

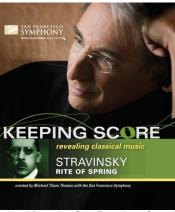
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# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 9, 2013









Images of **Gil Shaham**, **the Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble** and **Michael Tilson Thomas** are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's Online Photo Library. Keeping Score cover art is available here.

# MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY CELEBRATE 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF STRAVINSKY'S *RITE OF SPRING*WITH PERFORMANCES JUNE 19-22 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL

Programs featuring Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble and violinist Gil Shaham explore the folkloric roots and lasting influence of Stravinsky's masterpiece

SFSMedia releases Rite of Spring Keeping Score episode and concert on Blu-ray disc May 14

**SAN FRANCISCO, May 9, 2013 –** Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) leads the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) in two concert programs dedicated to one of the most influential musical works of the 20th century, Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first performance this year. Designed to give audiences new insight into the composer's folk music inspirations and the paradigm-shifting legacy of Stravinsky's groundbreaking ballet score, both programs include this defining work of Stravinsky's, paired with other lesser-known music that reflects the creative roots of his work and its lasting influence. MTT first worked with Stravinsky as a student in Southern California and has remained one of the composer's most ardent advocates. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first performance of *The Rite of Spring*, led by Pierre Monteux, is May 29.

The program of June 19 and 20 traces the influences of *The Rite of Spring* into Stravinsky's later neoclassical and serial works. Violinist Gil Shaham joins MTT and the Orchestra in the Violin Concerto, and MTT conducts the rarely heard ballet score *Agon. Agon* was last performed by the SFS in 1999 during the MTT-led Stravinsky Festival.

A second program on June 21 and 22 explores the folkloric inspirations of *The Rite of Spring*, as MTT leads members of the SFS and the Russian folk music specialists The Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble in the rarely performed work *Les Noces*, which captures the earthly exuberance of a Russian village wedding. The Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble, known for its

unique singing style evoking the vitality of authentic Russian village music, also performs a selection of traditional Russian folk songs.

"The folk music he heard in Russian villages made an enormous impression on a young Stravinsky," said Michael Tilson Thomas in the San Francisco Symphony's PBS television documentary *Keeping Score: Stravinsky's Rite of Spring*. "In *The Rite of Spring*, he wanted to use the sophisticated symphony orchestra to evoke the wild power of village music."

#### **MTT & STRAVINSKY**

MTT's relationship with Stravinsky dates back to his years as a student in Southern California when he worked frequently with the composer. MTT spoke of his experiences with Stravinsky in *Keeping Score*, "Stravinsky was a great watcher and listener. He had immense curiosity. When I was a youngster in Los Angeles I met him and played for him and I can remember the intense way he peered at the score as if he were decoding it. When he wasn't listening to music, he might sit and make motions with his fingers as if he were playing a phantom piano."

Michael Tilson Thomas has conducted and recorded a wide range of Stravinsky works with the San Francisco Symphony including the infrequently performed operas *The Nightingale* and *Oedipus rex*. In 1993, in his first concerts with the San Francisco Symphony after he was named Music Director, MTT conducted the Orchestra in *The Rite of Spring*. In 1999 he led the Orchestra in an all-Stravinsky Festival and in 2000 MTT and the Symphony were awarded three Grammy Awards for Best Classical Album, Best Orchestral Performance, and Best Engineered Classical Album for their RCA Red Seal all-Stravinsky recording of *Le Sacre du Printemps (Rite of Spring)*, *The Firebird*, and *Perséphone*.

## RITE OF SPRING ON SFS MEDIA

MTT and the San Francisco Symphony featured Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* in their 2006 *Keeping Score* television series on PBS. The *Keeping Score* documentary explores the work with MTT on location in the Théâtre Champs-Élysées where *Rite of Spring* had its debut and Ustilug, the Russian countryside where Stravinsky heard village folk music, among others. The DVD on the Orchestra's in-house label, SFS Media, includes a full SF Symphony concert performance of *Rite of Spring* and music from *The Firebird*. In commemoration of the anniversary of the seminal work, the SFS will release *Keeping Score: Rite of Spring* on Blu-ray for the first time on May 14, 2013. Both DVD and Blu-ray disc are available from the Symphony store in Davies Symphony Hall and online at <u>sfsymphony.org/store</u>. A recording featuring *The Rite of Spring* and selections from *The Firebird* Suite, both recorded live at Davies Symphony Hall during the filming of *Keeping Score*, is available from <u>sfsymphony.org/store</u> and as a <u>download from the iTunes store</u> and other digital outlets. A variety of information on *Rite of Spring* can be found online at <u>KeepingScore.org</u>, <u>SFSymphony.com/riteofspring</u>, and the San Francisco Symphony's YouTube Channel <u>youtube.com/sfsymphony</u>.

# **SOLOISTS**

<u>Violinist Gil Shaham</u> has been a frequent guest of the San Francisco Symphony since his debut in 1990. He last performed the Brahms Violin Concerto with MTT & the SFS during the Orchestra's centennial season in November 2011. He performed the Stravinsky Violin Concerto at Davies Symphony Hall with Music Director David Robertson and the St. Louis Symphony in April 2010. He most recently performed at Davies Symphony Hall in recital in March 2013. In the 2012-13 season, Shaham continues his long-term exploration of "Violin Concertos of the 1930s," a project he started in 2010. Last fall he released a recording tied to the project on his label, Canary Classics, which included the Barber, Stravinsky and Berg Violin Concertos with three leading orchestras under the baton of David Robertson. Shaham plays the 1699 "Countess Polignac" Stradivarius. Shaham lives in New York City with his wife, violinist Adele Anthony, and their three children.

The Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble was founded in Moscow in 1973 by prominent musician, scientist and researcher of Russian national culture Dmitry Pokrovsky (1944-1996 as a living laboratory for the study of different Russian folk traditions. The Ensemble was the first group of professional musicians to perform authentic village Russian folk music at the academic level. To capture the essence of the village music, the ensemble's members have traveled the length and breadth of rural Russia, documenting and studying the musical traditions they encountered. The vocal style of the Ensemble is distinctive for its various styles of traditional Russian singing. The Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble collaborates

with musicians, contemporary composers, theatrical directors and filmmakers and has become internationally renowned. These concerts mark the Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble's San Francisco Symphony debut.

## SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

Wednesday, June 19 at 10 am (Open Rehearsal)
Wednesday June 19 at 8 pm
Thursday, June 20 at 2 pm

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor Gil Shaham violin San Francisco Symphony

Stravinsky Agon Stravinsky Violin Concerto in D major Stravinsky The Rite of Spring [1947 revision]

#### PRE-CONCERT TALK:

James Keller 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.

#### **AUDIO PROGRAM NOTES:**

A free audio "Program Notes" podcast about Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, hosted by <u>KDFC's Rik Malone</u>, will be available from <u>sfsymphony.org/podcasts</u> and from the <u>iTunes store</u>.

#### **BROADCAST:**

The concerts will be broadcast on Tuesday, July 2 at 8 pm. All broadcasts are on Classical 89.9/90.3/104.9 KDFC and kdfc.com.

# TICKETS:

Tickets are \$22-40 for Open Rehearsal and \$34-156 for the concerts and are available at <u>sfsymphony.org</u>, 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, June 21 at 6:30 pm Saturday, June 22 at 8 pm

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble San Francisco Symphony

**Traditional** Russian Folk Songs **Stravinsky** *Les Noces* 

Stravinsky The Rite of Spring [1947 revision]

Note: Stravinsky's Renard has been removed from the programs of June 21 and June 22

#### PRE-CONCERT TALK:

Laura Stanfield Prichard 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.

## **AUDIO PROGRAM NOTES:**

A free audio "Program Notes" podcast about Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, hosted by <u>KDFC's Rik Malone</u>, will be available from <u>sfsymphony.org/podcasts</u> and from the <u>iTunes store</u>.

### TICKETS:

Tickets are \$15-150 and are available at <u>sfsymphony.org</u>, 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.

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Gil Shaham's appearance is supported by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Guest Artists.

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