



SAN FRANCISCO
SYMPHONY

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SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY CANCELS PLANNED CONCERTS IN NORTH CAROLINA DUE TO STATE'S HOUSE BILL 2

SAN FRANCISCO – The San Francisco Symphony (SFS) today announced the cancellation of two planned performances in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, April 5–6, 2017 in response to that state's House Bill 2 (HB2), a law which overturned protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals earlier this year. Scheduled tour performances at New York's Carnegie Hall April 7–8 featuring Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra, Mahler's Symphony No. 1, John Cage's *The Seasons*, and Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1 performed by Gautier Capuçon remain unchanged.

Soon after the bill was passed and signed into law, San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee issued a statement barring publicly-funded City employees from travelling to North Carolina on business. While the San Francisco Symphony is not a city entity, it honors its role as a cultural ambassador to also include the values of the city whose name it carries.

"The Symphony today made the decision to cancel its appearances in North Carolina," stated Executive Director Brent Assink. "In the months after HB2 became law, we have closely watched the fluctuating political landscape in hopes that the law would be overturned. Because that has not yet happened, and due to pressing internal travel deadlines, the San Francisco Symphony has made the decision to cancel its concerts at this time."

"This decision is not a reflection of our regard for Carolina Performing Arts, which is a valued artistic partner, but a response to the North Carolina state legislature's decision to enact HB2. We would have loved to perform at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a community that in many ways is consonant with our own San Francisco Bay Area. But we also feel we must join our city, our state, the NBA, NCAA, and the many artists, organizations, and businesses who have chosen to not visit or contribute economically to North Carolina until legislation denying protection for the LGBT community has been overturned. The San Francisco

Symphony, its Board of Governors, and Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas wholeheartedly support this decision, as they support all those striving for equality and inclusiveness in their community and beyond.”

Carolina Performing Arts Executive and Artistic Director and Special Assistant to the Chancellor, Emil J. Kang, stated “I am disappointed that the San Francisco Symphony will not be performing at UNC-Chapel Hill in April, 2017 because of NC House Bill 2 (HB2) but I respect their decision to cancel. UNC-Chapel Hill policies – including protections for sexual orientation and gender identity – remain in effect, and we have never enforced HB2 on our campus. We at Carolina Performing Arts (CPA) will continue to foster inclusion and strive to provide an open, welcoming environment for all patrons.”

“The San Francisco Symphony should be applauded for taking a leadership role in our community,” stated longtime California State Senator and civil rights advocate Mark Leno. “Michael Tilson Thomas and the Orchestra have been active and vocal leaders nationwide in many ways and I am proud to see them taking this stance in the name of equal rights for all. Both our city and state have restricted official travel to North Carolina in response to HB2, and the Symphony lends its voice in defending San Francisco values.”

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