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**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY RELEASE ALBAN BERG:
 VIOLIN CONCERTO, SEVEN EARLY SONGS, & THREE PIECES FOR ORCHESTRA ON SFS MEDIA
 FEBRUARY 26, 2021**

**Gil Shaham performs Berg's Violin Concerto and soprano Susanna Phillips is soloist in Berg's Seven
 Early Songs**

**Album recorded in 24-bit/192kHz high-resolution; available in 5.1 surround-capable SACD and for
 download and streaming via major retailers worldwide**

Available for pre-order now at sfsymphony.org/berg

SAN FRANCISCO –The San Francisco Symphony and Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas announce the SFS Media release of **Alban Berg: Violin Concerto, Seven Early Songs, & Three Pieces for Orchestra**, available for pre-order now. Recorded live at Davies Symphony Hall in March and November 2018 and January 2015, respectively, this newest release from the Grammy Award-winning SFS Media label illuminates the evocative world of Alban Berg with the heartbreaking pathos of Berg's Violin Concerto brought to life by violinist Gil Shaham; the soaring, multicolored Seven Early Songs performed by soprano Susanna Phillips; and the spellbinding Three Pieces for Orchestra, in which the composer solidified his reputation as a master of spacious expression. This album will be available in 24-bit/192kHz studio master-quality as a 5.1 surround-capable SACD, as a digital download, and streaming via all major retailers worldwide on February 26. For more information, program notes, and performance video footage, visit sfsymphony.org/berg.

[Click here](#) to access the Online Press Kit, which includes a PDF of this press release, performance video and photos, and artist headshots.



Berg's Violin Concerto, composed in 1935 as a musical memorial to the daughter of Alma Mahler Werfel and Walter Gropius, Manon Gropius, was Berg's last completed work and his only solo concerto. The performance on this album, featuring violinist Gil Shaham, was recorded in March 2018 at Davies Symphony Hall, in concerts that preceded Michael Tilson Thomas and the SF Symphony's tour of California later that month. Reviewing the concerts at Davies Hall, *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote, "Shaham's treatment of the solo part has grown progressively more ingratiating and soft-hued with time, without losing any of the ardor or expressive urgency on which it depends. In the first movement, he spun out long, intricately arched melodies with unassuming tenderness; the unaccompanied cadenza was a small miracle of shapely grace."

Berg's Seven Early Songs, originally composed in piano-and-voice versions from 1905 to 1908 and orchestrated in 1928, musically revisit Berg's formative years under his teacher Arnold Schoenberg while also alluding to the influences of Johannes Brahms, Hugo Wolf, and Richard Strauss. Michael Tilson Thomas and the SF Symphony's performances of Seven Early Songs, featuring soprano Susanna Phillips as soloist, were recorded at Davies Symphony Hall in November 2018 and described by *Seen & Heard International* as "a seductive and utterly delicious reading by soprano Susanna Phillips that brought out the sheer beauty in Berg's lush harmonies and graceful melodies."

Berg's Three Pieces for Orchestra was previously released as SFS Media's first-ever digital-only release in June 2017, commemorating the 15th anniversary of the San Francisco Symphony's eight-time Grammy Award-winning in-house record label. *Fanfare* magazine applauded the album, saying, "The score is communicated here with irresistible impact, recorded in state-of-the-art sound (even heard as a streaming audio) that is almost literally an x-ray of every detail . . . In this performance, which avoids any sense of analytical chill, Tilson Thomas beautifully manages the rhythms of waltz and march, the fountain of melodic ideas, and the spectrum of orchestral color that Berg created."



About Michael Tilson Thomas

Conductor, composer, and educator Michael Tilson Thomas is Music Director Laureate of the San Francisco Symphony, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of the New World Symphony, and Conductor Laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. In June 2020, he completed a remarkable 25-year tenure as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, becoming the Orchestra's first Music Director Laureate. Beginning with his debut in 1974, Tilson Thomas and the Symphony developed what is widely considered one of the most dynamic and

productive partnerships in the orchestral world, notable for 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. Tilson Thomas's recordings have won numerous international awards, including 12 Grammys, 11 for San Francisco Symphony recordings. In 2014, he inaugurated SoundBox, the SF Symphony's alternative performance space and eclectic live music series. His television credits include the New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts and *Keeping Score* on PBS-TV, which he and the San Francisco Symphony launched in 2004. His compositions include *From the Diary of Anne Frank* and *Meditations on Rilke*, both recorded with the SF Symphony and released on SFS Media in June 2020; *Shówa/Shoáh*; settings of poems by Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman; *Island Music*; *Notturmo*; and *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*. Tilson Thomas is a 2019 recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors, 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. Tilson Thomas was named an Officier in the French Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in June 2020, recognizing his continued contributions to global culture and the vast impact of his 25 years as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony. For more information, visit michaeltilsonthomas.com.

About SFS Media

[SFS Media](#) is the San Francisco Symphony's award-winning in-house media production company and label, launched in 2001. SFS Media captures, records, and releases audio and audio/visual material reflecting the Orchestra's restless creativity and commitment to leading-edge production standards, and showcasing the vibrant and inclusive musical communities it serves. From audio recordings released in 5.1 surround-capable SACD, 24-bit, and DSD Studio Master digital formats to unique concert capture video programs presented on the Orchestra's new streaming service [SFSymphony+](#), SFS Media has been on the forefront of production and distribution among the world's leading orchestras for 20 years. SFS Media productions and recordings have garnered multiple Grammy, Emmy, and Peabody Awards and include *Throughline: From Hall to Home*; *MTT25: An American Icon*; the CURRENTS video series; and a new digital SoundBox series; as well as the San Francisco Symphony's national public television series and multimedia project *Keeping Score* and its seven-time Grammy Award winning *Mahler Project*. Other video recordings 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*—the centennial season's Opening Gala live concert video paired with a documentary about the Symphony's history, which won a Northern California Emmy Award for "Historical/Cultural Program or Special" in 2012.

For more information, performance video, program notes, and photos, visit sfsymphony.org/berg. To request a digital review copy of the recording, email the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at publicrelations@sfsymphony.org.

Alban Berg: Violin Concerto, Seven Early Songs, & Three Pieces for Orchestra will be available February 26 in 5.1 surround-capable SACD and through digital outlets worldwide, including [iTunes](#), [Amazon](#), [Apple Music](#), [Spotify](#), [Primephonic](#), [HDTracks](#), and [IDAGIO](#). All SFS Media physical recordings are also available from the Symphony Store in Davies Symphony Hall, as well as from all major retailers. Global distribution of all SFS Media products is managed by [Warner Classics Label Services](#).

Title: Violin Concerto, Seven Early Songs, & Three Pieces for Orchestra

Composer: Alban Berg

Artists: San Francisco Symphony

Michael Tilson Thomas Music Director Laureate and conductor

Gil Shaham violin (Violin Concerto)
Susanna Phillips soprano (Seven Early Songs)

Works: Violin Concerto
Seven Early Songs
Three Pieces for Orchestra, Opus 6

Recorded: March 22–25 and November 23–25, 2018 and January 12–23, 2015. All works recorded in PCM and 24-bit/192kHz audio live in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.

Label: SFS Media

Catalogue Number: SFS 0080

Release Date: February 26, 2021

Total Run Time: 01:07:09

Description: Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony illuminate the gorgeously evocative world of Alban Berg in the newest release from the Grammy Award-winning SFS Media label. Hear the heartbreaking pathos of Berg's Violin Concerto brought to life by brilliant violinist Gil Shaham; the soaring, multicolored Seven Early Songs performed by acclaimed soprano Susanna Phillips; and the spellbinding Three Pieces for Orchestra, in which the composer solidified his reputation as a master of spacious expression. This album is available February 26, 2021 as a studio master-quality SACD, as a digital download, and via streaming. To learn more visit sfsymphony.org/berg

Media copies: Members of the press may request physical and digital review copies, high-res live performance photos, and a digital CD booklet from San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at publicrelations@sfsymphony.org.

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