinsky is masterly: his harmony is conceived so precisely that it can only be the way it is.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The players never think they project enough. In a hall that seats 3,300 people, it's a very scary thing to play so quietly that you can barely hear yourself.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Every day we make more progress toward understanding the concert

hall.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Los Angeles is just a more open place. The way L.A. functions is that people give you a forum. They say, Show us what you can do.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The Royal Festival Hall in London is nice; people hang out there. I think this inviting, non-exclusive character is very important.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

If I were in a position to announce a public competition to coin a new word, I would do so right now.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The sort of commercial parameters of classical music changed after the [World War II] , and the whole industry became more backward-looking.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I started conducting lessons and I realized that this is actually something I like doing.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

There's so much energy exchange [in conduction], so you get back a lot, of course, but you also have to give a lot. It's kind of high-energy thing.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I think if you would like to describe composing as an act with one word, "slow" would be the word.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Sometimes you spend nine months, 10 months, a year writing a piece

that you will hear two years later or something like that, and you never see anybody. It's a very different sort of metabolic.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

When an artist works today or whenever, it's not about creating immortal masterpieces, because that's the one thing we don't decide ourselves.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I actually don't like this term, "classic." It's wrong, but we don't have a better word at the moment.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Our audience, it has been a more difficult process for classical music audiences around the world, and I'm not completely certain why.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

There was this kind of mildly annoying mythology about conductor Like biker should riding a Harley-Davidson on an LP cover, and wearing a sort of a leather suit.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Somehow, conductor as this superhuman conduit between the masters and the masterpieces and the immortals.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I like this idea of identification with the local team. I think it's great. That's what an orchestra should be. It's an orchestra for its hometown, and it serves the people.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The biggest difference between U.S and most European big cities is that in a place like London, for instance, there are five orchestras, and there's a bloody competition between these five orchestras.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I think we are in the process of getting the word out, and we haven't done very well yet. But we are trying.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

There is such a suspicion in today's world of people who do more than one thing, who aren't specialized.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I realized that the European dogma is not necessarily the only way to look at things.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The Northern idea of form is more of a process. The various units of the form overlap. You can't tell where some things stop and new things start. This is typical of Sibelius.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I think truth as an idea should be left to the philosophers and perhaps religious leaders and politicians, and professional people who deal with that idea.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I can't imagine how many first performances I've done, perhaps 500. Some of them have been very good, and some of course very bad.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I'm composing more than before. I'm cutting down on conducting.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

In Europe, there is so much tradition, and everyone has established ideas as to what art should be and what it has always been.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Music has just as much to do with movement and body as it does soul and intellect.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The music I turn out these days is the kind of music I want to hear myself.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Anyone who composes and conducts at the same time is immediately suspect, because he must be faking one or the other.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

The philharmonic became such a journey and adventure in my life, and a deeply satisfying thing.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Our industry [classic music] has kind of retarded into this kind of endless cover-producing thing, and it's a pity.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

If you think of the history, in the days of Brahms and Beethoven and all these guys, almost every concert was a new music concert. To play something old was really an exception.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

Conducting was just something that happened by fluke.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen

I always felt that one day I would have to make the change in my own life, bite the bullet and see what it is to be a composer who conducts rather than the other way around.

~Esa-Pekka Salonen



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