



**SAN FRANCISCO
SYMPHONY**
MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS • MUSIC DIRECTOR



Contact:

Public Relations

San Francisco Symphony

(415) 503-5474

publicrelations@sfsymphony.org

sfsymphony.org/press

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(High resolution images of the SFS Chorus and Ragnar Bohlin are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Photo Library](#))

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY CHORUS AND DIRECTOR RAGNAR BOHLIN PERFORM FAURÉ'S REQUIEM, MAY 1 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL

Program includes the SF Symphony Chorus premiere of Brahms's *Fest- und Gedenksprüche* and the SFS commission *Mass Transmission* by Mason Bates

SAN FRANCISCO, April 13 – The Grammy Award-winning San Francisco Symphony Chorus and Director Ragnar Bohlin present a performance featuring Fauré's Requiem on Sunday, May 1 in Davies Symphony Hall. Other works on the program are Brahms's *Fest- und Gedenksprüche* and Mason Bates's *Mass Transmission*, with Bates performing on electronica. The SFS Chorus performs the version of Fauré's Requiem for chorus, soloists, and organ, featuring soprano Joanna Taber, baritone Hadleigh Adams, and organist Jonathan Dimmock. Dimmock also joins the Chorus in *Mass Transmission*, which is scored for chorus, organ, and electronica and was commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony for its *American Mavericks* Festival during the 2011-12 Centennial season.

Fauré's Requiem is the best known of his large works and it offers a unique view on the subject of death, in that its focus is on eternal rest and consolation. Fauré said of his work: "It has been said that my Requiem does not express the fear of death and someone has called it a lullaby of death. But it is thus that I see death: as a happy deliverance, an aspiration towards happiness above, rather than as a painful experience." While the orchestral version of Fauré's Requiem was last performed by the SFS and Chorus in 2014, this concert will mark the SFS Chorus's first performance of the version scored for chorus, soloists, and organ. Mason Bates's *Mass Transmission* was premiered by the SFS Chorus in 2012, as part of the SF Symphony's *American Mavericks* Festival. *Mass Transmission* is the story of a mother and daughter communicating over vast distances by radio in the 1920's. The program opens with Brahms's *Fest- und Gedenksprüche*

for double chorus, considered one of the 19th century's most important *a cappella* works. This will be the first time *Fest-und Gedenksprüche* is performed by the SFS Chorus.

One of America's most distinguished choruses, the 152-member [San Francisco Symphony Chorus](#) led by Director Ragnar Bohlin celebrated its 40th anniversary in the 2013-14 season. Known for its precision, power, and versatility, the SFS Chorus performs more than twenty concerts each season and is comprised of 32 professional and 120 volunteer members. Recordings featuring the SFS Chorus have won a total of eight Grammy awards, including three for Best Choral Performance. They were featured on the SFS Media's recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with MTT and the SFS, which won three 2010 Grammys, including the award for Best Choral Performance. Most recently, the SFS Chorus can be heard on a recording of Beethoven's Mass in C with Michael Tilson Thomas and the SFS, released on the Orchestra's in-house label SFS Media in November 2015. Members of the chorus can also be heard on the SF Symphony's complete concert recording of Bernstein's score for *West Side Story*, released in June 2014 and nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Musical Theater Album and winner of the 2015 ICMA Award for Best Album. Coming up, the SFS Chorus will be featured in a semi-staged production of *On the Town* with the SF Symphony and Michael Tilson Thomas, May 25-29 at Davies Symphony Hall.

[Ragnar Bohlin](#) began his tenure as Chorus Director of the San Francisco Symphony in 2007. Under his leadership, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus received a Grammy for Best Choral Performance for the recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony. Bohlin has served as choirmaster of Stockholm's Maria Magdalena Church, and holds a master's degree in organ and conducting and a postgraduate degree in conducting from the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm. He studied choral conducting with choir director Eric Ericson, orchestral conducting with Jorma Panula, piano with Peter Feuchtwanger in London, singing with Swedish tenor Nicolai Gedda, and through a Sweden-America Foundation scholarship he visited choruses throughout the US. With Stockholm's KFUM Chamber Choir, the Maria Magdalena Motet Choir, and the Maria Vocal Ensemble, Ragnar Bohlin has won numerous prizes in international competitions. He has received the Johannes Norrby Medal for expanding the frontiers of Swedish choral music. Currently teaching at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, he has also taught at the Royal Academy in Stockholm and been a visiting professor at Indiana University and Miami University. In 2010, he conducted the Swedish Radio Choir on a US tour; he also made his Carnegie Hall debut conducting Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem*. With the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, he has conducted J.S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and B minor Mass, and Handel's *Messiah*. In 2011 he appeared as guest conductor of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Bach's *Magnificat* and Pärt's *Te Deum*. In 2012 he appeared as guest conductor with the Orquesta Clásica Santa Cecilia and the Madrid Choral Society in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and he conducted Sixten's *Requiem* with the Swedish Radio Choir and Nordic Chamber Orchestra, broadcast on Swedish Public Radio. Upcoming guest conducting appearances include debuts with the Stavanger Symphony and the Edmonton Symphony. He will also return to the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra for multiple appearances in 2015 and 2016. Ragnar Bohlin is the founding Artistic Director of the professional chamber chorus Cappella SF. In March 2013, he was awarded the Cultural Achievement Award from the Swedish-America Chamber of Commerce in San Francisco.

Calendar editors, please note:

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY CHORUS WITH DIRECTOR RAGNAR BOHLIN

[Sunday, May 1, 2016 at 7:30 pm](#)

Davies Symphony Hall
201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA

Ragnar Bohlin conductor
Joanna Taber soprano
Hadleigh Adams baritone
Mason Bates electronica
Jonathan Dimmock organ
San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Ragnar Bohlin director

BRAHMS
Mason BATES
FAURÉ

Fest- und Gedenksprüche, Opus 109
Mass Transmission
Requiem, Opus 48 (for chorus, soloists, and organ)

Please note that the San Francisco Symphony does not appear on this program.

Pre-Order Food and Drinks: Concertgoers may pre-order drinks and snacks [here](#) by 11am the day of a performance to arrange to have them ready at Davies Symphony Hall either before the concert or at intermission.

Tickets: \$20-\$125

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.

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