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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / JUNE 4, 2019

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS WITHDRAWS FROM ALL ENGAGEMENTS FROM JUNE 17 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 3

Michael Tilson Thomas announced today that he is withdrawing from all engagements beginning June 17 until September 3 in order to undergo a cardiac procedure. The operation, which will take place in Cleveland, is scheduled to follow his performances of Mahler's Symphony No. 9 with the San Francisco Symphony on June 13, 14, 15, and 16.

"I deeply regret missing concerts and projects that I have been greatly anticipating," said Tilson Thomas. "On the advice of my doctors, I need to undergo this procedure at this time in continuation of treatment for a heart condition I have managed for many years. I expect to make a full recovery in time to return to the San Francisco Symphony for the opening of my 25th season as Music Director."

Previously scheduled engagements from which Tilson Thomas is withdrawing are performances with the San Francisco Symphony and appearances at the Music Academy of the West including concerts with the London Symphony Orchestra.

"The entire San Francisco Symphony family supports Michael and is sending positive thoughts to both him and his husband Joshua at this time," said Mark C. Hanson, CEO of the San Francisco Symphony. "We look forward to seeing him on the podium for Mahler's 9th next week, and then following his full recovery over the summer, for the opening weeks next September of his extraordinary final season as Music Director."

Conductor changes for SFS concerts affected are as follows:

June 20–22: Conductor **Joshua Gersen** will lead the Orchestra in a program that includes the SFS premiere and co-commission of Steve Reich's *Music for Ensemble and Orchestra* and Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 2* with Yefim Bronfman. Replacing MTT's *Street Song* for Symphonic Brass will be Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* for Strings and Percussion and Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances*. Gersen made his SFS debut in 2013 and has led the Orchestra multiple times in both Davies Symphony Hall and in experimental SoundBox programs.

June 27, 29, and 30: British conductor **Martyn Brabbins** will conduct the SFS in a semi-staged production of Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* June 27, 29, and 30, featuring mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard as L'Enfant. Created by the visionary team of animator Grégoire Pont and director James Bonas, the staging uses advanced projection techniques to capture the fantasy and poetry of Ravel's spellbinding and luminous tale. Brabbins has previously conducted Ravel's enchanting opera at the Opéra de Lyon in France in 2012, at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich in 2013, and again in Lyon in 2016—premiering Pont and Bonas' new production, which

will be featured at the San Francisco Symphony's performances in June. First half repertoire now also includes Debussy's *Children's Corner*, *La Plus que lente*, and "Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maison," Fauré's Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor, and Ravel's *The Enchanted Garden* from *Ma Mère l'Oye* (*Mother Goose*).

July 10: New Zealand-born conductor **Gemma New** will make her debut with the Orchestra on July 10 at Stanford University's Frost Amphitheater in the inaugural concert of the Symphony's new summer series at the renovated and historic outdoor venue, presented by Stanford Live. The all-Tchaikovsky program features Gil Shaham performing the composer's Violin Concerto, Symphony No. 5 which replaces the previously announced Symphony No. 4, and the "Polonaise" from *Eugene Onegin*. Gemma New conducts the inaugural concert in addition to her scheduled performances leading the SFS July 13 and 14 at Frost in a program featuring Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and Beethoven's majestic Symphony No. 9 with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and vocal soloists.

For complete program information, please visit www.sfsymphony.org

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