



SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS • MUSIC DIRECTOR

Contact:

Public Relations

San Francisco Symphony

(415) 503-5474

publicrelations@sfsymphony.org

sfsymphony.org/press

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / SEPTEMBER 17, 2018



(High resolution images of Michael Tilson Thomas, Audra McDonald, Renée Fleming, Leonidas Kavakos, and the San Francisco Symphony are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Photo Library](#). Photo credit L to R: Spencer Lowell, Michael Orenstein, Andrew Eccles, Marco Borggreve)

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY OPEN CARNEGIE HALL'S 2018–2019 SEASON WITH OPENING NIGHT GALA CONCERT, OCTOBER 3

Gala program includes works by Gershwin and Liszt, plus renowned vocalists Renée Fleming and Audra McDonald performing songs, arias, and duets from opera and musical theater

SF Symphony Tour continues with an All-Stravinsky Program featuring violinist Leonidas Kavakos, October 4 at Carnegie Hall and October 5 at Tilles Center for the Performing Arts

Pre-tour performances of All-Stravinsky Program take place at Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, September 27–30, as part of the SF Symphony's Stravinsky Festival

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) launch Carnegie Hall's 2018–2019 season with an Opening Night Gala Concert on **October 3**, featuring **Gershwin's *Cuban Overture*** and ***An American in Paris***, **Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz No. 1 for Orchestra***, and renowned vocalists [Renée Fleming](#) and [Audra McDonald](#) performing works by Gershwin, Villa-Lobos, Bock/Sheldon Harnick, Guettel, Nyro, and Sondheim/Rodgers. The Opening Night Gala Concert will be broadcast live to listeners around the world via *Carnegie Hall Live* on WQXR 105.9 FM in New York and online at wqxr.org and carnegiehall.org/wqxr.

Michael Tilson Thomas made his Carnegie Hall debut nearly 50 years ago, leading the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1969. This season, he curates his second [Perspectives](#) series, celebrating more than 100 performances at Carnegie Hall and his 19th Carnegie Hall tour with the San Francisco Symphony. Known for his work as a composer as well as conductor, MTT's compositions have been performed around the world, many premiering at Carnegie Hall during his first *Perspectives* series (2003–2005). In 2012, MTT and the SF Symphony presented a landmark two-week *American Mavericks* festival, which showcased music by groundbreaking American composers and included four performances at Carnegie Hall. MTT and the SFS's performance at Carnegie Hall's 1998 Opening Gala was telecast nationally on PBS's *Great Performances*, and their 2008 Opening Gala concert celebrating Leonard Bernstein's 90th birthday was recorded and released on [DVD](#).

On **October 4**, MTT and the SFS return to Carnegie Hall with an **all-Stravinsky program**, which includes two of the three ballet scores composed by Stravinsky for Sergei Diaghilev's revolutionary Ballets Russes—***Petrushka*** and ***Le Sacre du printemps (The Rite of Spring)***—and [Leonidas Kavakos](#) performing the **Violin Concerto in D major**. Both Carnegie Hall performances are presented as part of Michael Tilson Thomas' seven-concert *Perspectives* series at Carnegie Hall this season. The all-Stravinsky program is repeated on **October 5** at the **Tilles Center for the Performing Arts**, bringing the San Francisco Symphony's East Coast Tour to a close.

Pre-tour performances of the all-Stravinsky program take place **September 27–30** at San Francisco's Davies Symphony Hall, as part of the San Francisco Symphony's two-week Stravinsky Festival. For more information about the festival, visit <http://www.sfsymphony.org/stravinsky>.

About Michael Tilson Thomas

Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) first conducted the San Francisco Symphony in 1974 and has been Music Director since 1995. Now in his 24th season as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, MTT is currently the longest-tenured music director at any major American orchestra. He is a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres of France, was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama in 2010, and was named the American Academy of Arts and Letters' 2016 award recipient for Distinguished Service to the Arts. Michael Tilson Thomas will conclude his distinguished tenure as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony in June 2020, at the conclusion of the 2019–2020 season, which will mark both his 75th birthday and his 25th year leading the Symphony in what is widely considered one of the most productive musical partnerships in the orchestral world.

Michael Tilson Thomas curates his second *Perspectives* series at Carnegie Hall during the 2018–2019 season, leading four orchestras over seven concerts that reflect his multifaceted career and commitment to shaping the future of classical music. The series features music by composers he has long championed, as well of his own recent compositions, performed by artists with whom he frequently collaborates. Tilson Thomas kicked off his *Perspectives* in July 2018, when he led the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America in Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage as well as on its five-city tour to Asia, joined by pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet. After the October concerts with the San Francisco Symphony, Tilson Thomas returns to Carnegie Hall in March for two concerts with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, including performances of works by Ives and Mahler—composers for whom he has a special affinity (March 5–6, 2019). His *Perspectives* series culminates in May with two performances with the New World Symphony, the orchestral academy he co-founded to prepare the most gifted graduates of America's conservatories for leadership roles in professional orchestras and ensembles. Both concerts feature fellow Carnegie Hall *Perspectives* artist and longtime colleague and friend, pianist Yuja Wang.

About the 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. The SFS presents more than 200 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. The national *Keeping Score* PBS television series and multimedia project, launched by MTT and the SFS in 2006 to make classical music accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds, has since been viewed by more than six million people in the U.S. alone, with episodes also being broadcast in countries around the world. 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. For more information, go to sfsymphony.org.

CALENDAR EDITORS:

PRE-TOUR PERFORMANCES

[Thursday, September 27, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Friday, September 28, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Saturday, September 29, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Sunday, September 30, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

Davies Symphony Hall

STRAVINSKY FESTIVAL

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Leonidas Kavakos violin

San Francisco Symphony

STRAVINSKY *Petrushka* (1947 revision)

STRAVINSKY Violin Concerto in D major

STRAVINSKY *Le Sacre du printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*) (1947 revision)

Tickets: \$15–\$166. 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.

2018 CARNEGIE HALL TOUR

[Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 7 pm](#)

Carnegie Hall

New York City, NY

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Renée Fleming soprano

Audra McDonald soprano

San Francisco Symphony

GERSHWIN *Cuban Overture*

LISZT *Mephisto Waltz* No. 1 for Orchestra

GERSHWIN *An American in Paris*

Renée Fleming and Audra McDonald with the San Francisco Symphony:

GERSHWIN "Summertime" from *Porgy and Bess*

VILLA-LOBOS Aria from *Bachianas brasileiras* No. 5

BOCK/Sheldon HARNICK "Vanilla Ice Cream" from *She Loves Me*
GUETTEL "Fable" from *The Light in the Piazza*
SONDHEIM/RODGERS "Children Will Listen" from *Into the Woods*
SONDHEIM/RODGERS "You've Got To Be Carefully Taught" from *South Pacific* (arr. Fisher)
NYRO "Save the Country" (arr. Bruce Coughlin)

Tickets: \$57–\$190. A limited number of Opening Night concert-only tickets are available at the Carnegie Hall Box Office by calling CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800, or online at carnegiehall.org. Gala Benefit tickets are available by calling the Carnegie Hall Special Events office at 212-903-9679 or online at carnegiehall.org/OpeningNight2018.

Broadcast: The Opening Night Concert will be broadcast live to listeners around the world via *Carnegie Hall Live* on WQXR 105.9 FM in New York and online at wqxr.org and carnegiehall.org/wqxr.

Thursday, October 4, 2018 at 8 pm

Carnegie Hall
New York City, NY

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Leonidas Kavakos violin
San Francisco Symphony

STRAVINSKY *Petrushka* (1947 revision)
STRAVINSKY Violin Concerto
STRAVINSKY *Le Sacre du Printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*) (1947 revision)

Tickets: \$38–\$126. Tickets are available at the Carnegie Hall Box Office, 154 West 57th Street, by calling CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800, or online at carnegiehall.org.

Pre-concert talk with Ara Guzelimian, Provost and Dean of The Juilliard School, begins at 7 pm.

Friday, October 5, 2018 at 8 pm

Tilles Center for the Performing Arts
Greenvale, NY

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Leonidas Kavakos violin
San Francisco Symphony

STRAVINSKY *Petrushka* (1947 revision)
STRAVINSKY Violin Concerto
STRAVINSKY *Le Sacre du Printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*) (1947 revision)

Tickets: \$45–\$125. Tickets are available by calling the box office at 516-299-3100, or online at <http://tillescenter.org/>.

Arts Insider event begins at 6:45 pm at the Krasnoff Theater at Tilles Center. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased by calling the box office at 516-299-3100, or online at <http://tillescenter.org/>.



The San Francisco Symphony receives support from over 10,000 individual donors and 150 partner institutions.

San Francisco Symphony tours are supported by the Frannie and Mort Fleishhacker Endowed Touring Fund, the Halfmann-Yee Fund for Touring, the Fay and Ada Tom Family Fund for Touring, and the Brayton Wilbur, Jr. Endowed Fund for Touring.

Emirates is the Official Airline of the San Francisco Symphony.

San Francisco Chronicle / SFGATE.com is the Official Media Partner of the San Francisco Symphony.

The San Francisco Symphony's Official Radio Partner is KDFC, The Bay Area's Radio Home for Classical Music and the Arts

- SFS -