



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

220 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60604-2559

News

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**Press Contacts:**

[Dana Navarro](#)

312-294-3090

**Photos available upon request**

[PR@CSO.org](mailto:PR@CSO.org)

[Eileen Chambers](#)

312-294-3092

## **SYMPHONY CENTER PRESENTS JAZZ SERIES ANNOUNCES 25<sup>TH</sup> SEASON PROGRAMMING FOR 2018/19**

**SCP Jazz Series Celebrates its 25th Season with Iconic Artists  
Ahmad Jamal, Wayne Shorter, Branford Marsalis, Joshua Redman,  
Chick Corea, Béla Fleck and Nicholas Payton**

**Jason Moran and Alicia Hall Moran's *Two Wings* Explores African American  
Music of the Great Migration for an SCP Jazz Commission**

**Two Additional SCP Jazz Commissions Bring New Works by Contemporary  
Ragtime Pianist Reginald Robinson Celebrating James Reese Europe and  
by Oded Lev-Ari for Clarinetist Anat Cohen and Her Tentet**

CHICAGO—The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) announces the 2018/19 Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Jazz series programming. Established in 1994, the 10-concert series is now entering its 25th season, with a continued commitment to presenting some of today's most acclaimed and innovative jazz artists.

Throughout the past 25 years, the SCP Jazz series has been carefully curated to celebrate the rich legacy and breadth of jazz through performances by international legends and local talent, partnerships with jazz institutions and talented artists, presentations of new projects through commissions and unique programs created specifically for the series, and by introducing Chicago to rising stars. In addition to performances, the series annually includes educational opportunities for Chicago-area students to both attend performances and learn directly from jazz legends and innovators.

Highlights of the 2018/19 series include three SCP Jazz series commissions, a new project by Jason Moran and Alicia Hall Moran tailored to tell Chicago's Great Migration story, and the appearance of five National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) jazz masters including star-powered bookends to the season—piano phenom Ahmad Jamal opening the season on October 12 and

RICCARDO MUTI  
Zell Music Director

HELEN ZELL  
Chair, Board of Trustees

JEFF ALEXANDER  
President

YO-YO MA  
Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

legendary saxophonist Wayne Shorter in a series finale on June 7, 2019. Other artists closely associated with the SCP Jazz series over the years make return appearances in 2018/19 including Branford Marsalis, Joshua Redman, Chick Corea, Nicholas Payton and Jason Moran, as well as an appearance by Cécile McLorin Salvant headlining the touring ensemble of the Monterey Jazz Festival, which marks its 60th anniversary in 2018. The season also features several artists in their SCP Jazz series debuts including Cuban-born clarinetist and saxophonist Paquito D’Rivera, Latin jazz pianist Alfredo Rodríguez, banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck, guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel, and jazz vocalists José James, Will Downing, Nona Hendryx and Quiana Lynell.

In addition to a lineup featuring some of jazz’s greatest artists, the 2018/19 season offers a variety of music and projects that showcase local and global influences—from the South Side of Chicago to Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and more. Of particular note are three projects commissioned by the SCP Jazz series. In conjunction with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s programming that commemorates the centennial of the Armistice that ended World War I, Reginald R. Robinson presents a tribute to band leader and composer James Reese Europe, who first brought ragtime and jazz to Europe during World War I. In a co-commission with Carnegie Hall, Anat Cohen and her tentet will perform a concerto for solo clarinet and ensemble composed by Cohen’s longtime colleague Oded Lev-Ari. Additionally, pianist Jason Moran and his wife, mezzo-soprano Alicia Hall Moran, present an exploration of African American music of the Great Migration in a new project called *Two Wings: The Music of Black America in Migration*.

Program details for each of the 10 concerts in the 2018/19 SCP Jazz series follow. All SCP Jazz series concerts in the 2018/19 season take place on Fridays at 8 p.m.

The 25th season of the SCP Jazz series opens on [Friday, October 12](#), with Ahmad Jamal, who in 1958 first achieved fame with an album recorded live at Chicago’s Pershing Hotel. The pianist, composer and NEA jazz master, who turns 88 this year, continues to thrill audiences with his creative energy just as much as he did when his classics *Poinciana* and *But Not For Me* became runaway hits. For this performance, Jamal brings his nuanced and globally influenced sound to his latest project, *Marseille*, which serves as a love letter to this beloved coastal city in southern France. At the invitation of Jamal, Azerbaijani pianist Shahin Novrasli makes his Symphony Center debut with a solo performance to open the concert. A classically trained prodigy, Novrasli brings a soft touch and intense speed to his keyboard technique and creates original music that blends his country’s traditional mugham folk music with jazz and baroque influences.

The next SCP Jazz series concert, on [Friday, November 2](#), features the Branford Marsalis Quartet with special guest Roy Hargrove. NEA jazz master and saxophonist Branford Marsalis returns this time with guest trumpeter Roy Hargrove, who first appeared on the series during the 1995/96 season. The Branford Marsalis Quartet, with its tight, intuitive communication, welcomes Hargrove’s bold and flexible sound to their musical conversation in this special collaboration for the SCP jazz series.

The evening also features Chicago contemporary ragtime pianist, composer and MacArthur Fellow Reginald R. Robinson in an SCP Jazz series commission commemorating the centennial of the World War I Armistice. Robinson's new work for a small ensemble pays tribute to ragtime and jazz musician James Reese Europe, who first introduced the musical genres to Europe as a band leader for the 369th Regiment "Harlem Hellfighters," who served in France during WWI.

On [Friday, February 1, 2019](#), the Anat Cohen Tentet appears on a double bill with the Joshua Redman Quartet featuring Aaron Goldberg on piano, Reuben Rogers on bass and Gregory Hutchinson on drums. Within a couple years of winning the Thelonious Monk Competition in 1991, saxophonist Joshua Redman first appeared on the SCP Jazz series and has regularly returned since. This time he brings his longtime sidemen Goldberg, Rogers and Hutchinson for a program that includes original music alongside standards Redman arranged for these performers.

The concert also features Israel-born clarinetist and saxophonist Anat Cohen and her tentet, which includes horns, strings and percussion. Her swinging jazz idiom includes influences from South America, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East, and the set includes a performance by Cohen of a concerto for solo clarinet and ensemble composed by Cohen's longtime colleague Oded Lev-Ari. This work is co-commissioned by the SCP Jazz series and Carnegie Hall, where it receives its world-premiere performance a few weeks prior to the Chicago premiere.

On [Friday, February 22, 2019](#), the SCP Jazz series continues with a multimedia tribute to Pulitzer Prize-winning American writer Ralph Ellison and his favorite jazz artists in *Jazz in the Key of Ellison*. Ellison, who also played the trumpet, built a record collection of his jazz contemporaries including Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Mahalia Jackson, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Ray Charles and others. This program, which is presented in music, words and images, features Grammy Award-winning trumpeter Nicholas Payton, R&B and jazz vocalists Will Downing and Nona Hendryx, 2017 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition winner Quiana Lynell and the Andy Farber Orchestra.

The [Friday, March 8, 2019](#), program features two generations of Cuban artists for an evening of Latin jazz. In his SCP Jazz series debut, 14-time Grammy Award-winning clarinetist, saxophonist and NEA jazz master Paquito D'Rivera brings his quintet to Symphony Center for a program that features D'Rivera's musical ideas that straddle both jazz and classical genres. The evening also features percussionist Pedrito Martinez and pianist Alfredo Rodríguez performing as a duo. Having worked with both jazz and rock musicians, Martinez's style also reflects the polyrhythms of his Santería faith's African roots. Rodríguez has worked with masters including Quincy Jones and blends his affinity for modern jazz and classical composition with an array of popular Cuban dance styles.

The Bad Plus returns to Symphony Center on [Friday, March 15, 2019](#), with guest guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel for a special collaboration for the SCP Jazz series. With their new pianist Orrin Evans, this band recently released its latest album, *Never Stop II*, filled with original pieces that

range from lyrical to abstract, with influences that touch on West African drumming patterns and post-bop harmonies. The Bad Plus also continues to reference rock beats and classical technique mixed with wide improvisational directions on rock hits from Blondie, Nirvana and Black Sabbath. Kurt Rosenwinkel, who is widely considered one of the most influential jazz guitarists of his generation, adds his signature sound to this program. The other half of the concert features jazz vocalist José James in a tribute to superstar R&B singer/songwriter Bill Withers, who penned such hits as “Lean on Me” and “Ain’t No Sunshine.” For his SCP Jazz series debut, James brings his smooth baritone and straightforward delivery to take this songbook into a new direction of his own.

A lineup of today’s young all-stars is featured on the Monterey Jazz Festival’s 60th anniversary celebration tour performance at Symphony Center on [Friday, April 12, 2019](#). *Downbeat*’s female vocalist of the year, Cécile McLorin Salvant headlines this group with her commanding range and winning sense of humor, and pianist Christian Sands, whose own music embraces Afro-Cuban rhythms and hip-hop beats, directs this ensemble. The lineup also includes Chilean saxophonist Melissa Aldana, who made her Symphony Center debut earlier this year; bassist Yasushi Nakamura, who performs with the New Century Jazz Quintet and Japanese-based JSquad; New York-based Canadian trumpeter/singer/songwriter Bria Skonberg, who effortlessly flows between a smooth vocal performance and a gritty brass attack; and New Orleans-based vocalist and drummer Jamison Ross, who draws on gospel and his hometown’s R&B tradition.

On [Friday, May 3, 2019](#), keyboardist and NEA jazz master Chick Corea and banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck reunite for a duo program that demonstrates their shared affinity for jazz, bluegrass and flamenco music. Corea’s career has spanned more than 50 years, and his recordings have garnered 22 jazz Grammy Awards—more than any other artist. Fleck has won 16 Grammy Awards himself and is an innovator of his instrument, working on projects ranging from classical concertos to collaborations with African instrumentalists.

MacArthur Fellow and pianist Jason Moran returns to Symphony Center on [Friday, May 24, 2019](#), with his wife, mezzo-soprano Alicia Hall Moran, Pastor Smokie Norful on piano and vocals, the Imani Winds, Chicago’s Kenwood Academy Jazz Band, music director for this project Joseph Joubert, and other artists who will be announced. *Two Wings: The Music of Black America in Migration* is a new project by Jason and Alicia Hall Moran that tells the story of the African Americans who relocated from the South—with Chicago being a key destination for many during the 20th century—and how their journey shaped American culture. Moran taps the young musicians of the Kenwood Academy Jazz Band for their second collaboration for the SCP Jazz series, while gospel pianist and vocalist Smokie Norful demonstrates the role of the church within this culture and the Imani Winds reaffirm how much of the music of this culture has roots in the classical tradition. Traditional work songs, rock and roll, and R&B help complete the story alongside family narratives.

The 2018/19 SCP Jazz series concludes with another icon who has been thrilling audiences for more than 60 years, saxophonist Wayne Shorter, who brings his longtime, legendary quartet to Symphony Center for a performance on [Friday, June 7, 2019](#). While Shorter’s driving sound is

the heart of the group, their music has embraced a world of traditional hard bop and expansive fusion. For more than 18 years his quartet members have performed together and are able to find new meanings in old jams and cast musical lines in new directions with merely a slight gesture from their leader.

For 2018/19 SCP Jazz series program listings information, click [here](#).

Beyond the 10 concerts in the 2018/19 SCP Jazz series, several Symphony Center Presents Special Concerts have also been announced. The Soweto Gospel Choir returns from South Africa to Symphony Center on [Friday, November 16, at 8 p.m.](#); the Japanese taiko-drumming troupe Kodo returns on [Thursday, February 28, 2019, at 7:30 p.m.](#); and tabla master Zakir Hussain returns on [Friday, April 19, 2019, at 8 p.m.](#)

Subscriptions for the 2018/19 SCP Jazz season in five-concert or 10-concert series are on sale now and begin at \$130. Subscribers to any SCP Jazz series can purchase single tickets to any Special Concerts now. Single tickets for SCP Jazz concerts and Special Concerts go on sale August 10, 2018.

Subscriptions for the 2018/19 Symphony Center Presents Jazz series and tickets to Special Concerts can be purchased by phone at **800-223-7114** or **312-294-3000**, online at [cso.org](http://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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**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 pre-eminent 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://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. 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.