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(High resolution images of Michael Tilson Thomas, James Darrah, and the full cast are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Press Kit](#). Photo credit L to R: Spencer Lowell, Simona Kessler.)

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS LEADS THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY & CHORUS AND AN INTERNATIONALLY-RENOWNED CAST IN ORIGINAL SEMI-STAGED PERFORMANCES OF MUSSORGSKY'S OPERA *BORIS GODUNOV*, JUNE 14–15 & 17, 2018

Bass Stanislav Trofimov performs the title role of Boris Godunov

Production team includes Director James Darrah, Lighting Designer Pablo Santiago, Projection Designer Adam Larsen, and scenic & costume design by Emily Anne MacDonald and Cameron Jaye Mock

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) leads the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) and Chorus, joined by the Pacific Boychoir and an internationally-renowned cast, in **semi-staged performances of the epic political drama *Boris Godunov* featuring Mussorgsky's original orchestration, June 14–15 & 17** at Davies Symphony Hall. Inspired by Pushkin's Shakespearean tragedy, the work follows the rise and fall of the 16th-century Tsar Boris Godunov in a story underpinned by ambition, power, and betrayal. The production, conceived by MTT and directed by [James Darrah](#), features original lighting design by [Pablo Santiago](#), projection design by [Adam Larsen](#), and scenic & costume design by [Emily Anne MacDonald & Cameron Jaye Mock](#). This same world-class creative team has previously collaborated with MTT and the SFS on critically-acclaimed productions including *Peer Gynt* in 2013, *Peter Grimes* in 2014, and, most recently, *On the Town* in 2016.

For more than twenty seasons, Michael Tilson Thomas and the SFS have been reinventing the way audiences experience

classical music by creating original staging for works of the orchestral and operatic repertory in a symphonic setting. From *The Flying Dutchman*, *Peter Grimes*, and *Peer Gynt*, to *West Side Story* and *On The Town*, MTT continues to explore new ways to provide context for core masterworks with visionary staging and design elements. “My goal with each semi-staged production, whether opera, musical theater, or symphonic work, is to use lighting, costumes, projections, and stage direction to further illuminate the music and story so that the audience comes away with a deeper and more immersive concert experience,” explains Michael Tilson Thomas. “I’m looking forward to this production which will showcase the incredible artistry of the San Francisco Symphony, our esteemed soloists, and our remarkable design team and stage crew.”



(Images L to R: Stanislav Trofimov as Boris in the Mariinsky Theatre's 2017 production of *Boris Godunov*; preliminary renderings of costume and stage designs by Emily Anne MacDonald & Cameron Jaye Mock. Images can be downloaded from the [Online Press Kit](#).)

The accomplished Eastern European cast assembled for *Boris Godunov* includes bass [Stanislav Trofimov](#) (Boris Godunov), tenor [Sergei Skorokhodov](#) (Grigory), tenor [Yevgeny Akimov](#) (Prince Shuisky), bass [Vyacheslav Pochapsky](#) (Varlaam), bass [Maxim Kuzmin-Karavaev](#) (Pimen), baritone [Aleksey Bogdanov](#) (Andrei Shchelkalov), and tenor [Stanislav Mostovoy](#) (Holy Fool), in addition to soprano [Jennifer Zetlan](#) (Xenia), mezzo-soprano [Eliza Bonet](#) (Fyodor), mezzo-soprano [Silvie Jensen](#) (Nurse), mezzo-soprano [Catherine Cook](#) (Innkeeper), tenor [Ben Jones](#) (Missail), tenor [Elliott Encarnación](#) (Boyar in Attendance), baritone [Matthew Peterson](#) (Chernikovsky), baritone [Jonathan Thomas](#) (Lavitsky), baritone [Samuel Faustine](#) (Boyar Khrushchov), bass-baritone [Philip Skinner](#) (Nikitich), and bass [Chung-Wai Soong](#) (Mityukha). Other cast members include choreographer and dancer [Christopher Bordenave](#), and [Judson Emery](#), [Charissa Kroeger](#), [Austyn Rich](#), [Sasha Rivero](#), and [Jobel Medina](#) who appear in various roles as actors and dancers. The performances also feature the [San Francisco Symphony Chorus](#), directed by Ragnar Bohlin; the [Pacific Boychoir](#), directed by Andrew Brown; and live Russian bells performed by San Francisco percussionist [Victor Avdienko](#).

From June 1 through June 17, there will be an informative lobby display on the First Tier of Davies Symphony Hall titled *Times of Trouble: The Intersection of Music and Politics*. The exhibit explores the ways in which composers like Mussorgsky, Shostakovich, and Messiaen used music to express political ideas and provide social commentary in times of trouble throughout history.

To access the synopsis of *Boris Godunov*, as well as artist bios and photos, preliminary production renderings and costume sketches, and other supporting materials please visit the [Boris Godunov Online Press Kit](#).

About the San Francisco Symphony

The San Francisco Symphony (SFS) is widely considered to be among the most artistically adventurous and innovative arts institutions in the U.S. Under the artistic direction of [Michael Tilson Thomas](#) since 1995, the Orchestra is a leading presence among American orchestras at home and around the world, celebrated for its artistic excellence, creative performance concepts, active touring, award-winning recordings, and standard-setting education programs. The SFS presents more than 220 concerts and presentations annually for an audience of nearly 450,000 in its home of Davies Symphony Hall and through its active national and international touring. A cornerstone of the organization’s mission, the San Francisco Symphony’s education programs are the most extensive offered by any American orchestra today, providing free comprehensive music education to every first- through fifth-grade student in the San Francisco public schools, and serving more than 100,000 children, students, educators, and families annually. The SFS has won such recording awards as France’s Grand Prix du Disque and Britain’s *Gramophone* Award, as well as 15 Grammy Awards. In

2004, the SFS launched the multimedia *Keeping Score* on PBS-TV and the web. In 2014, the SFS inaugurated SoundBox, a new experimental performance venue and music series located backstage at Davies Symphony Hall. SFS radio broadcasts, the first in the nation to feature symphonic music when they began in 1926, today carry the Orchestra's concerts across the country.

About the San Francisco Symphony 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 26 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.

Travel Advisory

Those traveling to San Francisco for Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony's performances of *Boris Godunov* have an opportunity to experience another operatic masterpiece the same week at the San Francisco Opera—Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Opening performances of the *Ring* cycle take place on June 12, 13, 15, and 17, ideally surrounding the opening of *Boris Godunov* at Davies Symphony Hall on Thursday, June 14.

Calendar editors, please note:

All concerts take place at Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

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.

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

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY and CHORUS, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

[Thursday, June 14, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Friday, June 15, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Sunday, June 17, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

[Michael Tilson Thomas](#) conductor

[Stanislav Trofimov](#) bass (Boris Godunov)

[Jennifer Zetlan](#) soprano (Xenia)

[Eliza Bonet](#) mezzo-soprano (Fyodor)

[Silvie Jensen](#) mezzo-soprano (Nurse)

[Yevgeny Akimov](#) tenor (Prince Shuisky)

[Aleksey Bogdanov](#) baritone (Andrei Shchelkalov)

[Maxim Kuzmin-Karavaev](#) bass (Pimen)

[Sergei Skorokhodov](#) tenor (Grigory)

[Vyacheslav Pochapsky](#) bass (Varlaam)

[Ben Jones](#) tenor (Missail)

[Catherine Cook](#) mezzo-soprano (Innkeeper)

[Stanislav Mostovoy](#) tenor (Holy Fool)

[Philip Skinner](#) bass (Nikititsch)

[Chung-Wai Soong](#) bass (Mityukha)
[Elliott Encarnación](#) tenor (Boyar in Attendance)
[Samuel Faustine](#) tenor (Boyar Khrushchov)
[Jonathan Thomas](#) baritone (Lavitsky)
[Matthew Peterson](#) baritone (Chernikovsky)
[Christopher Bordenave](#) actor/dancer
[Judson Emery](#) actor/dancer
Charissa Kroeger actor/dancer
Sasha Rivero actor/dancer
Jobel Medina actor/dancer
Austyn Rich actor/dancer
[Victor Avdienko](#) Russian bell ringer
[Pacific Boychoir](#), **Andrew Brown** director
[San Francisco Symphony Chorus](#), **Ragnar Bohlin** director
[San Francisco Symphony](#)

Production team:

[James Darrah](#) director
[Pablo Santiago](#) lighting design
[Adam Larsen](#) video design
[Hana S. Kim](#) associate video design
[Christopher Bordenave](#) choreographer
[Emily Anne MacDonald & Cameron Jaye Mock](#) scenic & costume design

MUSSORGSKY

Boris Godunov [First SFS Performances]

Scene 1 – Courtyard
Scene 2 – Coronation Scene
Scene 3 – Monastery
Scene 4 – The Inn
Scene 5 – The Palace
Scene 6 – Kremlin
Scene 7 – Forest at Kromy

Pre-Concert Talk: Alexandra D. Amati will give an “Inside Music” talk from the stage one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

Tickets: \$35–159

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