



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

**MAYOR BREED PROPOSES HONORING LONGTIME SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY MUSIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS WITH STREET NAME**

*"MTT Way", home to the iconic Davies Symphony Hall, would be added to the list of Commemorative Streets Names in San Francisco.*

Mayor London N. Breed today introduced legislation to designate the block of Grove Street between Franklin Street and Van Ness Avenue as "MTT Way" in recognition of San Francisco Symphony Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas's tremendous impact on the City's local arts and culture through his 25 years as the Symphony's Music Director. If approved by the Board of Supervisors, the sign displaying "MTT Way" honorary street name will hang underneath the official Grove Street sign.

Michael Tilson Thomas made his San Francisco Symphony debut in 1974 at age 29 and quickly became a frequent and favorite guest conductor with the Orchestra. He was appointed Music Director in 1995, a role he served for 25 years. During his tenure, he pushed the boundaries of traditional orchestral performances through cutting-edge stagings of musical theater, operas, and theatrical works, the expansion of the symphonic repertoire, and experimental new concert formats like SoundBox, which debuted in 2014. He made a tremendous impact on the San Francisco Symphony and the entire classical music world as a conductor, composer, pianist, educator, mentor, and visionary.

"The story of the classical music, arts, and culture scenes in San Francisco is intertwined with the artistic journey of Michael Tilson Thomas," **said Mayor Breed.** "Today, we not only recognize him as a vital part of the cultural makeup of the City, we also celebrate the fact that he has been San Francisco's proud ambassador on the world stage."

Michael Tilson Thomas has championed the City through Orchestral tours nationally and internationally, and frequently collaborated with Bay Area luminaries, composers, and bands. Tilson Thomas helped expand the San Francisco Symphony's education initiatives, affecting the lives of countless young people in San Francisco and beyond, as part of his deep commitment to education and mentorship of young people. Additionally, he created the acclaimed multimedia education series *Keeping Score* in 2004, making classical music more accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds.

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“What a tremendous honor, and what fantastic fun,” said **Michael Tilson Thomas**. “I will always treasure that symphony goers will pick up their Davies Symphony Hall tickets, and that Ballet and Opera goers will get their after-performance transportation on ‘MTT Way.’ I am honored for this recognition, and I thank the City and County of San Francisco and Mayor Breed for their contributions to the arts and to my life.”

“From his very first concerts with the Orchestra in 1974, Michael forged a meaningful connection with the San Francisco Symphony—and with his appointment as music director in 1995, that connection between Michael and the Orchestra deepened into one of the most transformational creative partnerships in our organization’s history,” said San Francisco Symphony CEO **Matthew Spivey**. “It’s a fitting tribute to MTT’s lasting impact that the block of Grove Street in front of Davies Symphony Hall, where he’s captivated multitudes in thousands of concerts over the years, will now be known as MTT Way. We’re grateful to Mayor Breed and the City and County of San Francisco for celebrating Michael’s contributions to classical music and San Francisco with this honor.”

Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony’s recordings—many of them released through the Symphony’s own SFS Media label, which launched under MTT’s leadership—have been recognized with 12 Grammy® Awards. He is an Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, member of the American Academies of Arts & Sciences and Arts & Letters, National Medal of Arts recipient, Peabody Award winner, Kennedy Center Honoree, and a member of the California Hall of Fame.

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