



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

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News

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MUSIC DIRECTOR RICCARDO MUTI RETURNS IN MARCH FOR TWO WEEKS OF SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS AND ACTIVITIES

MARCH 15–24, 2018

**CSO Concertmaster Robert Chen and Violist Paul Neubauer—
in his CSO Debut—are Soloists in Mozart’s Sinfonia concertante (March 15-17)**

**Muti Leads World Premiere Performances of Three Lisel Mueller Settings by
CSO Viola Max Raimi featuring Mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong
in her CSO Debut (March 22-24)**

**Chicago Symphony Chorus Marks 60th Anniversary in March 2018 and Performs
Schubert’s Mass in E-flat Major with Muti and the CSO**

CHICAGO—Music Director Riccardo Muti returns to Chicago in March to lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in two subscription concert programs and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in a free, open rehearsal. Muti and the CSO perform the music of Haydn and Mozart in subscription concerts at Symphony Center on [Thursday, March 15, at 8:00 p.m.](#) and [Saturday, March 17, at 8:00 p.m.](#), as well as [Friday, March 16, at 7:30 p.m.](#) at Wheaton College. In addition to symphonies by Haydn and Mozart, the program features violist Paul Neubauer in his CSO debut alongside CSO Concertmaster Robert Chen as soloists in Mozart’s Sinfonia concertante. The Chicago Symphony Chorus (CSC), under the direction of Duain Wolfe, joins Muti and the Orchestra in subscription concerts on [Thursday, March 22, at 8:00 p.m.](#), [Friday, March 23, at 8:00 p.m.](#) and [Saturday, March 24, at 8:00 p.m.](#) to perform Schubert’s Mass in E-flat Major, on a program that serves to mark the 60th anniversary of the Chorus in March 2018. This program also includes Weber’s Overture to *Oberon* and the world-premiere performances of Three Lisel Mueller Settings, a CSO-commissioned work composed by CSO Viola Max Raimi and featuring mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong in her CSO debut. Muti leads the Civic Orchestra in a free open rehearsal at Symphony Center on [Sunday, March 18, at 7:00 p.m.](#)

RICCARDO MUTI
Music Director

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YO-YO MA
Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

In the first program of his March CSO residency ([March 15-17](#)), Muti leads a program of classical masterworks which opens with Haydn's Symphony No. 89 in F Major. Composed in 1787, the work borrows musical material from a concerto for *lira organizzata* (organ lyre), a keyboard instrument favored by one of the composer's noteworthy patrons, Ferdinand IV, king of Naples, who commissioned Haydn to write several works for the instrument. The symphony's slow movement and finale are derived directly from the concerto, to which Haydn added an opening Vivace movement and sparkling Minuet to realize a work that highlights the composer's inventiveness, wit and gift for melody. The program continues with Mozart's Sinfonia concertante, a work that combines elements of both a symphony and concerto and features the violin and viola soloists intertwined in brilliant, singing melodic lines set against a backdrop of rich orchestral sonorities. Completing the program is Mozart's Symphony No. 36 (*Linz*), which takes its subtitle from the city in which it was written. The symphony includes Mozart's first use of a slow introduction, which gives way to an exuberant Allegro spiritoso in the first movement of the work. The inventive work also includes a more formal, courtly Minuet and thrilling finale.

Muti's second March program ([March 22-24](#)), opens with the overture to Carl Maria von Weber's *Oberon*. Based on a medieval French fairytale, the opera features a delightful overture considered to be one of Weber's finer works for orchestra. Muti and the CSO are joined by the Chicago Symphony Chorus, under the direction of Duain Wolfe, for the closing work on the program, Schubert's Mass in E-flat Major. These performances feature soprano Amanda Forsythe, tenor Nicholas Phan, and bass Nahuel Di Pierro, as well as mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong and tenor Paul Appleby in their CSO debuts. The final of six masses Schubert composed during his lifetime, the Mass in E-Flat Major is known for its powerful setting of the traditional mass text, including its reverent opening of the *Kyrie* and majestic declamations of the *Gloria*.

These concerts also mark the 60th anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, which gave its first performances in March 1958. Then-music director Fritz Reiner sought to establish a chorus commensurate with the Orchestra, and invited the distinguished choral conductor Margaret Hillis to do so. Hillis, who served as a conductor for the New York City Opera and the founder of the American Choral Foundation, took on the monumental task, and the Chorus gave its first public performances with the CSO in Mozart's Requiem on March 13 and 14, 1958. Over the next decade, the Chicago Symphony Chorus rose to become one of the finest professional ensembles in the country, releasing its first commercial recording with the Orchestra in 1959 and making their debut at Carnegie Hall in 1967. Hillis served as chorus director for 37 years until her retirement in 1994. Then-music director Daniel Barenboim appointed Duain Wolfe as Hillis' successor in June that year, and Wolfe continues to serve as the Chorus's director. The Chorus has won 10 Grammy awards for its recordings with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, including the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance for Verdi's Requiem, led by Riccardo Muti on the CSO Resound label.

An additional focal point of this program is the world premiere of Three Lisel Mueller Settings, written by composer and CSO Viola Max Raimi, a member of the Orchestra since 1984. A CSO Commission, which received additional funding from The Poetry Foundation, the work features

text from three poems by Pulitzer Prize-winning, Chicago-based poet Lisel Mueller, sung in these performances by mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong. Raimi was first introduced to Mueller's work on reading her "A Poem about the Hounds and the Hares" shortly after she received the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry. "This poem hit me between the eyes, and I couldn't get it out of my imagination," Raimi notes, "and I knew immediately that I wanted to set it to music." Since then, Raimi has forged a friendship with Mueller through their artistic common ground. Such collaboration is core to Raimi's process, which he attributes to his dual roles as a composer and an orchestral musician.

The first setting, "The Story," suggests a darkly comic tale of the marriage between water and fire, in which "opposites attract, but are fundamentally unsuited to be together," says Raimi. Taking the shape of what the composer describes as a "dark waltz," it plays to the notion of a tragic dance of opposites, and features a distinctive solo line for the clarinet. The second setting, "An Unanswered Question," sheds light on the perspective of a captive woman pining for her lost people, unable to communicate with strangers in a unfamiliar world. Themes of isolation and oppression play out in anguished lines and poignant solo moments for the bassoon. The final setting, "Hope," takes the striking imagery of the original poem as a point of departure for the music. In the opening lines, the mezzo-soprano sings "it hovers in dark corners, before the lights are turned on" over a prominent string bass solo before the mezzo-soprano soars up to the top of her range.

Audiences attending the March 22 world premiere of Raimi's work can experience poetry in a new way during a special event hosted by Poems While You Wait. This Chicago-based collective of poets with their vintage typewriters will provide patrons with an unexpected and decontextualized encounter with poetry. Poems While You Wait will be stationed in the Grainger Ballroom prior to the March 22 performance. For a \$5 donation, one of six poets will compose an original poem on any topic of the patron's choosing, to be composed during the concert. Attendees may sign up to request a poem starting at 7 p.m. before the concert on a first-come, first-served basis, and poems will be available for collection at the end of the concert. All donations will go to the non-profit publisher Rose Metal Press. To learn more about Poems While You Wait, please visit <http://poemswhileyouwait.tumblr.com/>.

In conjunction with world-premiere performances of Raimi's Three Lisel Mueller Settings, the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO and The Poetry Foundation organized several educational activities for local music students. These included a lecture on text painting in music by the composer for students at Chicago High School for the Arts on February 26 and Raimi leading a chamber ensemble of students performing three of his own works at Merit School of Music's tuition-free conservatory on March 3.

In addition to his subscription concert programs, Muti also returns to the podium to lead the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in an open rehearsal at Symphony Center on [Sunday, March 18, at 7:00 p.m.](#) Muti rehearses the members of the Civic Orchestra in Mozart's Symphony No. 36

(Linz). While the rehearsal is free and open to the public, tickets are required. The Civic Orchestra is a program of the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO.

Following his CSO residency in February 2018, Muti led the Orchestra in the second of [two domestic tours](#) in the 2017/18 season. The five-city, eight-concert East Coast tour launched on February 7 at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., with a concert that marked Muti's 350th performance with the CSO. The tour continued to New York City where Muti and the CSO participated in a multi-day residency of engagement activities and concerts at Carnegie Hall on February 9 and 10. Muti and the Orchestra then traveled to Florida for a concert at Hayes Hall in Naples (February 12), presented by Artis—Naples, which recently announced a new, three-year residency for Muti and the CSO for 2019-2021. This was followed by two concerts on February 14 and 15 at the Raymond F. Kravis Center in West Palm Beach, including a performance on the day of the school shooting in nearby Parkland, Florida. Muti and the Orchestra dedicated their performance of the encore—Schubert's Entr'acte No. 3 to *Rosamunde*—to the memory of victims and their families on February 14. The East Coast tour concluded with a return appearance at Memorial Hall in Chapel Hill, North Carolina for two concerts, on February 16 and 17, as well as master classes with music students from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill's music department.

For the East Coast tour, Muti led the Orchestra in varied programs that included works by Stravinsky, Verdi, Britten, Brahms, and Chausson, as well as *many words of love* by CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Samuel Adams. Tour programs also featured performances of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Jennifer Higdon's Low Brass Concerto, featuring the Orchestra's legendary low brass section, which received its world premiere with the orchestra during Muti's February residency at Symphony Center. The East Coast tour performances garnered wide critical acclaim for Muti and the Orchestra with Anne Midgette of the *Washington Post* hailing their opening night at the Kennedy Center as "[an] evening that offered a taste of what a really great orchestra sounds like" and James R. Oestreich of *The New York Times* noting that their performances were "richly sonorous and warmly expressive" and "honed to a fine touch by Mr. Muti." Xenia Hanusiak of the *Financial Times* declared that "Muti's disciplined ensemble plays with a clarity of texture and meticulous intonation unmatched by most orchestras."

The CSO's music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation.

Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

United Airlines is the official airline of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The performances on March 15 and 17 are generously sponsored by the Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin Family Fund for the Canon.

The performances on March 15, 16 and 17, as well as March 22, 23 and 24 are supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The March 16 performance at Wheaton College is generously sponsored by the JCS Fund of the DuPage Foundation.

The March 22, 23 and 24 performances are generously sponsored by the Zell Family Foundation.

Funding for Max Raimi's Three Lisel Muller Settings comes from The Poetry Foundation.

Support for the 60th Anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Chorus is provided by the Walter E. Heller Foundation in honor of Alyce DeCosta.

The appearance of the Chicago Symphony Chorus is made possible by a generous gift from Jim and Kay Mabie.

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

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra

[Thursday, March 15, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, March 17, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Riccardo Muti, conductor

Robert Chen, violin

Paul Neubauer, viola

HAYDN

Symphony No. 89

MOZART

Sinfonia concertante

MOZART

Symphony No. 36 (*Linz*)

Tickets: \$34-221

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Wheaton College Series

Edman Memorial Chapel

401 E. Franklin

Wheaton, IL

[Friday, March 16, 2018, 7:30 p.m.](#)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Riccardo Muti, conductor

Robert Chen, violin

Paul Neubauer, viola

HAYDN Symphony No. 89
MOZART Sinfonia concertante
MOZART Symphony No. 36 (*Linz*)

Tickets: \$45-85

**Civic Orchestra of Chicago
Open Rehearsal**

[Sunday, March 18, 2018, 7:00 p.m.](#)
Civic Orchestra of Chicago
Riccardo Muti, conductor

MOZART Symphony No. 36 (*Linz*)

Free and open to the public; tickets are required.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

[Thursday, March 22, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)
[Friday, March 23, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)
[Saturday, March 24, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Riccardo Muti, conductor
Amanda Forsythe, soprano
Elizabeth DeShong, mezzo-soprano
Paul Appleby, tenor
Nicholas Phan, tenor
Nahuel Di Pierro, bass
Chicago Symphony Chorus
Duain Wolfe, chorus director

WEBER Overture to *Oberon*
RAIMI Three Lisel Mueller Settings
 [World Premiere, CSO Commission]
SCHUBERT Mass in E-flat Major

Tickets: \$34-221

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Riccardo Muti

Riccardo Muti, born in Naples, Italy, is one of the preeminent conductors of our day. In 2010, when he became the tenth music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), he already had more than forty years of experience at the helm of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Philharmonia Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Teatro alla Scala. He is a guest conductor for orchestras and opera houses all over the world: the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera, the Royal Opera House, the Metropolitan Opera, and many others.

Muti studied piano under Vincenzo Vitale at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella in his hometown of Naples, graduating with distinction. He subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan, also graduating with distinction. His principal teachers were Bruno Bettinelli and Antonino Votto, principal assistant to Arturo Toscanini at La Scala. After he won

the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition—by unanimous vote of the jury—in Milan in 1967, Muti's career developed quickly. In 1968, he became principal conductor of Florence's Maggio Musicale, a position that he held until 1980. In 2017, Muti led the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale in performances that were part of the historic G-7 Culture Summit which explored the use of culture as an instrument of dialogue among different peoples and nations.

Herbert von Karajan invited him to conduct at the Salzburg Festival in Austria in 1971, and Muti has maintained a close relationship with the summer festival and with its great orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, for now forty-five consecutive years. When he conducted the philharmonic's 150th anniversary concert in 1992, he was presented with the Golden Ring, a special sign of esteem and affection, and in 2001, his outstanding artistic contributions to the orchestra were further recognized with the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal. Muti was also invited by the Orchestra to lead his fifth New Year's concert in 2018. He is also a recipient of a silver medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum for his contribution to the music of W.A. Mozart. He is an honorary member of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of the Friends of Music), the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Vienna State Opera. In 2015, he founded the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in Ravenna, Italy, to train young conductors, répétiteurs, and singers in the Italian opera repertoire.

Muti succeeded Otto Klemperer as chief conductor and music director of London's Philharmonia Orchestra in 1973, holding that position until 1982. From 1980 to 1992, he was music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and in 1986, he became music director of Milan's Teatro alla Scala. During his nineteen-year tenure, in addition to directing major projects such as the Mozart–Da Ponte trilogy and Wagner Ring cycle, Muti conducted operatic and symphonic repertoire ranging from the baroque to the contemporary, also leading hundreds of concerts with the Filarmonica della Scala and touring the world with both the opera company and the orchestra. His tenure as music director, the longest of any in La Scala's history, culminated in the triumphant reopening of the restored opera house with Antonio Salieri's *Europa riconosciuta*, originally commissioned for La Scala's inaugural performance in 1778.

Throughout his career, Muti has dedicated much time and effort to training young musicians. In 2004, he founded the Orchestra Giovanile Luigi Cherubini (Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra), based in his native Italy. He regularly tours with the ensemble to prestigious concert halls and opera houses all over the world.

Since 1997, as part of *Le vie dell'Amicizia* (The paths of friendship), a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, Muti has annually conducted large-scale concerts in war-torn and poverty-stricken areas around the world, using music to bring hope, unity, and attention to present day social, cultural, and humanitarian issues.

Muti has received innumerable international honors. He is a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic, Officer of the French Legion of Honor, and a recipient of the German Verdienstkreuz. Queen Elizabeth II bestowed on him the title of honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire, Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded him the Order of Friendship, and Pope Benedict XVI made him a Knight of the Grand Cross First Class of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great—the highest papal honor. Muti also has received Israel's Wolf Prize for the arts, Sweden's prestigious Birgit Nilsson Prize, Spain's Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts, and the gold medal from Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his promotion of Italian culture abroad. In March 2017, the Italian government recognized Muti with its prestigious Presidente della Repubblica award, presented to Muti for his exceptional contribution to Italian culture in the field of music. He has received more than twenty honorary degrees from universities around the world.

Considered one of the greatest interpreters of Verdi in our time, Muti wrote a book on the composer, *Verdi, l'italiano*, published in Italian, German, and Japanese. His first book, *Riccardo Muti: An Autobiography: First the Music, Then the Words*, also has been published in several languages, including Chinese.

Riccardo Muti's vast catalog of recordings, numbering in the hundreds, ranges from the traditional symphonic and operatic repertoires to contemporary works. His debut recording with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, released in 2010 by CSO Resound, won two Grammy awards. His second recording with the CSO and Chorus, Verdi's *Otello*, released in 2013 by CSO Resound, won the 2014 International Opera Award for the Best Complete Opera.

During his time with the CSO, Muti has won over audiences in greater Chicago and across the globe through his music making as well as his demonstrated commitment to sharing classical music. His annual free concerts for the city of Chicago attract tens of thousands of people. He regularly invites subscribers, students, seniors, and people of low incomes to attend, at no charge, his CSO rehearsals. Muti's commitment to artistic excellence and to creating a strong bond between an orchestra and its communities continues to bring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to ever higher levels of achievement and renown.

<http://www.riccardomutimusic.com/>

Other Featured Artists for these Performances

[Robert Chen, violin](#)

[Paul Neubauer, viola](#)

[Max Raimi, composer and viola](#)

[Amanda Forsythe, soprano](#)

[Elizabeth DeShong, mezzo-soprano](#)

[Paul Appleby, tenor](#)

[Nicholas Phan, tenor](#)

[Nahuel Di Pierro, bass](#)

[Chicago Symphony Chorus](#)

[Duain Wolfe, chorus director](#)

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra: www.cso.org and 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. 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.

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. Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the CSO. 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.