



**SAN FRANCISCO  
SYMPHONY**

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS • MUSIC DIRECTOR

2016-17  
Season

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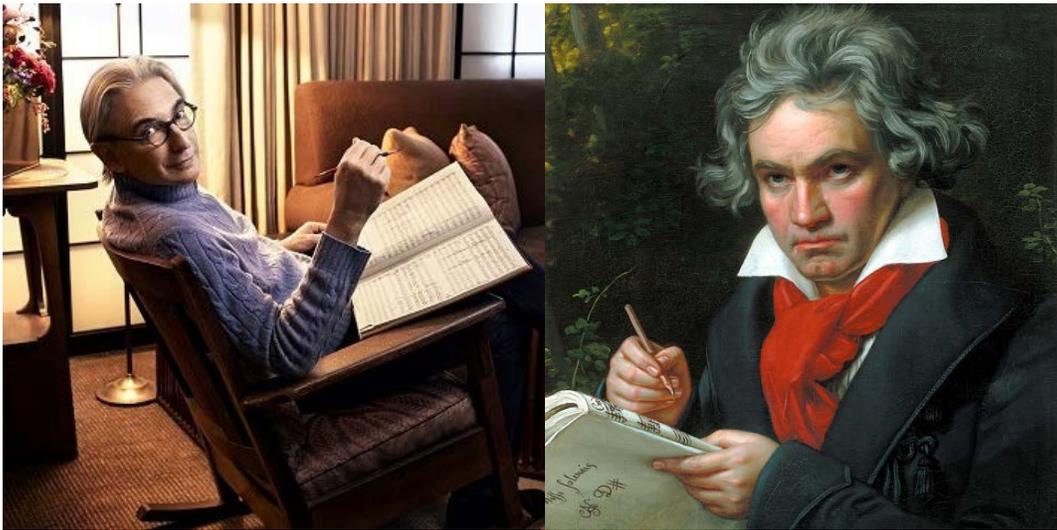
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(High resolution images of Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Photo Library](#))

## **MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY PERFORM BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 5, SEPTEMBER 14-18 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL**

**A special "Discovery Concert" on Sunday, September 18 offers a unique in-depth examination of  
Beethoven's Symphony No. 5**

**September 14-17 concerts include Haydn's Symphony No. 69, *Laudon* and Sibelius's Symphony No. 3**

**SAN FRANCISCO, UPDATED SEPTEMBER 15, 2016**– Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) leads the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) in concerts featuring Beethoven's pivotal Symphony No. 5, September 14-18 at Davies Symphony Hall. On Sunday, September 18, the SFS introduces a new "Discovery Concert" in which MTT takes listeners on an in-depth exploration of Beethoven's groundbreaking work.

MTT will conduct and host this special event, which will incorporate demonstrations at the piano, projections that illustrate other works of music, literature and art that provide context around Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, and orchestral and choral excerpts from related works by Beethoven, Monteverdi, and J.S. Bach (excerpts will be performed by the SF Symphony and members of the SFS Chorus). A full performance of the work will conclude the exploratory afternoon.

Michael Tilson Thomas describes Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 and the September 18 "Discovery Concert" by saying:

“There is something incredibly special about the piece because it represents a moment in history, and a change in the way we think about ourselves. It’s a psychological diary of sorts in which Beethoven illustrates feelings of anger, unhappiness, and confusion. But somehow, we find our way towards joyousness, freedom, and liberation. He encodes all of these emotions over the course of this symphony. That’s why, musically, it is such a revolutionary piece, and why to this day it represents the extraordinary journey of the human spirit.

“So in this concert, I’m going to take you through all of this. It will be as if you are seated right here at the piano bench with me where I can play it for you, but along with the Orchestra we’ll have the best of all possible worlds. I can talk to you about the piece, I can demonstrate some examples with the Orchestra, then cut away to some other examples in music history, but also in visual arts, literature, and drama, to show how this piece is as individual and path-finding a work today as it has ever been.”

Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony have released five separate Beethoven recordings on SFS Media, the Orchestra’s Grammy Award-winning recording label. The most recent recording was released in November 2015 and features Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 3 featuring Emanuel Ax and Mass in C major. This recording joins four previous SFS Media recordings of Beethoven’s music by MTT and the San Francisco Symphony, and a *Keeping Score* documentary and concert of the composer’s Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*, available on DVD and Blu-ray. Of their recording of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 in 2011, Donald Rosenberg wrote in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, “Tilson Thomas leads a forceful, nuanced account of Beethoven’s Fifth that shows his San Francisco Symphony to be in prime health.” MTT and the SFS also recorded and released Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7 and *Leonore* Overture No. 3. Beethoven recordings featuring the Grammy Award-winning San Francisco Symphony Chorus include Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and his Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II and Symphony No. 2. Of MTT and the SFS’s Beethoven exploration, Blair Sanderson wrote on *All Music.com*, “Michael Tilson Thomas’s super audio recordings of Beethoven’s symphonies with the San Francisco Symphony deserve attention for their superb musicianship and extraordinary sound quality.”

Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, completed and premiered in 1808, is known for perhaps the most famous opening bars of any symphonic work. The first eight notes immediately set a dramatic tone, but Beethoven’s masterful development of this theme is what makes the symphony truly spectacular. The victory symphony was a new kind of symphony, and Beethoven’s invention here of a path from strife to triumph became a model for symphonic writing to the present day.

Haydn’s Symphony No. 69, composed in 1775-1776, is more lighthearted than the composer’s earlier works and represents a stylistic departure from Haydn’s Sturm und Drang period. The symphony is named after General Ernst Gideon Freiherr von Laudon, although this was more of a financial ploy rather than a sign of patriotism. This will be San Francisco Symphony’s first performance of Haydn’s *Laudon* Symphony.

Sibelius began work on his Third Symphony in 1904 and premiered it with the Helsinki Philharmonic in summer of 1907. The symphony is marked by a stubborn anti-Romanticism, uncharacteristic for Sibelius and very different from the lush and grand style of his other works during the same time period. His Third Symphony is about the pleasure of making music, its chief traits being modesty and energy. Sibelius’s Symphony No. 3 was last performed by the SFS in June of 2012 under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas.

***Calendar editors, please note:***

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## **SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING**

[Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Friday, September 16, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Saturday, September 17, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

Davies Symphony Hall  
201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA

**Michael Tilson Thomas** conductor  
**San Francisco Symphony**

**HAYDN** Symphony No. 69 in C major, *Laudon*  
**SIBELIUS** Symphony No. 3 in C major, Opus 52  
**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Opus 67

**Audio Program Notes:** Listen to a free podcast about Sibelius's Symphony No. 3, hosted by [KDFC's Rik Malone](#). All podcasts are archived, and can be downloaded or streamed from [sfsymphony.org/podcasts](https://sfsymphony.org/podcasts) and from the [iTunes store](#).

**Broadcast / Archived Stream:** A broadcast of these performances will air Tuesday, September 27 at 8 pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and [kdfc.com](https://kdfc.com) where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

**Pre-Concert Talk:** Elizabeth Seitz 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.

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

**Tickets:** \$15-\$169.

Tickets are available at [sfsymphony.org](https://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.

## DISCOVERY CONCERT WITH MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS: BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 5

[Sunday, September 18, 2016 at 2 pm](#)

Davies Symphony Hall  
201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA

**Michael Tilson Thomas** conductor and host

**San Francisco Symphony**

**Members of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Ragnar Bohlin** director

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Opus 67

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

**Tickets:** \$35-\$155.

Tickets are available at [sfsymphony.org](https://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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*The September 14-17 concerts are made possible through the generosity of Franklin Templeton Investments.*

*The September 14-17 concerts are generously sponsored by the Mr. and Mrs. George Otto Sibelius Fund.*

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