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SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES CANCELLATION OF ALL REMAINING 2019–20 SEASON CONCERTS INCLUDING SUMMER WITH THE SYMPHONY

ORCHESTRA, CHORUS, STAGEHANDS, STAFF AND MUSIC DIRECTOR TAKE COLLECTIVE MEASURES AND SHARE SACRIFICE TO ADDRESS FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

EXPANDED DIGITAL CONTENT AND EVENTS INCLUDE A 25-DAY ONLINE CELEBRATION OF MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS' 25-YEAR TENURE AS MUSIC DIRECTOR

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—The San Francisco Symphony today announced the cancellation of all remaining concerts in the 2019–20 Season and Summer with the Symphony through August 31 due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. In light of these concert cancellations, which began on March 8, the San Francisco Symphony Board of Governors, Music Director, staff, members of the Orchestra & Chorus, and stagehands, have joined together to implement a variety of measures necessary to address current challenges.

In order to help counter the significant financial impact of the COVID-19 situation, members of the Orchestra, Chorus, and stagehands have all agreed to reduce their salaries by an average of 25% during the timeframe of April 19 to September 5. These steps are complemented by similar percentage reductions in staff salary expense, and Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas will not receive compensation for canceled concerts. Parties will retain all healthcare and insurance benefits during this time.

These “shared-sacrifice” reductions have been made as the San Francisco Symphony faces more than \$13 million in lost revenue and \$5.4 million in net losses due to the cancellation of 64 performances, including the remainder of the Orchestral Series, Great Performers Series, Summer with the Symphony and film concerts, and the cancellation of a three-week tour to Carnegie Hall and Europe. The 2019–20 season also marks the conclusion of Michael Tilson Thomas’ extraordinary 25-year tenure as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony.

“Our top priority from the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic has been to take care of the people who are the San Francisco Symphony family,” says San Francisco Symphony CEO Mark C. Hanson. “Realizing that it may be many months from now before we will be allowed to resume normal concert activity, we worked together to implement a shared-sacrifice plan that attempts to balance individual and institutional needs. I am grateful to our Music Director, our Orchestra, Chorus, and stagehand colleagues, as well as our Symphony staff who have worked together as one San Francisco Symphony in making these important sacrifices that will

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS, MUSIC DIRECTOR

contribute to the financial stability of the organization during these challenging times. I also deeply appreciate the leadership, generosity, and flexibility of our Board, whose members have worked tirelessly from day one as we navigate these unprecedented challenges. As we enter this new reality, we know that the decisions we announce today are indicative of the united and collaborative nature of this organization and will allow us to move forward together in the near and long term.”

“I am greatly saddened by the cancellation of the remainder of our season,” says Michael Tilson Thomas. “We would have been performing essential works in which we have developed our special sound, style and collaboration. It would have been such a joy to share our innovative tradition with our audiences and to savor once again how much we have grown together during these last 25 years. I’m looking forward to our making music together in the future in my new role as Music Director Laureate.”

In response to the current global environment with audiences seeking meaningful ways to connect to music and each other from home, the San Francisco Symphony has begun to make a shift in focus and is moving resources towards the creation of new curated online content and experiences, working collaboratively with members of the orchestra and with new and existing educational partners to support and create remote learning opportunities. Online experiences include a forthcoming 25-day digital celebration of the remarkable 25-year tenure of Michael Tilson Thomas as Music Director.

“Celebrating the legacy of Michael’s tenure as Music Director in a way that is fitting of his decades of adventurous and generous music-making with our Orchestra has been something we’ve all been preparing for and looking forward to for quite some time,” says San Francisco Symphony CEO Mark C. Hanson. “While we are disappointed to not share in our long-planned celebrations with live audiences at this time, we are focusing our time and energy on developing and supporting new online content and experiences that will engage current and new audiences and that will celebrate the deep and lasting legacy of MTT’s vision and enthusiasm and extraordinary musical partnership with the Orchestra and our community.”

TICKETHOLDER INFORMATION

Ticketholders are encouraged to consider [donating the cost of their tickets](#) back to the San Francisco Symphony, or to ask for a gift certificate for the value of their tickets. This helps support the organization as an arts nonprofit during this challenging time as we navigate the significant, ongoing impact of the COVID-19 situation.

In the coming weeks, the San Francisco Symphony will also announce special additional opportunities for those who opt to donate their tickets. Every ticket donation goes a long way in helping the San Francisco Symphony come back stronger and more vibrant than ever. As an added incentive, a group of generous San Francisco Symphony Board members and donors consisting of President Sakurako Fisher and William Fisher, President-elect Priscilla B. Geeslin and Keith Geeslin, former President John Goldman and Marcia Goldman, and Development Committee Chair Trine Sorensen and Michael Jacobson, has committed to match all ticket donations through an initial matching fund of \$1M.

For those who opt for gift certificates, patrons will receive a 20% credit applied to their gift certificate based on the value of tickets they had purchased for use in future concerts. These credits won’t expire.

For those who are in the position to do so, please consider making an additional gift to support the San Francisco Symphony by visiting sfsymphony.org/give.

All requests for ticket donations, gift certificates, exchanges, and refunds must be received by August 31, 2020. For assistance, please contact the Box Office by phone at 415-864-6000 or email

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patronservices@sfsymphony.org. Box Office hours (for phone and emails only) are Mon–Fri: 10am–6pm. Box Office windows will remain closed through May 31.

A small number of concerts that have been previously announced as postponed will be rescheduled for a later date. Ticketholders for those performances may hold onto their tickets until a new date is confirmed. For a full list of those concerts please visit sfsymphony.org.

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