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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / FEBRUARY 12, 2020



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**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY EMBARK ON FINAL
TOUR OF NEW YORK AND EUROPE TOGETHER WITH PERFORMANCES IN EIGHT
COUNTRIES, MARCH 17–APRIL 7, 2020**

Tour begins with two performances at New York's Carnegie Hall March 17 & 18 featuring Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto No. 1 with Gautier Capuçon, the New York Premiere of San Francisco Symphony and Carnegie Hall Co-Commission *I Still Dance* by John Adams, and Mahler's Symphony No. 6

European tour performances feature Pianist Daniil Trifonov in London, Hamburg, Berlin, and Vienna; and Cellist Gautier Capuçon in Munich, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Luxembourg, Lyon, and Paris

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Music Director **Michael Tilson Thomas** (MTT) and the **San Francisco Symphony** (SFS) embark on their final tour of New York and Europe together before MTT concludes his distinguished 25-year tenure as Music Director at the end of the 2019–20 season. The tour begins with two concerts at New York's Carnegie Hall **March 17–18**, and continues with 14 performances in ten cities across Europe, **March 21–April 7**.

The **March 17** performance at Carnegie Hall features the New York premiere of **John Adams' new composition, *I Still Dance***, co-commissioned by the **San Francisco Symphony and Carnegie Hall**. An explosive eight-minute

work written in a single movement, *I Still Dance* features densely interwoven parts that are driven forward by propulsive arpeggiated figures. A number of instruments not usually heard in the symphony orchestra setting, including the djembe, taiko, and a bass guitar provide much of the piece's rhythmic drive. *I Still Dance* received its world premiere at Davies Symphony Hall in September 2019 and is dedicated to MTT and his husband, Joshua Robison. John Adams explains that the title is "an acknowledgment of both of their continued youthful vitality." This marks the eighth time the San Francisco Symphony has commissioned a new work from Adams, whose relationship with the Orchestra spans nearly four decades. The program also includes **Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto No. 1**, performed by **Gautier Capuçon**, and **Stravinsky's The Firebird**.



The **March 18** performance at Carnegie Hall features **Mahler's Symphony No. 6**—a work imbued with impassioned expression, inspired melodies, and tragic vision. "Here Mahler has pushed his technical abilities as a composer and his perceptual boundaries as a human being," states MTT. "The Sixth looks unflinchingly at the obsessive, destructive nature of man, the unremitting capacity of humankind to hurt itself. In its final pages, it regards destiny and realizes there will be no mercy. But there is more than despair in these pages. There is utter honesty, humor, tenderness, and, in the third movement, homage to the power of love. Mahler said that a symphony should mirror life. His entire symphonic output is a testament to that belief, and nowhere did he realize this credo so powerfully as in his Sixth Symphony." MTT and the San Francisco Symphony's recording of Mahler's Sixth Symphony was the first to be released on the Orchestra's in-house SFS Media label and was recognized with a 2002 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance, the first of seven Grammy Awards received by MTT and the San Francisco Symphony for their complete recordings of Mahler's symphonies.

European tour repertoire includes **Mahler's Symphonies No. 6 & 9**, **Stravinsky's The Firebird**, **Rimsky-Korsakov's Dubinushka**, **Michael Tilson Thomas' Street Song for Symphonic Brass**, and **John Adams' I Still Dance**. Cellist **Gautier Capuçon** joins the SFS to perform **Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto No. 1** and Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 2, and pianist **Daniil Trifonov** performs **Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 4**.

Tour performances take place at Carnegie Hall in New York, New York (March 17 & 18); Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall in London, England (March 21 & 22); the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, Germany (March 24 & 25); the Berliner Philharmonie in Berlin, Germany (March 26); the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Austria (March 28 & 29); the

Philharmonie im Gasteig in Munich, Germany (March 30); the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Netherlands (April 1); the Elisabethzaal in Antwerp, Belgium (April 2); the Luxembourg Philharmonie in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg (April 3), the Auditorium de Lyon in Lyon, France (April 5); and the Philharmonie in Paris, France (April 6 & 7).

About Michael Tilson Thomas

Michael Tilson Thomas concludes his remarkable 25-year tenure as the 11th music director of the San Francisco Symphony at the end of the 2020 season, a post he assumed in 1995, consolidating a relationship with the Orchestra that began with this debut here in 1974. In what is widely considered one of the most dynamic and productive partnerships in the orchestral world, Tilson Thomas and the SF Symphony have been praised for their innovative programming, enhancing the orchestral concert experience with multimedia and creative staging, showcasing the works of American composers, and attracting new audiences to orchestral music, both at home at Davies Symphony Hall and through the Orchestra's extensive media projects. A Los Angeles native, he studied with John Crown and Ingolf Dahl at the University of Southern California, becoming Music Director of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra at nineteen. He worked with Stravinsky, Boulez, Stockhausen, and Copland at the famed Monday Evening Concerts and was pianist and conductor for the Piatigorsky and Heifetz master classes. In 1969, Tilson Thomas was appointed Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony. Ten days later he came to international recognition, replacing Music Director William Steinberg in mid-concert at Lincoln Center. He went on to become the BSO's Principal Guest Conductor, and he has also served as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic, and as a Principal Guest Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. With the London Symphony Orchestra he has served as Principal Conductor and Principal Guest Conductor; he is currently Conductor Laureate. He is Artistic Director of the New World Symphony, America's Orchestral Academy, which he co-founded in 1987. The NWS has helped launch the careers of more than 1,200 alumni worldwide, including more than 15 members of the SFS. Tilson Thomas's recordings have won numerous international awards, including 12 Grammys, 11 for SFS recordings. In 2014, he inaugurated SoundBox, the San Francisco Symphony's alternative performance space and eclectic live music series. His television credits include the New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts and in 2004 he and the SFS launched *Keeping Score* on PBS-TV. His compositions include *From the Diary of Anne Frank*; *Shōwa/Shoáh*; settings of poems by Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Rainer Maria Rilke; *Island Music*; *Notturmo*; and *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*. Tilson Thomas is a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres of France, was *Musical America's* Musician and Conductor of the Year, and was inducted into the *Gramophone* Hall of Fame. He has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, was inducted in the California Hall of Fame, and was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Obama. Most recently, he was named a 2019 recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors.

About Gautier Capuçon

Gautier Capuçon is an award-winning cellist committed to pushing the frontiers of the cello repertoire. He regularly premieres new commissions, and his current projects include the world premiere of Tabachnik's cello concerto "Summer" and collaborations with Danny Elfman and Thierry Escaich. He plays the 1701 Matteo Goffriller cello and is the founder and leader of the 'Classe d'Excellence de Violoncelle' at the Fondation Louis Vuitton" in Paris. Capuçon records exclusively for Erato (Warner Classics), and his most recent album recorded with Yuja Wang features sonatas by Chopin and Franck. In addition to touring Europe with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony during the 2019–20 season, Capuçon is an artist-in-residence at Lugano Musica and will appear with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Czech Philharmonic, the St. Louis Symphony, and the Singapore Symphony. As a chamber musician, he performs recitals regularly with Nicholas Angelich, Martha Argerich, Daniel Barenboim, Lisa Batiashvili, Jean-Yves Thibaudet and the Artemis and Ébène quartets. Click [here](#) to read Gautier Capuçon's full biography.



About Daniil Trifonov

Named *Musical America's* 2019 Artist of the Year, **Daniil Trifonov** is an accomplished Russian pianist whose accolades include a Grammy Award for the Best Instrumental Solo Album of 2018 for his Liszt collection, First Prize in Tel Aviv's Rubinstein Competition, First Prize and Grand Prix in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Competition, Italy's Franco Abbiati Prize for Best Instrumental Soloist, and *Gramophone's* 2016 Artist of the Year. He is an exclusive Deutsche Grammophon artist and has served season-long residencies with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, and currently serves as the 2019–20 Artist-in-Residence of the New York Philharmonic. He gives solo recitals around the world and regularly collaborates with ensembles including the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, and London Philharmonic. Click [here](#) to read Daniil Trifonov's full biography.



About SFS Media

[SFS Media](#) is the San Francisco Symphony's eight-time Grammy Award-winning in-house label, launched in 2001. SFS Media releases reflect MTT and the SFS's artistic vision of showcasing music by American composers as well as core classical masterworks and embody the broad range of programming that has been a hallmark of the MTT/SFS partnership. In celebration of MTT's 25th and final season as Music Director, SFS Media recently launched a digital concert series and dynamic season playlist on Apple Music and all major streaming and download platforms that includes live concert recordings from 2019–20 season concerts featuring composers that MTT and the SFS have championed throughout their decades together. The Digital Concert Series will include tour repertoire such as Mahler's Symphony No. 6 and Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. Visit warnerclassics.com/sfs-digital-concert-series for more information.



MTT and the SFS's 2001 recording of Mahler's Sixth Symphony was the first album to be released on the in-house SFS Media label and launched the Mahler recording project, which was completed in 2010 and encompasses all of Mahler's symphonies and works for voice, chorus, and orchestra. The recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 6 was recognized with a Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance, the first of seven Grammy Awards received by MTT and the SFS for the historic Mahler Project. The Orchestra's recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 9 was released in 2005.

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. In December 2018, the San Francisco Symphony announced Esa-Pekka Salonen as its Music Director Designate. Salonen will begin his appointment as the SFS's 12th Music Director in September 2020, at which time Michael Tilson Thomas will become the Orchestra's first Music Director Laureate, following his remarkable 25-year tenure as Music Director.

The San Francisco Symphony presents more than 220 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 75,000 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. In 2004, the SFS launched the multimedia *Keeping Score* on PBS-TV and the web. In 2014, the SFS inaugurated SoundBox, a new experimental performance venue and music series located backstage at Davies Symphony Hall. 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.

CALENDAR EDITORS:

**2020 NEW YORK and EUROPEAN TOUR with
cellist GAUTIER CAUÇON and pianist DANIIL TRIFONOV**

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

[Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Carnegie Hall
New York, NY

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Gautier Capuçon cello

John ADAMS

I Still Dance (New York premiere, co-commissioned by SFS and Carnegie Hall)

SAINT-SAËNS

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Opus 33

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

[Thursday, March 18, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Carnegie Hall
New York, NY

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

MAHLER

Symphony No. 6 in A minor

LONDON, ENGLAND

[Saturday, March 21, 2020 at 7:30 pm](#)

Southbank Centre Royal Festival Hall
London, England

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

MAHLER

Symphony No. 6 in A minor

LONDON, ENGLAND

[Sunday, March 22, 2020 at 7:30 pm](#)

Southbank Centre Royal Festival Hall
London, England

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Daniil Trifonov piano

John ADAMS
I Still Dance (co-commissioned by SFS and Carnegie Hall)

RACHMANINOFF
Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Opus 40

STRAVINSKY
The Firebird

HAMBURG, GERMANY

[Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Elbphilharmonie
Hamburg, Germany

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

MAHLER
Symphony No. 9 in D major

HAMBURG, GERMANY

[Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Elbphilharmonie
Hamburg, Germany

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Daniil Trifonov piano

Michael TILSON THOMAS
Street Song for Symphonic Brass

RACHMANINOFF
Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Opus 40

STRAVINSKY
The Firebird

BERLIN, GERMANY

[Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Philharmonie
Berlin, Germany

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Daniil Trifonov piano

Michael TILSON THOMAS

Street Song for Symphonic Brass

RACHMANINOFF

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Opus 40

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

[Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 7:30 pm](#)

Konzerthaus

Vienna, Austria

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Daniil Trifonov piano

Michael TILSON THOMAS

Street Song for Symphonic Brass

RACHMANINOFF

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G minor, Opus 40

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

[Sunday, March 29, 2020 at 7:30 pm](#)

Konzerthaus

Vienna, Austria

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

MAHLER

Symphony No. 9 in D major

MUNICH, GERMANY

[Monday, March 30, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Philharmonie im Gasteig

Munich, Germany

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Gautier Capuçon cello

Michael TILSON THOMAS

Street Song for Symphonic Brass

SAINT-SAËNS

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Opus 33

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

[Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at 8:15 pm](#)

Concertgebouw
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Gautier Capuçon cello

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

Dubinushka, Opus 62

SHOSTAKOVICH

Cello Concerto No. 2 in G major, Opus 126

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

ANTWERP, BELGIUM

[Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Koningin Elisabethzaal
Antwerp, Belgium

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Gautier Capuçon cello

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

Dubinushka, Opus 62

SHOSTAKOVICH

Cello Concerto No. 2 in G major, Opus 126

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

LUXEMBOURG CITY, LUXEMBOURG

[Friday, April 3, 2020 at 8 pm](#)

Luxembourg Philharmonie
Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Gautier Capuçon cello

Michael TILSON THOMAS

Street Song for Symphonic Brass

SAINT-SAËNS

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Opus 33

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

LYON, FRANCE

[Sunday, April 5, 2020 at 6 pm](#)

Auditorium de Lyon

Lyon, France

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Gautier Capuçon cello

Michael TILSON THOMAS

Street Song for Symphonic Brass

SAINT-SAËNS

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Opus 33

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

PARIS, FRANCE

[Monday, April 6, 2020 at 8:30 pm](#)

Philharmonie

Paris, France

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

Gautier Capuçon cello

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

Dubinushka, Opus 62

SHOSTAKOVICH

Cello Concerto No. 2 in G major, Opus 126

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird

PARIS, FRANCE

[Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 8:30 pm](#)

Philharmonie

Paris, France

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor

MAHLER

Symphony No. 9 in D major

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March 6 concert and March 12–14 pre-tour performances are generously supported in part by our MTT Angels.

March 12–14 pre-tour performances are made possible through the generosity of Emirates Airline.

March 12–14 pre-tour performances are presented in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

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

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