



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

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News

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## **RICCARDO MUTI EXTENDS CONTRACT AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA THROUGH 2022**

CHICAGO—The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) is pleased to announce that the contract for Music Director Riccardo Muti has been extended through the 2021/22 season.

Muti became the CSO's 10<sup>th</sup> music director in 2010 and his current contract continues through 2020. Muti's new contract will begin in September 2020 and extend through August 2022. During this period, Muti will maintain his current commitment to lead the Orchestra in 10 weeks of subscription concerts, special concerts and community engagement activities in Chicago, in addition to three to four weeks of domestic or international tours each season.

"On behalf of the Association's Board of Trustees, it gives me great pleasure to share this news today, as we celebrate the unique musical artistry of Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra," said Helen Zell, CSOA Board Chair. "Having witnessed the remarkable response from our Chicago audiences and audiences around the world to this Orchestra led by our Music Director, we are grateful that Maestro Muti has accepted our invitation to stay with us for more exceptional music-making in the years ahead."

"I have a deep respect and affection for the great musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra," said Riccardo Muti. "Our relationship is growing stronger each year and this is the reason why I have decided to continue for two more seasons. I look forward to making more wonderful music with my CSO and sharing it with audiences in the great city of Chicago and around the world. I also look forward to continuing to tour and record with the Orchestra, and to working with the CSOA's Trustees, volunteers and Administration in the years to come."

"Maestro Muti continues to achieve ever-greater artistic collaboration with the musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The concerts they perform together are simply extraordinary," noted Jeff Alexander, CSOA President. "The entire CSOA family expresses our sincere gratitude to Maestro Muti for his artistic leadership and the gift of his continued commitment to the Orchestra, our education and engagement activities and to our community."

**RICCARDO MUTI**  
Music Director

**HELEN ZELL**  
Chair, Board of Trustees

**JEFF ALEXANDER**  
President

**YO-YO MA**  
Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

“The Musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra are extremely happy that Maestro Riccardo Muti will continue to be our Music Director through the 2021/22 season,” added CSO bass Stephen Lester, Chairman of the Members’ Committee. “In the last eight years, Maestro Muti has developed a tremendous working relationship with us. He explores familiar and unfamiliar repertoire with energy, depth and a commitment to artistic standards that is unique in the world today. It is an approach to which the orchestra willingly responds. Leading us on national and international tours, dealing with administrative duties, yet always focused on the music we make, Maestro Muti’s leadership has created a unique synergy among us. That this relationship, and the music making that results, can continue for years to come is a great gift for the orchestra and music lovers everywhere.”

As with his previous contracts, Muti’s role as music director includes a diverse set of responsibilities. In addition to his subscription concerts and touring responsibilities, Muti also works to maintain the ensemble’s exceptional roster of musicians, participating in auditions for and the selection of new members of the Orchestra. In addition, Muti continues the CSO’s distinguished legacy of recording with releases on the CSO’s Resound recording label. Muti is also responsible for the selection of season programming and regularly features works by CSO Mead Composers-in-Residence, including a March 2017 world premiere by Samuel Adams and September 2017 world premiere by Elizabeth Ogonek, both of whom he appointed to their positions in 2015. Integral to establishing the CSO’s respected Sir Georg Solti Conducting Apprentice Program at the beginning of his tenure as music director, Muti remains connected to activities of each apprentice including current Solti Conducting Apprentice Erina Yashima who was named to the post in 2015.

In support of the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO, Muti will also continue to play an active role in several community engagement and training programs. These include his annual free Concerts for Chicago; interactive recital programs with CSO and guest musicians at area juvenile justice facilities; CSO open rehearsals for seniors, veterans and school and community groups; and free, open rehearsals at Symphony Center during the annual Youth in Music Festival and with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the CSO’s prestigious training Orchestra.

Since the beginning of his tenure as music director in 2010, Muti, the CSO and the Chicago Symphony Chorus have also reached a global audience through radio broadcasts and projects such as the CSO’s first worldwide live video webcast of Verdi’s Requiem in 2013 and an online streaming video of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony which has been viewed by more than nine million people around the world on the CSO’s YouTube channel since it was posted in May 2015.

Riccardo Muti made his debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1973 at the Ravinia Festival. In 2007, after an absence of more than 34 years, Muti led the CSO in a month-long residency which included subscription concerts and a critically heralded European tour which included the CSO’s first appearances in Italy in more than 25 years.

Muti's appointment as the CSO's 10<sup>th</sup> music director was announced in 2008. He appeared with the Orchestra several times as Music Director Designate beginning in January 2009 and officially stepped into his role as Music Director on September 19, 2010, leading the CSO in a concert which attracted 25,000 people to the Pritzker Pavilion in Chicago's Millennium Park.

Since 2010, Muti has led seven international tours with the CSO including an 11-concert Asia tour in 2016 with sold-out performances in Taiwan, China, Japan and South Korea and the critically acclaimed 2017 European tour which featured performances that marked the CSO's debut in Hamburg, Germany at the new Elbphilharmonie and concerts at Milan's Teatro alla Scala which represented Muti and the Orchestra's first appearances at the venue together. Muti and the CSO have also made regular appearances together at New York's Carnegie Hall including the most recent performances in 2015 of Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* with the Chicago Symphony Chorus.

The 2017/18 season includes two domestic tours for Muti and the CSO with a critically acclaimed tour in October 2017 to Kansas City and the U.S. West Coast and an upcoming tour to the East Coast in February 2018. The West Coast tour included the Orchestra and Muti's debut at Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, and the East Coast tour will feature the first appearance for Muti and the Orchestra together at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as well as a return appearance at Carnegie Hall. These tour performances in 2017/18 add to the Orchestra's distinguished touring history, which began in 1892 and includes 60 international tours.

Muti's CSO Resound recordings number eight to date and include his 2010 debut release of Verdi's Requiem which garnered two Grammy awards; his 2013 release of Verdi's *Otello* which won the 2014 International Opera Award for the Best Complete Opera; the Grammy-nominated 2016 world premiere recording of Mason Bates's *Anthology of Fantastic Zoology*; and the most recent, critically acclaimed release of Bruckner's Symphony No. 9 in 2017, which was selected by *The New York Times* as one of the best recordings of the year.

Regularly attracting critical attention and capacity audiences to his subscription concerts with the CSO at Symphony Center in Chicago, Muti's programming highlights since 2010 include performances of Verdi's Requiem, *Otello*, *Macbeth* and *Falstaff*; Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible*; the complete symphonies of Schubert, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Scriabin; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; many works of the classical, romantic and modern repertoire; and a survey of works which received their U.S. or world premiere by the CSO as part of the Orchestra's 125th season in 2015/16.

Muti's commitment to connecting all Chicagoans to the CSO has resulted in free, annual community concerts that have taken place in locations throughout the city including Millennium Park, Morton East High School in Cicero, Apostolic Church of God in Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood and Lane Technical High School in Chicago's Roscoe Village neighborhood. Muti's appearances with the CSO in the Chicago area also extend to performances included on

the CSO's new annual concert series at Wheaton College's Edman Memorial Chapel, where Muti's debut at the venue in March 2017 attracted a capacity audience. During his tenure as music director, Muti has also led the CSO in nearly 40 open rehearsals at Symphony Center with more than 20,000 members of the community having attended.

In 2014, the CSO's music director position was endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation.

Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the CSO.

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### **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 now forty-five consecutive 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. Muti was also invited by the Orchestra to lead his fifth New Year's concert in 2018. 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 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/>

**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 preeminent 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](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.