SYMPHONY CENTER PRESENTS ANNOUNCES PROGRAM DETAILS FOR FOURTH ANNUAL CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

The Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre and the Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra Showcase Traditional Chinese Music in a Unique Program

Concert at Symphony Center is Part of City-wide Chinese New Year Celebration Activities

Saturday, February 17, 2018, at 3 p.m.

CHICAGO—Symphony Center Presents (SCP) announces program details for its fourth annual Chinese New Year Celebration concert scheduled for Saturday, February 17, 2018, at 3 p.m., at Symphony Center (220 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago). The concert features a performance by the Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre, as well as the Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra led by its music director, Zhang Yi.

This year’s Chinese New Year Celebration concert at Symphony Center is part of the City of Chicago’s multi-week calendar of activities and programs to mark this festive season. Symphony Center Presents is pleased to once again collaborate with the Consulate of the People’s Republic of China in Chicago and Choose Chicago in the planning of the 2018 Celebration, which marks the Year of the Dog.

“Choose Chicago is thrilled to be working with the CSO to help present these exciting performers, musicians and artists visiting Chicago to perform during Chicago’s Chinese New Year Celebration,” said Choose Chicago President and Chief Executive Officer David Whitaker. “The February 17 performance at Symphony Center is an appropriate crescendo for the city’s Chinese New Year celebration and will be a wonderful way for visitors and locals alike to experience traditional Chinese culture.”
“We are pleased to have the opportunity to present some of the best artists from China in a program of traditional Chinese music,” said CSOA President Jeff Alexander. “This concert is a very special, annual event for our audiences and has become a marvelous musical celebration for Chinese New Year at Symphony Center.”

The first half of the program features several opera scenes performed by the Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre. Chuanju is a type of opera that originated in China’s Sichuan province around 1700. With performers dressed in full traditional costume and makeup, these opera scenes also feature acrobatics and stunts such as fire-spitting and the ancient skill of face-changing, in which a performer instantly switches masks by raising a hand, swinging a sleeve or tossing the head. The Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra, led by its music director Zhang Yi, performs new Chinese compositions and symphonic arrangements of traditional works during the second half of the program. These pieces incorporate traditional and regional folk music of the Zhejiang province performed on orchestral instruments and feature solos performed on traditional Chinese instruments.

The Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre, formerly the Experimental Chuanju Theatre of Chongqing, was established in 1951. During its more than 60-year history, the theatre has strived to explore and present the art of Sichuan opera. The company has included veteran masters and renowned leading actors, and its repertoire consists of more than 60 traditional Chinese operas including The Story of the Wooden Hairpin, The Reincarnation of a Beauty, The Tale Under the Willow Shade, The Story of the Lute, Jinzi and Li Yaxian. In recent years, the Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre has toured in England, the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Korea, Malta and Hong Kong.

The Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra was founded by the Zhejiang Provincial Government in 1958, at which time it consisted of only 30 members. Over the years, the orchestra has gradually expanded its size and artistic capability. In addition to performing Western classical repertoire, the Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra has distinguished itself through its performances of new compositions and arrangements of symphonic works that incorporate traditional, regional folk music including The Primitive Hunting Picture, A Dream of Boudoir and Flying Partridge. The orchestra has worked with many leading conductors in China and has toured extensively throughout Asia, Europe and South America, showcasing the music and culture of its homeland.

Zhang Yi has been music director of the Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra since 2015 and also is music director of the National Ballet of China. Over the past two decades, he has conducted hundreds of concerts, operas and ballets, both in China and abroad, including the China National Symphony Orchestra, China Philharmonic Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, China National Opera House, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra and the Cuba Symphony Orchestra. In July 2007, he conducted a performance celebrating the 10th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to China. Additionally, he conducted for a recording of the musical pieces performed for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games opening ceremony including the theme song, You and Me. He has collaborated
with leading classical artists including flutist Emmanuel Pahud, violinist Renaud Capucon, pianist Lang Lang and violinist Ning Feng.

Ticket holders are invited to come early on February 17 for a special preconcert performance featuring traditional vocal and instrumental works performed by soloists and ensembles from Chicago-based groups Dong Fang Performing Arts and Yellow River Performing Arts. This event is free to all ticketholders and will take place from 1:45 - 2:30 p.m. in Buntrock Hall at Symphony Center.

A specially-priced ticket offer is available to encourage families to attend—four tickets for $99. Discounted pricing for groups of 10 or more is also available; call 312-294-3040 for details.

The Chinese New Year Celebration concert at Symphony Center is generously sponsored by Ling Z. and Michael C. Markovitz. Additional promotional support was provided by Choose Chicago.

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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Symphony Center Presents
Chinese New Year Celebration
Saturday, February 17, 2018 at 3 p.m.
Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre

Chuanju Music
Tryst
The Taming of the Gambler
Palace of Eternal Life
Jin Shan Temple

Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra
Zhang Yi, conductor

Six Traditional Chinese Opera Works
Heavenly Landscape of Zhejiang
The Picture of Primitive Hunting for Bone Flute and Orchestra
Zhaoxi Qian, Bone Flute
Three Romances for Violin and the Orchestra
Haiying Li, Violin
Uighurs Folk Song (arr. Na Wu) Lift Your Veil
A Beautiful Night for String Ensemble
Crossing the River

Tickets: $20-$75

All ticketholders are invited to a preconcert program featuring traditional vocal and instrumental works performed by soloists and ensembles from Dong Fang Performing Arts and Yellow River Performing Arts. The preconcert performance program is free to all ticketholders and will be held from 1:45 - 2:30 p.m. in Buntrock Hall.

Featured Artist for this Performance:
Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre
Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra
Zhang Yi

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 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. 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.