



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



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PROGRAM CHANGE ALERT: MARCH 4, 2016

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ANNOUNCE PROGRAM CHANGE IN CONCERTS FEATURING MEZZO-SOPRANO SUSAN GRAHAM, MAY 19-22

SAN FRANCISCO, March 4, 2016 –The San Francisco Symphony (SFS) announced today that mezzo-soprano Susan Graham will sing Berlioz's *La mort de Cléopâtre* with the Orchestra, in place of the previously announced Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*, in concerts in Davies Symphony Hall May 19-22. The program now also includes Schubert's *Nachtgesang im Walde*, featuring the men of the SFS Chorus.

"After Susan's stunning appearance as Didon in *Les Troyens* at SF Opera, I wanted to provide an opportunity for San Francisco Symphony audiences to experience her unique and powerful interpretation of Berlioz's music," said Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas. "For me, Susan has no equal when it comes to his music."

As originally announced, the remainder of the program includes Brahms's Variations of a Theme by Haydn and Schumann's Symphony No. 4 in D minor.

La Mort de Cléopâtre (1829) is one of four dramatic cantatas for voice and orchestra composed by Berlioz in his attempt to win the *Prix de Rome*. Set to a text by Pierre-Ange Vieillard which describes Cleopatra's death, it is composed like a monologue rather than the traditional alternation between aria and recitative. This, along with some colorful harmonic choices, did not please the conservative judges at the time. Even though Berlioz was quite proud of the work, it was never performed publically in his lifetime, but later adopted as a favorite amongst singers. Susan Graham recorded the work with the Berlin Philharmonic in 2008.

Calendar editors, please note:

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

[Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 10 am \(Open Rehearsal\)](#)

[Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Friday, May 20, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Saturday, May 21, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Sunday, May 22, 2016 at 2 pm](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Susan Graham mezzo-soprano

Men of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus

San Francisco Symphony

BRAHMS

Variations of a Theme by Haydn, Opus 56a

BERLIOZ

La Mort de Cléopâtre

SCHUBERT

Nachtgesang im Walde

SCHUMANN

Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Opus 120

Tickets: \$30-\$170. Tickets to Davies Symphony Hall performances are available at [sfsymphony.org](https://www.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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