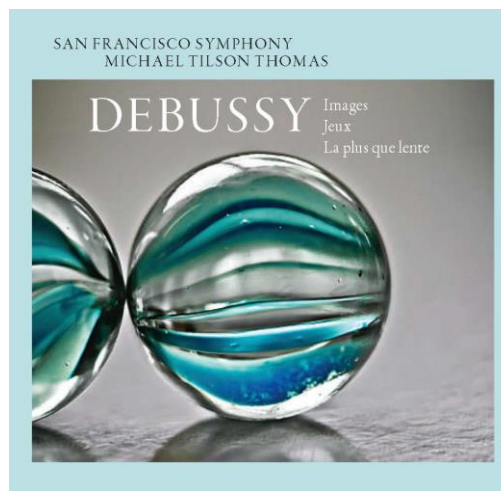


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**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY RELEASE  
ALL-DEBUSSY ALBUM ON SFS MEDIA OCTOBER 28, 2016**

**Album Includes *Images pour orchestre*, *Jeux*, and *La plus que lente***

**Pre-order September 27 on [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) and [SFSymphony.org/Debussy](http://SFSymphony.org/Debussy)**

**SAN FRANCISCO, September 27, 2016** – Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) will release an all-Debussy album featuring three works that illustrate the French composer's mastery with orchestration including *Images pour orchestre*, *Jeux*, and *La plus que lente*, on the Orchestra's Grammy Award-winning SFS Media label on Friday, October 28, 2016. The recording will be available for pre-order on [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) and [SFSymphony.org/Debussy](http://SFSymphony.org/Debussy) on Tuesday, September 27, 2016. This recording is presented by SFS Media in premium audio hybrid SACD as well as studio master-quality download.

Michael Tilson Thomas comments, "Right from the start of my musical life, Debussy's music captivated me. He had a genius for sensing the essential quality of a particular instrument's voice and creating for it evocative solos that have become emblematic. His sense of unusual blends of different instruments was also original and highly demanding. In fact, his orchestral music, especially the later orchestral works like those on this album, presents some of the greatest challenges in the whole repertory for both conductor and instrumentalists."

He continues, “It has been a pleasure to perform this music with the San Francisco Symphony, whose members possess all the artistry and are more than willing to take the risks that this music demands.”

***Images pour orchestre*** (1912) is a three part orchestral composition inspired by folk tunes and the composer’s impressions of three different countries. MTT explains, “The first, *Gigues*, uses the dance form to evoke Scotland. It is a sad and chilly Scotland that the composer is imagining. The theme itself is played by an unusual instrument, the oboe d’amore. One can imagine this theme played on some kind of bagpipe. But here the effect is misty and far away in both time and place. *Ibéria* is the largest and most ambitious of Debussy’s many portraits of Spain. The orchestration uses traditional instruments like castanets, but it also creates the sound of guitar and flamenco singing and footwork from unusual combinations of the orchestral instruments themselves. Once again the music is often in independent streams—some capricious, some haunting, some reckless. Allowing each one of these streams to have its own special swing and feeling, and at the same time, coordinate with the rest of the orchestra, is a great challenge. The second movement, *Les parfums de la nuit*, is one of the most difficult of all. *Rondes de printemps* is a picture of the French countryside. It uses folk-like themes and drums to create a rustic quality, but its shape and shifting textures suggest flickers of light in Monet paintings or early films.”

***Jeux*** (1913) was a prestigious commission for Debussy from the *Ballets Russes*, and portrays the interactions, games, and passionate exchanges between a boy and two girls. It is unique in Debussy’s repertoire for its eschewal of his earlier more repetitious style, instead transforming each musical idea completely in rhythm or texture. MTT comments, “*Jeux* is an intricate and luscious bandying back and forth of tiny gestures of tambourines, viola, xylophone, and more. The music seems to be in streams of sound coalescing, dissolving, transforming. The orchestra, especially the strings, is divided into many independent lines, each of which requires great virtuosity and subtlety to play. The effect of the music depends on the hypersensitivity of each player and an ability to be instantaneously in touch with both colleagues and the conductor. Almost all the music is in 3/4 time and I often think of it as a kind of X-rated waltz.”

Originally written for solo piano, ***La plus que lente*** (1912) was later orchestrated into a salon version by the composer himself. MTT remarks, “*La plus* is a waltz in the shadow of Chopin, but going much further into dark, moody, and amorous territory. Debussy orchestrated it for a kind of cafe orchestra that included the Gypsy instrument cimbalom, which adds to the alternatively brooding and ecstatic mood.”

Debussy: *Images*, *Jeux*, *La plus que lente* will be available as a hybrid [SACD](#) compatible with conventional CD players, and as a digital download — including as high-resolution 24-bit downloads — and on all major streaming services. The album is available for pre-order starting today on iTunes with [Mastered for iTunes](#) audio quality at [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) and on the SF Symphony’s e-store at [sfsymphony.org/Debussy](https://sfsymphony.org/Debussy).

*Images* was recorded May 22-25, 2014; *Jeux* was recorded January 10-13, 2013; and *La plus que lente* was recorded September 26-28, 2013. All works were recorded in PCM 192kHz/24-bit audio and PCM 96kHz/24-bit audio in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.



SFS Media is the San Francisco Symphony’s award-winning in-house label, launched in 2001. SFS Media releases reflect MTT and the SFS’ 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, the 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 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. 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.

All SFS Media recordings are available from the Symphony Store in Davies Symphony Hall and online at [sfsymphony.org/store](http://sfsymphony.org/store), digitally on [itunes.com/sfsymphony](https://itunes.com/sfsymphony), and from all major retailers and other digital outlets worldwide. SFS Media recordings are distributed in the U.S. and Canada by the [PIAS] Group via RED Distribution and Sony Music Canada, through Avie Records internationally, and by The Orchard to digital retailers.

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**Title:** Debussy: *Images, Jeux, La plus que lente*

**Composer:** Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

**Artists:** San Francisco Symphony  
Michael Tilson Thomas, Music Director

**Works:** *Images pour orchestre* (1912)  
*Jeux* (1913)  
*La plus que lente* (1912)

**Recorded:** *Images* was recorded May 22-25, 2014; *Jeux* was recorded January 10-13, 2013; and *La plus que lente* was recorded September 26-28, 2013. All works were recorded in PCM 192kHz/24-bit audio and PCM 96kHz/24-bit audio in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.

**Label:** SFS Media

**Catalogue Number:** SFS 0069

**Release Date:** October 28, 2016

Pre-order a digital download on iTunes at [iTunes.com/SFSymphony](https://iTunes.com/SFSymphony) or on disc from [SFSymphony.org/Debussy](http://SFSymphony.org/Debussy).

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Online: [sfsymphony.org/store](http://sfsymphony.org/store)

**Media copies:** Members of the press may request a copy of the recording for review from Shuman Associates at [shumanpr@shumanassociates.net](mailto:shumanpr@shumanassociates.net) or the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at [publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org)

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