CONDUCTOR HANNU LINTU MAKES HIS CSO DEBUT LEADING PROGRAM OF WORKS BY NORDIC COMPOSERS SIBELIUS AND NIELSEN

Pekka Kuusisto Makes His CSO Subscription Debut as Soloist in Nielsen’s Violin Concerto

Performances Take Place at Symphony Center and on CSO at Wheaton Series

February 27-29

CHICAGO—Conductor Hannu Lintu, Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, makes his Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) debut in February subscription concerts at Symphony Center on Thursday, February 27, 2020, 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, February 29, 2020, 8:00 p.m. The program highlights works by Nordic composers Jean Sibelius and Carl Nielsen including Sibelius’s iconic tone poem Finlandia and Symphony No. 5, as well as Nielsen’s Violin Concerto and Helios Overture. Nielsen’s Violin Concerto features Pekka Kuusisto as soloist in his CSO subscription debut. The program is also presented on Friday, February 28, at 7:30 p.m. in Edman Memorial Chapel (401 E. Franklin St. Wheaton, IL) as part of the CSO’s annual concert series at Wheaton College. The Friday, February 28 program includes a free preconcert lecture that begins at 6:15 p.m. in Armerding Recital Hall on the Wheaton College campus.

The program opens with Sibelius’s orchestral tone poem Finlandia. Receiving its premiere in 1900 at a time when Russia was attempting to tighten its control over Finland, the work epitomizes a nationalistic style of composition and is widely recognized for its hymn-like theme which returns throughout the work, ultimately making a powerful statement to conclude. The program continues with two works by Danish composer Carl Nielsen. His Violin Concerto of 1911 opens with an inventive virtuosic cadenza accompanied by the Orchestra. The concerto
also features elegiac and lyrical passages in its middle movement before arriving at a playful conclusion filled with rustic charm and folk themes. Nielsen’s Helios Overture was inspired by an extended visit to Greece. The work musically depicts the composer’s own impressions of the sun rising and setting over the Aegean Sea and includes a triumphant brass fanfare that announces the arrival of the sun. The program concludes with Sibelius’s Symphony No. 5. The three-movement work received its premiere in 1921 with the composer conducting. It features a majestic finale that takes its inspiration from nature—notably from the grace and movement of swans. The fluttering string passages that open the movement ultimately give way to the symphony’s soaring “swan theme” played throughout the finale by the brass.

Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra Hannu Lintu has conducted some of the world’s most prestigious orchestras, and appears regularly with the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, where he will become Chief Conductor in 2022. Acclaimed projects with the Finnish National Opera and Ballet include Berg’s Wozzeck in March 2019 and the critically acclaimed 2017 production of Kullervo, a special collaborative project with director and choreographer Tero Saarinen commemorating 100 years of Finnish independence. Lintu has received accolades for his recordings, including a 2018 ICMA Award for works by Sibelius featuring Anne Sofie von Otter and a 2011 Grammy nomination for Best Opera CD (Rautavaara’s Kaivos), as well as Gramophone Award nominations for recordings of Enescu’s Symphony No.2 with the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra and the Violin Concertos of Sibelius and Thomas Adès with Augustin Hadelich and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Described as “one-of-a-kind” by Toronto’s The Globe and Mail, violinist Pekka Kuusisto is renowned for his fresh approach to repertoire. Widely recognized for leading ensembles from the violin, Kuusisto is Artistic Partner with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Artistic Director of ACO Collective, a string ensemble of Australia’s most talented young professional musicians. In 2017, Kuusisto became Artistic Best Friend of Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, and in 2018 became an Artistic Partner of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra. An enthusiastic advocate of contemporary music, he recently premiered Daníel Bjarnason’s Violin Concerto at the Hollywood Bowl with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel.

The Thursday, February 27 concert is part of the CSO’s Classic Encounter series and includes a lively pre-concert scene complete with food and drinks. The February 27 event features a multimedia presentation and conversation with a CSO musician hosted by WXRT Radio and Radio Hall of Fame DJ Terri Hemmert. For this Classic Encounter program, Hemmert welcomes CSO trumpet John Hagstrom for the pre-concert conversation. Single tickets for the Classic Encounter reception can be added to any concert ticket order for February 27. Single tickets for the Classic Encounter reception, priced at $25, can be added to any concert ticket order for the February 27 event. Classic Encounter series subscription ticket packages are available and include concert tickets and access to preconcert receptions. More information is available at cso.org/classic-encounter.
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.

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.

United Airlines is the official airline of the CSO.

The appearance of Pekka Kuusisto is made possible by the Grainger Fund for Excellence.

The February 28 performance is generously sponsored by the JCS Arts, Health and Education Fund of the DuPage Foundation.

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The February 28 performance is presented in collaboration with Wheaton College and the Wheaton College Artist Series.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Thursday, February 27, at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 29, at 8:00 p.m.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Hannu Lintu, conductor
Pekka Kuusisto, violin

SIBELIUS  Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7
NIELSEN  Violin Concerto, Op. 33
NIELSEN  Helios Overture, Op. 17
SIBELIUS  Symphony No. 5 in E-flat Major, Op. 82

Tickets: $39-$220

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Wheaton College Series
Edman Memorial Chapel
401 E. Franklin St. Wheaton, IL

Friday, February 28, at 7:30 p.m.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Hannu Lintu, conductor
Pekka Kuusisto, violin

SIBELIUS  Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7
NIELSEN
Violin Concerto, Op. 33
NIELSEN
Helios Overture, Op. 17
SIBELIUS
Symphony No. 5 in E-flat Major, Op. 82

Tickets: $60-$95

**Featured Conductor and Artists for this Performance:**
Hannu Lintu, conductor
Pekka Kuusisto, violin

**The Chicago Symphony Orchestra: cso.org and 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. Missy Mazzoli is Mead Composer-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 62 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.