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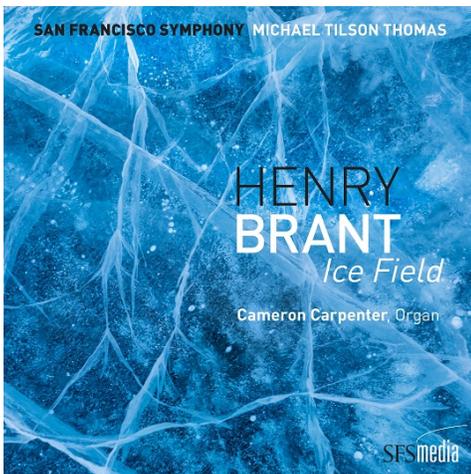
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / MAY 17, 2019

**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY RELEASE DIGITAL RECORDING OF HENRY BRANT'S PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING SPATIAL COMPOSITION *ICE FIELD* ON SFS MEDIA LABEL MAY 17, 2019**

**Organist Cameron Carpenter featured on first-ever recording of Brant's work, written specifically for Michael Tilson Thomas, the San Francisco Symphony, and Davies Symphony Hall**

**Digital-only release available for streaming and download in one-of-a-kind binaural headphones experience produced using Dolby Atmos system**

**Listen now and learn more at [sfsymphony.org/brant](http://sfsymphony.org/brant)**



SAN FRANCISCO—Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) announce the release of Brant *Ice Field*, featuring organist Cameron Carpenter. Recorded live during performances at Davies Symphony Hall in September 2014, this latest release from the San Francisco Symphony's eight-time Grammy Award-winning in-house recording label, SFS Media, is a one-of-a-kind binaural headphones experience produced using Dolby Atmos®. Henry Brant's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Ice Field*—written expressly for MTT, the SFS, and Davies Symphony Hall—is available now for streaming and download.

Michael Tilson Thomas has, throughout his career, championed the work of iconoclastic 20th Century American composers—“mavericks” in his own words. MTT comments: “Henry’s compositions create a huge world of sound. His *Ice Field* is a vast sonic landscape on a huge scale that was written specifically for the acoustics of Davies Symphony Hall. The piece is a kind of a concerto grosso for organ and orchestra. Not only are the forces of a huge orchestra divided from the top balcony to positions on (or seemingly under) the stage, but they are coupled with the full power of our Ruffatti organ. When we played the premiere, the organ part was partially improvised by Henry himself. He was a very slight guy, but one of the wildest people I’ve met as far as his musical imagination and spontaneity. When organist Cameron Carpenter joined us for this recording of *Ice Field*, he too had a reputation for being one of the wilder people in music. I shared with Cameron my

experience of Henry's free spirit and imagination, and from that moment on, Cameron pushed the instrument as far it could go."

The full title of the piece, *Ice Field: Spatial Narratives for Large and Small Orchestral Groups*, indicates the nature of Brant's "spatial" approach to composition. *Ice Field* was commissioned for the SFS by [Other Minds](#), a San Francisco-based new music organization founded by composer Charles Amirkhanian. *Ice Field* received its world premiere by MTT and the SFS in December, 2001, with the composer at the organ. Brant won a 2002 Pulitzer Prize for the work the following year.

For Brant, "space," created by the location of the instruments in the hall, is a crucial compositional element. *Ice Field* was devised to use the expressive spatial possibilities of Davies Symphony Hall, dividing the orchestra into various groups and positioning them in the organ loft, second tier, on stage, and in the side boxes, thus creating a multi-directional aspect to the sound for the listener. He also uses elements of improvisation in the composition. Of his spatial technique Brant has said, "I had come to feel that single-style music, no matter how experimental or full of variety, could no longer evoke the new stresses, layered insanities, and multi-directional assaults of contemporary life on the spirit." In his spatial music he found a solution that he believed would "speak more expressively of the human predicament."



*Henry Brant and Michael Tilson Thomas prepare for the world premiere of Ice Field in Davies Symphony Hall, 2001.*

San Francisco Symphony Recording Engineer and Producer for this album, Jack Vad, describes the unique way in which this recording was produced: "Utilizing Dolby Atmos allowed us to take unconventionally located musical performance elements and create a listening experience that provides imaging from the front, center, back, side, and above in ways that are extremely realistic. Dolby Atmos is a superior technology when compared to anything else that we're aware of in the music world. Once we started experimenting with this recording of Brant's *Ice Field* in Dolby Atmos, we quickly realized that it would actually be possible to finally represent this work the way it should be heard. Ultimately, we created a file that, by listening with a standard set of headphones, allows the listener to have both a clear sense that there is not only activity all around but that one can accurately pinpoint where specific sound elements are originating."

**For more information; photos; audio samples; a short documentary video about the performance, recording, and engineering process; digital liner notes featuring a forward written by MTT; and written interviews with composer Henry Brant and Producer Jack Vad, visit [sfsymphony.org/brant](https://sfsymphony.org/brant). To request a digital review copy of the recording, email the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at [publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org).**

**Henry Brant** (1913-2008), America's pioneer explorer and practitioner of 20th Century spatial music, was born in Montreal in 1913 to American parents and began to compose at the age of eight. In 1929 he moved to New York where for the next 20 years he composed and conducted for radio, films, ballet and jazz groups, at the same time composing experimentally for the concert hall. From 1947 to 1955 he taught orchestration and conducted ensembles at The Juilliard School and Columbia University. At Bennington College, from 1957 to

1980, he taught composition; and every year he presented premieres of orchestral and choral works by living composers. For the last 27 years of his life, Brant made his home in Santa Barbara, California. MTT and the SF Symphony recorded Charles Ives' *A Concord Symphony* orchestrated by Henry Brant for SFS Media in 2010.



Organist [Cameron Carpenter](#) has been a frequent guest of the SF Symphony since his debut on the organ series in 2010, appearing in many subsequent seasons in solo recital, in the Film Series, or with the Orchestra. Cameron's repertoire—from the complete works of J. S. Bach to film scores, his original compositions and hundreds of transcriptions and arrangements—is probably the largest and most diverse of any organist. He is the first concert organist in history to prefer the digital organ to the pipe organ, and to champion it as the future of the instrument. In 2014, Cameron launched his International Touring Organ—a monumental cross-genre digital organ built by Marshall & Ogletree to his own design—in extensive tours in Europe and the USA. His Sony Music debut album *If You Could Read My Mind* entered Billboard's Traditional Classical chart at No. 1 on its US release. A former child prodigy, Cameron Carpenter trained at the American Boychoir School, the North Carolina School of the Arts and has two degrees from The Juilliard School. He

holds the 2012 Leonard Bernstein Award, is the first solo organist ever nominated for a Grammy® Award for a solo album, and has appeared with many of the great orchestras around the world; he has spoken and debated at think tanks and conferences including TED, IdeaCity, The Entertainment Gathering, and many more.

[SFS Media](#) is the San Francisco Symphony's award-winning in-house label, launched in 2001. SFS Media releases reflect MTT and the SFS's artistic vision of showcasing music by American composers as well as core classical masterworks, and embody the broad range of programming that has been a hallmark of the MTT/SFS partnership. Recorded live in concert and engineered at Davies Symphony Hall, audio recordings are released on hybrid SACD and in high-resolution digital formats. SFS Media has garnered eight Grammy awards. SFS Media also produces and releases documentary and live performance videos, including the SFS's national public television series and multimedia project *Keeping Score*, which includes three seasons of television episodes, eight documentaries, and eight concert films designed to make classical music more accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds. The *Keeping Score* series is now available as a digital download and on DVD and Blu-ray. Other videos of the San Francisco Symphony available from SFS Media include *A Celebration of Leonard Bernstein: Opening Night at Carnegie Hall 2008* and *San Francisco Symphony at 100*, a documentary about the Symphony's history, which won a Northern California Emmy Award.

**Brant *Ice Field*** is available May 17 through digital outlets worldwide, including iTunes, Amazon, [AppleMusic](#), [Spotify](#), Primephonic, HDTracks, and Google Play. All SFS Media physical recordings are also available from the Symphony Store in Davies Symphony Hall, as well as from all major retailers. Global distribution of all SFS Media products is managed by Warner Classics Label Services.

**Title:** Brant: *Ice Field*

**Composer:** Henry Brant (1913–2008)

**Producer:** Jack Vad

**Engineering Support:** Roni Jules, Gus Pollek, Jonathon Stevens, Denise Woodward

**Post-Production:** Jack Vad, Mark Willsher,

**Dolby Atmos Post-Production:** John Loose, Jack Vad, Mark Willsher

**Artists:** San Francisco Symphony

Michael Tilson Thomas, Music Director  
Cameron Carpenter, Organ  
Edwin Outwater, Conductor

**Work:** *Ice Field*

**Commissioned by:** Other Minds

**Recorded:** September 18–21, 2014. All works recorded in PCM and 24-bit/192kHz audio live in Davies Symphony Hall

**Label:** SFS Media

**Catalogue Number:** SFS-0075

**Release Date:** May 17, 2019

**Total Run Time:** 00:24:31

**Price:** \$3.99 / £3.49 / €3.99

**Description:** Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony team up with iconoclastic organist Cameron Carpenter to release the first-ever recording of Henry Brant's Pulitzer Prize-winning spatial composition, *Ice Field*. Put on your headphones for a unique Dolby Atmos immersive experience that allows us to hear Brant's work as it was intended: as a vast acoustical soundscape for 100 players scattered throughout Davies Symphony Hall. Visit [sfsymphony.org/brant](https://sfsymphony.org/brant) and digital stores everywhere to hear and learn more about this groundbreaking recording.

**Media copies:** Members of the press may request a digital review copy of the recording, high-res photos, video for embed, and digital liner notes from the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at [publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org).

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