

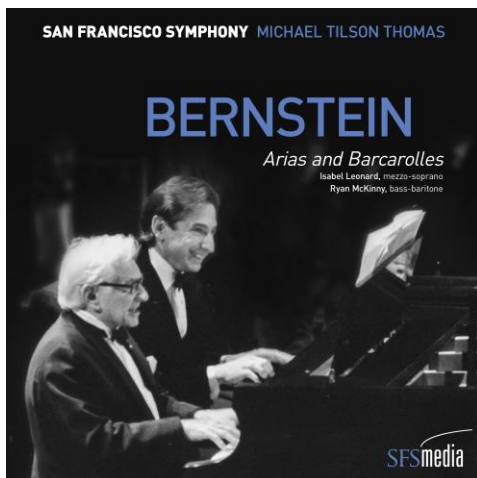
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / AUGUST 1, 2018

**ON THE EVE OF LEONARD BERNSTEIN'S BIRTH CENTENNIAL, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS
AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY RELEASE RECORDING OF BERNSTEIN'S *ARIAS AND
BARCAROLLES* ON SFS MEDIA LABEL AUGUST 24, 2018**

**Mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard and bass-baritone Ryan McKinny are featured in this recording of
Bernstein's final song cycle**

**Digital-only release available for streaming and download in stereo, mastered for iTunes quality, and
24-bit/96kHz Studio Master**



SAN FRANCISCO—In honor of American icon Leonard Bernstein's birth centennial, Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) announce the release of Bernstein *Arias and Barcarolles*, on August 24, the eve of the composer's 100th birthday. Recorded during live performances at Davies Symphony Hall in September 2017, and featuring mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard and bass-baritone Ryan McKinny, this latest release from the SF Symphony's eight-time Grammy Award-winning in-house recording label, SFS Media, will be available for streaming and download in stereo, Mastered for iTunes quality, and 96kHz/24-bit Studio Master.

"Reflecting on the world's season-long celebration of Bernstein's centennial, it occurs to me that this performance of Arias and

Barcarolles speaks far more eloquently than any words I might offer. It illuminates what he was actually like and shows the range of his omnivorously curious, confrontational, and generous spirit. It delights and challenges us at every moment." – Michael Tilson Thomas

Michael Tilson Thomas first met Leonard Bernstein in 1968 and they became longtime friends and colleagues. *Arias and Barcarolles* is Bernstein's brooding song cycle, which MTT and Bernstein premiered together in its original version for piano four-hand and voices in 1988 in New York City. The title of the piece came to the composer following the performance of one of his works at the White House in 1960 when President Eisenhower remarked, "You know, I liked that last piece you played: It's got a theme. I like music with a theme, not all them arias and barcarolles."

The sixth song in the cycle, “Oif Mayn Khas’neh” (or “At my Wedding,” translated from the Yiddish) bears the dedication “for M.T.T.” MTT explains: “This song is dedicated to me because of my association with Yiddish theater through my grandparents, and because of our shared joy in the countless Yiddish expressions that were a part of Broadway.”

Grammy Award-winning American mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard recently appeared as Claire in the San Francisco Symphony’s semi-staged production of Bernstein’s *On the Town*, and will also perform at the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s celebration of Bernstein on August 25 at Tanglewood. American bass-baritone Ryan McKinny, who made his San Francisco Symphony debut with these performances, recently created the role of Clarence in the world premiere of John Adams’s *Girls of the Golden West* at San Francisco Opera.

About this performance, MTT comments, “Isabel and Ryan uniquely and remarkably capture what I know was the spirit of this piece from the moment of its creation. Their voices allow them to sing at times a bit on the pop/Broadway side, and at others on the really big classical side. They do so effortlessly and infectiously, and to me, it is exactly what Bernstein was seeking in an ideal performance of this music.”

For more information, audio samples, digital liner notes featuring a foreword written by MTT, and a video including performance audio, photos, and commentary by MTT, visit sfsymphony.org/bernstein. To request a digital review copy of the recording, email the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at publicrelations@sfsymphony.org.

SFS Media is the San Francisco Symphony’s 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. Recorded live in concert and engineered at Davies Symphony Hall, audio recordings are 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 SFS’s national public television series and multimedia project *Keeping Score*, which includes 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. The *Keeping Score* series is now available as a digital download and on DVD and Blu-ray. 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 history, which won a Northern California Emmy Award.

Bernstein *Arias and Barcarolles* will be available August 24 through digital outlets worldwide, including iTunes, Amazon, [AppleMusic](#), [Spotify](#), Primephonic, HDTracks, and Google Play. 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.



Ryan McKinny, Isabel Leonard, and Michael Tilson Thomas backstage at Davies Symphony Hall. Photo © Stefan Cohen.

Title: Bernstein *Arias and Barcarolles* (1988)

Composer: Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

Artists: San Francisco Symphony
Michael Tilson Thomas, Music Director

Isabel Leonard, mezzo-soprano
Ryan McKinny, bass-baritone

- Works:** Bernstein *Arias and Barcarolles* (orchestrated by Bruce Coughlin)
Prelude
Love Duet
Little Smary
The Love of My Life
Greeting
Oif Mayn Khas'neh (At My Wedding)
Mr. and Mrs. Webb Say Goodnight
Nachspiel
- Recorded:** Bernstein *Arias and Barcarolles* was recorded live September 22–24, 2017 in PCM 96kHz/24-bit audio at Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.
- Label:** SFS Media
- Catalogue Number:** SFS-0073
- Release Date:** August 24, 2018
- Total Run Time:** 32:54
- Description:** In honor of Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony unveil their latest digital release: Bernstein's personal and vacillating song cycle *Arias and Barcarolles*. In this recording, MTT enlivens a work he premiered with the composer, and shares with us a glimpse into the mind of one of music's greatest cultural ambassadors. Available on all download and streaming channels, Bernstein: *Arias and Barcarolles* features the voices of mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard and bass-baritone Ryan McKinny, an orchestral arrangement that is, according to MTT, "everything that Bernstein would have wanted it to be."
- Media copies:** Members of the press may request a digital review copy of the recording, high-res photos, and digital liner notes from the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at publicrelations@sfsymphony.org.

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