

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** / April 14, 2009

**MUSIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTS  
THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY AND YUJA WANG IN  
PROKOFIEV'S PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2  
MAY 20, 22 & 23 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL**

**World Premiere of SFS Commission, Mason Bates'  
*The B-Sides*, Performed in these Concerts**

**WHAT:** Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas leads the [San Francisco Symphony](http://www.sfsymphony.org) (SFS) and guest pianist Yuja Wang in Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 2 May 20, 22 and 23 at Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco. The Orchestra will also perform the world premiere of a new work commissioned from Bay Area composer Mason Bates entitled *The B-Sides* and Sibelius' Symphony No. 4. These concerts mark Mason Bates' SFS debut as both a performer and a composer.

Bay Area electronica and classical composer Mason Bates's *The B-Sides* is a play on pop music's way of referring to the more alternative (or less popular) songs on the B-side of a record. According to Bates, the five short orchestral snapshots that make up the work are "informed by the grooves of electronica as well as the modern masters of orchestral sonority, and might also be said to inhabit the 'flipside' of the symphonic world - a place where drum 'n bass rhythms meet fluorescent orchestral textures." An excerpt of the piece will be performed at Carnegie Hall on April 15 when MTT conducts the [YouTube Symphony concert](#).

Raised in Virginia where he studied piano with Hope Armstrong Erb and composition with Dika Newlin, Mason Bates enrolled in the Columbia-Juilliard program in New York City. Earning degrees in music composition and English literature, he studied primarily with John Corigliano, and also worked under David Del Tredici and Samuel Adler in addition to playwriting studies under Arnold Weinstein and Kenneth Koch. Later working with Edmund

Campion at U.C. Berkeley, he found Berkeley's Center For New Music and Audio Technologies ([CNMAT](#)) an important influence on his approach to electro-acoustic composition. His awards include a Charles Ives scholarship and fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Jacob Druckman Memorial Prize from Aspen Music Festival, ASCAP and BMI awards, and a Fellowship from Tanglewood.

Twenty-two-year-old pianist Yuja Wang last appeared in Davies Symphony Hall in 2008 with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Prior to that she performed Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2 with the SFS under the baton of Charles Dutoit in April 2007. Yuja Wang was born in China and at age 15 in 2002 won the Aspen Music Festival's concerto competition. She then moved to the U.S. to study with Gary Graffman at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where she graduated in 2008. In 2006 she received the Gilmore Young Artist Award. She first appeared with the SFS at its Chinese New Year concert in February 2006. For her debut recording on Deutsche Grammophon released in February 2009, titled *Sonatas & Etudes*, she performs a program of sonatas including Chopin's Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, "Funeral March," Liszt's Sonata in B minor, Scriabin's Sonata No. 2, and Etudes by Ligeti.

Following the concert on Friday, May 22 the SFS presents [Davies After Hours](#) where SFS Resident Conductor Benjamin Shwartz and [DJ Masonic](#), the alter-ego of composer Mason Bates, present *Mercury Lounge: Mercury Soul comes to Davies*. Chamber musicians and DJs will join in collaboration in the second tier lobby following the San Francisco Symphony concert. Part performance, part reception, *Davies After Hours* offers concertgoers the opportunity to enjoy musical groups of other genres reflecting on that evening's program, in the nightclub-like atmosphere of a transformed top floor of Davies Symphony Hall. With its open air balconies and stunning views overlooking City Hall, *Davies After Hours* is a unique after-party designed to draw parallels between classical music and the many other popular styles that thrive in the Bay Area. Admission is free for all ticketholders attending the concert on April 24 and a cash bar will be available. For information on *Davies After Hours* events visit [www.sfsymphony.org/daviesafterhours](http://www.sfsymphony.org/daviesafterhours).

**WHO:** Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor ([Click here for bio.](#))  
Yuja Wang, piano ([Click here for bio.](#))  
Mason Bates, electronic a ([Click here for bio.](#))  
San Francisco Symphony

**PROGRAM:** Mason Bates *The B-Sides*, world premiere, SFS commission  
Sibelius / Symphony No. 4 in A minor, Opus 63  
Prokofiev / Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Opus 16

**WHEN AND WHERE:** Wednesday, May 20, Friday, May 22 and Saturday, May 23 at 8:00 p.m.  
OPEN REHEARSAL - Wednesday, May 20 at 10:00 a.m.  
Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

**PRE-CONCERT TALKS:** Associate Conductor James Gaffigan gives "Inside Music" talks one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

**POST-CONCERT Q&A:** The SFS invites audience members to participate in *Off the Podium*, an informal post-concert question and answer session with composer Mason Bates and pianist Yuja Wang immediately following the concert on Wednesday, May 20. A full schedule of *Off the Podium* for the 2008-09 season can be found [here](#).

**CD SIGNINGS:** Yuja Wang will sign CDs in the Symphony Store following the concerts on Friday, May 22 and Saturday, May 23.

**DAVIES AFTER HOURS:** SFS Resident Conductor Benjamin Shwartz and [DJ Masonic](#), the alter-ego of composer Mason Bates, present *Mercury Lounge: Mercury Soul comes to Davies*, a performance/reception where classical music meets electronica. Chamber musicians and DJs join in collaboration in the second tier lobby following the San Francisco Symphony concert. Cash bar. Free to all ticketholders. More info is at [sfsymphony.org/daviesafterhours](http://sfsymphony.org/daviesafterhours).

**BROADCAST:** Portions of these concerts will be broadcast on Tuesday, June 2 at 8:00 p.m. on Classical 102.1 KDFC.

**TICKETS:** \$30-\$130, available through the SFS Box Office at (415) 864-6000, or at [sfsymphony.org](http://sfsymphony.org).

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