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**SALONEN LEADS LA PHILHARMONIC IN DEBUT OF ADAMS'S
THE DHARMA AT BIG SUR, INAUGURAL WORK FOR DISNEY HALL**

John Adams's newest orchestral work, *The Dharma at Big Sur*, makes its debut on Friday, October 24, as Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic at Walt Disney Concert Hall. Commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, *The Dharma at Big Sur* is the first piece to receive its premiere at the new hall.

alternate tuning,
six-string violin

Fittingly, Adams has composed a groundbreaking score. The orchestra performs in just intonation, a system of tuning in which the intervals can be expressed as whole-number ratios. The sound of a justly-tuned ensemble – previously explored by composers such as Lou Harrison and Harry Partch, among many others – has an unmistakably pure and resonant quality. *The Dharma at Big Sur* uses few woodwinds, since they are heavily weighted toward equal temperament; the harp and keyboards are retuned. The two-movement work also includes a prominent role for six-string electric violin, played by Tracy Silverman. (Tuned in 5ths like a standard violin, the bottom two strings go down to F above the cello's low C, and are fretted.)

a tribute to his
adopted home state

After graduating from Harvard in 1971, Adams drove to San Francisco. He was well aware of others who had preceded him, including fellow Massachusetts native Jack Kerouac, whose books include *On the Road*, *The Dharma Bums*, and *Big Sur*. Says Adams, "I wanted to write something that had as its theme the sensation that one experiences on arriving in California. I looked around for literary sources, and eventually hit on Jack Kerouac. His arrival here was sort of a defining moment – not only for himself but for the representation of a totemic experience for all Americans, which is the journey westward."

his first glimpse of
the Pacific

Ultimately, Adams hopes to convey the exhilaration of a life-changing encounter. "I'll never forget the first time I came down the Marin headlands on a beautiful August morning, and saw the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco off in the distance – those were very powerful moments....I hope to create a musical expression of that experience."