



SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS • MUSIC DIRECTOR

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(Anne Frank; Michael Tilson Thomas and San Francisco Symphony; Isabel Leonard and Michael Tilson Thomas. Photos are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Press Kit](#).)

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY CELEBRATE THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS' UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WITH TWO WEEKS OF CONCERTS, NOVEMBER 15–18 & 23–25

MTT CONDUCTS THE SAN FRANCISCO PREMIERE OF *FROM THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK*—HIS 1990 COMPOSITION WRITTEN FOR AUDREY HEPBURN AND UNICEF—WITH ISABEL LEONARD NARRATING

Concert programs also feature Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3, Eroica*; Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*; and Berg's *Seven Early Songs*, featuring soprano Susanna Phillips

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) leads the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) in two concert programs in honor of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, November 15–18 & 23–25 at Davies Symphony Hall. Drafted by representatives from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948, for the first time setting out fundamental human rights which are to be universally protected. **November 15–18** concerts feature the first SFS performances of *From the Diary of Anne Frank*, MTT's dramatic work for narrator and orchestra based on the historic diary kept by Anne Frank during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. The work, commissioned by UNICEF, was written for Audrey



MTT rehearses *From Diary of Anne Frank* with Audrey Hepburn. Photo credit: Todd Levy



MTT rehearses *From Diary of Anne Frank* with Audrey Hepburn. Photo credit: Todd Levy

Hepburn as a vehicle in her role as an ambassador for UNICEF. Hepburn grew up in occupied Holland and identified strongly with Anne Frank, who was her exact same age. *From the Diary of Anne Frank* was premiered in 1990 by the New World Symphony, with MTT conducting and Hepburn narrating, and has since been translated and performed in many languages worldwide, including at the United Nations General Assembly Hall. MTT remarks, "I now realize that so much of this work is a reflection not just of Anne Frank, but of Audrey Hepburn. Audrey's simplicity, her deeply caring nature, the ingenuous sing-song of her voice are all present in the phrase shapes of the orchestra. The work would never have existed without her, and it is dedicated to her." [Isabel Leonard](#) narrates the November 15–18 performances of *From the Diary of Anne Frank*. Completing the program is **Beethoven's** epic testament to liberty, **Symphony No. 3, Eroica**. Tickets to these concerts have been provided free of charge to volunteers and staff from a variety of Bay Area social justice and human rights organizations.

On **November 23–25** MTT conducts the SF Symphony in **Beethoven's** monumental **Symphony No. 9**, featuring Ragnar Bohlin's [San Francisco Symphony Chorus](#) and solo contributions by soprano [Susanna Phillips](#), mezzo-soprano [Kelley O'Connor](#), tenor [Nicholas Phan](#), and bass-baritone [Davóne Tines](#). Fueled by principles of freedom and equality, Beethoven crafted his Ninth Symphony in an epic struggle between despair and transcendence to reach new heights with the words "all men become brothers." The symphony's famous last movement—Ode, "To Joy," is widely considered to be one of the most poignant musical proclamations for humanity. Also on the program is **Berg's Seven Early Songs**, featuring soprano **Susanna Phillips**, which will be recorded live for future release on SFS Media.



(High resolution images of Isabel Leonard, Susanna Phillips, Kelley O'Connor, Nicholas Phan, and Davóne Tines are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Press Kit](#). Photo credit L to R: Becca Fay, Zachary Maxwell, Kristina Choe Jacinth, Henry Dombey, Étude Arts)

Music as a Human Right Exhibit

Both concert weeks will be supplemented by informative pre-concert talks and an exhibit in the 1st Tier lobby of Davies Symphony Hall. The exhibit will explore avenues through which the San Francisco Symphony honors, fosters, and supports an individual's "right to participate in the cultural life of the community," outlined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. Written in the wake of the atrocities of World War II, the Declaration serves as a moral beacon to the world, an "international Magna Carta," in the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, chair of the Commission on Human Rights that drafted the document. The topic of "Music as a Human Right" will be further explored in panel discussions one hour prior to concerts on November 15–18, moderated by **Steven Winn**—an award-winning writer and veteran theater and culture critic of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. November 23–25 concerts will be preceded by *Inside Music* lectures led by **Peter Grunberg**.



Eleanor Roosevelt holding the Declaration of Human Rights, November 1949

Michael Tilson Thomas as Composer

Michael Tilson Thomas is currently the longest-tenured music director at any major American orchestra, celebrating his 24th season as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony during the 2018–19 season. Also recognized for his work as a composer, MTT has given world premieres of many of his works with the San Francisco Symphony. These include the world premiere of *Agnegram*, the composer's 90th-birthday orchestral tribute to longtime San Francisco Symphony patron Agnes Albert, in 1998; the first orchestral version of *Three Songs to Poems by Walt Whitman* in 1999; and two premieres in 2002—contrabassoon concerto *Urban Legend* with SFS contrabassoonist Steven Braunstein and MTT's song cycle *Poems of Emily Dickinson* with soloist Renée Fleming. In 2017, MTT led the SFS in the West Coast premiere of his tumultuous setting of Carl Sandburg's poem, *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*, featuring mezzo-soprano Measha Brueggengosman. Tilson Thomas' published compositions also include *Five Songs*, for voice and piano, including "We Two Boys Together Clinging," recorded by baritone Thomas Hampson and pianist Craig Rutenberg for EMI; *Street Song*, written for the Empire Brass Quintet and also available in a version for symphonic brass; and *Island Music*, a work dedicated to the memory of Lou Harrison. In the 2018–19 season, the San Francisco Symphony gives performances of MTT's *From the Diary of Anne Frank* on November 15–18 and *Street Song* for Symphonic Brass on June 20–22, both of which will be recorded for future release on SFS Media.

Calendar editors, please note:

Concerts take place in Davies Symphony Hall, located at 201 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco, CA 94102.

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.

Pre-Order Food and Drinks: Concertgoers may pre-order food and beverages by calling 415-252-1937 or emailing Global Gourmet Catering staff at davieshallpreorder@ggcatering.com before the performance to place an order.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

[Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

[Friday, November 16, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Saturday, November 17, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Sunday, November 18, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

[Isabel Leonard](#) narrator

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

San Francisco Symphony

Michael TILSON THOMAS *From the Diary of Anne Frank* [First SFS performances; to be recorded live for future release on SFS Media]

Isabel Leonard narrator

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Opus 55, *Eroica*

*Note: December 2018 marks 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Tickets: \$20–156

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

Pre-Concert Panel Discussion: Steven Winn will moderate a panel discussion exploring the topic of "Music as a Human Right" one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

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

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTING

[Friday, November 23, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Saturday, November 24, 2018 at 8 pm](#)

[Sunday, November 25, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

[Susanna Phillips](#) soprano

[Kelley O'Connor](#) mezzo-soprano

[Nicholas Phan](#) tenor

[Davóne Tines](#) bass-baritone

San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Ragnar Bohlin director

San Francisco Symphony

BERG *Seven Early Songs (Sieben frühe Lieder)* [To be recorded live for future release on SFS Media]

Susanna Phillips soprano

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Opus 125

Susanna Phillips soprano

Kelley O'Connor mezzo-soprano

Nicholas Phan tenor

Davóne Tines bass-baritone

San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Ragnar Bohlin director

Tickets: \$89–200

Audio Program Notes: Listen to a free podcast about Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, hosted by [KDFC's Rik Malone](#). All podcasts are archived, and can be streamed from sfsymphony.org/podcasts, and downloaded from the [iTunes store](#) and from soundcloud.com/sfsymphony.

Pre-Concert Talk: Peter Grunberg 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.

Broadcast / Archived Stream: A broadcast of these performances will air Tuesday, December 11 at 8 pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and kdfc.com where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

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

These performances of Michael Tilson Thomas's From the Diary of Anne Frank are supported by the Paul L. and Phyllis Wattis Endowment for New Music.

The Thursday Matinee concerts are endowed by a gift in memory of Rhoda Goldman.

The concert on November 16 is presented in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

Davóne Tines' appearance is generously supported by the Shenson Young Artist Debut Fund.

Support for this program's vocal soloists is provided by the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Guest Artists.

Members of the San Francisco Symphony are donating their services at the November 25 concert, which is performed in benefit of the musicians' Pension Fund.

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