For Immediate Release:
December 11, 2019

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA RELEASES NEW RECORDING WITH RICCARDO MUTI ON CSO RESOUND LABEL—SHOSTAKOVICH SYMPHONY NO. 13 (BABI YAR)

Available for Pre-Order Now

CD Release and Digital Download Available Worldwide on January 17, 2020

CHICAGO—The Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) releases its 10th recording with Music Director Riccardo Muti on its own CSO Resound label—Shostakovich Symphony No. 13 (Babi Yar)—via international retail outlets, including the CSO’s Symphony Store and symphonystore.com, and in North American retail outlets, as well as for digital download and streaming worldwide on January 17, 2020. The new recording is available now for pre-order on online retail outlets including symphonystore.com.

The CSO Resound release of Symphony No. 13 (Babi Yar) captures a masterwork by 20th century Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich featuring Riccardo Muti leading the assembled musical forces of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Men of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, prepared by Chorus Director Duain Wolfe, and renowned Russian bass Alexey Tikhomirov, who made his CSO debut in these performances. Recorded live in Orchestra Hall in September 2018, the performances took place more than 70 years after the Word War II tragedy that served as a powerful call to action for Shostakovich. The unfathomable atrocity carried out by German forces over two days in September 1941 at Babi Yar, a steep ravine outside Kiev, in Ukraine, counted more than 33,000 Jews among its victims.
Despite setbacks, including interference from Soviet officials that threatened to disrupt the world premiere, Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 13 was performed for the first time on December 18, 1962, in Moscow with distinguished conductor Kirill Kondrashin on the podium. With only a handful of additional performances taking place in the years that followed, Riccardo Muti led a performance of Babi Yar in 1970 in Rome—the first performance of the symphony in western Europe—in an Italian translation of the work with the RAI National Symphony Orchestra and renowned bass Ruggero Raimondi. Shostakovich obtained a cassette tape recording of the 1970 performance and according to his widow, Madame Irina Shostakovich, he “loved very much this performance, not only for the performance in itself, but he liked the sound of the Italian language.” In 2018, Madame Shostakovich sent Muti the cassette tape, which the composer had kept in his personal library for many years. She also attended the CSO’s opening performance of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 13 (Babi Yar) led by Riccardo Muti on September 21, 2018 from which the CSO Resound recording was later created.

In reflecting on these performances of the landmark work, Riccardo Muti said in an interview with the Chicago Tribune, “The symphony reminds us that all the wars against religion, against differences don’t make any sense. The statements of Yevtushenko are important to remind us that we need to go back to simplicity, to brotherhood and to freedom, and to help people.”

In the review of the CSO’s opening performance of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 13 with Riccardo Muti the Chicago Tribune noted, “The symphonic passages build to a crescendo, Shostakovich’s outcry given volcanic force by Muti and the CSO….vocalists and instrumentalists joined forces in passages both tragic and heroic…In all, a probing performance of a work Muti rightly termed ‘a masterpiece’.”

“Muti and his musicians found the perfect balance of oppressive menace, shrieking outrage and deep melancholy that makes Shostakovich’s music so intensely human,” said the Chicago Sun-Times, also remarking that “Tikhomirov was a spell-binding storyteller.”

Critic Hedy Weiss of WTTW went on to praise “The richly expressive bass voice of Alexey Tikhomirov, whose notable restraint only enhanced the gravitas of Yevtushenko’s words. The men of the CSO chorus provided added heft and emotion throughout.”

Shostakovich Symphony No. 13 (Babi Yar) was recorded live in September 2018 at Orchestra Hall in Chicago during the opening subscription programs of the Orchestra’s 128th season. The recording was produced, edited and mixed by David Frost, and mastered by Silas Brown. The recording engineer was Charlie Post. Previously with the CSO, Frost produced CSO Resound recordings including the 2018 release of Riccardo Muti Conducts Italian Masterworks, as well as recordings of music by Bruckner, Verdi, Berlioz, Prokofiev, and by former CSO Mead Composers-in-Residence Mason Bates and Anna Clyne, all conducted by Riccardo Muti, as well as a collection of works performed by the CSO Brass.
Muti and the CSO’s first recording together on the CSO Resound label—Verdi’s Requiem with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, released in 2010—won two Grammy awards for Best Classical Album and Best Choral Performance. Muti and the CSO’s 2016 world premiere recording of Mason Bates’s *Anthology of Fantastic Zoology* received a Grammy nomination. The 2013 recording of Verdi’s *Otello* won an International Opera Award. *Schoenberg: Kol Nidre and Shostakovich: Suite on Verses of Michelangelo Buonarroti* was named as one of the Best Classical Albums of 2016 by *The New York Times*, who called the album “gripping” and “compelling.” The CSO Resound recording of Bruckner’s Ninth Symphony with Muti and the CSO was named as one of “The 25 Best Classical Albums of 2017” by *The New York Times*. Other CSO Resound recordings featuring Muti and the CSO in works by Berlioz, Prokofiev and contemporary works by former CSO Mead Composers in Residence Anna Clyne and Mason Bates have continued to garner critical acclaim. *Riccardo Muti Conducts Italian Masterworks*, the most recent CSO Resound release, was praised by the Austrian newspaper *Kurier* as “exquisite” and “enchanting.”

The CSO’s commercial recording history began more than 100 years ago on May 1, 1916. More information can be found [here](#).

The CSO’s music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation.

---

**RICCARDO MUTI**  
**CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORUS**  
**ALEXEY TIKHOMIROV**

**SHOSTAKOVICH 13**  
**BABI YAR**

---

*Shostakovich Symphony No. 13 (Babi Yar)*  
*Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus*

1 *Babi Yar: Adagio*  
17.28

2 *Humor: Allegretto*  
9.06

3 *In the Store: Adagio*  
13.17

4 *Fears: Largo*  
13.54

5 *A Career: Allegretto*  
14.42
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 in Music, Sweden’s prestigious Birgit Nilsson Prize, Spain’s Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts, from Japan the Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Star, and most recently the Praemium Imperiale, and the gold medal from Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his promotion of Italian culture abroad as well as the prestigious “Presidente della Repubblica” award from the Italian government and the Viareggio Repaci Special Prize. Muti has received more than 20 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, as well as Infinity Between the Notes: My Journey Into Music, published May 2019 and available in Italian.

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.

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 in Music, Sweden’s prestigious Birgit Nilsson Prize, Spain’s Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts, from Japan the Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Star, and most recently the Praemium Imperiale, and the gold medal from Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his promotion of Italian culture abroad as well as the prestigious “Presidente della Repubblica” award from the Italian government and the Viareggio Repaci Special Prize. Muti has received more than 20 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, as well as Infinity Between the Notes: My Journey Into Music, published May 2019 and available in Italian.

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.

riccardomutimusic.com

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 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.