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**MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY WIN 2021 GRAMMY® AWARD IN THE CATEGORY OF BEST CLASSICAL COMPENDIUM FOR THEIR LIVE CONCERT RECORDING OF TILSON THOMAS' *FROM THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK & MEDITATIONS ON RILKE***

### Recording on SF Symphony's in-house label SFS Media

**SAN FRANCISCO**—It has just been announced that the San Francisco Symphony and Music Director Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas' (MTT) recording of Michael Tilson Thomas' own compositions *From the Diary of Anne Frank & Meditations on Rilke*, featuring Isabel Leonard, Sasha Cooke, and Ryan McKinny as soloists, won a 2021 Grammy® Award in the category of Best Classical Compendium. Recorded live at Davies Symphony Hall in November 2018 and January 2020, respectively, this album represents the first SFS Media release of MTT's original compositions, juxtaposing his earliest orchestral work with his most recent one. The 63rd annual Grammy® Awards is streaming live exclusively on [Grammy.com](http://Grammy.com) and will broadcast in HDTV and 5.1 surround sound on the CBS Television Network, Sunday, March 14, at 8:00 p.m. ET/5:00 p.m. PT.

Based on the historic diary kept by Anne Frank during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, *From the Diary of Anne Frank* is MTT's dramatic work for narrator and orchestra. Commissioned by UNICEF and originally written for Audrey Hepburn as a vehicle in her role as a UNICEF ambassador, the work received its premiere with Michael Tilson Thomas and the New World Symphony in 1990. The San Francisco Symphony first performed *From the Diary of Anne Frank* in November 2018, in concerts celebrating the 70th anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human

Rights, with [Isabel Leonard](#) as narrator. Completed more than three decades later, MTT's song cycle *Meditations on Rilke* is a musical setting of lyric poems by German modernist Rainer Maria Rilke, whose writings grapple with sentiments at the core of the human condition, including solitude, mortality, and the redemptive value of art. Mezzo-soprano [Sasha Cooke](#) and bass-baritone [Ryan McKinny](#) joined MTT and the San Francisco Symphony for the world premiere of *Meditations on Rilke* at Davies Symphony Hall in January 2020. **For more information, program notes, and performance video footage, and commentary from MTT, visit <https://www.sfsymphony.org/tilsonthomas>.**

This is the 16th Grammy® Award for the San Francisco Symphony, ninth since launching SFS Media in 2001. The partnership of Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony has been recognized with numerous recording honors. Their very first recording together, a live recording of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, won a 1997 Grammy® Award for Best Orchestral Performance. Their RCA Red Seal all-Stravinsky recording of *Le Sacre du printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*), *The Firebird*, and *Perséphone* won three Grammy® Awards in 2000 in the categories of Best Classical Album, Best Orchestral Performance and Best Engineered Classical Album. Under SFS Media, Tilson Thomas and the Orchestra's acclaimed Mahler cycle recording project has won seven Grammy® Awards, including a 2003 Grammy® Award for Mahler: *Symphony No. 6* in the category of Best Orchestral Performance; a 2004 Grammy® Award for Mahler: *Symphony No. 3; Kindertotenlieder* in the category of Best Classical Album; two 2006 Grammy® Awards for Mahler: *Symphony No. 7* in the categories of Best Orchestral Performance and Best Classical Album; and two Grammy® Awards for Mahler: *Symphony No. 8 & Adagio from Symphony No. 10* in the categories of Best Choral Performance and Best Engineered Album, Classical. Its 2013 recording of John Adams: *Harmonielehre & Short Ride in a Fast Machine* won a 2013 Grammy® Award for Best Orchestral Performance.

#### **About SFS Media**

[SFS Media](#) is the San Francisco Symphony's in-house media production company and label, launched in 2001. SFS Media records and releases audio and visual material which reflects the Orchestra's commitment to the highest recording and production standards, showcasing music by maverick American composers as well as core classical masterworks. Recorded live in concert and engineered at Davies Symphony Hall, the audio recordings are released in 5.1 surround-capable SACD, in high quality 24-bit and DSD Studio Master digital formats, and on streaming platforms via all major retailers. In addition to live concert recordings, SFS Media produces and releases documentary and live performance videos, including the San Francisco Symphony's national public television series and multimedia project *Keeping Score*, designed to make classical music more accessible to people of all ages and musical backgrounds. *Keeping Score* is available on DVD and Blu-ray, can be accessed online at [keepingscore.org](http://keepingscore.org), and was made available for unlimited free streaming on the Symphony's YouTube channel in 2020. Other video recordings 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*, the centennial season's Opening Gala live concert video paired with a documentary about the Symphony's history, which won a Northern California Emmy Award for "Historical/Cultural Program or Special" in 2012. Its first digital program with Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen, *Throughline*, is available for free streaming at [www.sfsymphony.org/throughline](http://www.sfsymphony.org/throughline).

All SFS Media recordings and videos are available online at <https://www.warnerclassics.com/artist/san-francisco-symphony/releases> and at major retailers nationwide, with all physical recordings also available from the Symphony Store in Davies Symphony Hall. Global distribution of all SFS Media products is managed by [Warner Classics Label Services](#).

*From the Diary of Anne Frank & Meditations on Rilke* is available in 5.1 surround-capable SACD and through digital outlets worldwide, including [iTunes](#), [Amazon](#), [AppleMusic](#) [Spotify](#), [Primephonic](#), [HDTracks](#) and [IDAGIO](#).

To request a digital review copy of the recording, email the San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at [publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org)

Click [here](#) to access the Online Press Kit, which includes performance videos & photos, and artist headshots.

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**Title:** *From the Diary of Anne Frank & Meditations on Rilke*

**Composer:** Michael Tilson Thomas

**Artists:** San Francisco Symphony

Michael Tilson Thomas Music Director and conductor

Isabel Leonard narrator (*From the Diary of Anne Frank*)

Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano (*Meditations on Rilke*)

Ryan McKinny bass-baritone (*Meditations on Rilke*)

**Works:** *From the Diary of Anne Frank*

*Meditations on Rilke*

**Recorded:** November 15–18, 2018 and January 9–12, 2020. All works recorded in PCM and 24-bit/192kHz audio live in Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco.

**Label:** SFS Media

**Catalogue Number:** SFS 0079

**Release Date:** Digital on June 26, 2020 and SACD on July 17, 2020

**Total Run Time:** 01:21:08

**Description:** In celebration of Michael Tilson Thomas' 25th and final year as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, SFS Media presents the premiere recordings of MTT's first and most recent compositions for voice and orchestra. MTT's *From the Diary of Anne Frank* and *Meditations on Rilke* feature narrator Isabel Leonard, mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, and bass-baritone Ryan McKinny. Inspired by and based on the words and compassionate spirit of Anne Frank, *From the Diary of Anne Frank* opens with a flourish and culminates in a solemn yet hopeful vision for the future. *Meditations on Rilke* takes listeners on an emotional and evocative journey befitting the lyrical sweep of Rainer Maria Rilke's poems. This album will be available June 26, 2020 as a digital download, and via streaming and as a studio master-quality SACD on July 17, 2020. Learn more [sfsymphony.org/tilsonthomas](https://sfsymphony.org/tilsonthomas).

**Media copies:** Members of the press may request physical and digital review copies, high-res live performance photos, and a digital CD booklet from San Francisco Symphony Public Relations Department at [publicrelations@sfsymphony.org](mailto:publicrelations@sfsymphony.org).

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ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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