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SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY NOMINATED FOR 2019 GRAMOPHONE ORCHESTRA OF THE YEAR AWARD

Voting Open to the General Public June 11–September 7 at gramophone.co.uk/awards

SAN FRANCISCO—The San Francisco Symphony (SFS) has been announced as one of ten nominees for the *Gramophone* Classical Music Awards' Orchestra of the Year. Now in its second year, the *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year award recognizes ensembles that have made significant recorded contributions in the past year, and once again reflects the excellence of music-making across the globe. The Award will be decided by public vote, and the winner will be revealed at a ceremony at London's De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms on Wednesday October 16, to be streamed live by Medici.TV. Voting is open to the general public beginning today, June 11 until September 7, 2019 at gramophone.co.uk/awards.

Launched in 2001, San Francisco Symphony's in-house media label SFS Media has released 32 live performance recordings, garnering 15 Grammy Awards, 22 Grammy Nominations, Japan's Record Academy Award, France's Grand Prix du Disque, Germany's ECHO Klassik Award, and an International Classical Music Award. In addition to live concert recordings, SFS Media has produced and released documentary and live performance videos, including the multimedia project *Keeping Score*.

San Francisco Symphony CEO Mark C. Hanson says: "The San Francisco Symphony is honored to be nominated for *Gramophone's* Orchestra of the Year award. Since its founding, the SFS Media label has exemplified the Symphony's commitment to innovation, access, and sharing the exceptional music-making of Michael Tilson Thomas and this Orchestra with audiences around the globe. The recordings released on SFS Media this year provide a window into MTT's artistic vision, spanning a masterful symphony by Tchaikovsky and a large-scale vocal and choral work by Berlioz, to two works written by iconic Americans who MTT knew well—an intimate song cycle by Leonard Bernstein and a work by Henry Brant commissioned for the San Francisco Symphony. I commend MTT, the members of the Orchestra and Chorus, our tremendous guest soloists, and audio producer Jack Vad for their vision and artistry reflected in these recordings."

Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony's album releases this year aptly reflect SFS Media's goal of showcasing American composers as well as core classical masterworks. 2018–19 releases include Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 6, Pathétique* (June 2018); Bernstein's *Arias and Barcarolles* with mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard and bass-baritone Ryan McKinny (August 2018); Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* with mezzo-

soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Nicholas Phan, and bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni, and the San Francisco Symphony Chorus under the direction of Ragnar Bohlin (November 2018); and Brant's *Ice Field*, with organist Cameron Carpenter (May 2019).

Editor-in-Chief of *Gramophone* James Jolly says: "The first-ever Orchestra of the Year Award last year captured the imaginations of over 20,000 music lovers from all over the world and propelled the Seattle Symphony to victory. This year *Gramophone* has short listed ten ensembles who have made a huge impact over the last year, invariably thanks to a special dynamism between conductor and players. Guided by some superb recordings, we've highlighted ten magnificent ensembles. Just head to Apple Music to listen to the playlists and cast your vote!"

The ten orchestras nominated for Gramophone's Orchestra of the Year are the San Francisco Symphony, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Staatskapelle Berlin, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia – Rome, and Les Siècles.

ABOUT SFS MEDIA

[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.

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

The San Francisco Symphony 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. In December 2018, the San Francisco Symphony announced Esa-Pekka Salonen as its Music Director Designate. Salonen will begin his appointment as the SFS's 12th Music Director in September 2020, at which time Michael Tilson Thomas will become the Orchestra's first Music Director Laureate, following his remarkable 25-year tenure as Music Director.

The San Francisco Symphony 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 75,000 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.

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