



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

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News

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## THE JOFFREY BALLET MAKES THEIR CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA DEBUT IN CHOREOGRAPHY FOR TWO WORKS BY STRAVINSKY

**The Joffrey Ballet and the CSO Perform in Acclaimed Choreographer  
Christopher Wheeldon's *Commedia* and in the World Premiere of *Bliss!* from  
Chicago Choreographer Stephanie Martinez**

**Conductor Matthias Pintscher Returns to Symphony Center to Lead this  
Program That Also Includes Works by Rossini and Ravel**

**May 30, 31 & June 1**

CHICAGO—Conductor Matthias Pintscher, Music Director of the Ensemble intercontemporain, leads the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in subscription concerts that feature The Joffrey Ballet in their CSO debut on [Thursday, May 30, at 8:00 p.m.](#), [Friday, May 31, at 8:00 p.m.](#) and [Saturday, June 1, at 8:00 p.m.](#) Pintscher conducts works by Rossini and Ravel on this special program that also features The Joffrey Ballet performing with the CSO in two works—choreographer Christopher Wheeldon's *Commedia*, set to Stravinsky's Suite from *Pulcinella* and the world premiere of the Joffrey-commissioned *Bliss!*, from Chicago choreographer Stephanie Martinez, set to Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks* Concerto. The program represents a first-ever collaboration for the CSO and The Joffrey Ballet, under the leadership of The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director Ashley Wheater.

The program opens with Rossini's Overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (The Barber of Seville) and continues with Ravel's *Mother Goose*. Originally composed as a set of short piano duets, Ravel later expanded the work to a colorful suite for orchestra that evokes a whimsical fairy tale world in movements about Sleeping Beauty, Tom Thumb and Beauty and the Beast among others.

RICCARDO MUTI  
Zell Music Director

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Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

Also on the program is Ravel's *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (Pavane for a Dead Princess) that evokes the melancholy musical character of the traditional dance.

The Joffrey Ballet joins the CSO to perform the world premiere of *Bliss!* by choreographer Stephanie Martinez, whose work was featured in the Joffrey's 2015 Winning Works competition. For *Bliss!*, she draws upon the music of Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks* Concerto as the primary source of inspiration citing "contrasting sections of reflection and exuberance" as the propulsive force behind her choreography. The work's title and narrative structure also allude to Mildred and Robert Bliss, the distinguished art collectors and philanthropists who commissioned Stravinsky to write the *Dumbarton Oaks* concerto for their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

Stravinsky's Suite from *Pulcinella*, featuring an original ballet by Christopher Wheeldon titled *Commedia*, completes the program. A product of Stravinsky's long-standing professional relationship with ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes, *Pulcinella* is one of the most genial and charming of Stravinsky's ballet works. Wheeldon's *Commedia* is an abstraction on both the ballet by Stravinsky and Diaghilev and on the *commedia dell'arte* form, and premiered by Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company in September 2008 at Sadler's Wells in London. Called a "bittersweet harlequinade" by *The Guardian*, the work references the comic tropes and physical humor inherent to the work's inspiration while maintaining the ballet itself as the central subject. The Joffrey Ballet has enjoyed a long relationship with Wheeldon, including its presentations of Wheeldon's ballets such as *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*. This marks the Joffrey's first performances of *Commedia*.

Matthias Pintscher is the Music Director of the Ensemble intercontemporain, serves as the 2018/19 Season Creative Chair for the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, and is Artist-in-Residence at the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. Also during the 2018/19 season, Pintscher concludes his term as Artist-in-Association with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held since 2010. After studying conducting in his early twenties with Peter Eötvös, Pintscher began a dual career as a conductor and composer, rapidly gaining critical acclaim in both areas of activity. As a conductor, Pintscher has appeared with the Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Bayerische Rundfunk, and many others. During the 2017/18 season, he made his conducting debuts with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra and Berlin Radio Symphony. Following his CSO debut leading the Orchestra in Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* in April 2018, the *Chicago Tribune* praised Pintscher for his "forensic illumination" of the work, citing that his "penetrating treatment... made this 'Daphnis' feel bracingly of a piece."

Choreographer Stephanie Martinez has presented works with the Charlotte Ballet, the Kansas City Ballet, Nashville Ballet, Moving Arts Cincinnati, and many others. She has worked with and had her work featured by numerous institutions nationwide, including Jacksonville University, Shenandoah University and Virginia Commonwealth University. Martinez is the recipient of a 3Arts Award as well as a Ruth Page Award for Outstanding performance for her work with the River North Dance Company, of which she was a member for 17 years. Her upcoming commissions include those with the North Carolina School of the Arts, Ballet Memphis and Cincinnati Ballet.

Director and choreographer Christopher Wheeldon trained at The Royal Ballet School in London and joined The Royal Ballet in 1991. Wheeldon joined New York City Ballet (NYCB) in 1993 and was promoted to Soloist in 1998. He served as NYCB's first-ever Artist in Residence in 2000/01 and was named NYCB's first Resident Choreographer in July 2001. He has created productions for all the world's major ballet companies, including the New York City Ballet, and the Bolshoi Ballet. Wheeldon has also choreographed several productions for the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and won a Tony Award® for Best Choreography for the 2014 Broadway production of *An American in Paris*, which he directed and choreographed. His other honors include the Martin E. Segal Award from Lincoln Center, the American Choreography Award, a *Dance Magazine* Award, and the London Critic's Circle Award for best new ballet for *Polyphonia*. He is an Officer of the Order of the British Empire, a distinction he has held since 2016.

Classically trained to the highest standards, The Joffrey Ballet expresses a unique, inclusive perspective on dance, proudly reflecting the diversity of America with its company, audiences, and repertoire, which includes major story ballets, reconstructions of masterpieces and contemporary works. The Company's commitment to accessibility is met through an innovative and highly effective education program including the much-lauded Joffrey Academy of Dance, Official School of The Joffrey Ballet, Community Engagement programs, and collaborations with myriad other visual and performing arts organizations. Founded by visionary teacher Robert Joffrey in 1956, guided by celebrated choreographer Gerald Arpino from 1988 until 2007, The Joffrey Ballet continues to thrive under internationally renowned Ashley Wheater, The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director, and Greg Cameron, President and CEO.

Ashley Wheater, The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director of The Joffrey Ballet, has dedicated his life to dance. He was born in Scotland and trained at the Royal Ballet School in England, where he completed his studies at the upper school and danced in several full-length productions. He has served as company member of The Joffrey Ballet, principal dancer with the London Festival Ballet and Australian Ballet, and held the title of Ballet Master with the San Francisco Ballet. Since his appointment in 2007 as artistic director of The Joffrey Ballet, Wheater has been celebrated for both honoring and preserving ballet masterpieces and championing new and relevant work. In 2010, Wheater was Lincoln Academy Laureate – the highest honor presented by the State of Illinois – and was named a “Chicagoan of the Year” by the *Chicago Tribune* in 2013. His other awards and honors include a Boeing Game-Changer Award in 2008, a Chicago Spirit of Innovation Award for The Joffrey Ballet in 2014, and in 2015, he received the University of Chicago Rosenberger Medal for Outstanding Achievement in the Creative and Performing Arts. He also serves as The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director of The Joffrey Academy of Dance, the Official School of The Joffrey Ballet.

Tickets for all CSOA-presented 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. CSO tickets for select program 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.

United Airlines is the Official Airline of the CSO.

These performances are generously sponsored by the Walter E. Heller Foundation, in honor of Alice DeCosta, Allstate Insurance Company, Megan and Steve Shebik, William and Elisabeth Adams, and John and Dora Aalbrecht. Additional support is provided by Joyce Chelberg.

The production of *Bliss!* is generously supported by Shea Family Foundation in loving memory of Joanne Sevcik Shea.

Additional support provided by Elizabeth Yntema in honor of women in leadership in dance.

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**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

[Thursday, May 30, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Friday, May 31, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, June 1, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

**Matthias Pintscher**, conductor

**The Joffrey Ballet**

**Ashley Wheeler**, *The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director*

ROSSINI Overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

RAVEL *Mother Goose*

STRAVINSKY *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto*

*Bliss!* (World Premiere Commission)

by Stephanie Martinez

RAVEL *Pavane pour une infant défunte*

STRAVINSKY Suite from *Pulcinella*

*Commedia*© by Christopher Wheeldon

Tickets: \$37-\$252

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**Featured Artist for this Performance:**

[Matthias Pintscher, conductor](#)

[The Joffrey Ballet](#)

[Ashley Wheeler, The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director](#)

**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 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 61 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. 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.