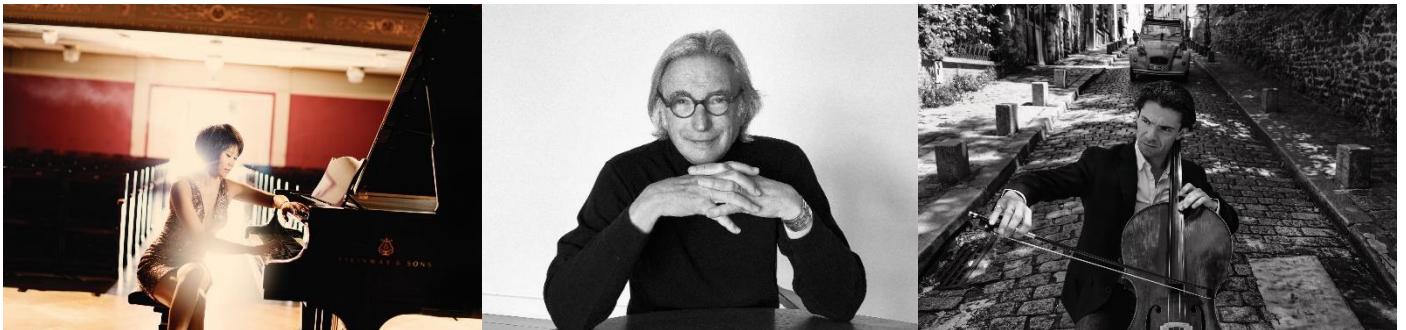




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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / JANUARY 7, 2022



(High-resolution images of the San Francisco Symphony and guest artist headshots are available for download from the [Online Photo Library](#).)

MUSIC DIRECTOR LAUREATE MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS CONDUCTS THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY IN TWO CONCERT PROGRAMS AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL IN JANUARY 2022

January 20–22 concerts include Sergei Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 5 and Dmitri Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 2 featuring cellist Gautier Capuçon

January 27–29 concerts feature Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 and pianist Yuja Wang performing Franz Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 1

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas (MTT) returns to conduct the San Francisco Symphony in two weeks of concerts at Davies Symphony Hall featuring two longtime collaborators. January 20–22 concerts include Sergei Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 5 and Dmitri Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 2 performed by cellist Gautier Capuçon and January 27–29 concerts feature pianist Yuja Wang performing Franz Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 1 and Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 1.

Dmitri Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 2—the penultimate concerto in his catalogue—was composed in spring 1966 and dedicated to legendary cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. Dating from Shostakovich’s final decade, the Second Cello Concerto is an example of the leaner and mercurial style of Shostakovich’s later works. Following the November 2015 release of Gautier Capuçon’s [recording](#) of Shostakovich’s two cello concertos on the Erato label, performed with the Mariinsky Orchestra under direction of Valery Gergiev,

BBC Music Magazine praised Capuçon’s “passionate and rhythmically incisive accounts” while *Gramophone* said the cellist “immediately shows that his are interpretations to be reckoned with.” Rounding out the January 20–22 program is Sergei Prokofiev’s uplifting and triumphant Symphony No. 5, composed during the Second World War. After the work’s premiere in January 1945, Prokofiev wrote, “I regard the Fifth Symphony as the culmination of a long period of my creative life. I conceived of it as glorifying the grandeur of the human spirit . . . praising the free and happy man—his strength, his generosity, and the purity of his soul.”

Franz Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 1, was begun around 1830 and thoroughly revised multiple times over a quarter of a century. The concerto finally got its premiere in February 1855, with Hector Berlioz conducting and the composer as soloist. Yuja Wang, “the most dazzlingly, uncannily gifted pianist in the concert world today” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), joins the SF Symphony in these performances of Liszt’s First Piano Concerto on January 27–29. Concluding the program is Gustav Mahler’s powerful Symphony No. 1—recorded and released by Michael Tilson Thomas and the SF Symphony on the SFS Media label as part of the Mahler symphony recording cycle, which has garnered a total of seven Grammy Awards and helped solidify MTT’s stature as one of the world’s foremost Mahler interpreters. When the recording was released in 2002, MTT shared, “Mahler was like a cinematographer in music, creating enormous soundscapes that include everything we know of life. His First Symphony concerns the voyage from a lonely contemplation of nature to a radiant assuredness about man’s place in the universe. From a spiritual point of view, it is one of the most confident first symphonies in Western music.”

About Michael Tilson Thomas

Michael Tilson Thomas is Co-Founder and Artistic Director of the New World Symphony, Music Director Laureate of the San Francisco Symphony, and Conductor Laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. He is a twelve-time Grammy Award winner and has conducted the major orchestras of Europe and the United States.

Born in Los Angeles, he studied piano, conducting, and composition at the University of Southern California, and as a young musician worked with such artists as Igor Stravinsky and Aaron Copland. In his mid-20s, he became Assistant Conductor—and later Principal Guest Conductor—of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which he led in his New York debut. He subsequently served as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic, Principal Guest Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra.

In 1987, he co-founded the New World Symphony (NWS), a postgraduate orchestral academy in Miami Beach dedicated to preparing young musicians of diverse backgrounds for leadership roles in classical music. Since then, he has worked with more than 1,100 NWS Fellows, many of whom have gone onto careers with major orchestras.

He became Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony in 1995, and his tenure was a period of significant growth and heightened international recognition for the orchestra. In June 2020, he completed his remarkable 25-year tenure as Music Director, 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. He led the San Francisco Symphony in championing contemporary and American composers alongside classical masters, and as Music Director Laureate, he continues to lead the orchestra in four weeks of concerts annually, as well as in special projects.

Michael Tilson Thomas’s discography includes more than 120 recordings, which have won numerous international awards, including twelve Grammys for San Francisco Symphony recordings. Throughout his

career, he has been an active composer, with major works including *From the Diary of Anne Frank* (1990), commissioned by UNICEF and premiered with narrator Audrey Hepburn, and *Meditations on Rilke* (2019). Both works appear on a recent Grammy Award-winning recording of his music by the San Francisco Symphony. Other compositions by Tilson Thomas include *Shówa/Shoáh*; settings of poems by Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman; *Island Music*; *Notturmo*; and Four Preludes on *Playthings of the Wind*. His television work includes the New York Philharmonic's Young People's Concerts, series for the BBC and PBS, and numerous televised performances. In 2020, he was profiled on PBS's *American Masters*.

He is an Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, a member of the American Academies of Arts and Sciences and Arts and Letters, a National Medal of Arts recipient, a member of the California Hall of Fame, and a 2019 Kennedy Center Honoree.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Tickets

Tickets for concerts at Davies Symphony can be purchased via sfsymphony.org or by calling the San Francisco Symphony Box Office at 415-864-6000.

Location

Davies Symphony Hall is located at 201 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

Health & Safety Information

Davies Symphony Hall is currently operating at full audience capacity. The San Francisco Symphony requires proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 for everyone ages 12 and up entering Davies Symphony Hall—including patrons, performers, volunteers, and staff. Full vaccination is defined as completion of the two-dose regimen of Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or one dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or other WHO authorized COVID-19 vaccine administered two weeks or more in advance of the concert. Audience members between the ages of 5 and 11 must show proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 or a negative COVID-19 test (PCR test within 48 hours of the event, or antigen [rapid] test within 24 hours of the event). Audience members under age 5 must show proof of a negative COVID-19 test (PCR test within 48 hours of the event, or antigen [rapid] test within 24 hours of the event). All patrons are required to wear a face mask while attending performances.

Beginning February 1, 2021, for those eligible, the SF Symphony will begin requiring proof of a COVID-19 booster—received at least one week prior to each event—for entrance into Davies Symphony Hall. Details about health and safety protocols at Davies Symphony Hall can be found [here](#).

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAL SERIES

MTT: Gautier Capuçon Plays Shostakovich

[Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 7:30pm](#)

[Friday, January 21, 2022 at 7:30pm](#)

[Saturday, January 22, 2022 at 7:30pm](#)

[Michael Tilson Thomas](#) conductor

[Gautier Capuçon](#) cello

San Francisco Symphony

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH Cello Concerto No. 2

SERGEI PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 5

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Tickets: \$20–165.

Pre-Concert Talk: Peter Grunberg will give an “Inside Music” talk from the stage one hour prior to the January 20–22 performances. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

Broadcast / Archived Stream: A broadcast of these performances will air February 1 at 8 pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and kdfc.com where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAL SERIES

MTT: Yuja Wang & Mahler 1

[Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 7:30pm](#)

[Friday, January 28, 2022 at 7:30pm](#)

[Saturday, January 29, 2022 at 7:30pm](#)

[Michael Tilson Thomas](#) conductor

[Yuja Wang](#) piano

San Francisco Symphony

FRANZ LISZT Piano Concerto No. 1

GUSTAV MAHLER Symphony No. 1

Tickets: \$30–250.

Pre-Concert Talk: John Platoff will give an “Inside Music” talk from the stage one hour prior to the January 27–29 performances. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

Broadcast / Archived Stream: A broadcast of these performances will air February 8 at 8 pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and kdfc.com where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

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The January 20–22 concerts are generously supported by the Matthew Kelly Family Foundation and Nellie & Max Levchin.

The January 20–22 concerts, a part of The Barbro and Bernard Osher Masterworks Series, are made possible by a generous gift from Barbro and Bernard Osher.

The January 28 performance conducted by Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas is underwritten by Marcia and John Goldman in honor and memory of Past San Francisco Symphony President Nancy Hellman Bechtle.

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– San Francisco Symphony –