

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY HISTORY

In the wake of the 1906 earthquake, establishment of a permanent orchestra was high on San Francisco's civic agenda, and in December 1911 the San Francisco Symphony gave its first concerts. Almost immediately, the Symphony revitalized the city's cultural life with programs that offered a kaleidoscope of classics and new music.

The Orchestra grew in stature and acclaim under a succession of distinguished music directors: Henry Hadley, Alfred Hertz (who had led the American premieres of Wagner's *Parsifal* and R. Strauss' *Salome*, and *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Metropolitan Opera), Basil Cameron, Issay Dobrowen, the legendary Pierre Monteux (who introduced the world to Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* and *Petrushka*), Enrique Jordá, Josef Krips, Seiji Ozawa, Edo de Waart, Herbert Blomstedt (who continues to serve as Conductor Laureate), and Michael Tilson Thomas, who assumed his post as Music Director in September 1995. In December 2018, the San Francisco Symphony announced Esa-Pekka Salonen as its Music Director Designate, to begin his appointment as the SFS's 12th Music Director in September 2020.

The San Francisco Symphony has won some of the world's most prestigious recording awards, including Japan's Record Academy Award, France's Grand Prix du Disque, Britain's *Gramophone* Award, and the United States' Grammy. For RCA Red Seal, MTT and the Orchestra have recorded scenes from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, Mahler's *Das klagende Lied*, two Copland albums, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, a collection of Stravinsky ballets (which captured three Grammys, including those for Best Classical Album and Best Orchestral Performance), a Gershwin collection, and *Charles Ives: An American Journey*. Their recording of Mahler's Sixth Symphony on SFS Media inaugurated a Mahler symphonic cycle and won the Grammy award for Best Orchestral Recording of 2002; their recording of Mahler's Third Symphony won the 2003 Grammy for Best Classical Album; their recording of the Mahler Seventh captured Grammys for Best Classical Album and Best Orchestral Performance of 2006; and their recording of Mahler's Eighth Symphony won Grammys for Best Classical Album, Best Choral Performance, and Best Engineered Classical Album in 2010. The recording of John Adams' *Harmonielehre* and *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* won a 2013 Grammy for Best Orchestral Performance.

Some of the most important conductors of their time have been guests on the SFS podium, among them Bruno Walter, Leopold Stokowski, Leonard Bernstein, and Sir Georg Solti, and the list of composers who have led the Orchestra is a who's who that includes Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Prokofiev, Maurice Ravel, Arnold Schoenberg, Paul Hindemith, Aaron Copland, and John Adams.

For its adventurous programming, the Symphony has been honored thirteen times by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. In 1978, the appointment of John Adams as New Music Adviser became a model for composer-in-residence programs adopted by major orchestras across America. *Adventures in Music*, the longest-running education program of its kind among this country's orchestras, brings music to every child in grades one through five in San Francisco's public schools and reaches more than 23,000 students. *Keeping Score*, designed to connect audiences with music and the emotions it conveys, aired on PBS-TV, is available on DVD and Blu-ray, and can be accessed at keepingscore.org. Through its radio broadcasts, the first in America to feature symphonic music when they began in 1926, the San Francisco Symphony is heard throughout the country, confirming an artistic vitality whose impact extends throughout American musical life.