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SYMPHONY  
MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS - MUSIC DIRECTOR

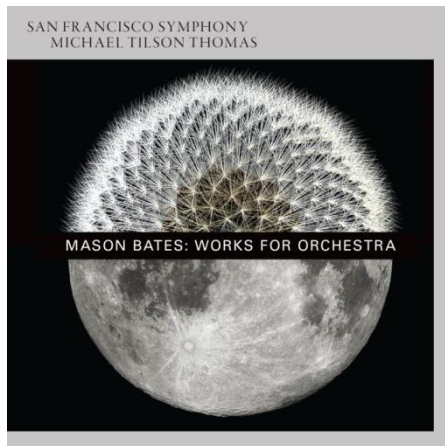


Press Contacts:

Public Relations  
San Francisco Symphony  
(415) 503-5474  
[publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org)  
[www.sfsymphony.org/press](http://www.sfsymphony.org/press)

National Press Representation:  
Shuman Associates  
(212) 315-1300  
[shumanpr@shumanassociates.net](mailto:shumanpr@shumanassociates.net)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / February 9, 2016**



(High resolution images available for download from the SFS Media's [Online Press Kit](#))

**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY RELEASE  
*MASON BATES: WORKS FOR ORCHESTRA* ON SFS MEDIA MARCH 11, 2016**

**Album of Bates's three largest electro-acoustic orchestral works features first ever recordings  
of the SF Symphony-commissioned *The B-Sides* and *Liquid Interface*  
plus the first CD release of *Alternative Energy***

**Pre-order now on [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) and [SFSymphony.org/MasonBates](https://SFSymphony.org/MasonBates)**

**SAN FRANCISCO, February 9, 2016** – Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) will release a new recording featuring Bay Area composer Mason Bates's three largest electro-acoustic orchestral works on the Orchestra's Grammy Award-winning SFS Media label on Friday, March 11, 2016. It is available for pre-order on [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) and [SFSymphony.org/MasonBates](https://SFSymphony.org/MasonBates) today. The album of Bates's largest orchestral works features the first recordings of the SFS-commissioned *The B-Sides* and *Liquid Interface*, in addition to *Alternative Energy*. These three works illustrate Bates's exuberantly inventive music that expands the symphonic palette with sounds of the digital age: techno, drum 'n' bass, field recordings and more, with the composer performing on electronica. MTT and the SFS have championed Bates's works for over a decade, evolving a partnership built on multi-year commissioning, performing, recording, and touring projects. Watch the album's promotional video [here](#).

“The three pieces on this album are my largest electro-acoustic works, my wildest explorations into the power of an expanded symphonic palette and its implications for imaginative new forms,” said Mason Bates. “The sounds range from glaciers to industrial techno to a NASA spacewalk. New sounds have often provoked new forms throughout music history... and I look to the digital world as an important twenty-first century expansion of the orchestral sound world.”

“Mason has an enormous imagination for extending and creating another vocabulary of sound,” said Michael Tilson Thomas. “It complements what he's doing with his notes and bass lines and melodies. He blends these two aspects together, and it's volatile and engaging.”

Of the long term collaboration, MTT said, “Just as we continue to examine the music of composers like Beethoven it is important to develop and support composers writing today, and treat new music in the way we treat music of the past—to revisit it over the years, record it, tour with it. This is part of developing creative partnerships with composers over the course of their careers. Ongoing relationships like this are inseparable from our work together as musicians and open new dimensions in our music-making for everyone.”

Adds Bates: “Michael has been a tremendous mentor over the years, always challenging me with obscure listening assignments and, often, actual composition assignments (*The B-sides* as a response to Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra for example). During my years in the Bay Area, it has been quite a trip to migrate from SFS audience member to contributing composer, and the San Francisco Symphony continues to be my window into the limitless possibilities of an orchestra.”

[Mason Bates](#) writes music that fuses innovative orchestral writing, imaginative narrative forms, the harmonies of jazz and the rhythms of electronic dance music. Frequently performed by orchestras large and small, Bates has become a visible advocate for bringing new music to new spaces, whether through partnerships with Orchestras or through his *Mercury Soul* project which has transformed commercial spaces, clubs and concert halls into exciting, hybrid musical events. Bates was the recipient of the 2012 Heinz Award for Arts and Humanities. In presenting him with the award, Teresa Heinz remarked that “his music has moved the orchestra into the digital age and dissolved the boundaries of classical music.” In the 2015-16 season, he joined the Kennedy Center as its composer-in-residence and is currently writing an opera about the late tech giant Steve Jobs. The SF Symphony has commissioned and premiered many works by Bates, including *The B-Sides*, *Mass Transmission*, composed for the Orchestra's Centennial, *Attack Sustain Decay Release*, and his newest work, *Auditorium*, which will receive its world premiere by the SFS in April 2016 in Davies Symphony Hall.

Bates's [The B-Sides](#) (2009) was commissioned and premiered by the SF Symphony in 2009. “I had often imagined a suite of concise, off-kilter symphonic pieces that would incorporate the grooves and theatrics of electronica in a highly focused manner,” says Bates. “So, like the forgotten bands from the flipside of an old piece of vinyl, *The B-Sides* offers brief landings on a variety of peculiar planets, unified by a focus on fluorescent orchestral sonorities and the morphing rhythms of electronica.”

Of [Liquid Interface](#) (2007) Bates explains, “Water has influenced countless musical endeavors—*La Mer* and Siegfried's *Rhine Journey* quickly come to mind. But after living on Berlin's enormous Wannsee and seeing this huge body of water transform from an ice sheet thick enough to support sausage vendors, to a refreshing swimming destination heavy with humidity, I became consumed with writing a new take on the idea. If the play of the waves inspired Debussy, then what about water in its variety of forms?” These varying states are illustrated in *Liquid Interface*, most notably with an actual recording of glaciers breaking into the Antarctic. “Again, the distinguishing elements of *Liquid Interface* are not just the electronic sounds, but more so the way that these expanded palettes articulate large narrative forms,” Bates explains.

[Alternative Energy](#) (2011) is “an ‘energy symphony’ spanning four movements and hundreds of years. Beginning in a rustic Midwestern junkyard in the late 19th Century, the piece travels through ever greater and more powerful forces of energy—such as a present-day particle collider and a futuristic Chinese nuclear plant—until it reaches a future Icelandic rainforest, where humanity's last inhabitants seek a return to a simpler way of life.” Sounds outside the regular symphonic palette that Mason Bates uses in this piece include percussion instruments of actual auto parts from a junkyard to simulate the cranking of a car motor in the first movement; recordings from FermiLab's particle accelerator in the second

movement, which takes place in present-day Chicago; and techno beats in the work's third movement to illustrate a futuristic, bustling energy industry in Xinjiang Province, China, in 2112.

*Mason Bates: Works For Orchestra* will be available as a hybrid [SACD](#) compatible with conventional CD players, and as a digital download — including as high-resolution 24-bit downloads — and on all major streaming services. The album is available for pre-order starting today on iTunes with [Mastered for iTunes](#) audio quality at [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) and on the SF Symphony's e-store at [sfsymphony.org/MasonBates](https://sfsymphony.org/MasonBates). A promotional video about the recording featuring performance footage and interviews with the artists can be viewed at [bit.ly/BatesSFSVideo](https://bit.ly/BatesSFSVideo).

*Liquid Interface* and the *B-Sides* were recorded in January 8-18, 2014 and *Alternative Energy* was recorded in September 10-13, 2014. All works were recorded in PCM 192kHz/24-bit audio in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.



SFS Media is the San Francisco Symphony's award-winning in-house label, launched in 2001. SFS Media releases reflect MTT and the SFS' artistic vision of showcasing music by American composers as well as core classical masterworks and embody the broad range of programming that has been a hallmark of the MTT/SFS partnership. Recorded live in concert and engineered at Davies Symphony Hall, the audio recordings are released on hybrid SACD and in high-resolution digital formats. SFS Media has garnered eight Grammy awards. SFS Media also produces and releases documentary and live performance videos, including the SFS's national public television series and multimedia project *Keeping Score*, which included three seasons of television episodes, eight documentaries, and eight concert films designed to make classical music more accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds. The *Keeping Score* series is now available as a digital download and on DVD and Blu-ray. Other videos of the San Francisco Symphony available from SFS Media include *A Celebration of Leonard Bernstein: Opening Night at Carnegie Hall 2008* and *San Francisco Symphony at 100*, a documentary about the Symphony's history, which won a Northern California Emmy Award.

All SFS Media recordings are available from the Symphony Store in Davies Symphony Hall and online at [sfsymphony.org/store](https://sfsymphony.org/store), digitally on [itunes.com/sfsymphony](https://itunes.com/sfsymphony), and from all major retailers and other digital outlets worldwide. SFS Media recordings are distributed by harmonia mundi in the U.S., Canada, and France, through Avie Records internationally, and by The Orchard to digital retailers.

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<b>Title:</b>	<i>Mason Bates: Works For Orchestra</i>
<b>Composer:</b>	Mason Bates (b. 1977)
<b>Artists:</b>	San Francisco Symphony Michael Tilson Thomas, Music Director Mason Bates, electronica
<b>Works:</b>	<i>The B-Sides</i> (2007) <i>Liquid Interface</i> (2009) <i>Alternative Energy</i> (2011)
<b>Recorded:</b>	<i>The B-Sides and Liquid Interface</i> were recorded in January 8-18, 2014 and <i>Alternative Energy</i> was recorded in September 10-13, 2014. All works were recorded in PCM 192kHz/24-bit audio in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.
<b>Label:</b>	SFS Media
<b>Catalogue Number:</b>	SFS 0065

**Release Date:** March 11, 2016  
Pre-order a digital download on iTunes at [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) or on disc from [SFSymphony.org/MasonBates](https://SFSymphony.org/MasonBates).

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Online: [sfsymphony.org/store](https://sfsymphony.org/store)

**Media copies:** Members of the press may request a copy of the recording for review from Shuman Associates at [shumanpr@shumanassociates.net](mailto:shumanpr@shumanassociates.net) or the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at [publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org)

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