



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

220 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60604-2559

News

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**Press Contacts:**

[Eileen Chambers](#), 312-294-3092

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

## **MUSIC DIRECTOR RICCARDO MUTI RETURNS TO CHICAGO FOR MARCH SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS AND ACTIVITIES**

**Muti Leads the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Overtures by  
Rossini and Wagner and Beethoven's Symphony No. 2**

**Program also features CSO Piccolo Jennifer Gunn as Soloist in Concertos  
by Vivaldi and American Composer Ken Benshoof**

**MARCH 14–16, 2019**

CHICAGO—Music Director Riccardo Muti returns to Chicago in March for his fourth residency of the 2018/19 season to lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in subscription concerts on [Thursday, March 14, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#), [Friday, March 15, 2019, 1:30 p.m.](#) and [Saturday, March 16, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#) The program includes two overtures, Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* Overture and Wagner's Overture to *Tannhäuser*, as well as Beethoven's Symphony No. 2. CSO Piccolo Jennifer Gunn is the featured soloist on this program in two concertos—Vivaldi's Piccolo Concerto in C Major and the Orchestra's first performances of American composer Ken Benshoof's Concerto in Three Movements for Piccolo and Orchestra, a work that Gunn performed at its world premiere in 2016.

In addition to subscription concerts, Muti leads an open rehearsal for donors and musicians of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago on March 14 and participates, along with a distinguished selection committee, in the Fourth CSO Sir Georg Solti Conducting Competition on March 17. Muti and the committee will choose a new Solti Conducting Apprentice who will begin a two-year apprenticeship beginning in the 2019/20 season. The CSO Sir Georg Solti Conducting Competition is a program of the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO and the current Solti Conducting Apprentice is Erina Yashima.

Muti and the Orchestra open the March subscription program with Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* (The Journey to Reims) Overture. Written in the tradition of the composer's other grand

RICCARDO MUTI  
Music Director

HELEN ZELL  
Chair, Board of Trustees

JEFF ALEXANDER  
President

YO-YO MA  
Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

overtures, it was not part of the opera of the same name as often believed. The overture includes signature elements of Rossini's style. The program also includes Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 and Wagner's Overture to *Tannhäuser*.

For this program, CSO Piccolo Jennifer Gunn joins Muti and the Orchestra for a pair of concertos for piccolo including Vivaldi's Concerto in C Major, one of three concertos the composer wrote for the *flautino*, the predecessor to the modern piccolo. Gunn also performs American composer Ken Benshoof's Concerto in Three Movements for Piccolo and Orchestra, a work commissioned by the National Flute Association and premiered by Gunn in 2016.

Benshoof is a former Fulbright scholar whose body of work includes many chamber works, with eight scores commissioned for the Kronos Quartet. He describes the arc of the three-movement work as the soloist playing "alone at the beginning, gradually forming close relationships with members of the orchestra, leading to energetic playfulness with good friends." The inviting music of this concerto explores the colorful timbral range of the instrument, highlighting its throaty low register as well as its characteristically shimmering upper range. The composer goes on to describe the piece as "a morning walk-about, an indoor afternoon (with a little romance), and a party for the evening," with the three movements titled "Flowing," "Calm" and "On the move."

Jennifer M. Gunn was appointed to the position of Piccolo/Flute of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by Daniel Barenboim in 2005. Since joining the CSO, she has been active in the life of the Orchestra in many ways including performances on the CSO's contemporary music series, MusicNow, CSO Chamber series and Once Upon a Symphony series designed for families with young children. Gunn has also served as a piccolo and flute coach for the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, participated in the *Dream Out Loud* Music Education Advocacy Campaign and joined Music Director Riccardo Muti for several of the programs for at-risk and incarcerated youth at Chicago area juvenile justice centers.

At home on the flute or the piccolo, Gunn has been featured as a soloist with the Orchestra on several occasions. She made her flute solo debut under the direction of Ludovic Morlot on the MusicNow series playing Shirish Korde's *Nesting Cranes* in 2007. One year later, she made her piccolo debut under the direction of Harry Bicket playing Vivaldi's C Major Concerto RV443 on the CSO's subscription series. Gunn was also the featured flutist on Bach's *Brandenburg* Concerti with her CSO colleagues under the direction of both Nicholas Kraemer and Pinchas Zukerman.

Following Muti's February CSO residency in Chicago that included his and the Orchestra's first performances of American composer William Schuman's Symphony No. 9 (*Le fosse Ardeatine*) attended by Italian ambassador to the U.S., Armando Varricchio on February 21, Muti led the Orchestra on a domestic tour to Florida, the second of two tours during the 2018/19 season. Tour highlights included the first performance for Muti and the CSO together at the Knight Concert Hall in Miami on February 27, presented by the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts. The 2019 Florida tour also included critically acclaimed return appearances at

the Alexander W. Dreyfoos, Jr. Concert Hall presented by the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach on February 26 and performances on February 28 and March 2 at Frances Pew Hayes Hall presented by Artis—Naples. The concerts in Naples were enhanced by activities organized by the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO and represented the beginning of a three-year residency for the CSO in Naples, which will include community performances and education activities each year through the 2020/21 season. Additional educational and engagement activities were part of the tour stops in Miami and West Palm Beach.

From March 28 to April 4, Muti brings his Italian Opera Academy to the Tokyo Spring Festival to work with young conductors and répétiteurs, as well as soloists in public rehearsals and performances of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. On April 14 and 20, Muti conducts Verdi's Requiem at the Festspielhaus in Baden Baden with the Berlin Philharmonic and the Chorus of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and distinguished soloists including soprano Vittoria Yeo, mezzo-soprano Elina Garanča, tenor Francesco Meli and bass Ildar Abdrazakov.

The CSO's music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation.

Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

United Airlines is the Official Airline of the CSO.

The performances of Ken Benshoof's Concerto in Three Movements are sponsored in part by a generous grant from The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust.

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.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

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**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

[Thursday, March 14, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Friday, March 15, 2019, 1:30 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, March 16, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

**Riccardo Muti**, conductor

**Jennifer Gunn**, piccolo

ROSSINI *Il viaggio a Reims* Overture

VIVALDI Piccolo Concerto in C Major, RV 444

BENSHOOF Concerto in Three Movements for Piccolo and  
Orchestra

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 36

WAGNER Overture to *Tannhäuser*

Tickets: \$35-\$224

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## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

### **Riccardo Muti**

Riccardo Muti, born in Naples, Italy, is one of the preeminent conductors of our day. In 2010, when he became the tenth music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), he already had more than forty years of experience at the helm of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Philharmonia Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Teatro alla Scala. He is a guest conductor for orchestras and opera houses all over the world: the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera, the Royal Opera House, the Metropolitan Opera, and many others.

Muti studied piano under Vincenzo Vitale at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella in his hometown of Naples, graduating with distinction. He subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan, also graduating with distinction. His principal teachers were Bruno Bettinelli and Antonino Votto, principal assistant to Arturo Toscanini at La Scala. After he won the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition—by unanimous vote of the jury—in Milan in 1967, Muti's career developed quickly. In 1968, he became principal conductor of Florence's Maggio Musicale, a position that he held until 1980. In 2017, Muti led the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale in performances that were part of the historic G-7 Culture Summit which explored the use of culture as an instrument of dialogue among different peoples and nations.

Herbert von Karajan invited him to conduct at the Salzburg Festival in Austria in 1971, and Muti has maintained a close relationship with the summer festival and with its great orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, for more than forty-five years. When he conducted the philharmonic's 150th anniversary concert in 1992, he was presented with the Golden Ring, a special sign of esteem and affection, and in 2001, his outstanding artistic contributions to the orchestra were further recognized with the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal. He is also a recipient of a silver medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum for his contribution to the music of W.A. Mozart. He is an honorary member of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of the Friends of Music), the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Vienna State Opera. In 2015, he founded the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in Ravenna, Italy, to train young conductors, répétiteurs, and singers in the Italian opera repertoire.

Muti succeeded Otto Klemperer as chief conductor and music director of London's Philharmonia Orchestra in 1973, holding that position until 1982. From 1980 to 1992, he was music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and in 1986, he became music director of Milan's Teatro alla Scala. During his nineteen-year tenure, in addition to directing major projects such as the Mozart–Da Ponte trilogy and Wagner Ring cycle, Muti conducted operatic and symphonic repertoire ranging from the baroque to the contemporary, also leading hundreds of concerts with the Filarmonica della Scala and touring the world with both the opera company and the orchestra. His tenure as music director, the longest of any in La Scala's history, culminated in the triumphant reopening of the restored opera house with Antonio Salieri's *Europa riconosciuta*, originally commissioned for La Scala's inaugural performance in 1778.

Throughout his career, Muti has dedicated much time and effort to training young musicians. In 2004, he founded the Orchestra Giovanile Luigi Cherubini (Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra), based in his native Italy. He regularly tours with the ensemble to prestigious concert halls and opera houses all over the world.

Since 1997, as part of *Le vie dell'Amicizia* (The paths of friendship), a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, Muti has annually conducted large-scale concerts in war-torn and poverty-stricken areas around the

world, using music to bring hope, unity, and attention to present day social, cultural, and humanitarian issues.

Muti has received innumerable international honors. He is a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic, Officer of the French Legion of Honor, and a recipient of the German Verdienstkreuz. Queen Elizabeth II bestowed on him the title of honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire, Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded him the Order of Friendship, and Pope Benedict XVI made him a Knight of the Grand Cross First Class of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great—the highest papal honor. Muti also has received Israel's Wolf Prize for the arts, Sweden's prestigious Birgit Nilsson Prize, Spain's Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts, and the gold medal from Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his promotion of Italian culture abroad. In March 2017, the Italian government recognized Muti with its prestigious Presidente della Repubblica award, presented to Muti for his exceptional contribution to Italian culture in the field of music. He has received more than twenty honorary degrees from universities around the world.

Considered one of the greatest interpreters of Verdi in our time, Muti wrote a book on the composer, *Verdi, l'italiano*, published in Italian, German, and Japanese. His first book, *Riccardo Muti: An Autobiography: First the Music, Then the Words*, also has been published in several languages, including Chinese.

Riccardo Muti's vast catalog of recordings, numbering in the hundreds, ranges from the traditional symphonic and operatic repertoires to contemporary works. His debut recording with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, released in 2010 by CSO Resound, won two Grammy awards. His second recording with the CSO and Chorus, Verdi's *Otello*, released in 2013 by CSO Resound, won the 2014 International Opera Award for the Best Complete Opera.

During his time with the CSO, Muti has won over audiences in greater Chicago and across the globe through his music making as well as his demonstrated commitment to sharing classical music. His annual free concerts for the city of Chicago attract tens of thousands of people. He regularly invites subscribers, students, seniors, and people of low incomes to attend, at no charge, his CSO rehearsals. Muti's commitment to artistic excellence and to creating a strong bond between an orchestra and its communities continues to bring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to ever higher levels of achievement and renown.

<http://www.riccardomutimusic.com/>

### **Other Featured Artists for these Performances**

[Jennifer Gunn, piccolo](#)

**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.