



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

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News

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SEMYON BYCHKOV LEADS THE CZECH PHILHARMONIC IN A SYMPHONY CENTER PRESENTS ORCHESTRA CONCERT

The All- Dvořák Program Includes Symphony No. 9 (*From the New World*) and Cello Concerto Featuring Alisa Weilerstein as Soloist

Sunday, November 4, at 3 p.m.

CHICAGO—Led by newly appointed Chief Conductor and Music Director Semyon Bychkov, the Czech Philharmonic returns to Symphony Center on [Sunday, November 4, at 3 p.m.](#), for a concert that opens the 2018/19 Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Orchestras series. The program features two works written by Czech composer Antonín Dvořák when he was living in the United States—Symphony No. 9 (*From the New World*) and Cello Concerto in B Minor, featuring Alisa Weilerstein as soloist. The Czech Philharmonic's U.S. tour coincides with the 100th anniversary of Czech and Slovak independence, on October 28.

The program opens with Dvořák's Cello Concerto, which features a full range of expressiveness, from grandiose statements and dancing virtuosic displays to profoundly lyrical, intimate moments. Soloist Alisa Weilerstein performed the Dvořák Cello Concerto with the Czech Philharmonic in a 2014 Deutsche Grammophon release, which topped the U.S. classical chart and was called "an interpretation of passion, with a spine-tingling thrill and generosity of feeling that make it irresistible" (The Daily Telegraph). The second half of the program features Dvořák's beloved Ninth Symphony (*From the New World*), his ode to America. Fascinated and influenced by traditional and folk music melodies that he found in his adopted country, the composer once described the symphony as his "impressions and greetings from the New World."

Based in Prague, the Czech Philharmonic, which debuted in 1896 under Antonín Dvořák, has an extraordinary legacy reflecting its place in the pantheon of the great European orchestras, as

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well as its distinct embrace of both Eastern and Western European culture. Since its founding, the all-Czech orchestra has championed the music and composers of their homeland. Acknowledged for its definitive performances of Dvořák, Janáček, Martinů and Suk, the Czech Philharmonic is also recognized for its deep relationships with Brahms, Tchaikovsky—who was a friend of the composer—and Mahler, who was of Czech origin and whose Symphony No. 7 they premiered in 1908. In 1901 the orchestra premiered Smetana's *Má vlast* (My Homeland), a piece that is considered by many to be the country's unofficial national anthem. The 2018/19 season marks the beginning of a new era for the Czech Philharmonic as Semyon Bychkov becomes the orchestra's 14th Chief Conductor and Music Director, taking up the mantle from luminary predecessors including Václav Talich, Rafael Kubelík, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Jiří Bělohlávek. The Czech Philharmonic last performed at Symphony Center in 2003.

Internationally recognized for an approach to music making that combines innate musicality with the rigors of Russian music pedagogy, Semyon Bychkov assumed the role of Chief Conductor and Music Director of the Czech Philharmonic at the beginning of the 2018/19 season. Following early concerts with the Czech Philharmonic in 2013 that sparked a unique artistic partnership, Bychkov initiated *The Tchaikovsky Project*, an intensive exploration of the venerated composer's seminal works through a series of concerts, residencies and recordings for Decca Classics. Bychkov conducts the major orchestras and at the major opera houses in the U.S. and Europe. In addition to his title with the Czech Philharmonic, he holds the Günter Wand Conducting Chair with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, with which he appears annually at the BBC Proms, and the honorary Klemperer Chair of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music. He was named "Conductor of the Year" at the 2015 International Opera Awards. Bychkov last appeared at Symphony Center in May 2018, when he led the CSO in subscription concerts featuring Tchaikovsky's Manfred Symphony.

Known for combining technical precision with impassioned musicianship, cellist Alisa Weilerstein first appeared with the Czech Philharmonic in 2011 and is a frequent guest soloist with them. Other notable collaborations with the Czech Philharmonic include performances both in Prague and on international tours with late music director Jiří Bělohlávek, with whom she recorded the Dvořák Cello Concerto for Decca. In spring 2018, she was the soloist on the Czech Philharmonic's tour of the United Kingdom with Principal Guest Conductor Designate Tomáš Netopil conducting. In the 2018/19 season, Weilerstein releases *Transfigured Night* on the Pentatone label and gives numerous solo and chamber concerts, as well as with orchestras across America and Europe. In 2016 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Weilerstein premiered Pascal Dusapin's cello concerto "Outscape," which the CSO commissioned for her. Her most recent appearance with the CSO was in 2017 as soloist in the Barber Cello Concerto. She received a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship in 2011.

Tickets for all Symphony Center Presents Orchestras series 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.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

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**Symphony Center Presents
Orchestras**

[Sunday, November 4, at 3:00 p.m.](#)

Czech Philharmonic

Semyon Bychkov, conductor

Alisa Weilerstein, cello

DVOŘÁK Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 104

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 (*From the New World*)

Tickets: \$32-\$158

Featured Artist for this Performance:

[Czech Philharmonic](#)

[Semyon Bychkov, conductor](#)

[Alisa Weilerstein, cello](#)

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.