CONDUCTOR JAMES GAFFIGAN RETURNS TO LEAD CSO IN SHOSTAKOVICH SYMPHONY NO. 8 AND THE U.S. PREMIERE OF AVNER DORMAN’S *ETERNAL RHYTHM*

CSO Principal Percussion Cynthia Yeh is soloist in Dorman’s New Percussion Concerto

**October 3, 4 & 5**

CHICAGO—Conductor James Gaffigan, Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra returns to Symphony Center to lead the CSO in subscription concerts on Thursday, October 3, at 8:00 p.m., Friday, October 4, at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, October 5, at 8:00 p.m. The program includes the U.S. premiere of Avner Dorman’s percussion concerto, *Eternal Rhythm*, featuring CSO Principal Percussion Cynthia Yeh as soloist, followed by Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8.

Israeli composer Avner Dorman’s five-movement percussion concerto *Eternal Rhythm* opens the program. Evoking many changes in mood and requiring great technical virtuosity from the soloist, the work is scored for an impressive array of percussion instruments ranging from pitched, metallic keyboard instruments such as crotales, vibraphone and glockenspiel to marimba and a melodic set of tom-toms, pots, and tin cans. In his composer’s note for the piece, Dorman says, “To the best of our knowledge, the universe began with a large impulse, and the resulting oscillations, pulses and beats, are what we still experience—an Eternal Rhythm that stretches from the beginning of time in perpetuity.” This understanding unfolds throughout the work that also includes a songlike fourth movement inspired by an 11th century
Hebrew text and an exuberant finale that the composer describes as “a celebration of life, energy and an ever-present and eternal rhythm.” The second half of the program features Shostakovich's Symphony No. 8. Receiving its premiere in 1943, it is one of the several “wartime” symphonies and includes moments of pure power, raw intensity and fragile beauty. Shostakovich noted, “In this work there was an attempt to express the terrible tragedy of the war….it is an echo of that difficult time.” The deep sense of tragedy that pervades the work eventually resolves into an unexpected atmosphere of quiet dissonances and serenity.

Renowned conductor James Gaffigan has collaborated with some of the finest orchestras and opera companies in the world. In addition to his roles as Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Gaffigan has performed with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Staatskapelle, London Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic and many others. His conducting success has allowed him to collaborate with renowned opera companies like the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera and the Santa Fe Opera. Since his rise to international fame after being named a 2003 conducting fellow at Tanglewood and winning the 2004 Sir George Solti International Conducting Competition, Gaffigan has established a career rooted in insightful musicianship and innovative interpretation.

Cynthia Yeh was appointed as the CSO’s Principal Percussionist by Principal Guest Conductor Pierre Boulez in 2007. In addition to her role with the orchestra, Yeh performs regularly on the CSO’s MusicNOW series and with numerous Chicago-based chamber ensembles. Yeh has appeared as a soloist with the CSO several times including her critically acclaimed 2014 performance in James MacMillan’s Veni, Veni Emmanuel. She has also performed as a soloist with the National Orchestra of Mexico, the Illinois Philharmonic, the National Symphony of Taiwan and the Chicago Sinfonietta. She has previously served on the faculty of the National Youth Orchestra-USA, the Pacific Music Festival, and the Chosen Vale Percussion Seminar, and is currently on faculty with the Aspen Music Festival and DePaul University.

Composer Avner Dorman draws on a variety of cultural and historical influences in composing, resulting in music that affects an emotional impact while exploring new territories. His works utilize an exciting and complex rhythmic vocabulary, as well as unique timbres and colors in orchestral, chamber, and solo settings. Dorman's music is championed by conductors including Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Chailly, and Andris Nelsons, and by soloists Gil Shaham, Martin Grubinger, and Hilary Hahn. His music has garnered numerous awards and prizes including the 2018 Azrieli Prize for Jewish Music. Dorman’s opera Wahnfried was named a finalist for the International Opera Awards. At the age of 25, he became the youngest composer to win Israel's prestigious Prime Minister's Award for his Elieff Symphony. Dorman has earned several international awards from ASCAP, ACUM, and the Asian Composers League. He holds a doctorate in composition from the Juilliard School and serves as Associate Professor of Music Theory and Composition at the Sunderman Conservatory of Music at Gettysburg College.
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.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Thursday, October 3 at 8:00 p.m.
Friday, October 4 at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 5 at 8:00 p.m.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
James Gaffigan, conductor
Cynthia Yeh, percussion

DORMAN
Eternal Rhythm (U.S. Premiere)

SHOSTAKOVICH
Symphony No. 8

Tickets: $32-$222

Featured Conductor and Artists for this Performance:
James Gaffigan, conductor
Cynthia Yeh, percussion
Avner Dorman, composer

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 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. 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.