



SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

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(High resolution images of Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony, Sasha Cooke, John Adams and Julia Fischer available for download from the [Online Photo Library](#).)

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS & THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY'S 2014 EUROPEAN TOUR FEATURES 11 CONCERTS IN 8 CITIES MARCH 14-26

Concerts include Mahler's Symphony No. 3, John Adams's *Absolute Jest*, Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, Prokofiev's Violin Concerto, and The Alcotts from *A Concord Symphony* by Ives/Brant

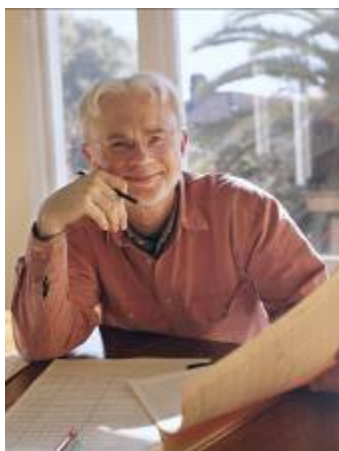
SAN FRANCISCO, CA (March 5, 2014) – Music Director [Michael Tilson Thomas](#) (MTT) leads the [San Francisco Symphony](#) (SFS) in eleven concerts across Europe March 14-26, taking them to London, Paris, Vienna, Prague, Geneva, Luxembourg, Dortmund, and Birmingham. The tour celebrates repertoire from the orchestra's Grammy award-winning SFS Media recording catalogue such as Mahler's Symphony No. 3, Beethoven's Symphony No.7, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and The Alcotts movement from *A Concord Symphony* by Charles Ives orchestrated by Henry Brant. The tour also highlights the orchestra's long standing relationship with San Francisco Bay Area composer John Adams with *Absolute Jest*, a work commissioned and recorded by MTT and the SFS, slated for release on CD in 2015. Distinguished soloists joining the Orchestra are the St. Lawrence String Quartet in *Absolute Jest*, violinist Julia Fischer in Prokofiev's Violin Concerto in D major and mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke in Mahler's Symphony 3. The chorus in Mahler's Symphony No. 3 will be performed by local ensembles: St. Paul Boys Choir and Women of the London Symphony Orchestra Chorus in London; Maîtrise de Paris children's chorus and Choeur des femmes de l'Orchestre de Paris women's chorus in Paris; Pueri cantores of the Luxembourg Conservatory and Choeur symphonique de la Grande Région in Luxembourg; and Vienna Boys Choir and Women of the Wieneringakademie in Vienna.

Celebrating their 20th season together next year, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony have the longest artistic partnership of any major American orchestra and music director active today. The partnership has been characterized by major national and international touring, ambitious media initiatives and recording projects of Mahler, Beethoven, and American maverick composers, and the most comprehensive music education program of any orchestra in the U.S., with educational and community programs that reach thousands of people of all ages throughout Northern California. MTT and the SFS have toured together over 25 times. Of particular prominence was a 2011 tour of Mahler symphonies to Europe's leading music capitals for the anniversaries of the composer's birth and death. This tour included a rare four-concert engagement at the famed Vienna Konzerthaus. Other recent touring highlights include the Orchestra's 10-concert tour of Asia in 2012, and a 2007 tour of summer festivals that featured two televised appearances at the BBC Proms in London and the festivals of Edinburgh, Rheingau, Berlin and Lucerne, where the SFS held a three-season residency.



SFS Media is the San Francisco Symphony's in-house audio and video recording label, launched in 2001. SFS Media records and releases material reflecting 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, the audio recordings are released on hybrid SACD and in high-quality digital formats. SFS Media recordings have garnered eight Grammy awards.

Also on SFS Media, the Orchestra produced the award-winning series *Keeping Score*, eight composer-based documentaries and concert films designed to make classical music more accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds, and now available on DVD and Blu-ray. *Keeping Score* includes an innovative website, www.keepingsscore.org, live performance audio CDs, and an education program for public schools to further teaching through the arts by integrating classical music into core subjects. 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.



John Adams

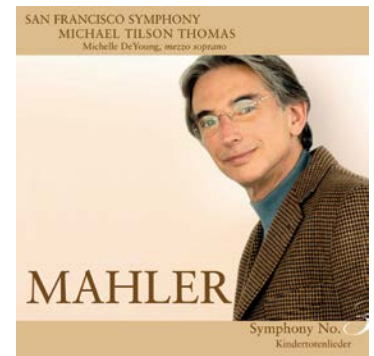
One of America's most admired and respected composers, John Adams has enjoyed a strong relationship with the San Francisco Symphony for more than 30 years. Adams was appointed contemporary music advisor to the San Francisco Symphony in 1979 and composer-in-residence between 1982 and 1985, a tenure which helped set the precedent for composer residencies at orchestras around the world. The creative relationship between the SF Symphony and John Adams has been extraordinarily productive: since 1981 the SFS has performed 23 of his works, seven of which were SFS commissions. John Adams's writings and more about his work can be found on his website, earbox.com.

In 2013 MTT and the SFS were honored with an Echo Klassik award for "Orchestra of the Year" from the German Music Critics' Association in recognition for their recording of John Adams's *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* and *Harmonielehre*. In 2012 the recording won a Grammy Award for "Best Orchestral Performance."

MTT and the San Francisco Symphony recorded their performance of *Absolute Jest*, inspired by the scherzos from Beethoven's late string quartets, with the St. Lawrence String Quartet in May 2013 for future release in 2015. Of the performance, Joshua Kosman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote, "The piece unveiled in Davies Symphony Hall boasts all the hallmarks of Adams' finest orchestral music—his extraordinary command of instrumental color, his buoyant rhythmic palette and his sure-handed mastery of large-scale form... Adams asserts his right to stand beside Beethoven, and to counterpoise the fruits of his own creative imagination to those of the master."

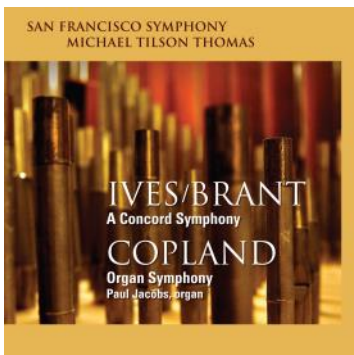
MTT/SFS Mahler Cycle

Michael Tilson Thomas and the SFS's self-produced Mahler recording project, launched in 2001, encompasses all of Mahler's symphonies and works for voice, chorus and orchestra. The Orchestra's Mahler cycle on SFS Media has been recognized with seven Grammy Awards, including three Grammy Awards for its recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 and the Adagio from Symphony No. 10. Complete box sets of the cycle are available on vinyl and SACD. MTT and the SFS's recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 3, featuring mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung, was released in 2003 and was paired with *Kindertotenlieder*. It won a Grammy for "Best Classical Album" and 5 stars from *Diapason* in France. At the time of its release, *Fono Forum* (Germany) called it, "A Mahler which sets new standards—not least due to its outstanding recording technology." *Thurgauer Zeitung* (Switzerland) described it as "... a fabulous recording....exemplary and [beautiful] sounding recording... Tilson Thomas takes his time for making music and breathing." And *Classic FM* wrote, "The knockout factors here are the orchestra's playing—consistently lovely, without a trace of harshness even in Mahler's hugest climaxes – and the spacious clarity of the sound." MTT and the SFS explore Mahler in an episode of their *Keeping Score* television series, an excerpt of which can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1kRhQK751s>.



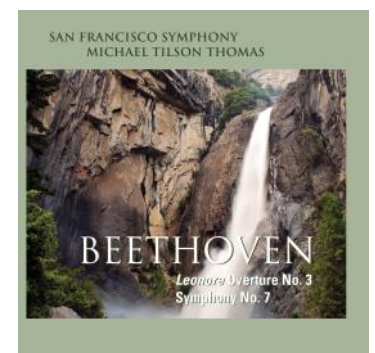
American Maverick Composers

MTT and the SFS's 2011 recording of Charles Ives's *A Concord Symphony*, orchestrated by Henry Brant, was recorded live at Davies Symphony Hall in February 2010 and paired with Copland's *Organ Symphony*, featuring soloist Paul Jacobs. At the time MTT said, "These are pieces which are about the experience of sound itself as well as a stirring musical message. The impact and depth and intricacy of the sound really come through in the Ives's *Concord Symphony*. It takes supreme technical brilliance and mental concentration by the orchestra to play it." MTT talks further about the recording in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtwxotKGn6U>.



MTT/SFS Beethoven Project

MTT and the SFS's recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 and *Leonore Overture No. 3* was released in September 2011. It was the first release in the orchestra's current and ongoing Beethoven exploration, which includes releases of Beethoven's Symphonies No. 9 and 5 and Piano Concerto No. 4 with Emanuel Ax. His Symphony No. 2 and *Cantata on the Death of the Emperor Joseph II* with the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus and soloists Sally Matthews, Tamara Mumford, Barry Banks, and Andrew Foster-Williams became available in fall 2013. A video about that recording can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BPVDy-kOXk>.



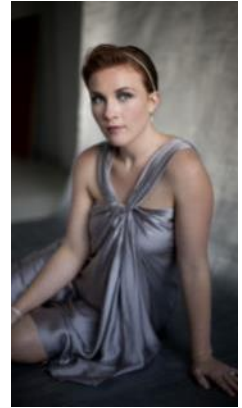
Berlioz

MTT and the SFS first recorded *Symphonie fantastique* for RCA Red Seal in 1998. Their performance of the piece for the *Keeping Score* PBS television series, now available on DVD and Blu-ray from SFS Media, was recorded live in concert at Davies Symphony Hall and released in 2009. It features a full one-hour documentary episode and a complete concert performance of the work that is also available as a companion audio CD and digital download. A three minute excerpt from *Symphonie fantastique* can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3uCKvIGa2U>.

SOLOISTS

Sasha Cooke

Mezzo-soprano [Sasha Cooke](#) is a rising star who has been appearing with the San Francisco Symphony since 2009 in music by composers as diverse as Gilbert and Sullivan, Mahler, Debussy, Beethoven, Stravinsky and Berlioz. In anticipation of this tour, she most recently appeared with MTT and the SFS in performances of Mahler's Symphony No. 3. Other symphonic engagements of Cooke's 2013-2014 season include appearances with Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic performing Britten's *Spring Symphony*, Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony, and performances of Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with both Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin with Tugan Sokhiev and Columbus Symphony conducted by Jean Marie Zeituni. This season she makes her debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Cristian Macelaru. Last season she performed the title role in the world premiere of Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* at San Francisco Opera. In the summer of 2013 she performed Mahler's Second Symphony with Michael Tilson Thomas and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl.



Julia Fischer

German violinist [Julia Fischer](#) has been a returning guest of the San Francisco Symphony since 2001. She was named "Artist of the Year" at The Gramophone Awards in 2007 and "Instrumentalist of the Year" at the 2009 MIDEM Classical Awards. Julia Fischer opened the 2013-14 season with a tour through Germany with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. As Artist-in-Residence at the Dresdner Philharmonie this season she performs the Brahms Violin Concerto with chief conductor Michael Sanderling and tours Asia with the orchestra. In fall of 2013, she appeared in recitals in major European venues including Musikverein Wien, Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels and at the Berlin Philharmonie. The tour program featured repertoire from her new CD on the Decca label: Pablo Sarasate's works for violin and piano op. 20-24 and 26-29. Concerts with the D usseldorfer Symphoniker under the baton of Andrey Boreyko and with the Leipziger

Gewandhausorchester under the baton of Christoph Eschenbach see Julia Fischer perform the rarely programmed Schumann Violin Concerto. In the United States, she performs with the Cleveland Orchestra under music director Franz Welse-M ost and with MTT and the SFS in March before their European tour together.



St. Lawrence String Quartet

Established in 1989, the [St. Lawrence String Quartet](#) (SLSQ) performs over 120 concerts annually worldwide and is Ensemble in Residence at Stanford University. Violist Lesley Robertson and violinist Geoff Nuttall are founding members of the group. Cellist Christopher Costanza joined the group in 2003 and violinist Mark Fewer began his first season with the quartet in 2014. All four members of the quartet live and teach at Stanford University, in the San Francisco Bay Area of California. The SLSQ is committed to the established quartet repertoire as well as the championing of new works by such composers as John Adams, Osvaldo Golijov, Eziquiel Vaino, and Jonathan Berger. Their recordings have been honored with the German critics award, Canada's Juno Award (for their release of Schumann's 1st and 3rd quartets), and two Grammy nominations (for

their landmark Yiddishbuk CD). John Adams wrote *Absolute Jest* for them to perform with MTT and the San Francisco Symphony.

About the San Francisco Symphony

The San Francisco Symphony, widely considered to be among the most artistically adventurous and innovative arts institutions in the U.S., celebrated its Centennial season in 2011-12. Under Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas, the SFS presents more than 220 concerts and presentations annually for an audience of nearly 600,000 in its home of Davies Symphony Hall and through an active national and international touring program.

Tilson Thomas assumed his post as the SF Symphony's eleventh Music Director in September 1995 and will celebrate his 20th season as Music Director next year. Together, he and the SFS have formed a musical partnership hailed as one of the most inspiring and successful in the U.S. His tenure with the Orchestra has been praised by critics for its outstanding musicianship, innovative programming, highlighting the works of American composers, and bringing new audiences to classical music. Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony maintain a leading presence among American orchestras around the world through an active touring program, award-winning recordings, and innovative broadcast and education projects.

The San Francisco Symphony's commitment to music education has resulted in the groundbreaking television, radio, multimedia and website project [Keeping Score](#); an award-winning children's website, www.sfskids.com; and [Adventures in Music](#), a nationally acclaimed in-school music education program in San Francisco schools. The *Keeping Score* series has been viewed by over six million people since its first broadcast in 2006 and has been acclaimed for making classical music accessible to a wider, more diverse audience.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY MARCH 2014 EUROPEAN TOUR MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS, MUSIC DIRECTOR St. Lawrence String Quartet, Julia Fischer violin, Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano

Friday, March 14 at 7:30 pm
Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
St. Lawrence String Quartet
San Francisco Symphony

[Birmingham Symphony Hall](#)

Ives/Brant *The Alcotts from A Concord Symphony*
John Adams *Absolute Jest*
Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*, Opus 14

Saturday, March 15 at 7:30 pm

[Southbank Centre, Royal Festival Hall, London](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
St. Lawrence String Quartet
San Francisco Symphony

Ives/Brant *The Alcotts from A Concord Symphony*
John Adams *Absolute Jest*
Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*, Opus 14

The BBC will live broadcast and re-broadcast the SF Symphony's two Southbank Centre concerts on March 15 & 16, and offer a 30-day streaming of the entire broadcast [HERE](#).

Sunday, March 16 at 3 pm

[Southbank Centre, Royal Festival Hall, London](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano
St. Paul Boys Choir
Women of the London Symphony Orchestra Chorus
San Francisco Symphony

Mahler Symphony No. 3 in D minor

The BBC will live broadcast and re-broadcast the SF Symphony's two Southbank Centre concerts on March 15 & 16, and offer a 30-day streaming of the entire broadcast [HERE](#).

Monday, March 17 at 8 pm

[Salle Pleyel, Paris](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
St. Lawrence String Quartet
San Francisco Symphony

Ives/Brant The Alcotts from *A Concord Symphony*
John Adams *Absolute Jest*
Beethoven Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92

This concert will be available for streaming on Radio France's website for 21 days beginning April 1 at <http://www.francemusique.fr/>

Tuesday, March 18 at 8 pm

[Salle Pleyel, Paris](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano
Maîtrise de Paris children's chorus
Choeur des femmes de l'Orchestre de Paris women's chorus
San Francisco Symphony

Mahler Symphony No. 3 in D minor

This concert will be available for streaming on Radio France's website for 21 days beginning April 2 at <http://www.francemusique.fr/>

Thursday, March 20 at 8 pm

[Victoria Hall, Geneva](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano
Maîtresse de Radio France children's chorus
Choeur des femmes de l'Orchestre de Paris women's chorus
San Francisco Symphony

Mahler Symphony No. 3 in D minor

Friday, March 21 at 8 pm

[Konzerthaus, Dortmund](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Julia Fischer violin
San Francisco Symphony

Ives/Brant The Alcotts from *A Concord Symphony*
Prokofiev Violin Concerto in D major, Opus 19
Beethoven Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92

Sunday, March 23 at 8 pm

[Philharmonie, Luxembourg](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano
Pueri cantores of the Luxembourg Conservatory
Choeur symphonique de la Grande Région
San Francisco Symphony

Mahler Symphony No. 3 in D minor

Monday, March 24 at 8 pm

[Smetana Hall, Prague](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Julia Fischer violin
San Francisco Symphony

Dvořák Legend in C-sharp minor, Op. 59 No. 6
Prokofiev Violin Concerto in D major, Opus 19
Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*, Opus 14

Czech Radio will broadcast this concert live. It will be streamable live from the Czech Radio website [HERE](#) .

Tuesday, March 25 at 7:30 pm

[Konzerthaus, Vienna](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Julia Fischer violin
San Francisco Symphony

Ives/Brant The Alcotts from *A Concord Symphony*
Prokofiev Violin Concerto in D major, Opus 19
Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*, Opus 14

Wednesday, March 26 at 7:30 pm

[Konzerthaus, Vienna](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano
Vienna Boys Choir
Women of the Wienersingakademie

Mahler Symphony No. 3 in D minor

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