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(From left to right: High resolution images of Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas are available for download from his online press kit. Photos of Michael Fabiano, Sasha Cooke, Laura Claycomb, and other soloists are available for download from the Guest Artists' Photo Library and those of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus can be found in the SF Symphony Chorus' Online Press Kit.)

MUSIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONTINUES MULTI-YEAR EXPLORATION OF BEETHOVEN IN A TWO-WEEK FESTIVAL OF HIS EARLY MUSIC AND LASTING INFLUENCES WITH THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, CHORUS AND SOLOISTS MAY 2-11 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL

Additional Festival highlights include MTT Beethoven Symposium, *Davies After Hours* post-concert party, and recording of Beethoven Project performances for future release on SFS Media

SAN FRANCISCO, April 15 – Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas leads the San Francisco Symphony in a Beethoven Festival May 2-11 at Davies Symphony Hall in three concert programs that explore the composer's earliest inspirations and how they informed his own style and the music of composers who came long after. Over the course of two weeks, MTT will lead the San Francisco Symphony, Chorus and soloists on a musical journey tracing Beethoven's advanced and often revolutionary musical ideas, culminating in performances of one of his most significant works, *Missa solemnis*. The festival is part of MTT and the SFS' ongoing multi-season exploration of the music of Ludwig van Beethoven including recordings on the Orchestra's in-house label SFS Media of Beethoven's Symphonies No. 5, 7 and 9, Piano Concerto No. 4 with Emanuel Ax, and *Leonore* Overture No. 3.

"This Beethoven Festival is an opportunity, in the context of major masterpieces, to hear works that were precursors to them; these are unusual pieces that many people have not had a chance to hear in live performance," said SFS Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas. "When you have a figure like Beethoven in your life, you have two kinds of relationships: one is to come back to certain things that you know, to have your

impressions confirmed and deepened, but it's also interesting to be discovering *new* things about that figure, about his contribution and the progression of his thought. That's what this festival offers."

More information about all the Beethoven Festival performances can be found at sfsymphony.org/beethoven.

BEETHOVEN FESTIVAL CONCERTS AND EVENTS:

PROGRAM 1: MTT EXPLORES EARLY BEETHOVEN

Beethoven (Arr. Bohlin) *Adelaide*
Beethoven Sonatina for Mandolin and Fortepiano
Beethoven *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* (First SF Symphony performances)
Beethoven Symphony No. 2

Concerts on May 2 and 3 will provide a unique opportunity to hear a variety of Beethoven's early works, such as his *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II*, a work he wrote at the age of 19 and arguably Beethoven's first masterpiece, paired with his Symphony No. 2. For Beethoven, 1802, the year of the Second Symphony, was the beginning of a period of unparalleled creative fertility and at the time Beethoven spoke of setting out upon a fresh path. The *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* offers a glimpse into a young Beethoven finding his musical voice. It features mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford, tenor Barry Banks, and bass-baritone Andrew Foster-Williams all making their SFS debuts, and soprano Sally Matthews returning. In 1796, Beethoven wrote four compositions for mandolin with keyboard accompaniment, including his Sonatina for Mandolin and Fortepiano, to be performed in these concerts by mandolinist Joseph Brent making his SFS debut. Beethoven's "*Adelaide,*" a song on a large scale written in 1797, lends itself to the expansive treatment SFS Chorus Director Ragnar Bohlin has given it in this new arrangement to be performed by the San Francisco Symphony Chorus.

PROGRAM 2: MTT LEADS BEETHOVEN AND ADAMS

Beethoven Three *Equali* for Four Trombones (First SF Symphony performances)
Beethoven *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Beloved)
John Adams *Absolute Jest* (San Francisco Symphony Co-Commission)
Beethoven Symphony No. 4

May 4, 5 and 9 tenor Michael Fabiano performs Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Beloved) accompanied by piano paired with MTT and the Orchestra's performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 4. *An die ferne Geliebte* is an assemblage of six songs of poems by Alois Isidor Jeitteles (1794-1858). The song cycle, one of the first by a major composer, was an important inspiration for later writers of the genre, especially Schumann. The individual songs of *An die ferne Geliebte* cannot be extracted for individual performance as they are linked by interludes for the solo piano, which carries the passage from one song to the next. The SFS brass section is showcased in the first performances of Beethoven's somber Three *Equali* for Four Trombones. Beethoven holds a place of honor in the history of the trombone, as he was the first major composer to employ it in the orchestration of symphonies, beginning with his Symphonies Nos. 5 and 6, written mostly in 1807-08. The St. Lawrence String Quartet joins the Orchestra for performances of John Adams's *Absolute Jest*, an SFS co-commission inspired by the scherzos from Beethoven's late string quartets that was premiered during the Orchestra's 2012 *American Mavericks* Festival. This work will be recorded live for future release on CD on the Orchestra's in-house label SFS Media. Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, written in 1806, is probably the least frequently performed of his nine symphonies. SF Symphony Program Annotator James Keller's program notes explain, "Robert Schumann poetically captured the Fourth's relationship to its neighbors when he called it 'a slender Grecian maiden between two Nordic giants.' Berlioz viewed it as a return to an earlier sound-world.

‘Here,’ he wrote, ‘Beethoven entirely abandons ode and elegy, in order to return to the less elevated and less somber, but not less difficult, style of the Second Symphony.’ This symphony, then, reflects the Apollonian side of a composer whose Dionysian aspect generally finds broader popularity.”

PROGRAM 3: MTT AND *MISSA SOLEMNIS*

Palestrina Kyrie, Gloria, and Agnus Dei from *Missa Papae Marcelli*
Beethoven *Missa solemnis*

For the May 10 and 11 performances of Beethoven’s choral masterpiece *Missa solemnis* MTT and the Orchestra and Chorus are joined by soprano Laura Claycomb, mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Michael Fabiano and bass Shenyang. Generally considered one of the composer's supreme achievements, Beethoven wrote *Missa solemnis* between 1819 and 1823 and the San Francisco Symphony first presented the work in January 1932 at the Tivoli Opera House. “In *Missa solemnis*, Beethoven offers very powerful musical ideas,” said Michael Tilson Thomas. “There are references to early music that harken back to the Renaissance but at the same time very advanced musical ideas as far forward into the future as Wagner. We hope to more powerfully reveal these many musical streams and the incredible impact of this work.” An enduring example of the type of Renaissance polyphony that inspired Beethoven’s *Missa*, Palestrina’s Kyrie, Gloria, and Agnus Dei from *Missa Papae Marcelli* opens the concerts. Palestrina wrote the *a cappella* Mass in 1562 in honor of Pope Marcellus II, who reigned for three weeks in 1555. *Missa Papae Marcelli* was performed at all papal coronation masses through the coronation of Paul VI in 1963.

SYMPOSIUM: BEETHOVEN BEFORE AND AFTER

Michael Tilson Thomas will be featured in a unique symposium that, in three one-hour sessions combining performance and discussion, explores Beethoven’s inspirations, his music, and his legacy. MTT shares his thoughts and ideas about Beethoven’s earliest music in conversation with William Meredith, Director of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies at San Jose State University on Saturday May 4 beginning at 1:00pm at Davies Symphony Hall.

DAVIES AFTER HOURS

Davies After Hours, a post-concert music event free to May 10 ticketholders features singer/songwriter duo Meklit & Quinn’s musical response to the performance of *Missa solemnis* that evening along with artwork by sculptor Cyrus Tilton courtesy of Vessel Gallery in Oakland. The party begins immediately following the Friday, May 10 concert in the Second Tier lobby-turned-lounge of Davies Symphony Hall. Singer-songwriter Meklit Hadero’s music blends New York jazz and West Coast folk with traditional Ethiopian melodies. Quinn DeVeaux is a commanding singer and guitarist whose music is filled with joy, grit and a catchy crossroads of Chicago blues and New Orleans soul and gospel. Vessel Gallery in Oakland presents a composite of Cyrus Tilton's sculptures from "The Cycle," "A Place In Between," and "Absence". Tilton's highly evocative and distinctive sculptures express concern for the environment and human psychological complexity.

BEETHOVEN ON SFS MEDIA

Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony’s multi-year exploration of Beethoven is available on a variety of SFS Media projects and releases. Earlier this month, SFS Media released a live recording of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 featuring the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, soprano Erin Wall, mezzo-soprano Kendall Gladen, tenor William Burden, and bass Nathan Berg, recorded at the conclusion of the Orchestra’s centennial season. View the new recording’s promotional video here. The Orchestra has also recorded Beethoven’s Symphonies 5 and 7, Piano Concerto No. 4 with Emanuel Ax and *Leonore* Overture No. 3.

MTT and the SFS also explored Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, *Eroica,* in a documentary during the first season of their PBS television series *Keeping Score* (now available on DVD and companion audio CD.)

All SFS Media titles are available from the Symphony Store at sfsymphony.org/store.

SOLOISTS

Tenor Michael Fabiano will turn 29 while making his San Francisco Symphony debut in performances of Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* May 4, 5 & 9 and *Missa solemnis* May 10 & 11. Born in Montclair, New Jersey, he graduated from the University of Michigan in 2005 with a bachelor's degree in vocal performance. In the summer of 2005 he was an apprentice with the Santa Fe Opera, and in the autumn of that year he began his studies at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. He has since performed in leading opera houses throughout the world, including the San Francisco Opera, Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Paris Opera, English National Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Teatro San Carlo. In the 2011-12 season Fabiano made his debuts at the San Francisco Opera as Gennaro in Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia,* the Teatro Real as Christian in Alfano's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and at the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the world premiere performances of the "Prologue" to Shostakovich's opera *Orango.* This season he returned to the Metropolitan Opera for performances as Cassio in *Otello.* He made his debuts at the Seattle Opera and Opera Lyra Ottawa as Rodolfo in *La Bohème,* a role he also performed at the Dresden Semperoper.

St. Lawrence String Quartet (SLSQ) is the Ensemble in Residence at Stanford University. The group, established in 1992, is comprised of founding members violist Lesley Robertson and violinist Geoff Nuttall, and violinist Scott St. John since 2006 and cellist Christopher Costanza since 2003. They last performed with the San Francisco Symphony in the 2012 performances of John Adams' *Absolute Jest*. In concert, they regularly perform traditional quartet repertoire, but are committed to performing and expanding the works of living composers. This season they perform new works by both John Adams and Osvaldo Golijov. Adams penned his work entitled "String Quartet" expressly for the St. Lawrence Quartet, who premiered the work at Juilliard in January 2009. Golijov's forthcoming new work is expected to build on the success of their previous collaboration, which culminated in the twice-Grammy-nominated SLSQ recording of the composer's *Yiddishbbuk* (EMI) in 2002. The quartet also paid tribute to a lineup of Canadian composers with performances of five new string quartets throughout Canada.

Soprano Laura Claycomb has been a frequent guest performer with the SF Symphony since 1990. She has toured with the Orchestra both nationally and abroad. She appears on MTT & the SFS' Grammy nominated recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 4 and its triple Grammy Award winning recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 8. She most recently performed Delibes' *Les filles des Cadix* as part of the Barbary Coast and Beyond performances during the San Francisco Symphony's centennial season in May 2012.

Mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke first performed with the San Francisco Symphony in the title role for its 2009 performances of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*. She most recently performed with MTT & the Orchestra in concerts of Mozart's Requiem in February 2011. Bass Shenyang made his San Francisco Symphony debut in performances of Bach's Mass in B minor performed at Davies Symphony Hall in March 2011. Soprano Sally Matthews made her SFS debut in 2009 performances of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe* in the role of Phyllis. Mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford, tenor Barry Banks, and bass-baritone Andrew Foster-Williams all make their SFS debuts in these performances of Beethoven's *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* May 2 and 3 at Davies Symphony Hall. Mandolinist Joseph Brent makes his SFS debut in performances of Beethoven's Sonatina for Mandolin and Fortepiano May 2 and 3.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

Thursday, May 2 at 8 pm
Friday, May 3 at 8 pm

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Ragnar Bohlin conductor (*Adelaide)*
Sally Matthews soprano
Tamara Mumford mezzo-soprano
Barry Banks tenor
Andrew Foster-Williams bass-baritone
Joseph Brent mandolin
Eric Zivian fortepiano
Robin Sutherland piano
San Francisco Symphony
San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Ragnar Bohlin, director

Beethoven (Arr. Bohlin) *Adelaide,* Opus 46
Beethoven *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* WoO 87 (First SF Symphony performances)
Beethoven Sonatina for Mandolin and Fortepiano, WoO 44a
Beethoven Symphony No. 2 in D major, Opus 36

AUDIO PROGRAM NOTES:
Free audio "Program Notes" podcasts about Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, hosted by KDFC's Rik Malone, will be available from sfsymphony.org/podcasts and from the iTunes store.

PRE-CONCERT TALK:
SF Symphony Director of Artistic Planning John Mangum will give an "Inside Music" talk from the stage one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

BROADCAST:
The performance of Beethoven Symphony No. 2 will be broadcast on Tuesday, July 9 at 8 pm. All broadcasts are on Classical 89.9/90.3/104.9 KDFC and kdfc.com.

TICKETS:
$37-$146. Tickets are available at sfsymphony.org, by phone at 415-864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, on Grove Street between Van Ness Avenue and Franklin Street in San Francisco.

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS SYMPOSIUM - BEETHOVEN: BEFORE AND AFTER

Sat May 4 at 1 pm

Part I: Beethoven Reimagined
1:00-1:45 p.m.

Michael Tilson Thomas Music Director, San Francisco Symphony, guest
William Meredith Director of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies at San Jose State University, host
Members of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Ragnar Bohlin Director, San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Musicians of the San Francisco Symphony

Topics: Festival Overview, Programs/pieces, MTT's approach to Beethoven, Beethoven biographical/historical information (including early years in Bonn/Vienna), Beethoven arrangements

Beethoven, arr. Bohlin Adelaide, Op. 46 (Chorus, Bohlin)
Beethoven Excerpts from Three Equali for Four Trombones, WoO 30
Beethoven, arr. Seyfried Excerpts from Three Equali for Four Trombones, WoO 30

Part II: Beethoven as Inspiration
2:00-2:45 p.m.

John Adams composer, guest
Saint Lawrence String Quartet
John Mangum Director of Artistic Planning, San Francisco Symphony, host

Topics: Late String Quartets, *Absolute Jest*

Beethoven I and V from String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131
Beethoven II from String Quartet in F major, Op. 135
Adams Excerpts from *Absolute Jest* (Quartet only)

Part III: Beethoven the Scholar
3:00-3:45 p.m.

William Meredith Director of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies at San Jose State University, speaker
Saint Lawrence String Quartet
Members of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Ragnar Bohlin Director, San Francisco Symphony Chorus

Topics: Beethoven's inspirations for *Missa solemnis*, including medieval and Renaissance music, and visual art

Palestrina Gloria from *Magnificat Terzii Toni*
Palestrina *Pueri Habraeorum*
Dietrich *Servus tuus sum ego Domine*
Beethoven *Heiliger Dankgesang* from String Quartet in A minor, Opus 132

Question and Answer Period
3:45-4:00 p.m.

TICKETS:
All seats $20. General Admission. Tickets are available at sfsymphony.org, by phone at 415-864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, on Grove Street between Van Ness Avenue and Franklin Street in San Francisco.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

Saturday, May 4 at 8 pm
Sunday, May 5 at 2 pm
Thursday, May 9 at 8 pm

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Michael Fabiano tenor
St. Lawrence String Quartet
Tim Higgins alto trombone
Paul Welcomer tenor trombone
Mark Lawrence tenor trombone
John Engelkes bass trombone
San Francisco Symphony

Beethoven Three *Equali* for Four Trombones (First SF Symphony performances)
Beethoven *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Beloved)
John Adams *Absolute Jest* (San Francisco Symphony Co-Commission)
Beethoven Symphony No. 4

AUDIO PROGRAM NOTES:
Free audio "Program Notes" podcasts about Beethoven's Symphony No. 4, hosted by KDFC's Rik Malone, will be available from sfsymphony.org/podcasts and from the iTunes store.

PRE-CONCERT TALK:
Peter Grunberg will give an "Inside Music" talk from the stage one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

~~**BROADCAST:**~~
~~The concerts will be broadcast on Tuesday, May 14 at 8 pm. All broadcasts are on Classical 89.9/90.3/104.9 KDFC and kdfc.com. Symphony No. 2 on 7/9/13~~

TICKETS:
$15-$150. Tickets are available at sfsymphony.org, by phone at 415-864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, on Grove Street between Van Ness Avenue and Franklin Street in San Francisco.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

Friday, May 10 at 8 pm*
Saturday, May 11 at 8 pm

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Laura Claycomb soprano
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano
Michael Fabiano tenor
Shenyang bass-baritone
San Francisco Symphony
San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Ragnar Bohlin, director

Palestrina Kyrie, Gloria, and Agnus Dei from *Missa Papae Marcelli*
Beethoven *Missa solemnis*

AUDIO PROGRAM NOTES:
Free audio "Program Notes" podcasts about Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*, hosted by KDFC's Rik Malone, will be available from sfsymphony.org/podcasts and from the iTunes store.

PRE-CONCERT TALK:
Dr. William Meredith, Director of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies at San Jose State University, will give an "Inside Music" talk from the stage one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

TICKETS:
$42-$155. Tickets are available at sfsymphony.org, by phone at 415-864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, on Grove Street between Van Ness Avenue and Franklin Street in San Francisco.

POST CONCERT EVENT:
**Davies After Hours*, a post-concert music event featuring singer-songwriter duo Meklit & Quinn, and artwork by sculptor Cyrus Tilton courtesy of Vessel Gallery in Oakland begins immediately following the Friday, May 10 concert in the Second Tier lobby-turned-lounge. Free to May 10 ticketholders.

Connect with the San Francisco Symphony through social media:

Jones Day is the Presenting Sponsor of the Beethoven Project,
with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Symposium on May 4 is produced in cooperation with the
Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies, San Jose State University.

The concert of May 9 is generously sponsored by PwC.

The concert of May 10 is made possible through the generosity of HSBC Premier.

Vocal soloists for Missa solemnis are supported by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Guest Artists.

Davies After Hours *is supported by the East Bay Express*

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