



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

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News

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MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS RETURNS TO SYMPHONY CENTER TO LEAD CSO IN PROGRAM OF WORKS BY STRAVINSKY, PROKOFIEV AND TCHAIKOVSKY

**Violinist Nicola Benedetti Makes Her Subscription Concert Debut
in Performances of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2**

**Program Also Includes Stravinsky's Concerto in D for String Orchestra and
Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony**

December 13, 14 & 15

CHICAGO— Michael Tilson Thomas returns to Symphony Center to lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in subscription concerts on [Thursday, December 13 at 8:00 p.m.](#), [Friday, December 14 at 1:30 p.m.](#), and [Saturday, December 15 at 8:00 p.m.](#) The program includes Stravinsky's Concerto in D for String Orchestra and Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony (*Pathétique*). Violinist Nicola Benedetti makes her subscription concert debut in Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2.

The program opens with Stravinsky's Concerto in D for String Orchestra. Composed in 1946, the concerto is written in the composer's neoclassical style. With musical ideas that are traded between a small group of solo players and the full orchestra, the three-movement work echos the form and style of a Baroque concerto grosso. Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 opens with a haunting unaccompanied line in the solo violin that gradually joins a dreamlike orchestral soundscape. The concerto moves on to an evocative second movement highlighting colorful and even delicate orchestration before arriving at a vivid and dramatic finale that finds the soloist trying to break free from the full orchestral texture as the piece concludes. Tchaikovsky's sixth and final symphony, known as the *Pathétique* Symphony, was completed in 1893. The composer named the work *Pateticheskaya* meaning "passionate" or "emotional," and admitted to its requiem-like qualities. In the opening of the first movement, the bassoon introduces the theme over a slowly descending line in the basses, evoking the style of a lament. The songlike

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second theme, often considered to be one of Tchaikovsky's greatest melodies, drifts away in a falling clarinet arpeggio. The second movement features an un-danceable waltz, and the third movement suggests a restless march. The music in the symphony's uncharacteristically slow finale seems to disappear into silent defeat.

Michael Tilson Thomas is Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, Founder and Artistic Director of the New World Symphony and Conductor Laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. Throughout his career, he has held positions as Principal Guest Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic, a Principal Guest Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1988 to 1995. Tilson Thomas's television work includes a series with the London Symphony Orchestra for BBC Television, the television broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts from 1971 to 1977 and numerous productions on PBS Great Performances. In February 1988 he inaugurated the New World Symphony, an orchestral academy for graduates of prestigious music programs. In 2020, after 25 years as the Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, Tilson Thomas assumes the title of Music Director Laureate for the Orchestra. On March 26, 2019, Tilson Thomas returns to Symphony Center to lead the San Francisco Symphony in a performance that is part of the 2018/19 Symphony Center Presents Orchestras series. Michael Tilson Thomas made his debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1981, and most recently led the Orchestra in subscription concerts in December 2016.

As one of the most sought-after violinists of her generation, Nicola Benedetti has collaborated with conductors including Vladimir Ashkenazy, Jiří Bělohlávek, Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, James Gaffigan, Valery Gergiev and more. She enjoys working with world-renowned orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival, and others. Nicola is a devoted chamber musician and educator, and developed her own education and outreach initiative entitled The Benedetti Sessions. Her most recent recording of the Shostakovich and Glazunov Violin Concertos for Decca (Universal Music) has been met with critical acclaim. She was the youngest ever recipient of the Queen's Medal for Music in 2017, was named Best Female Artist at both 2012 and 2013 Classical BRIT Awards, and has received eight honorary degrees to date. Benedetti made her CSO debut in a performance of the Wynton Marsalis Violin Concerto in D at the Ravinia Festival in 2016. These appearances mark her CSO subscription debut.

Tickets for all CSOA-presented concerts can be purchased by phone at **800-223-7114 or 312-294-3000**; online at [cso.org](https://www.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. CSO tickets for select programs are also available through the city's new Teen Arts Pass (TAP) program. More information available at <https://teenartspass.urbangateways.org/>.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the CSO.

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Nicola Benedetti is the Nuveen Emerging Artist.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra

[Thursday, December 13, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Friday, December 14, 2018, 1:30 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, December 15, 2018, 8:00 p.m.](#)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor

Nicola Benedetti, violin

STRAVINSKY

Concerto in D Major for String Orchestra

PROKOFIEV

Violin Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 63

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 6 in B Minor, Op. 74

(Pathétique)

Tickets: \$41 - \$265

Featured Artists for this Performance:

[Michael Tilson Thomas](#)

[Nicola Benedetti](#)

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 Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant, Missy Mazzoli is Mead Composer-in-Residence and Erina Yashima is the Sir Georg Solti Conducting Apprentice.

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.