CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION AND
CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS
RATIFY NEW THREE-YEAR CONTRACT

(CHICAGO)—The musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO)—members of the Chicago Federation of Musicians (CFM), Local 10-208 of the American Federation of Musicians—and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) announce the ratification of a new three-year collective bargaining agreement, effective September 14, 2015, through September 16, 2018.

The members of the CSO and the CSOA Board of Trustees voted today to accept the terms of the new contract. The agreement includes wage and pension increases and scheduling provisions that will provide more flexibility during the season and on tour.

“The city of Chicago is so very fortunate to be the home of one of the world’s great orchestras,” said Jay Henderson, Chairman of the CSOA’s Board of Trustees. “The musicians’ dedication to performing at the highest artistic level makes the Chicago Symphony Orchestra an exceptional ensemble. This new agreement recognizes the preeminence of our Orchestra while ensuring long-term financial sustainability, and we appreciate the musicians’ willingness to work constructively in this process.”

“I have the greatest admiration for the musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and am pleased we have come to an agreement on a new contract,” said Jeff Alexander, president of the CSOA. “The Orchestra serves the greater Chicago community and the world with extraordinary performances, recordings, broadcasts and educational activities. It is an honor to
be part of this distinguished institution, and to work on a daily basis with the members of the CSO. I look forward to continuing to work together to advance the activities of this great Orchestra.”

“The Musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra are pleased that an agreement for a new contract with the Association has been reached,” said Stephen Lester, chairman of the CSO Members Committee. “We are optimistic that this agreement will lay a foundation for dynamic growth and continued success into the future.”

“For many decades, the CFM and CSOA have had a productive relationship,” commented Gary Matts, president of the Chicago Federation of Musicians. “The parties have always worked diligently to reach contract agreements reflecting the status of the CSO as one of the world’s great orchestras.”

Under the terms of the newly ratified agreement, CSO musicians’ annual salary will increase by 1% in the first contract year and 2% in each of the second and third years. The pension benefit will increase by 4.3% and there will be no changes to health care plans or contributions.

Negotiations between the CSOA and the CSO Musicians’ Negotiating Committee began in July of 2015. The previous collective bargaining agreement expired on Sunday, September 13, 2015. A tentative agreement was reached on Monday, September 28, 2015, and ratified by both parties on Tuesday, September 29, 2015. A mediator from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), Javier Ramirez, assisted the parties in the final stages of negotiations.

Throughout the contract discussions, the CSO Musicians’ Negotiating Committee was represented by Chicago Federation of Musicians Local 10-208 President and Vice President Gary Matts and Terryl Lynn Jares, and legal counsel Kevin Case of Case Arts Law. The CSOA was represented by legal counsel Ross Eberly of DLA Piper.

The parties would like to express their gratitude to their Negotiating Committee members—for the CSO, musicians Stephen Lester, Chair of the CSO Members Committee; James Smelser, Vice Chair; Roger Cline; Robert Kassinger; and David Sanders—and for the CSOA, President Jeff Alexander, Vice Presidents Isabelle Goossen and Vanessa Moss, Kelly Cater, John Deverman and Sameed Afghani. The parties also extend special thanks to Mr. Ramirez and the FMCS.

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