



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

220 South Michigan Avenue  
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News

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**Photos Available By Request**

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## MUSIC DIRECTOR RICCARDO MUTI OPENS TWO WEEKS OF SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS AND ACTIVITIES ON MAY 2

**Mezzo-Soprano Joyce DiDonato Performs Berlioz's *The Death of Cleopatra* on  
Program that also includes Respighi's *Pines of Rome* (May 2, 3, 4 & 7)**

**Pianist Mitsuko Uchida is Soloist in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 on Program  
that also includes Stravinsky's Suite from *The Firebird* (May 9-11)**

**MAY 2–11, 2019**

CHICAGO—Music Director Riccardo Muti returns to Chicago in May for his fifth residency of the 2018/19 season to lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in two subscription concert programs. The May 2 subscription concert will be the first CSO concert after the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) and the musicians of the CSO reached a new five-year agreement on April 27, 2019.

Muti opens the May residency with a free, open rehearsal for invited community groups on Thursday, May 2, and also returns to the Illinois Youth Center in Warrenville (IYCW) on May 6 for an interactive recital with mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato marking his tenth visit to a Chicago-area youth correctional facility since becoming music director in 2010. CSO Principal Percussion Cynthia Yeh and Assistant Principal Clarinet John Bruce Yeh, as well as guest pianist Kay Kim will also participate in the IYCW program.

Muti's first subscription concerts with the CSO in the May residency take place on [Thursday, May 2, at 8:00 p.m.](#), [Saturday, May 4, at 8:00 p.m.](#) and [Tuesday, May 7, at 7:30 p.m.](#), as well as [Friday, May 3, at 7:30 p.m.](#) at Wheaton College. The program opens with Bizet's *Roma*, a symphonic poem inspired in part by the French composer's visit to Italy after winning the Prix de Rome composition prize in 1857. The program continues with Berlioz's *The Death of Cleopatra* featuring internationally renowned mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato as soloist. This dramatic lyric scene, evokes the queen's final moments following Egypt's capture at the hands of the

RICCARDO MUTI  
Music Director

HELEN ZELL  
Chair, Board of Trustees

JEFF ALEXANDER  
President

YO-YO MA  
Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

Romans. Completing the program is Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, one of three symphonic poems written by the Italian composer about different aspects of the Eternal City. The programmatic, four-movement work musically depicts pine trees in four locations throughout Rome. It opens with music that suggests children at play; followed by the movement titled "Pines Near a Catacomb," evoking the voices of monks; a nocturne that suggests moonlight and the gentle song of a nightingale; and a final movement that musically depicts a triumphant march by the Roman army at dawn. Muti and Orchestra along with DiDonato will also perform this program at New York's Carnegie Hall in November 2019. The performances in Chicago also mark Muti's first CSO performances of Respighi's *Pines of Rome* since his historic first concert as the Orchestra's tenth music director in Millennium Park on September 19, 2010.

Muti's second set of CSO subscription concerts in May take place on [Thursday, May 9, at 8:00 p.m.](#), [Friday, May 10, at 8:00 p.m.](#) and [Saturday, May 11, at 8:00 p.m.](#) The program opens with a pair of works by Mozart, including the Overture to the *Marriage of Figaro* and the Piano Concerto No. 20, with internationally celebrated pianist Mitsuko Uchida as soloist. The second half of the program opens with Stravinsky's Divertimento, Suite from *The Fairy's Kiss*, which replaces the previously announced *Apollon musagète* by Stravinsky. The program closes with Stravinsky's 1919 Suite from *The Firebird*, which captures the original ballet's powerful sense of musical drama through its colorful, evocative orchestration.

In March, Muti returned to Japan's Tokyo Spring Festival where he presented his Italian Opera Academy from March 28 to April 4. During the 2019 Academy, which he will bring back to Tokyo for two more years in 2020 and 2021, Muti worked with young conductors and répétiteurs, as well as soloists in public rehearsals and performances of selections from Verdi's *Rigoletto*. On April 14 and 20, Muti conducted 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 appearance of Joyce DiDonato is made possible by the Juli Plant Grainger Fund for Excellence

The performances on May 2, 4 and 7 receive generous support from the Nelson D. Cornelius Endowed Concert Fund.

These programs are supported in part by awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

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, May 2, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, May 4, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Tuesday, May 7, 2019, 7:30 p.m.](#)

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

**Riccardo Muti**, conductor

**Joyce DiDonato**, mezzo-soprano

BIZET *Roma*

BERLIOZ *The Death of Cleopatra*

RESPIGHI *Pines of Rome*

Tickets: \$37-\$253

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**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

Wheaton College Series

Edman Memorial Chapel

401 E. Franklin St. Wheaton, IL

[Friday, May 3, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

**Riccardo Muti**, conductor

**Joyce DiDonato**, mezzo-soprano

BIZET *Roma*

BERLIOZ *The Death of Cleopatra*

RESPIGHI *Pines of Rome*

Tickets: \$50-\$85

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**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

[Thursday, May 9, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Friday, May 10, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Saturday, May 11, 2019, 8:00 p.m.](#)

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

**Riccardo Muti**, conductor

**Mitsuko Uchida**, piano

MOZART *Overture to The Marriage of Figaro*

MOZART *Piano Concerto No. 20*

STRAVINSKY *Divertimento, Suite from The Fairy's Kiss*

STRAVINSKY *Suite from The Firebird*

Tickets: \$37-\$253

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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**

[Joyce DiDonato](#), mezzo-soprano

[Mitsuko Uchida](#), piano

#### **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.