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Click [here](#) to access the Online Press Kit, which includes links to the first three *Keeping Score* episodes on YouTube, cover art, and archival photos.

**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY'S
KEEPING SCORE TELEVISION SERIES TO BE AVAILABLE FOR FREE GLOBAL ONLINE
STREAMING FOR THE FIRST TIME**

Nine one-hour documentary episodes telling the stories of great works of classical music plus nine accompanying concert performances to be available worldwide on YouTube in light of COVID-19 closures

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—In the midst of cancellations of live performances due to COVID-19, the San Francisco Symphony announced today that all documentary and concert episodes of Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) and the San Francisco Symphony's groundbreaking *Keeping Score* project will be made available for unlimited free streaming on the Symphony's [YouTube](#) channel. After launching with three episodes today, *Keeping Score's* remaining six episodes will be released on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 5 pm through April 11, 2020.

"Creating *Keeping Score* remains one of the most exciting journeys the San Francisco Symphony and I have taken together," said Michael Tilson Thomas. "It offers real insight into the origins of the music and the devotion of the musicians who keep its message a living tradition. As we all navigate our brave new world, I take pride in being able to share with everyone the music and stories that hold such deep meaning to me and my Orchestra colleagues. Music connects us and has never been needed more."

"There is no better time to make this remarkable series available to all without barriers," said San Francisco Symphony CEO Mark C. Hanson. "*Keeping Score's* music and messages aren't just timeless stories for anyone to enjoy, they are an incredible resource for educators and anyone interested in connecting with the power and emotion of our art form. MTT's truly unique ability to communicate the joy and depth of symphonic music is one of the trademarks of his extraordinary 25-year tenure as our Music Director, and *Keeping Score* remains one of the most meaningful elements of his legacy with the San Francisco Symphony."

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Through nine one-hour documentaries, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony trace the lives of eight influential composers from around the world. Michael Tilson Thomas explores the motivations and influences behind major classical works by Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Copland, Stravinsky, Berlioz, Ives, Shostakovich, and Mahler. Each episode is accompanied by a one-hour concert program by the San Francisco Symphony. Launched in 2004, *Keeping Score* was designed to make classical music accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds through groundbreaking television, radio, and educational components. The video series pairs in-depth documentary explorations of composers and their music with concert performances by Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony captured at Davies Symphony Hall. The series comprises three seasons of television episodes, including nine documentaries and eight concert films, all of which are also available on DVD and Blu-Ray high definition formats through the Orchestra's own SFS Media label distributed by Warner Classics.

***Keeping Score* Episodes and Free [YouTube](#) Release Schedule**

Subscribe to the [San Francisco Symphony's YouTube Channel](#) to be notified when each episode is released

Release Batch 1: Thursday, March 19, 2020

[Keeping Score / Copland and the American Sound](#)

SFS Media Release November 2006

Aaron Copland's music reflects the transformation of the American experience that took place during his lifetime. Born in 1900 in Brooklyn, he witnessed the wild confidence of the Jazz Age, the fears of the Great Depression, and the rallying of the nation as it entered World War II. His ideal was to write music that would express how it felt to live those experiences. Copland wrote classical music in his own special way. He transformed it to capture the energy of American's bustling cities and the vast quiet of its empty plains. He created a musical style that evoked the diversity of the American people. The sounds of Jewish music, African American jazz, folk songs, cowboy ballads, and Latin American dances all played their parts in his compositions, which he hoped would bring people together in times of crises. Today, Copland's music seems comforting and celebratory. 75 years ago, it was a wake-up call that gave Americans a critical sense of their own identity. Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony explore the music of Copland and the cityscapes, landscapes, and social and political developments that shaped it. Episode includes full-length concert performance of Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* (Original Version for 13 instruments) by San Francisco Symphony musicians.

[Keeping Score / Shostakovich Symphony No. 5](#)

SFS Media release October 2009

Shostakovich may have secreted a subversive cipher beneath the surface of his life-saving Symphony No. 5. This is all the more shocking since another bad review from Stalin's totalitarian forces could have meant a sentence to the Gulag or worse. After his opera *Lady Macbeth* was publicly condemned as immoral by *Pravda*, the Soviet newspaper, Shostakovich knew he had only one chance to redeem himself. When he penned this fifth symphony, the composer was literally writing for his life. The risk was so high that Shostakovich slept on the stairs outside his apartment so the secret police would not wake his family when they came from him, as he was sure they would. This *Keeping Score* episode, investigates the arresting symphony that would either redeem Shostakovich or doom him. Did he dare hide a kernel of musical criticism in what appears to be a paean to the Motherland? Join Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony as they explore the hidden language of this masterwork. Episode includes full-length concert performance of Dimitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 in D minor by the San Francisco Symphony.

[Keeping Score / Ives *Holidays* Symphony](#)

SFS Media Release October 2009

Ranging from tender sentiment to savage chaos, the music of early 20th-century composer Charles Ives explores an essentially American riddle: how can we survive the relentless assault of our own success? It was an enigma Ives embodied himself. He believed that we should all be brave enough to go it alone—yet he earned his living in insurance! In this *Keeping Score* episode, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony unravel the layers of Ives's *Holidays* Symphony to reveal a surprising musical portrait of New England. The symphony's four movements journey across the terrain of the seasons. From the intimacy of the winter hearth to the explosive concussion of the 4th of July, discover the insights Ives liberates in his music's confrontational crunch. Episode includes full-length concert performance of Charles Ives's *Holidays* Symphony by the San Francisco Symphony.

Launching Saturday, March 28, 2020

Keeping Score / Part 1: Mahler Origins – Symphony No. 1: 5 pm

Keeping Score / Part 2: Mahler Legacy – A Mahler Journey: 8 pm

SFS Media release April 2009

From the sounds outside his bedroom window—a kind of sonic goulash of military marches, ethnic dance bands, church bells, ritual prayer, and nature itself—Gustav Mahler created an entire universe of emotion in music. In an astonishingly productive twenty-five years, he fashioned ten symphonies and 45 songs of cosmic scale, great beauty, and jarring emotional twists and turns. And he did it all in the brief moments he could spare from his day job as one of Europe's preeminent conductors. In *Gustav Mahler: Origins*, Michael Tilson Thomas journeys to rural Bohemia to rediscover the inspirations of Mahler's music, and traces Mahler's life through the premiere of his first symphony in 1888. It shocked the contemporary audience, but as MTT and the San Francisco Symphony reveal, on location and in performance, this ground-breaking symphony contains elements of everything else that Mahler composed. In *Gustav Mahler: Legacy*, MTT examines Mahler's creative growth, from the 1890s to his death at the age of 51 on May 18, 1911, including his symphonies, the Rückert songs and *Das Lied von der Erde*. The documentary charts Mahler's mercurial career as a conductor, from the Vienna Opera to Carnegie Hall in New York, as well as his tempestuous relationship with his wife Alma. At Mahler's simple grave in a Grinzing cemetery, MTT explains why Mahler has so profoundly affected his own life. Episodes include full-length concert performances of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 1, Titan; Songs of a Wayfarer, performed by baritone Thomas Hampson; Adagietto from Symphony No. 5; Scherzo from Symphony No. 7; and Rondo Burleske from Symphony No. 9; by the San Francisco Symphony.

Launching Wednesday, April 1, 2020

Keeping Score / Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*: 5 pm

SFS Media release October 2009

"I feel, therefore I am." For Hector Berlioz, and for the Romantic Movement, those were more than words; they were a song of the heart. But with the unprecedented outpouring of emotion in his *Symphonie fantastique*, Berlioz almost overpowered Paris. This orchestral sonic spectacular, written to win the heart of a beautiful actress, demanded sacrifice from its author and his audience. From romantic daydreams to deadly displays of devotion, the symphony relates an "episode in the life of an artist," that artist being the love-obsessed composer himself. This symphony encapsulates the inner drama—and trauma—that made Berlioz one of the masters. Join Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony as they follow Berlioz to the brink and beyond. Episode includes full-length concert performance of Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* by the San Francisco Symphony.

Launching Saturday, April 4, 2020

Keeping Score / Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*: 5 pm

SFS Media release November 2006

In 1913, with Europe on the brink of war, a fashionable Parisian audience reacted with hostile frenzy to the premiere of Igor Stravinsky's new work, *The Rite of Spring*. The ballet's shocking music and dance provoked a riot that evening and soon afterwards was recognized as perhaps the most revolutionary piece of the 20th century. It still has that reputation today. In this episode, Michael Tilson Thomas and the musicians of the San Francisco Symphony take you from the salons of St. Petersburg to the villages where Stravinsky found inspiration in the earthly power of Russian folk music and dance. MTT then retraces Stravinsky's journey to the cultural crossroads of pre-war Paris. There, in collaboration with the great impresario Diaghilev and his star dancer Nijinsky, Stravinsky developed the shocking, erotic, and violent evocation of pagan Russia that became *The Rite of Spring*. Episode includes full-length concert performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and music from *The Firebird* by the San Francisco Symphony.

Launching Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Keeping Score / Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4 (Pilot Episode)

SFS Media release June 2004

"Listen and obey! Fate decrees you must follow the road down to a place you have never imagined yet secretly always feared!" To the practiced ears of Michael Tilson Thomas, Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, the opening notes of Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony make this dramatic declaration. But how can marks on a 150-year-old page transform into the carnivorous wolf-pack noise that marks this symphony's climax? Where is the unflinching emotion found? From decoding the score, to uncovering Tchaikovsky's hidden history, through rehearsals, tuning, and the big bang of opening night, this first episode of Keeping Score gives us a backstage pass to the San Francisco Symphony.

Launching Saturday, April 11, 2020

Keeping Score / Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*

SFS Media release November 2006

Not all revolutions are political. Some overturn artistic conventions. Beethoven's *Eroica* challenged accepted artistic notions of music as a kind of decorative background and brought the listener along on a gripping voyage into the unconscious. Beethoven spent three years writing the *Eroica*, which was an intimate and unflinching journal of his personal crises. The piece marked his emergence as an original master. In this episode Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony invite you to discover the music of the *Eroica* and the circumstances surrounding its creation. Retracing Beethoven's steps through Vienna's aristocratic ballrooms and Austria's rustic villages, MTT explores how Beethoven channeled his fears of deafness, his admiration for Napoleon, and his obsession to prove himself the greatest composer of his time and to write a piece that forever changed what a symphony would be. Episode includes full-length concert performance of Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, *Eroica* by the San Francisco Symphony.

About SFS Media

[SFS Media](#) is the San Francisco Symphony's eight-time Grammy-winning in-house label, launched in 2001. SFS Media releases reflect MTT and the SF Symphony'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/SF Symphony partnership. Recorded live in concert and engineered at Davies Symphony Hall, the audio recordings have been released on hybrid SACD and in high-resolution digital formats. SFS Media has garnered eight Grammy awards. SFS Media also produces and releases documentary and live performance videos, including the San Francisco Symphony's national public television series and multimedia project *Keeping Score*, which included three seasons of television episodes, eight documentaries, and eight concert films designed to make classical music more accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds. 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 storied history, which won a Northern California Emmy Award.

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 SF Symphony have championed throughout their decades together. Visit warnerclassics.com/sfs-digital-concert-series for more information.

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