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**THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY PRESENTS ITS
10th ANNIVERSARY CHINESE NEW YEAR CONCERT & CELEBRATION
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27 IN DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL
WITH FESTIVE PROGRAM FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

Concert Highlights Include Michael Tilson Thomas Conducting the Pas de Deux from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* Featuring Yuan Yuan Tan and Tiit Helimets, Principal Dancers from the SF Ballet; Traditional Chinese Music Performed by Instrumentalist Rujun Wu and the Crystal Children's Choir; and Pianist Haochen Zhang Performing the First Movement of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1

San Francisco, CA, January 28, 2010 – The San Francisco Symphony (SFS) rings in the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Tiger at its 10th Anniversary Chinese New Year Concert & Celebration on Saturday, February 27 in Davies Symphony Hall. The afternoon begins with the Festival Reception at 2:00 p.m. and is followed by a concert at 3:00 p.m. Combining music, family, and tradition, this event will feature a unique blend of Eastern and Western music, instruments, and artists led by conductor Carolyn Kuan. Concert highlights include SF Symphony Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas conducting the Pas de deux from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* featuring Yuan Yuan Tan and Tiit Helimets, principal dancers from the San Francisco Ballet, and 2009 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition Gold Medalist Haochen Zhang performing the first movement from Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1. The program also includes traditional Chinese music performed by instrumentalist Rujun Wu on the jinghu, the Crystal Children's Choir, and the San Francisco Symphony. The concert is preceded by the Festival Reception, with lion dancers, fortune tellers, a prize-filled raffle, Chinese desserts, and traditional Chinese music in the Davies Symphony Hall lobbies. The afternoon also features an elegant post-concert Imperial Ball at San Francisco's City Hall, available for purchase separately. The 10th Anniversary Chinese New Year Concert & Celebration is chaired by Sharon Seto and made possible by the generous support of presenting partner Bank of America and supporting sponsor AT&T.

“Chinese New Year is a time of celebrating traditions and spending time with family,” said Sharon Seto, chairman of the Chinese New Year Concert & Celebration for the third year. “For ten years the San Francisco Symphony has taken great pride in offering an entertaining and affordable concert that allows the entire family to celebrate the arrival of the Lunar New Year with a delightful afternoon that blends the music and cultures of East and West.”

Born in Taiwan, [Carolyn Kuan](#) recently concluded a successful tenure as Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. Previously, Kuan held positions as Artist-in-Residence with the New York City Ballet, Assistant Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, and Assistant Conductor of the Baltimore Opera Company. She holds the distinction of being the first female to be awarded the Herbert von Karajan Conducting Fellowship by the Herbert von Karajan Centrum and American Austrian Foundation in 2003, which resulted in her residency at the 2004 Salzburg Festival. Kuan is a keen advocate of new music, having served as Assistant Conductor for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music under Music Director Marin Alsop since 2003. She has also held the post of conductor of the Smith College Composers Ensemble and has led the Peabody Symphony Orchestra in readings and recordings of new compositions. The recipient of numerous awards, Kuan was named the first Taki Concordia Fellow in 2003 and has received additional awards from the Women’s Philharmonic, the Conductors Guild, the Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowship and the Susan W. Rose Fund for Music. Kuan has studied with Marin Alsop, Kurt Masur, Gustav Meier, and Leonard Slatkin. She made her San Francisco Symphony debut at the 2007 Chinese New Year concert and this is her fourth time conducting this concert.

[Haochen Zhang](#) became one of the youngest participants and the first Chinese recipient to be awarded the prestigious Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Gold Medal at the Thirteenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in June 2009. Zhang’s talent manifested itself early when he began studying the piano at age three. At age five he made his debut recital at the Shanghai Music Hall performing all fifteen Bach two-part inventions as well as sonatas by Haydn and Mozart. His orchestral debut followed a year later when he performed a Mozart concerto with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. In 2005, Zhang moved to the United States to attend the Curtis Institute of Music and to study under renowned teacher Gary Graffman. At seventeen, he became the youngest winner of the China International Piano Competition in 2007. Since then, Zhang has performed with the China National Symphony, Polish Krakow State Philharmonic, Guangzhou and Shenzhen Symphony Orchestras, as well as with the New Jersey Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra.

[Yuan Yuan Tan](#) was born in Shanghai, China, and trained at Shanghai Dancing School and Stuttgart’s John Cranko School. She joined San Francisco Ballet as a soloist in 1995 and was promoted to principal dancer in 1997. She has danced lead roles in works such as Helgi Tomasson’s *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*; Tomasson/Possokhov’s *Don Quixote*; Morris’ *Sylvia*; and Lubovitch’s *Othello*. Tan was featured in *Vogue* magazine in April 2003 and was named a “Hero of Asia” in the Asian edition of *Time* magazine in

October 2004. In December 2008, Tan was featured as the Snow Queen in the PBS *Great Performances* broadcast of Tomasson's *The Nutcracker*.

Born in Viljandi, Estonia, [Tiit Helimets](#) trained at the Tallinn Ballet School and began his career as a soloist with Estonian National Ballet. Since joining San Francisco Ballet in 2005, he has performed lead roles in Tomasson's *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*, as well as Tomasson/Possokhov's *Don Quixote*, among others. His repertory also includes Balanchine's *Apollo*, *Allegro Brillante*, *Stravinsky's Violin Concerto*, *Divertimento No. 15*, and "Diamonds" from *Jewels*; Bintley's *The Dance House*; Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House*; McGregor's *Eden/Eden*; Mrozewski's *Concordia*; Possokhov's *Firebird* and *Magritomania*; Robbins' *In the Night*; Tomasson's *The Fifth Season*, *7 for Eight*, *Chi-Lin*, and *On a Theme of Paganini*; and Wheeldon's *Quaternary*.

Born in Nanjing in 1963, **Rujun Wu** is renowned throughout Asia for his mastery of the jinghu, a Chinese bowed string instrument. Wu was born into a Beijing Opera family and began to play the jinghu at age nine. In 1984, he graduated from the National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts with a major in traditional music. He was later admitted to the prestigious China National Peking Opera Company to play the jinghu. In 1996, Wu released his first album *The Three Kingdoms*, which was recorded with the China Opera Symphony and became the first album of solo jinghu music. In addition to establishing himself as an innovative instrumentalist, Wu is also well-known for his unique skill as a Male Dan in Chinese Opera stage productions.

The [Crystal Children's Choir](#) was founded in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1994, and has grown into a 1,000-chorister organization. The choir's mission is to provide choral music education to children and to blend the best of Eastern and Western musical traditions. The Crystal Children's Choir has toured Europe, Australia, Asia, and Canada, and has performed at many prestigious venues including Davies Symphony Hall, Carnegie Hall, St. Peter's Basilica, Sydney Opera House, Beijing Concert Hall, and Taipei National Concert Hall. The ensemble is led by Jenny Chiang and Karl Chang.

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*Bank of America is the Presenting Partner and AT&T is the Supporting Sponsor of
the 2010 Chinese New Year Concert & Celebration.*

Support for this event is also provided by the San Francisco Arts Commission.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

Saturday, February 27
2:00 p.m. – Festival Reception
3:00 p.m. - Concert

Davies Symphony Hall
201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY
10th ANNIVERSARY CHINESE NEW YEAR CONCERT & CELEBRATION

[Carolyn Kuan](#), conductor
[Michael Tilson Thomas](#), conductor
[Haochen Zhang](#), piano
[Yuan Yuan Tan](#), dancer
[Tiit Helimets](#), dancer
Rujun Wu, jinghu and vocalist
[Crystal Children's Choir](#) (Jenny Chiang, Karl Chang, conductors; Anna Lin, piano)
San Francisco Symphony

PROGRAM:

Li Huan-Zhi / *Spring Festival*
Houyuan Wu / Excerpts from *Stories of Three Kingdoms*
Tchaikovsky / Pas de deux from *Swan Lake*, Opus 20
Tchaikovsky / Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Opus 23 (first movement)
Zhang Jun / *Bonfires in the Hill*
Mou Hong-En (arr. by Xiao Geng) / *Water Beetle Presage*
Traditional (arr. by Gang Situ) / *Shanghai Night*
Lin Mei / *Rose, Rose, I Love You*
Traditional (arr. by Kroll-Rosenbaum) / *Gong Xi, Gong Xi* (sing-along)

Join the San Francisco Symphony at its 10th Anniversary Chinese New Year Concert & Celebration on Saturday, February 27 in Davies Symphony Hall. The afternoon begins with the Festival Reception at 2:00 p.m. and is followed by a concert at 3:00 p.m. This family event will feature a unique blend of Eastern and Western music, instruments, and artists. Highlights include 2009 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition Gold Medalist Haochen Zhang performing the first movement from Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 and SF Symphony Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas conducting the Pas de deux from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* featuring Yuan Yuan Tan and Tiit Helimets, principal dancers from the San Francisco Ballet. The program also includes traditional Chinese music performed by instrumentalist Rujun Wu on the jinghu, the Crystal Children's Choir, and the San Francisco Symphony. The concert is preceded by the Festival Reception, with the Davies Symphony Hall lobby filled with lion dancers, fortune tellers, a prize-filled raffle, Chinese desserts and traditional Chinese music. The afternoon also features an elegant post-concert Imperial Ball inside San Francisco's City Hall, available for purchase separately.

TICKETS:

Tickets for the concert and Festival Reception are \$25-\$65 and are available through SFS Ticket Services at (415) 864-6000 or sfsymphony.org. Tickets for the post-concert Imperial Ball at San Francisco's City Hall are \$350-\$1,000 and are available by calling the SFS Volunteer Council at (415) 503-5500.

****Special Package:** The San Francisco Symphony and the San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade are offering a special package to enjoy both Bay Area Chinese New Year traditions. \$45 for premier second tier concert seats and reserved stadium seating at the parade that starts at 5:15 p.m. Tickets are available through the SFS Volunteer Council at (415) 503-5500.

For further press information, contact Caitlin Hartney in the SFS Communications Department at (415) 503-5425.