



SAN FRANCISCO  
SYMPHONY  
MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS • MUSIC DIRECTOR



## **SoundBox Press Quotes, 2014-15 Season**

### **March 2015**

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"In only its third iteration, *SoundBox* has become a thing unto itself, and it took less than a scant four months to transform from a promising experiment into a scene of its own. Musically, last weekend's version rivalled the opener in terms of surprising, delighting, and delivering, but while no one was looking *SoundBox* found an entirely new audience. I did see some familiar faces in the crowd on Saturday night, but what struck me was how quickly the demographic of the audience changed, as if with each new show the average age of those attending decreased by a number of years. Look at the picture above and try to find classical music's "greying audience" in the crowd. The place is a hit."

- *A Beast in a Jungle*, Mark Rudio's [review](#), 3/11/15

"With artisanal drinks and small bites; surround sound and video projections; a variety of seating and standing options; and stages at the front, side, and center of the expansive rectangular room, *SoundBox* immediately became the hottest gathering place in town."

- *Christian Science Monitor*, Yoshi Kato's [article](#) on Michael Tilson Thomas and *SoundBox*, 3/10/15

### **February 2015**

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"Like many American orchestras, the San Francisco Symphony is seeking to diversify its offerings and capture the attention of a younger audience. With *SoundBox*, it has hit on a winning formula"

- *The New Yorker*, Alex Ross's article entitled "[Wizards of Sound.](#)" 2/23/15

"...what could be better suited to the *SoundBox* experience, with its combination of casual concert etiquette and focused listening, than a full-on percussion extravaganza?"

“The program, superbly planned and executed, encompassed not just rhythmic explosions but also rhapsodic lyricism, swingy minimalism, audience participation and tour-de-force of theatrical virtuosity — all in the space of a sleek two hours.”

- ***The San Francisco Chronicle***, Joshua Kosman’s [review](#), 2/16/15

“For years I’ve lamented our lack of a performance space on par with NYC’s [\(Le\) Poisson Rouge](#), the “multimedia art cabaret” (with great drinks!) that’s a strong contender for the hippest spot in the nightlife world...Well, no more. [Soundbox](#) has arrived...With a custom drink menu, low-slung padded seats, state-of-the-art multimedia (hello, “uniquely designed Meyer Sound Constellation system” and huge, cleverly utilised digital screens), multiple stages, and an afterhours vibe, *Soundbox* has been packing people in since it opened a couple months ago — and has yet to stray from its heady yet accessible music programming...Can you tell I’m freaking out about it? I am freaking out about it. I want to live there.”

- ***48 Hills Blog***, Marke Bieschke, 2/24/15

“Whoa, what a cool new addition to our musical scene, it felt so very *now*.”

- ***Tablehopper***, Marcia Gagliardi, 2/17/15

“Once just a rehearsal space but now a fully transformative experimental music space, *SoundBox* is basically half club and half concert hall. There’s really only one way to put it — *SoundBox* is flat-out cool!”

“If this night, only the second show in the newly created space, is any indication of the venue’s clever use of space and musical talent to be showcased, then sign me up for more!”

- ***Spinning Platters***, Chad Liffmann’s [review](#) 2/17/15

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## January 2015

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“*SoundBox*, the San Francisco Symphony’s new performance space and concert series, serves as a double showcase. It offers a chance to hear the orchestra’s wonderful musicians in a more intimate setting than Davies Symphony Hall, and it highlights the electro-acoustic razzle-dazzle of the Meyer Sound Constellation system.”

- ***The San Francisco Chronicle***, Joshua Kosman’s [review](#), 1/11/15

“There’s a wonderful new place to listen to music in San Francisco, and it’s called Sound Box.”

- ***The Lesser Blog***, [Wendy Lesser’s review](#) 1/11/15

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## December 2014 Opening

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“*SoundBox* succeeds on every level, both demographically and artistically.. and yes, it’s the coolest thing on the block.”

- **KQED.com**, [Gabe Meline's review "Classical Goes Clubbing"](#) 12/15/14

"...the music transported the audience into a timeless plane — reminding us that, more so than any technological and innovative elements, programming and performance must deliver. And they did."

- **San Francisco Classical Voice**, [Giacomo Fiore review](#) 12/15/14

"And just like that, San Francisco has a superb new performance venue for music. Saturday night's tremendous opening event of *SoundBox* ... was as exciting for what it offered as for what it promised. But just as thrilling as this event was the sense of anticipation about what might yet be done here — namely, pretty much anything... On the evidence of Saturday's concert, *SoundBox* may yet prove to be the killer app of local music...the venue unveiled on Saturday had the spacious charm of a funky but well-heeled nightclub...The results could be seen at the most casual glance around the audience, which suggested — unscientifically but unmistakably — a median age something like two decades younger than that of an average Symphony subscription concert. These are the listeners for whom Edgard Varèse is — to paraphrase one overheard snippet of conversation — that guy that Frank Zappa liked...For now, the possibilities seem unlimited."

- **San Francisco Chronicle**, [Joshua Kosman's review](#) 12/15/14

"The Symphony has created a nightclub for serious music."

- **San Francisco Chronicle**, [Leah Garchik's column](#) 12/16/14

"The classical music establishment has been wringing its hands for years, trying to figure out how to attract younger audiences. They can stop now. Michael Tilson Thomas has found the solution...The crowd -- a decidedly younger mix than the usual Symphony audience -- was right at home with the casual vibe."

- **Bay Area News Group**, [Georgia Rowe's review](#) 12/15/14

"a fun, surprising, exuberant success on every level."

- **Civic Center (blog)**, [Michael Strickland's review](#) 12/18/14

"The possibilities for the future here seem endless."

- **Financial Times**, [Allan Ulrich's review](#) 12/15/14 4 stars

"Want to experience an array of music spanning genres and centuries from a pocket venue located inside the San Francisco Symphony's Davies Symphony Hall? Ok ... and how about no assigned seating, swanky cocktails and snacks, and \$25 tickets for entry to a cool, intimate lounge atmosphere with one of the greatest sound systems in the city? Welp, the San Francisco Symphony just opened up *SoundBox*, a hyper-acoustic showspace "for all kinds of music" attached to Davies Symphony Hall."

- **The Bold Italic**, [Adrian Spinelli's preview entitled "Cozy new music venue opens inside Symphony Hall"](#) 12/15/14

“Equal parts lounge, experimental art space, and world-class symphony home, *SoundBox* just might be the one of the most exciting openings of the year...Because what’s not to love while sitting back and listening to beautiful music with a drink in hand?”

- ***SF Weekly All Shookdown (music blog)***, Laura Cramer [preview feature](#) 12/12/14

“There was a collective sense that *SoundBox* was going to be a pretty interesting venture when the Symphony revealed its plans for it earlier this year during their annual season announcement press conference, but I think it’s safe to say what transpired during its opening last Saturday night far exceeded the press and public’s expectations. On every level it was a total success. What was once a barren, aesthetically boring and acoustically dead rehearsal space in a corner of Davies Symphony Hall is now a live venue that feels ready for endless possibilities...I had no idea how much San Francisco needed something like *SoundBox*. Some people will talk about the bar, the Meyer Sound Constellation System which makes it all sound perfect, the casualness of the setting coupled with the respectful behavior of the audience, the state of the art projections and all the other nifty stuff that got packed into Saturday night’s performance, but for me the main thing is this: the City now has an excellent space to hear superbly played music that for a variety of reasons is ill-suited to the large, formal confines of the concert hall. It’s as if Bay Area music lovers were just handed a promising gift of unlimited potential.”

- ***A Beast in the Jungle (blog)***, [Mark Rudio’s review of opening night](#) 12/16/14

“...different, enormously stimulating, and potentially ground-breaking for symphony orchestras.”

- ***Classical Voice America***, [Richard Ginell’s review](#) 12/17/14

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