NEEME JÄRVI RETURNS TO SYMPHONY CENTER TO LEAD CSO IN DECEMBER SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS

Program Features Works by Czech composers Smetana and Dvořák

Award-winning Cellist Alisa Weilerstein is Soloist in Barber’s Cello Concerto

December 7, 8, 9 & 12

CHICAGO—Neeme Järvi returns to Symphony Center to lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in subscription concerts on Thursday, December 7 at 8:00 p.m., Friday, December 8 at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, December 9 at 8:00 p.m., and Tuesday, December 12 at 7:30 p.m. For this program, Järvi replaces the distinguished Czech conductor Jiří Bělohlávek who passed away unexpectedly in May 2017. The program includes works by Czech composers Bedřich Smetana and Antonin Dvořák, as well as Samuel Barber’s Cello Concerto with celebrated cellist Alisa Weilerstein, as soloist.

The program opens with three selections from Smetana’s The Bartered Bride, the composer’s brilliant comic opera that tells the story of true love’s prevailing power. A mainstay of the opera repertoire, Smetana’s work is a lasting example of his nationalistic composition style, drawing on spirited Czech folk melodies and themes throughout the score. The program continues with Barber’s Cello Concerto, written for the remarkable Russian cellist Raya Garbousova who premiered the work with the Boston Symphony Orchestra led by Serge Koussevitsky in 1946. She also gave the work its first performances with the CSO in 1949 under the baton of Charles Munch and returned to perform it again in 1952—the Orchestra’s most recent performances of this landmark American concerto—under music director Rafael Kubelík. Inspired by Garbousova’s technical command of the instrument, Barber’s work “stretches the technical limits of the cello,” according to Weilerstein and is filled with what she describes as “aching lyricism” and music that is “rhythmically interesting.” Completing the program is Dvořák’s Symphony No. 5. The work incorporates tuneful melodies and dancing rhythms of Bohemian folk music throughout its first three movements, including a playful scherzo that suggests a
rustic peasant dance before yielding to music of suspense and powerful drama in the symphony’s final allegro movement.

Estonian-born Neeme Järvi is the Principal Conductor of the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra. Järvi is a regular guest conductor for the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, with whom he is Chief Conductor Emeritus, and the Gothenburg Symphony, and has appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He has also led the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a guest conductor regularly since 1985, with his most recent podium appearance taking place in April 2017. A prolific recording artist and renowned Sibelius interpreter, Järvi’s discography includes over 440 titles, including an acclaimed 2007 release of Sibelius’s complete symphonies and tone poems for Deutsche Grammaphon.

Since making her solo debut at just 13 with the Cleveland Orchestra in 1995, Alisa Weilerstein has gone on to gain international recognition as one of the top cellists of her generation. Her distinctive musical voice has won her numerous awards throughout her career, including a 2011 MacArthur Foundation fellowship, the 2006 Leonard Bernstein Award, and Lincoln Center’s 2008 Martin E. Segal Prize for Exceptional Achievement. Weilerstein has been an exclusive recording artist for Decca Classics since 2010, the first cellist signed to the prestigious label in over 30 years. Her first album earned her “Recording of the Year” in 2013 by BBC Music, while her second album topped the U.S. Classical Charts. Recently, she has released her fifth album with Decca in 2016, featuring Shostakovich’s two cello concertos with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Tickets for all CSOA-presented concerts can be purchased by phone at 800-223-7114 or 312-294-3000; online at cso.org, or at the Symphony Center box office: 220 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604.

Discounted student tickets for select concerts can be purchased, subject to availability, online in advance or at the box office on the day of the concert. For group rates, please call 312-294-3040.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the CSO.

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These concerts are generously sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Dietrich M. Gross.

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<th>Chicago Symphony Orchestra</th>
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Neeme Järvi, conductor
Alisa Weilerstein, cello

SMETANA  Selections from *The Bartered Bride*
BARBER  Cello Concerto
DVORÁK  Symphony No. 5

Tickets: $34-221

**Featured Conductor and Artist for this Performance:**

- Neeme Järvi
- Alisa Weilerstein

**The Chicago Symphony Orchestra:** [www.cso.org](http://www.cso.org) and [www.csosoundsandstories.org](http://www.csosoundsandstories.org)

Founded by Theodore Thomas in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Since 2010, the preeminent conductor Riccardo Muti has served as its 10th music director. Yo-Yo Ma is the CSO’s Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant, and Samuel Adams and Elizabeth Ogonek are its Mead Composers-in-Residence.

From baroque through contemporary music, the CSO commands a vast repertoire. Its renowned musicians annually perform more than 150 concerts, most at Symphony Center in Chicago and, each summer, at the suburban Ravinia Festival. They regularly tour nationally and internationally. Since 1892, the CSO has made 60 international tours, performing in 29 countries on five continents.

People around the globe listen to weekly radio broadcasts of CSO concerts and recordings on the WFMT radio network and online at [cso.org/radio](http://www.cso.org/radio). Recordings by the CSO have earned 62 Grammy Awards, including two in 2011 for Muti’s recording with the CSO and Chorus of Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem* (Muti’s first of eight releases with the CSO to date). Find details on these and many other CSO recordings at [www.cso.org/resound](http://www.cso.org/resound).

The CSO is part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, which also includes the Chicago Symphony Chorus (Duain Wolfe, Director and Conductor) and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, a training ensemble for emerging professionals. Through its prestigious Symphony Center Presents series, the CSOA presents guest artists and ensembles from a variety of genres—classical, jazz, world, and contemporary.

The Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO offers community and education programs that annually engage more than 200,000 people of diverse ages and backgrounds. Through the Institute and other activities, including a free annual concert led by Muti, the CSO is committed to using the power of music to create connections and build community.

The CSO is supported by thousands of patrons, volunteers and institutional and individual donors. The CSO’s music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation. The Negaunee Foundation provides generous support in perpetuity for the work of the Negaunee Music Institute.