CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION
ANNOUNCES PROGRAMMING FOR THE 2020/21 SEASON

CHICAGO (January 28, 2020)—Riccardo Muti, Music Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) and Jeff Alexander, President of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA), announce programming for the CSO and Symphony Center Presents (SCP) 2020/21 season—the Orchestra’s 130th season, Muti’s 11th as music director, and the 90th season of Symphony Center Presents.

During the season, the Orchestra performs a wide array of significant works from the symphonic repertoire including Bartók’s Miraculous Mandarin Suite, Bernstein’s Three Dance Episodes from On the Town, Bruckner’s Symphonies Nos. 3 & 7, Copland’s Appalachian Spring, Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9 (From the New World), Janáček’s Taras Bulba, Mahler’s Symphony No. 7, Mendelssohn’s Symphonies Nos. 3 & 4, Nielsen’s Symphony No. 5, Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 5, Schubert’s Symphony No. 9 (The Great), Shostakovich’s Symphonies Nos. 10 & 12, Sibelius’s Symphony No. 2, Saint-Saëns’s Symphony No. 3 (Organ), Strauss’s Don Juan, Der Rosenkavalier Suite and Alpine Symphony, Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring, Tchaikovsky’s Symphonies Nos. 2 & 5 and Francesca da Rimini, Walton’s Symphony No. 1 and Vivaldi’s Gloria.

In two artistic highlights of the season, Riccardo Muti conducts Beethoven’s Missa solemnis as part of the culmination of the CSO’s yearlong commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the composer’s birth, as well as the Orchestra’s first performances of Luigi Cherubini’s Mass for the Coronation of Charles X. Both programs feature a roster of distinguished soloists, and the Chicago Symphony Chorus, prepared by Chorus Director Duain Wolfe.

The Orchestra also performs two world premieres of CSO-commissioned works by American composer Gabriela Lena Frank and Finnish composer Magnus Lindberg, as well as the first CSO performances of Her Story, by Pulitzer Prize–winning composer Julia Wolfe. Co-commissioned by the CSO and four other major U.S. orchestras, the new work commemorates the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. In addition, internationally renowned singers including mezzo-sopranos Anita Rachvelishvili and Alice Coote, as well as soprano Krassimira Stoyanova and tenor Francesco Meli join Muti and the Orchestra for vocal repertoire including orchestral art songs and opera selections.

Several programs led by Muti feature members of the CSO as soloists. Principal Flute Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson and Principal Harp Sarah Bullen are soloists in Mozart’s Concerto for Flute and Harp in the opening program of the season. Concertmaster Robert Chen is soloist in Mozart’s Violin Concerto No. 4 in March and for tour performances. Muti also leads the first CSO performances of two contemporary concertos—William Kraft’s Concerto for Timpani with Principal Timpani David Herbert and Lalo Schifrin’s Tuba Concerto with Principal Tuba Gene Pokorny. Other CSO musicians making solo appearances this season include Principal Oboe William Welter appearing with guest conductor
Jane Glover in Mozart’s Oboe Concerto and Principal Clarinet Stephen Williamson performing Copland’s Clarinet Concerto, with guest conductor Bramwell Tovey.

Muti leads 10 weeks of CSO subscription concerts in five residencies with the Orchestra in Chicago, with appearances in September and October 2020, as well as in January, March, and June 2021. He also joins the Orchestra for tour programs in Missouri (Kansas City), California (Costa Mesa) and Florida (West Palm Beach, Naples and the Orchestra’s debut in Orlando).

Other noteworthy program highlights for the 2020/21 season include the following:

● Muti opens the 2020/21 season with the annual free Concert for Chicago with the CSO on September 17 at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park with a program that includes Beethoven’s Leonore Overture No. 3 and Rimsky-Korsakov’s tone poem Sheherazade. The Concert for Chicago is part of the Year of Chicago Music. Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCAE) have designated 2020 as the Year of Chicago Music. This citywide, yearlong focus on music is one of the first of its kind in the U.S. More information is available at chicago.gov/music.

● Guest conductor Michael Tilson Thomas returns to conduct the CSO’s first performances of his Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind on December subscription concerts. First performed in 2016, Tilson Thomas’s semi-staged work is set to the poem of the same name by Carl Sandburg and features a mixed ensemble of vocalists, a “bar band” complete with electric guitars and drum set, as well as a chamber orchestra featuring solo turns for most of the musicians.

● British conductor and composer Thomas Adès makes his CSO podium debut and conducts the first CSO performances of his Concerto for Piano featuring Kirill Gerstein, for whom the concerto was written.

● Debut appearances for conductors Jane Glover, music director of Music of the Baroque; Lahav Shani, chief conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic and music director designate of the Israel Philharmonic; Constantine Kitsopoulos, who directs the Festival of the Arts Boca, Chatham Opera and New York Grand Opera; and Fabien Gabel, music director of the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec.

● Return appearances by renowned guest conductors Marin Alsop, Herbert Blomstedt, Adam Fischer, Edward Gardner, Manfred Honeck, Marek Janowski, Philippe Jordan, Simone Young and Xian Zhang, as well as Edo de Waart in a program featuring three young prize-winning violinists.

Symphony Center Presents (SCP) marks its 90th season in 2020/21. Originally established by Chicago impresario Harry Zelzer as Allied Arts in 1930, the series continues to bring leading artists and ensembles to Chicago.

This season, the SCP Piano series features 10 acclaimed pianists performing solo works in recitals by composers such as Brahms, Chopin, Schubert, Schumann, Debussy, Ravel and Scriabin. This season includes series debuts for pianists Seong-Jin Cho and Anna Vinnitskaya with returns for Richard Goode, Leif Ove Andsnes, Emanuel Ax, Maurizio Pollini and Evgeny Kissin, among others. The SCP
Chamber Music series features Joshua Bell and the Jerusalem Quartet with guests Pinchas Zukerman, violin/viola, and Amanda Forsyth, cello, as well as series debut appearances for the Thibaudet-Batiashvili-Capuçon piano trio and Mahler Chamber Orchestra. The SCP Orchestras series welcomes three world-class orchestras in the 2020/21 season including the return of the Berliner Philharmoniker with its new chief conductor Kirill Petrenko and the Mariinsky Orchestra with its artistic and general director Valery Gergiev.

The programs of the Negaunee Music Institute at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 2020/21 complement the CSO’s subscription programs and demonstrate the commitment of Music Director Riccardo Muti and the CSOA to develop new audiences, nurture young musicians, provide broad access to the Orchestra and serve the city of Chicago through music. The Institute also leads programs developed for its More Peaceful Chicago Initiative that connect to areas of the city impacted by gun violence. Both the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and the series of concerts for children were created more than one hundred years ago, during the 1919/20 season by second music director Frederick Stock.
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Chicago Symphony Orchestra Programs

Concerts with Riccardo Muti

Riccardo Muti leads 10 weeks of subscription programs in 2020/21, his 11th season as music director. In addition, he conducts the 2020 Symphony Ball concert, a free Concert for Chicago and CSO tour performances.

Mutti’s programs offer wide-ranging repertoire by Beethoven, Brahms, Britten, Cherubini, Cimarosa, Elgar, Kraft, Mozart, Prokofiev, Rachmaninov, Respighi, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rossini, Schubert, Schifrin, Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky, Varèse, Verdi, and Wagner.

- Riccardo Muti opens his 11th season as music director with a program that includes Mozart’s Concerto for Flute and Harp, with Principal Flute Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson and Principal Harp Sarah Bullen as soloists, followed by a performance of Schubert’s Symphony No. 9 (*The Great*). (September 18 and 20)

- As part of the season-spanning programs that mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Ludwig van Beethoven, Muti leads a performance of the composer’s greatest sacred work, the *Missa solemnis*. The performance features the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Chorus and distinguished soloists Hanna-Elisabeth Müller, soprano; Gerhild Romberger, contralto; Matthew Polenzani, tenor; and Tareq Nazmi, bass. (September 24, 25, and 26)

- In October, Muti collaborates with celebrated pianist Yefim Bronfman in Brahms’s Piano Concerto No. 1. The program also includes French-American composer Edgard Varèse’s *Arcana*, a work of orchestral color that offers the listener a spectrum of timbres and instrumental layers. Wagner’s Overture to *Tannhäuser* provides a stirring conclusion. (October 1 and 2)

- Muti’s second October program presents two British views of the sea, Britten’s Four Sea Interludes from *Peter Grimes*, and *Sea Pictures* by Elgar with internationally renowned mezzo-soprano Alice Coote. Completing the program is Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5. (October 22, 23, 24 and 27)

- Muti returns to the CSO in January for a concert highlighting CSO musicians. First, the string section is featured in Vivaldi’s Concerto in A Major for Strings and Continuo. Principal Timpani David Herbert makes his CSO solo debut in William Kraft’s Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra and Principal Tuba Gene Pokorny is featured in the CSO’s first performances of Lalo Schifrin’s Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra, which was written for Pokorny in 2018. Schifrin’s familiar Theme from *Mission: Impossible* is also performed by Muti and the Orchestra with Respighi’s colorful tone poem *Feste Romane* serving as a festive finale. (January 14, 15, and 16, 2021)

- Muti begins a three-week residency in March, when the Orchestra joins forces with the Chicago Symphony Chorus for the CSO’s first performances of Luigi Cherubini’s Mass for the Coronation of Charles X, first performed in Reims in 1825. Muti has been a life-long champion of the late classical-era Italian composer Cherubini, having performed and recorded all of his sacred works over a nearly 50-year period. Two other works on this program give prominence to the Chorus’s male voices: Schubert’s haunting *Song of the Spirits over the Waters*, and
Brahms’s Alto Rhapsody, with internationally renowned mezzo-soprano Anita Rachvelishvili. (March 4, 5, and 6, 2021)

- Muti features CSO Concertmaster Robert Chen performing the Violin Concerto No. 4 of Mozart. Continuing the past seasons’ explorations of Shostakovich symphonies, Muti and the CSO present Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10. (March 9, 2021)

- Muti’s third March program includes several works by Mozart including his Symphony No. 38 (Prague) and the Serenade No. 10 (Gran Partita). The program opens with the Overture to Il matrimonio segreto by Mozart’s contemporary, Domenico Cimarosa. (March 18, 19 and 20, 2021)

- Returning in June for his final residency of the season, Muti conducts an all-Russian program, reuniting with pianist Daniil Trifonov for a performance of Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 2, the first CSO subscription performance of which was given at Orchestra Hall in 1930, with the composer as soloist. The concerto is framed by a tone poem of Anatoly Liadov, The Enchanted Lake and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique). (June 3, 4, and 5, 2021)

- The season finale program finds Muti conducting a concert of Italian opera selections with soloists Krassimira Stoyanova, soprano and Francesco Meli, tenor. (June 10, 12, and 13, 2021)

In addition, Muti conducts two special concerts:

- The 2020/21 season officially opens with what has become an annual tradition for Muti and the Orchestra. This year’s free CSO Concert for Chicago features Beethoven’s Leonore Overture No. 3 and Rimsky-Korsakov’s tone poem Sheherazade in a performance at Millennium Park’s Jay Pritzker Pavilion. (September 17)

- Muti conducts the 2020 Symphony Ball concert program, which is inspired by the CSO’s season-spanning programming that recognizes the 250th anniversary of the birth of composer Ludwig van Beethoven. The program features the composer’s iconic Fifth Symphony and Piano Concerto No. 3 with soloist Yefim Bronfman. (October 3)

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

**Muti and the CSO on Tour**

In 2020/21, the CSO continues its tradition of touring with a two-concert residency in Costa Mesa, California (March 12-13, 2021), as well as concerts at the Kaufmann Center in Kansas City (October 24) and the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign (November 12).

Muti and the Orchestra also return to Florida in 2021 at the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach (January 19, 2021) and for a residency at Artis—Naples (January 21-23, 2021). In addition, Muti and the Orchestra make a debut appearance at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts in Orlando (January 20, 2021). Community engagement and education activities supported by the Naguane Music Institute at the CSO are also planned for the Orchestra’s week in Florida.
A European Festivals tour for Riccardo Muti and the CSO is also planned for Summer 2021 with details to be announced at a later date.

**Beethoven 250**

Marking the 250th anniversary of Ludwig van Beethoven’s birth, the CSO’s season-spanning celebration of the composer’s towering genius culminates in the fall of 2020 with Music Director Riccardo Muti leading the CSO in four works by Beethoven. The iconic composer’s works form a bridge from Classicism to the Romantic period and his influence continues to this day.

- Riccardo Muti and the Orchestra perform Beethoven’s *Leonore* Overture No. 3 as part of the Concert for Chicago program at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park. (September 17)

- Muti conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chicago Symphony Chorus in Beethoven’s masterwork *Missa solemnis* with soloists Hanna-Elisabeth Müller, soprano, Gerhild Romberger, contralto, and Tareq Nazmi, bass, making their CSO debuts; and Matthew Polenzani, tenor. (September 24, 25, and 26)

- Muti conducts Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 and Piano Concerto No. 3 with pianist Yefim Bronfman as soloist as part of the 2020 Symphony Ball concert. (October 3)

**Chicago Symphony Chorus**

The Chicago Symphony Chorus (CSC) is under the leadership of Chorus Director and Conductor Duain Wolfe. In 2020/21, the CSC appears with the Orchestra twice under the baton of Riccardo Muti, as well as with guest conductors Constantine Kitsopoulos and Giovanni Antonini.

- Riccardo Muti conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chicago Symphony Chorus in Beethoven’s masterwork *Missa solemnis* with soloists Hanna-Elisabeth Müller, soprano; Gerhild Romberger, contralto; Matthew Polenzani, tenor; and Tareq Nazmi bass. (September 24, 25, and 26).

- Guest conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos makes his CSO debut with the music of Mozart when the Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony Chorus perform *Amadeus Live!* on the CSO classical subscription series, as well as CSO at the Movies. (October 8, 9, 10, and 13)

- The Chicago Symphony Chorus joins Members of the CSO for *Merry, Merry Chicago!* This festive annual program of holiday music features the Chorus and Orchestra performing traditional carols and popular seasonal favorites. (December 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23)

- Muti returns to conduct a program of rarely performed works, two of which showcase male voices of the chorus: Schubert’s *Song of the Spirits over the Waters* and Brahms’s Alto Rhapsody with mezzo-soprano Anita Rachvelishvili. The Chicago Symphony Chorus also joins the CSO and Muti for the Orchestra’s first performances of Luigi Cherubini’s Mass for the Coronation of Charles X, a composer and a work both championed by Muti over the course of his career. (March 4, 5, and 6, 2021).
• Guest conductor Giovanni Antonini returns to lead a concert of baroque music including works by Handel as well as Vivaldi’s *Kyrie*, RV 587 and his *Gloria*, RV 589. Featured soloists on the program include Amanda Forsythe, soprano; Yulia Van Doren, soprano; and Julie Boulianne, mezzo-soprano. (April 29, 30, May 1 and 4, 2021)

• Guest conductor Richard Kaufman leads this film concert with Steven Spielberg’s 1977 sci-fi classic *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* featuring a score by Academy Award-winning composer John Williams. (May 27, 28, and 29, 2021)

**CSO at Wheaton**

Now entering its fifth season, the three-concert curated series at Wheaton College’s Edman Memorial Chapel has regularly attracted capacity audiences. In 2020/21, guest conductors Emmanuel Krivine, Osmo Vänskä, and Simone Young make their debut appearances on the series. The CSO’s concerts at Wheaton College are generously sponsored by the JCS Fund of the DuPage Foundation.

• Guest conductor Emmanuel Krivine leads the CSO in a program that includes Berlioz’s *Roman Carnival* Overture and Zemlinsky’s symphonic fantasy, *The Mermaid*. The 2010 first prize-winner of the Chopin International Competition, Yulianna Avdeeva, makes her CSO debut in Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 1. (November 20)

• Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä guest conducts a program featuring French cellist Gautier Capuçon in Elgar’s Cello Concerto, as well as an audience favorite, Symphony No. 3 (*Scottish*) by Mendelssohn. The program opens with Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho’s evocative Winter Sky from *Orion*. (February 5, 2021)

• Guest conductor Simone Young returns to the CSO after her acclaimed 2019 debut to lead Mahler’s Symphony No. 7. The Australian conductor is an important interpreter of works of the late Romantic style. (April 16, 2021)

**MusicNOW**

Created in 1998 to explore the richness and variety of contemporary classical music, the CSO’s MusicNOW series enters its 23rd year in the 2020/21 season with exciting opportunities to hear music from contemporary composers from the United States and beyond. Four concerts at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance will be performed this season by CSO musicians and guest performers. Performances take place on October 12, November 16 and April 12 and May 17, 2021.

Major support for MusicNOW is generously provided by the Zell Family Foundation, the Sally Mead Hands Foundation, Cindy Sargent, the Julian Family Foundation and an anonymous donor.

**World and CSO Premieres**

The 2020/21 season includes world premieres of CSO-commissioned works by American composer Gabriela Lena Frank and Finnish composer Magnus Lindberg. In addition, *Her Story*, a major new vocal/orchestral work by American composer Julia Wolfe receives its first CSO performances this season.
• The CSO’s program of American music led by guest conductor Bramwell Tovey features the world premiere of a new CSO-commissioned work by American composer Gabriela Lena Frank, who is the Philadelphia Orchestra’s Composer-in-Residence through 2021. Frank was included in the recent Washington Post list of the 35 most significant women composers in history. Her works often explore her multicultural heritage and identity. (November 5, 6, 7, and 8)

• A new CSO-commissioned work by Finnish composer Magnus Lindberg receives its world premiere on a program led by Finnish conductor Mikko Franck. Lindberg, one of today’s most widely recognized contemporary composers, has been hailed by The Times as “one of the major voices of 21st-century composition.” (May 20, 21, 22, and 25, 2021)

• Co-commissioned by the CSO with the Boston, Nashville, National and San Francisco symphonies, Pulitzer Prize–winning American composer Julia Wolfe’s Her Story commemorates the centennial of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guaranteed American women the right to vote. The San Francisco Chronicle said that Wolfe “stands among the most interesting and boldly inventive composers of her generation.” The CSO’s first performances of Wolfe’s new work feature the CSO debut appearance of the award-winning vocal group Lorelei Ensemble in a program led by guest conductor Marin Alsop. (February 26 and 27, 2021)

**First Performances**

In addition to world premieres, the CSO performs 16 works for the first time during the 2020/21 season:

• Thomas Adès: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (March 25, 26, and 30, 2021)
• Qigang Chen: L’Eloignement (October 29, 30, and 31)
• Luigi Cherubini: Mass for the Coronation of Charles X (March 4, 5, and 6, 2021)
• G.F. Handel: Dopo notte, atra e funesta from Ariodante (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)
• William Kraft: Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra No. 1 (January 14, 15, and 16, 2021)
• Jessie Montgomery: Starburst (February 26 and 27, 2021)
• Florence Price’s Ethiopia’s Shadow in America (November 5, 6, 7, and 8)
• Lalo Schifrin: Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra (January 14, 15, and 16, 2021)
• Lalo Schifrin: Theme from Mission: Impossible (January 14, 15, and 16, 2021)
• Peter Tchaikovsky: Valse-Scherzo in C Major, Op. 34 (December 17, 18, and 19)
• Michael Tilson Thomas: Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind (December 10, 11, and 12)
• Antonio Vivaldi: Concerto for Strings in G Minor, RV 157 (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)
• Antonio Vivaldi: Armatae face et anguibus from Juditha triumphans (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)
• Antonio Vivaldi: Kyrie, RV 587 (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)
• Antonio Vivaldi: Leggi almeno, tiranna infedele from Ottone in villa (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)
• Julia Wolfe: Her Story (February 26 and 27, 2021) (CSO co-commission)
Debuts

Several conductors and guest artists make debuts with the CSO during the 2020/21 season:

- Constantine Kitsopoulos is known for his versatility, conducting operas, symphonic works, music theater and film with orchestra. He currently directs the Festival of the Arts Boca, Chatham Opera and New York Grand Opera. He conducts the CSO and Chorus in *Amadeus Live* performances. (October 8, 9, 10 and 13)

- German soprano Hanna-Elisabeth Müller makes her CSO debut in Beethoven’s *Missa solemnis*. She has sung numerous roles at the Bavarian State Opera, the Royal Opera in London and La Scala in Milan. At the Metropolitan Opera she has sung roles of Mozart and Beethoven, including Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* in the 2019/20 season. (September 24, 25, and 26)

- Contralto Gerhild Romberger specializes in concert performances, from lieder recitals to contemporary music, with an extensive repertoire embracing all the major mezzo-soprano and contralto parts in the oratorio and concert literature from the Baroque to the present. She is frequently called on to perform the works of Beethoven and Mahler and has performed with noted conductors in Europe and North America. She makes her CSO debut under Riccardo Muti in Beethoven’s *Missa solemnis*. (September 24, 25, and 26)

- Fresh from his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 2020, bass Tareq Nazmi makes his CSO debut under Riccardo Muti in Beethoven’s *Missa solemnis*. After training at the Bavarian State Opera Studio, the Kuwaiti-born artist joined that company’s ensemble. In addition to his opera performances, Nazmi’s concert repertoire ranges from works by Bach and Haydn to Beethoven, Brahms and Dvořák. He has worked with noted conductors and major orchestras throughout Europe and the United States. He is an alumnus of Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute. (September 24, 25, and 26)

- British pianist Benjamin Grosvenor makes his highly anticipated CSO debut in October 2020. The young virtuoso has been winning awards since the age of 11 and actively plays solo recitals, chamber music concerts and concertos. Internationally recognized for his electrifying performances and insightful interpretations, he has performed with major orchestras in the United States and Europe, has toured China with Britten Sinfonia, and made his Symphony Center Presents recital debut in 2017. He plays Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 2 with the CSO under conductor Marek Janowski. (October 15, 16, and 17)

- Russian pianist Yulianna Avdeeva first came to international prominence in 2010 when she won first prize in the 16th International Chopin Piano Competition. With a combination of clarity and elegance, she has recently debuted with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the baton of Gustavo Dudamel, and she appeared as a soloist with orchestras throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia and the South Pacific. Her CSO debut is with guest conductor Emmanuel Krivine in Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 1. (November 19, 20 [Wheaton], 21, and 22)

- Well known to Chicago audiences as the music director of Music of the Baroque, British conductor Jane Glover makes her CSO debut in a program of 18th century music. She holds a doctorate in musicology and has written books on Mozart and Handel. Formerly music director
of the London Mozart Players, she is a noted conductor of opera as well. These concerts also mark the first CSO subscription concert performances of Haydn’s Symphony No. 71, as well as the CSO solo debut of Principal Oboe William Welter. The program also includes Handel’s Organ Concerto No. 1 with Paul Jacobs as soloist and Mozart’s Symphony No. 29. (December 3, 4, 5, and 8)

- William Welter, oboe, was appointed principal oboe of the CSO by Music Director Riccardo Muti in June 2018. He is a 2016 graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music. Prior to coming to Chicago, Welter performed as a guest musician with the Cleveland Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, New York Philharmonic and as guest principal oboe of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. (December 3, 4, 5, and 8)

- Mezzo-soprano Kara Dugan, makes her CSO debut as a vocalist in the CSO premiere of Michael Tilson Thomas’s *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*, a role she originated in the world premiere and other performances of the eclectic, dynamic, semi-staged work. She has performed with major orchestras in the United States and works frequently with living composers. She is an alumna of Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute. (December 10, 11, and 12)

- Versatile vocalist Kristen Toedtman makes her CSO debut in Michael Tilson Thomas’s *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind* in its first CSO performances. Also a bandleader and songwriter, she has collaborated with a variety of performers and composers, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Philip Glass Ensemble and Frank Zappa’s Mothers of Invention. (December 10, 11, and 12)

- American violinist Stella Chen makes her CSO debut in Beethoven’s Romance No. 2 in F Major with Edo de Waart conducting. A recent graduate of a dual degree program at Harvard and the New England Conservatory of Music, she won first prize in the 2019 Queen Elisabeth International Violin Competition in Brussels. She is an alumna of Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute. (December 17, 18, and 19)

- Timothy Chooi, violin, makes his CSO debut in a performance of the Introduction and Rondo capriccioso by Saint-Saëns with Edo de Waart conducting. The young Canadian studied at the Curtis Institute of Music with Ida Kavafian and at Juilliard with Pinchas Zukerman. He is an alumnus of Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute and the winner of the 2018 Joseph Joachim Violin Competition. (December 17, 18, and 19)

- Sergei Dogadin, violin, makes his CSO debut performing Tchaikovsky’s Valse-Scherzo, Op. 34 with Edo de Waart conducting. Born in Russia, Dogadin is a prize-winning soloist, having won most recently the first prize in the 2019 Tchaikovsky International Violin Competition. (December 17, 18, and 19)

- David Herbert, CSO principal timpani since 2013, makes his CSO solo debut in William Kraft’s First Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra, a piece which is being performed by the CSO for the first time with Muti conducting. Prior to joining the CSO, he served as principal timpani of the San Francisco Symphony and the New World Symphony. He performed the world premiere of William Kraft’s Timpani Concerto No. 2 (*The Grand Encounter*) in 2005 with the San Francisco Symphony, a commission written specifically for him. (January 14, 15, and 16, 2021)
Following his performance with the CSO at Ravinia in 2018, pianist Igor Levit makes his CSO subscription concert debut in Schumann’s Piano Concerto. Following his SCP recital debut in 2017, he was named the 2018 Gilmore Artist and Royal Philharmonic Society’s “Instrumentalist of the Year” 2018. (February 11, 12, and 13, 2021)

Founded and directed by Beth Willer, the Lorelei Ensemble is a vocal ensemble comprising nine women who bring together their combined expertise in wide-ranging musical styles and individual solo careers. The Ensemble has commissioned and premiered more than 50 new works since its founding in 2007. The group makes its CSO debut in Wolfe’s Her Story led by Marin Alsop. The program also includes Starburst by American composer Jessie Montgomery and Rachmaninov’s Symphonic Dances. (February 26 and 27, 2021)

British conductor and composer Thomas Adès makes his CSO debut conducting the Orchestra in its first performance of his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra with Kirill Gerstein, for whom it was written, as soloist. Gerstein and Adès have been performing this major new concerto since its premiere with the Boston Symphony in 2019. The prize-winning composer is also in demand as a pianist and works as a conductor, with major orchestras and opera companies from Los Angeles to Sydney. The program also includes works of Liszt and Janáček. (March 25, 26, and 30, 2021)

Conductor Fabien Gabel makes his highly anticipated debut with the CSO in a program of Wagner and Saint-Saëns. The rising young French conductor recently made débuts with a number of major orchestras, including San Francisco, Detroit, Houston and Toronto, as well as in Europe and Australia. (April 8 and 10, 2021)

An Illinois native and Northwestern University graduate, lyric soprano Amanda Majeski makes her debut with the CSO singing Wagner’s Wesendonck Lieder, a song cycle originally written for voice and piano. Majeski, an alumna of Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute, started her career at Chicago Opera Theater and has since sung major roles at Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Metropolitan Opera and the Paris Opera, as well as many others in Europe and the United States. (April 8 and 10, 2021)

French-Canadian mezzo-soprano Julie Boulianne makes her CSO debut under the baton of Giovanni Antonini in a program of Baroque works by Handel and Vivaldi. Noted for her agile ornamentation in works of Handel as well as Rossini, in addition to her operatic roles in the Unites States and Europe, she also appears regularly in concert with leading symphony orchestras. She recently released a recording of Vivaldi and Handel arias. (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)

Russian-American soprano Yulia Van Doren, who is known to Chicago audiences for her recent performances with Music of the Baroque, makes her CSO debut in a program of works by Handel and Vivaldi including arias and choral works under the direction of Giovanni Antonini. Well-versed in a variety of styles, she is particularly recognized for her interpretations of Baroque music and is the only singer to be awarded a top prize in all four U.S. Bach vocal competitions. (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)

Behzod Abduraimov makes his CSO debut on a program of Russian music led by guest conductor Lahav Shani when the noted young Uzbek pianist performs Rachmaninov’s
Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. He made his acclaimed debut on the SCP Piano series in a recital program of works by Liszt and Prokofiev in March 2019. (May 13, 14, 15, and 16, 2021)

- Rising star conductor and pianist Lahav Shani makes his CSO debut in a program of music by Rachmaninov and Prokofiev, including the first performance on a CSO subscription concert of the Rachmaninov Prelude in C-sharp Minor, as orchestrated by Leopold Stokowski. The young Israeli conductor and pianist is chief conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and is currently music director designate of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, following Zubin Mehta’s 50-year tenure. (May 13, 14, 15, and 16, 2021)

- Born in Oslo, violinist Vilde Frang regularly appears with the world’s leading orchestras. In 2012, she was unanimously awarded the Credit Suisse Young Artists Award which led to her debut with the Vienna Philharmonic under Bernard Haitink at the Lucerne Festival. Her recent debuts include solo engagements with the Berliner Philharmoniker, BBC Symphony, and Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, among others. She makes her CSO debut playing Bruch’s Violin Concerto No. 1 on a program directed by Mikko Franck. (May 20, 21, 22, and 25, 2021)

Returning Guest Conductors

Guest conductors returning to the CSO podium in 2020/21 include:

- Polish-born German conductor Marek Janowski, who last season was named chief conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic, brings a program of German Romantic music, his specialty, to the CSO, leading the Orchestra in Weber’s Overture to The Ruler of the Spirits and Bruckner’s Symphony No. 3. On the same program, pianist Benjamin Grosvenor makes his CSO debut performing Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 2. (October 15, 16, and 17)

- Conductor Xian Zhang is currently music director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and principal guest conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. A champion of Chinese composers, she conducts L’Eloignement, a 2003 work for string orchestra by noted composer Qigang Chen on a program that also holds Tchaikovsky’s Francesca da Rimini, Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No. 2 with soloist Simon Trpčeski, and the Suite from The Miraculous Mandarin by Bartók. (October 29, 30, and 31)

- Bramwell Tovey is an award-winning conductor, composer, and accomplished classical and jazz pianist. He returns to lead the CSO in a program of works by American composers including the full orchestral version of Copland’s Suite from Appalachian Spring paired with the composer’s jazzy and lyrical Clarinet Concerto with CSO Principal Clarinet Stephen Williamson as soloist. Also on the program is the world premiere of a CSO-commissioned work by Gabriela Lena Frank, Ethiopia’s Shadow in America by Florence Price, and two works by Bernstein—Prelude, Fugue and Riffs and Three Dance Episodes from On the Town. (November 5, 6, 7, and 8)

- Chief conductor of the Bergen Symphony Orchestra and principal conductor designate of the London Philharmonic Orchestra (2021), British conductor Edward Gardner returns to Orchestra Hall to conduct the CSO in a diverse program beginning with Wagner’s Prelude to Parsifal, Rachmaninov’s Piano Concerto No. 2 with soloist Alexander Gavrylyuk, and Walton’s...
Symphony No. 1. (November 12 [Champaign], 13, and 14)

- French conductor Emmanuel Krivine, music director of the Orchestre National de France, returns to Symphony Center to lead the Orchestra in a program that includes Berlioz’s *Roman Carnival* Overture and Zemlinsky’s symphonic fantasy, *The Mermaid*. The 2010 first prize-winner of the Chopin International Competition, Yulianna Avdeeva, makes her CSO debut in Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 1. (November 19, 20 [Wheaton], 21 and 22)

- American conductor and composer Michael Tilson Thomas, who becomes music director laureate of the San Francisco Symphony in 2020, returns to lead the CSO’s first performances of his *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*. Tilson Thomas’s eclectic work features costumes, a bar band complete with electric guitars and drum set in addition to a chamber orchestra. Acclaimed vocalist Measha Brueggergosman, who performed at the work’s premiere, joins vocalists Kristen Toedtman and Kara Dugan for these performances. Also on the program are Ruggles’s *Angels* and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 2 (*Little Russian*). (December 10, 11, and 12)

- Renowned conductor Edo de Waart conducts the CSO in a program highlighting three young rising violin stars—Stella Chen, Sergei Dogadin and Timothy Chooi—all recent prize winners. Opening with Berlioz’s *Overture to Beatrice and Benedict*, the concert also includes the *Traumerei am Kamin*, a symphonic interlude from Richard Strauss’s opera *Intermezzo*, and concludes with Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 4 (*Italian*). (December 17, 18, and 19)

- The CSO welcomes Hungarian conductor Adam Fischer back for his first subscription concerts with the Orchestra since 1985. The current music director of the Düsseldorf Symphony and founder of the Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra, Fischer has led major European symphony and opera orchestras throughout his career. His recording of Haydn’s complete 104 symphonies is still the gold standard and he brings his expertise to the CSO to lead them in Haydn’s Symphony No. 97 as well as Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9 (*From the New World*) on a program that also includes Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 1 with Martin Helmchen as soloist. (January 7, 8, 9, and 12, 2021)

- German conductor David Afkham has made several returns to lead the CSO since his subscription series debut in 2016. After an acclaimed performance of Richard Strauss’s tone poem *Death and Transfiguration* in 2019, he leads Strauss’s *An Alpine Symphony* on a program that also includes Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 27 with Pierre-Laurent Aimard as soloist. (January 28, 29, 30 and 31, 2021)

- Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä conducts a program featuring French cellist Gautier Capuçon in Elgar’s Cello Concerto, as well as an audience favorite, Symphony No. 3 (*Scottish*) by Mendelssohn. The program opens with Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho’s evocative Winter Sky from *Orion*. (February 4, 5 [Wheaton], 6, and 9, 2021)

- The legendary Herbert Blomstedt returns to lead the CSO in a program of Scandinavian works, including the interlude from Swedish composer Wilhelm Stenhammar’s cantata *The Song* and Symphony No. 5 by Carl Nielsen. Pianist Igor Levit makes his CSO subscription concert debut in Schumann’s Piano Concerto. (February 11, 12, and 13, 2021)
• Well known for his insightful interpretations of Bruckner, Manfred Honeck, music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, leads the CSO in Bruckner’s Symphony No. 7 on a program that also includes Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto featuring Christian Tetzlaff as soloist. (February 18, 19, 20, and 23, 2021)

• Marin Alsop conducts the CSO’s premiere of Her Story, a major new work by composer Julia Wolfe, co-commissioned by the CSO with the Boston, Nashville, National and San Francisco symphonies. The new work marks the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment that guaranteed American women the right to vote and features the CSO debut of the Lorelei Ensemble. Alsop also conducts Starburst by American composer Jessie Montgomery and Rachmaninov’s Symphonic Dances on this program. (February 26 and 27, 2021)

• Currently principal conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Thomas Søndergård made his CSO subscription concert debut in 2018. He returns to conduct a program of British and Finnish music that includes the sparkling Scapino, A Comedy Overture by William Walton—which was commissioned by the CSO for its 50th season—and Sibelius’s Symphony No. 2, as well as Britten’s Violin Concerto featuring internationally renowned violinist Janine Jansen. (April 1, 2, and 3, 2021)

• An important interpreter of works of the late Romantic style, Australian conductor Simone Young returns to the CSO after her acclaimed 2019 debut to lead Mahler’s Symphony No. 7. Young is Chief Conductor Designate of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, becoming its Chief Conductor in 2022. (April 15, 16 [Wheaton], 17 and 20, 2021)

• Ossetian conductor Tugan Sokhiev, music director and chief conductor of the Bolshoi Theatre, brings an all-Russian program to Orchestra Hall when he leads the CSO in Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 12 (The Year 1917), a programmatic work commemorating the Russian Revolution. Vadim Gluzman is soloist in Shostakovich’s Violin Concerto No. 2. The concert opens with the Prelude to Mussorgsky’s opera Khovanshchina, as orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov. (April 22, 23, and 24, 2021)

• Baroque specialist and director of Il Giardino Armonico, Giovanni Antonini conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus with soloists Amanda Forsythe and Yulia Van Doren, sopranos, and Julie Boulianne, mezzo-soprano, in a program of Vivaldi and Handel opera arias, concerti grossi, and choral works by Vivaldi. (April 29, 30, May 1 and 4, 2021)

• Philippe Jordan is currently music director of the Opéra National de Paris and principal conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. He begins as general music director of the Vienna State Opera in 2020. The Swiss conductor returns to lead the CSO for the first time since 2007. The program features the Piano Concerto No. 5 (Egyptian) of Saint-Saëns with Jean-Yves Thibaudet as soloist and Debussy’s Prelude to The Afternoon of a Faun. The concert concludes with Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring. (May 6, 7, and 8, 2021)

• Finnish conductor Mikko Franck returns to conduct an ambitious program of late Romantic works as well as the world premiere of Finnish contemporary composer Magnus Lindberg’s new CSO-commissioned work. Norwegian violinist Vilde Frang performs Bruch’s Violin Concerto No.
1. Two pieces by Richard Strauss, *Don Juan* and the Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*, round out the program. (May 20, 21, 22, and 25, 2021)

**Returning Guest Artists**

Guest artists returning to perform with the CSO during the 2020/21 season’s subscription series include:

**Piano**

Pierre-Laurent Aimard (January 28, 29, 30, and 31, 2021)
Yefim Bronfman (October 1 and 2, and 3 [2020 Symphony Ball concert])
Alexander Gavrylyuk (November 12, 13, and 14)
Kirill Gerstein (March 25, 26, and 30, 2021)
Martin Helmchen (January 7, 8, 9, and 12, 2021)
Jean-Yves Thibaudet (May 6, 7 and 8, 2021)
Daniil Trifonov (June 3, 4, and 5, 2021)
Simon Trpčeski (October 29, 30, and 31)

**Violin**

Robert Chen (March 9 [Chicago], 12 [Costa Mesa, CA], 2021)
Vadim Gluzman (April 22, 23, and 24, 2021)
Janine Jansen (April 1, 2, and 3, 2021)
Christian Tetzlaff (February 18, 19, 20, and 23, 2021)

**Cello**

Gautier Capuçon (February 4, 5, 6, and 9, 2021)

**Flute**

Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson (September 18 and 20)

**Clarinet**

Stephen Williamson (November 5, 6, 7, and 8)

**Tuba**

Gene Pokorny (January 14, 15 and 16, 2021)

**Harp**

Sarah Bullen (September 18 and 20)

**Organ**

Paul Jacobs (December 3, 4, 5, and 8)

**Voice**

Alice Coote, mezzo-soprano (October 22, 23, 24, and 27)
Amanda Forsythe, soprano (April 29, 30, May 1, and 4, 2021)
Francesco Meli, tenor (June 10, 12 and 13)
Matthew Polenzani, tenor (September 24, 25, and 26)
Anita Rachvelishvili, mezzo-soprano (March 4, 5, and 6, 2021)
Krassimira Stoynanova, soprano (June 10, 12 and 13, 2021)

**CSO at the Movies**

CSO at the Movies offers a unique opportunity to hear performances of great film scores played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Performances include feature films projected above the stage. Subscriptions for CSO at the Movies are available as a 4-concert curated series on Friday evenings or a create your own series option.

- Peter Shaffer’s smash Broadway hit play *Amadeus* became a beloved 1984 movie directed by Miloš Forman with a soundtrack formed from Mozart’s own masterpieces. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Constantine Kitsopoulos, making his CSO debut, play the many familiar works in *Amadeus Live.* (October 8, 9, 10, and 13)

- John Williams’s Oscar-nominated score for the 2015 film *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* brings back themes from the earlier movies in the Star Wars franchise and introduces several new and memorable ones. Guest conductor David Newman leads these performances. (November 27, 28, and 29)

- From Dorothy to the Munchkins and the Wicked Witch of the West and her flying monkeys, *The Wizard of Oz* is everyone’s favorite movie from childhood. The classic songs include “Over the Rainbow” and “Follow the Yellow Brick Road” in Harold Arlen’s colorful (make that Technicolor!) score in performances led by conductor Richard Kaufman. (April 9 and 11, 2021)

- Composer John Williams said about Steven Spielberg’s movies, “I think there’s something about Steven’s movies that almost requires that the music be an equal partner in the narrative.” Nowhere is this statement truer than in the 1977 movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind,* which has music embedded in the movie’s plot. Richard Kaufman returns to conduct the score in this screening of the sci-fi classic. (May 27, 28, and 29, 2021)

**CSO Radio**

The CSO Radio Broadcast Series is syndicated nationally to 476 radio stations reaching more than 170,000 listeners per week via the WFMT Radio Network. In 2019, on-demand streaming led to more than 250,000 plays of music and interviews from CSO Radio programs.

With commentary designed to illustrate the stories of the music and to provide insight into the themes of the CSO’s concert season, the series has offered a distinctive approach to classical music radio. The broadcasts include recorded concert performances by the CSO; produced segments featuring interviews with musicians of the Orchestra, guest artists and composers; and explorations of the CSO’s rich catalogue of commercial recordings.

The series is heard locally on 98.7 WFMT in Chicago on Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. For other cities, please check local listings.
A strong online presence at cso.org/soundsandstories gives music lovers access to additional content, including full-length interviews and commentary, program notes and biographical information.

**Symphony Center Presents**

Entering its 90th season, Symphony Center Presents (SCP) offers a range of programs highlighting the exceptional artistry of the world's most acclaimed musicians. Chicago's premier presenter of international artists and ensembles offers four series—Piano, Chamber Music, Orchestras, and Jazz, as well as special concerts. Programming details for the 2020/21 SCP Jazz series will be announced in April 2020.

**Symphony Center Presents Piano**

The Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Piano series celebrates keyboard artistry at the highest level. The 2020/21 Piano series invites 10 stellar pianists to Symphony Center for solo recitals of the highest caliber:

- Richard Goode opens the SCP Piano series with a program including Mozart's Sonata in F Major, Rondo in A Minor, Seven Fantasies by Brahms, a selection of Chopin's Mazurkas, Debussy's *L'isle joyeuse* and selected Études. (October 4)

- Anna Vinnitskaya makes her SCP Piano series debut, exploring Ravel's relationship with the waltz in a program featuring his *La valse* as well as the *Valses nobles et sentimentales*. Other works on the program include Tchaikovsky's *The Seasons*, Schumann's Sonata No. 1 and Arabesque, as well as and Chopin's Fantasy-Impromptu in C-sharp Minor. (November 1)

- One of the most successful pianists of his generation, Leif Ove Andsnes returns to Symphony Center in a program of Schumann, Janáček and Bartók, and featuring Schumann's delightful *Carnaval*. (January 24, 2021)

- After his 2020 performance at Symphony Center in Beethoven's First and Fourth Piano Concertos, pianist Paul Lewis returns for his first recital since 2017 to tackle Mussorgsky's *Pictures from an Exhibition* on a solo recital that also includes sonatas by Mozart and Haydn, selections from *Songs Without Words* by Mendelssohn, and Five Preludes by Scriabin. (February 21, 2021)

- Emanuel Ax will be featured on the SCP Chamber Music series in a piano trio program with his regular musical partners Leonidas Kavakos and Yo-Yo Ma in March 2020. Next season, he returns for a recital including pieces by Six Piano Pieces, Op. 18 by Brahms and Chopin's Andante spianato, Grande polonaise brillante and the Polonaise-Fantasy in A-flat Major. Always a committed exponent of contemporary composers, Ax will also perform Andrew Norman's *Suspend*, which was written for him in 2014 as a concerto and has been reconceived as a work for solo piano. (March 14, 2021)

- Seong-Jin Cho first rose to prominence in 2015 when he became the first South Korean pianist to win the International Chopin Competition. He makes his SCP Piano series debut with a program including Schumann's *Humoreske*, Szymanowski's *Masques*, and four Chopin
Scherzos. (March 28, 2021)

- Evgeny Kissin brings his musicality, poetry and virtuosity back to the SCP Piano series. Featured during the 2019/20 season in an all-Beethoven recital, the renowned pianist returns with a wide-ranging program of Chopin Impromptus, Berg’s Sonata No. 1, two pieces by Soviet composer Tikhon Khrennikov, and Three Preludes by Gershwin. (April 18, 2021)

- Maurizio Pollini is one of the great keyboard legends, with a career spanning 60 years. He returns to Symphony Center Presents with a program that includes Schoenberg’s Three Piano Pieces, Op. 11, and Six Little Piano Pieces, Op. 19, as well as Beethoven’s Sonata No. 29 in B-flat Major, Op. 106 (Hammerklavier). (May 9, 2021)

- Symphony Center Presents audiences may remember when Marc-André Hamelin stepped in on short notice for an ailing Yefim Bronfman in 2018. The Canadian-born virtuoso returns to the series again for a program of intriguing variety of works including C.P.E. Bach’s Rondo in C Minor, Schubert’s last Sonata in A Major, Schumann’s Waldszenen, and Ravel’s Gaspard de la nuit. (May 23, 2021)

- French pianist David Fray, who has performed with the CSO in concertos by Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin and made his SCP Piano debut in 2011, plays an all-Schubert recital program with details to be announced later. (June 6, 2021)

Syphony Center Presents Chamber Music

The Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Chamber Music series brings today’s top artists and chamber ensembles to Orchestra Hall for performances each season. Series programs include:

- With a career spanning more than 30 years, celebrated violinist Joshua Bell returns with Alessio Bax, piano, to perform a violin recital with a program to be announced at a later date. (October 18)

- Friends for many years, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, violinist Lisa Batiashvili and cellist Gautier Capuçon, all concert soloists in their own right, joined forces recently to tour as a trio and now bring their artistry to the SCP Chamber Music series. They present Shostakovich’s Piano Trio No. 1, Ravel’s Piano Trio, and Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio No. 2. (December 13)

- Critically acclaimed for her interpretations of Mozart’s music, pianist Mitsuko Uchida is soloist and leads the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in two piano concertos by Mozart, Nos.18 and 21. The internationally acclaimed Mahler Chamber Orchestra, in their SCP Chamber Music debut, also performs Janáček’s woodwind sextet Mládi (Youth). (March 21, 2021)

- A special treat is in store for connoisseurs of chamber works for strings when the Jerusalem Quartet adds Pinchas Zukerman, violin and viola, and cellist Amanda Forsyth for the warm and rich tones of Dvořák’s String Sextet and Brahms’s String Sextet No. 1. The Adagio from Bruckner’s String Quintet is an added bonus. (April 25, 2021)
Symphony Center Presents Orchestras

In 2020/21, the Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Orchestras series honors a long-standing tradition of welcoming the world’s finest orchestras to the stage of Orchestra Hall.

- In his first U.S. tour as its chief conductor, Kirill Petrenko brings the Berliner Philharmoniker to Symphony Center with a program of American eclecticism and Strauss tone poems. Ives’s *Central Park in the Dark* and Andrew Norman’s *Unstuck* were composed a century apart (1906 and 2008 respectively) but both share an imaginative response to the resources of the orchestra. The program also includes *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* and *Ein Heldenleben* by Richard Strauss, who regularly conducted the Berliner Philharmoniker in his own works. (November 15)

- The Mariinsky Orchestra of St. Petersburg, Russia, with their longtime director, Valery Gergiev, are known around the world for their powerful performances. They return to Symphony Center with pianist Alexandre Kantorow, the recipient of the first prize, gold medal, and Grand Prix at the 16th International Tchaikovsky Competition in 2019, in his SCP debut. The program includes Three Selections from Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 2 and Mahler’s Symphony No. 5. (February 14, 2021)

- The acclaimed music director of the Metropolitan Opera, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal, Yannick Nézet-Séguin returns to the 2020/21 series with the London-based Chamber Orchestra of Europe. The program includes the Brahms Violin Concerto with frequent collaborator, violinist Lisa Batiashvili as soloist, and Brahms’s Symphony No. 3. (March 13, 2021).

Special Concerts

During the 2020/21 season, Symphony Center Presents special concerts that showcase today’s internationally renowned soloists and ensembles in a range of genres—classical, world, folk and jazz—as well as unique holiday programs.

- The China NCPA Orchestra conducted by Lü Jia performs a varied program featuring music of Chinese composers and Tchaikovsky. In his SCP debut, Wu Wei is featured as soloist in a work by Unsuk Chin for the traditional Chinese instrument the sheng. The program also includes *Itineraire d’une illusion* by Qigang Chen, whose *L’Éloignement* is performed on a CSO subscription concert in the 2020/21 season. Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4 completes the program. (October 25)

- Branford Marsalis is the featured soloist with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in Debussy’s *Rhapsody for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra* and Ibert’s *Concertino da Camera* for Saxophone. The concert also includes the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra performing a program of Spanish-themed works by Rossini, Rodrigo, and Turina, as well as the world premiere of Courtney Bryan’s *Carmen*, Jazz Suite on themes by Bizet, a work commissioned by the Orpheus. (January 26, 2021)

- The Chinese New Year Celebration concert has become an anticipated annual tradition at Symphony Center. Program to be announced at a later date. (February 13, 2021)
• Japan’s legendary ensemble of drummers, Kodo, returns to Symphony Center with *Legacy*, a physically stunning and musically sensational show which puts their huge drums center stage and reworks their treasure trove of signature pieces created across almost 40 years of international touring. (February 28, 2021)

• Superstar pianist Lang Lang comes to Symphony Center in his worldwide tour performing Bach’s astonishing compendium of musical styles and contrapuntal genius, the *Goldberg* Variations, BWV 988. (March 7, 2021)

• As part of a residency that will include educational activities and a Friday night Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Jazz series performance to be announced with full jazz series details in April 2020, Wynton Marsalis leads and performs with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in an SCP special concert. The legendary Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra regularly presents programs that feature standards as well as original arrangements by its talented members. (March 11 & 12, 2021)

• Tabla legend Zakir Hussain and the Masters of Percussion perform on a cornucopia of drums and other instruments in a colorful program of music from India. (April 2, 2021)

• From oldies to punk, classical to trivial, George Hinchliffe’s Ukelele Orchestra of Great Britain presents music from across several genres that may sound familiar but are presented in a new way. This ensemble of ukulele players and singers brings a program that is engaging for listeners of all ages. (April 6, 2021)

• In celebration of the 25th anniversary of the project *In the Fiddler’s House* and the resulting CD, Itzhak Perlman presents a concert exploring traditional klezmer music. Collaborators include members of the Brave Old World and Klezmer Conservatory Band; Hankus Netsky, Music Director, saxophone and piano; Andy Statman, clarinet and mandolin and other special guests. (May 2, 2021)

**Holiday Programming**

• Called the “world’s reigning male chorus” by *The New Yorker*, the Grammy Award–winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer makes their annual visit to Chicago with their program “A Chanticleer Christmas,” featuring familiar and new seasonal pieces in a cappella arrangements, at Fourth Presbyterian Church. (December 7 and 8)

• The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Brass brings an engaging, entertaining program of brass ensemble favorites and special arrangements. This annual winter concert is presented in partnership with the Midwest Clinic International Band, Orchestra and Music Conference held in Chicago each December. (December 16)

• Returning for its annual Symphony Center appearance, the Vienna Boys Choir performs a joyful program of traditional and contemporary vocal selections entitled Christmas in Vienna. (December 21)
• Ring in the holidays at Symphony Center with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s *Merry, Merry Chicago!* This year’s festive program features Members of the CSO and Chicago Symphony Chorus. And the program wouldn’t be complete without a visit from a very special guest from the North Pole. (December 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23)

**Negaunee Music Institute at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

Building on the CSO’s extensive history of education and community engagement that originated in the early part of the 20th century, the Institute was created in 2008 to advance the organization’s mission of learning, access and training. Originally called the Institute for Learning, Access and Training, it was renamed the Negaunee Music Institute in 2014 after the CSO received a generous gift from the Negaunee Foundation that endows the department in perpetuity.

In the 2020/21 season, musicians of the CSO participate in a variety of Negaunee Music Institute programs, connecting with pre-K through high school-aged students, young musicians, and communities throughout Greater Chicago and while the Orchestra tours. In addition to an extensive series of CSO School and Family Concerts given at Symphony Center, CSO musicians offer chamber performances at approximately fifty sites including Chicago Public Schools (CPS), mentor young musicians throughout CPS and as part of the annual Chicago Youth in Music Festival, give master classes and coachings to hundreds of young musicians, and participate in musical projects for incarcerated youth as well as activities of the CSOA’s Initiative for a More Peaceful Chicago.

The Negaunee Music Institute also operates the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the CSO’s prestigious training program for emerging professional musicians that in 2020/21 celebrates its 102nd season. Led by Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur and an esteemed roster of coaches from the CSO, Civic Orchestra musicians train for careers in music by preparing and performing approximately thirty free concerts annually that reach over 20,000 people.

Select Civic Orchestra members are chosen as Civic Fellows who are immersed in additional training that enhances their participation in the full orchestra. Through an array of experiences designed to build and diversify creative and professional skills, the program empowers fellows to realize their potential as artistically excellent, collaborative, and civically-engaged musicians. For further details about fellowship activity, visit the blog they co-author, civicfellows.org.

Details of the Civic Orchestra’s 2020/21 season will be announced in June 2020.

**CSO School and Family Concerts**

Through the CSO’s School and Family concerts, the Negaunee Music Institute offers nearly 40 performances each year that reach 150 schools and 40,000 audience members. These concerts for school and family audiences are supported by a suite of school and community partnerships, curricular and preparatory resources, and other activities. Additionally, each season, the CSO opens several of its working rehearsals: three led by Riccardo Muti for invited community, senior, student and veterans groups and four led by guest conductors for groups of high school music students.
Family Matinees (Saturdays), for Children Ages 5 and Up

Introduce young people to the orchestra with the CSO’s fun and engaging concert series designed for children ages five and up.

Saturday, November 21 at 11:00 a.m. and 12:45 p.m.
**Peter and the Wolf**
Members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Erina Yashima, conductor
Magic Circle Mime Company
**Prokofiev Peter and the Wolf**

Prokofiev’s beloved musical tale is brought to life by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and artists from the Magic Circle Mime Company.

Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. and 12:45 p.m.
**The Carnival of the Animals**
Members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Scott Speck, conductor
**Saint-Saëns The Carnival of the Animals**

Conjure an imaginative zoo full of animals, from a lumbering elephant to an elegant swan, as members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra perform Saint-Saëns’ popular musical suite *The Carnival of the Animals*.

Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. and 12:45 p.m.
**On the Waves of Sound**
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Tania Miller, conductor

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra presents a program that demonstrates how composers have been inspired by the beauty and power of water.

**School Concerts (Fridays), for Children Grades K-3 and 4-12**

The Institute’s School Concerts for student groups offer weekday performances of each of the Family Matinee programs in the 2020/21 season for school groups. These take place in conjunction with family matinee concerts on Friday, November 20; Friday, February 19, 2021; and Friday, April 30, 2021.

**Once Upon a Symphony, (Saturdays and Mondays) for Children Ages 3 to 5**

Begin a child’s journey into the world of music with performances featuring small ensembles of CSO musicians, vivid storytelling, costumes and multimedia. Perfect for ages 3 to 5. Produced and presented in collaboration with Chicago Children’s Theatre. Two unique programs are offered each season with performance dates provided below.
Goldilocks and the Three Bears: Saturday, November 7; Monday, November 9; Saturday, December 12; Monday, December 14; and Saturday, January 16, 2021.

The King Elephant and the Mice: Saturday, April 17, 2021; Monday, April 19, 2021; Saturday, May 8, 2021; Monday, May 10, 2021; and Saturday, May 22, 2021.

Subscription and Ticket Information

Subscriptions to traditional curated series, as well as create-your-own series for the 2020/21 season of Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Center Presents concerts are now available, offering savings of up to 39% off regular single ticket prices on a wide variety of concert packages, from three to 10 concerts each. Subscriptions to the CSO at Wheaton are available as a three-concert curated series on Friday evenings or in a create-your-own series option.

In the 2020/21 season, the concert start time for subscribers attending all Thursday CSO concert series will move to 7:30 p.m. Subscribers receive reduced prices on additional tickets when purchased by August 12, 2020, plus ticket exchange options and other subscriber-only benefits, including priority service, pre-paid parking options and discounts on Symphony Center merchandise. Box seat holders and subscribers to curated series also receive unlimited free ticket exchange privileges throughout the season.

Tickets for special concerts are currently available for purchase only with subscriptions. Subscriptions may be purchased or renewed online, by phone, by mail or in person at the box office. The CSO provides an easy payment plan option for subscribers: subscription purchases made by credit card by April 3, 2020 are eligible for the payment plan and will be automatically charged in two, three or four monthly installments.

In the 2020/21 season, the Once Upon a Symphony and Family Matinee concert series will offer specially-priced Youth subscriptions (ages 12 and under) for 50% off the Adult subscription prices. Adult and Youth ticket prices will also be available for individual tickets.

For more information, call Patron Services at 312-294-3000 or 800-223-7114, Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; or visit cso.org. Groups of 10 or more who are interested in subscribing to the 2020/21 season should call Group Services at 312-294-3040.

Patrons also can visit cso.org to order tickets, learn about other nearby attractions and restaurants, purchase CSO merchandise and make donations. For background on the performances and the performers, patrons should go to CSO Sounds and Stories, the CSO’s online magazine at csosoundsandstories.org. It features program notes, articles, audio and video to enhance patrons’ experience before and after the performance.

Symphony Center, home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, is at 220 S. Michigan Ave. in Chicago.

Bank of America is the Maestro Residency Presenter and International Tour Sponsor of the CSO. United Airlines is the Official Airline of the CSO.

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