FINNISH CONDUCTOR JOHN STORGÅRDS MAKES CSO DEBUT IN PROGRAM INCLUDING NORDIC MASTERWORKS

Storgårds Leads the CSO in Performances of Sibelius’s Symphony No. 1 and Grieg’s Suite No. 1 from Peer Gynt

Gil Shaham is Soloist in Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto

November 30, December 1, 2 and 3

CHICAGO—Finnish conductor John Storgårds, Chief Guest Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic, makes his CSO debut in a set of subscription concerts on Thursday, November 30 at 8:00 p.m., Friday, December 1 at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, December 2 at 8:00 p.m., and Sunday, December 3 at 3:00 p.m. Storgårds leads the CSO in Sibelius’s Symphony No. 1, as well as Grieg’s Peer Gynt Suite No. 1 and Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto, featuring Gil Shaham as soloist.

The program opens with Grieg’s Suite No. 1 from Peer Gynt, a musical tale of the downfall and ultimate redemption of a humble poet. The suite features some of Grieg’s most recognizable and popular music such as the soaring flute melody of “Morning Mood” that evokes a pastoral setting at daybreak and the bassoon’s playful, bouncing line from “In the Hall of the Mountain King” depicting the poet’s stealthy approach to a stronghold rife with trolls and goblins. On this program, Grieg’s music is followed by Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto. According to the composer, the concerto is one of “juggler’s tricks and rope dancer’s feats,” referring to the balance required for the soloist to navigate dazzling technical passages that move at lightning speed and moments of sublime beauty. Sibelius’s stirring Symphony No. 1 concludes the program. Though Sibelius is famous for his poignant homages to his native Finland, his first symphony draws upon a wider range of influences, including the music of Tchaikovsky and Brahms. The work opens with a haunting clarinet solo before launching into a bold, nationalistic
theme and is filled with the folk melodies and rich orchestral colors that characterize Sibelius’
musical portraits of his homeland.

Finnish conductor and violinist John Storgårds has been called “an exemplary Sibelius
conductor” by BBC Music Magazine for his interpretations of the works of his fellow countryman.
Storgårds leads a dual-career as a conductor and violinist. He has appeared with many of the
world’s greatest orchestras, such as the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra,
Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Helsinki
Philharmonic, and the Sydney, NHK, Boston, Vancouver, and BBC symphonies. His recordings
featuring the works of Finnish composers Sibelius, Nielsen, Rautavaara, Vasks and Aho earned
him a 2004 Cannes Classical Disc of the Year Award, a Grammy nomination, 2012
Gramophone Award, and a 2015 ECHO Klassik Award. Storgårds holds positions as the Artistic
Partner of the Munich Chamber Orchestra, Artistic Director of the Lapland Chamber Orchestra,
and as of the start of the 2017/18 season, Chief Guest Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic.

Grammy Award-winning violinist Gil Shaham is one of the leading violinists of his generation.
Shaham has performed with the world’s most prestigious orchestras, including the Berlin, Israel,
Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics and the Jerusalem, Singapore, Boston and BBC
symphonies. His virtuosic performances have won him awards and recognition, such as Musical
America’s “Instrumentalist of the Year” Award and the Avery Fischer Career Grant (1990) and
Prize (2012). Shaham has recorded over a dozen concerto and solo CDs which have earned
him multiple Grammy awards, as well as the Grand Prix du Disque, Diapason d’Or, and the
Gramophone Editor’s Choice Award. A regular soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for
several decades, Shaham made his debut with the Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival in 1991
under James Levine.

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.

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# # #
Sunday, December 3, 2017, at 3:00 p.m.
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
John Storgård, conductor
Gil Shaham, violin

GRIEG
Suite No.1 from Peer Gynt

MENDELSSOHN
Violin Concerto

SIBELIUS
Symphony No. 1

Tickets: $36-$250

Featured Conductor for this Performance:

John Storgård
Gil Shaham

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. 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.