



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

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News

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CSOA ANNOUNCES PROGRAMMING DETAILS FOR ITS 2019/20 MusicNOW SERIES

MusicNOW Series Programming Curated by CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Missy Mazzoli

CHICAGO—The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association announces programming details for the 2019/20 season of MusicNOW, the CSO's acclaimed contemporary music series.

MusicNOW programming is curated by CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Missy Mazzoli, who was appointed by Riccardo Muti and begins the second of her two-season tenure in 2019/20.

Highlights of MusicNOW's 2019/20 series include six world premieres and works by composers who have not been featured on the MusicNOW series, including a number of emerging voices in contemporary music, some with ties to Chicago.

Mazzoli said, "The 2019/20 MusicNOW season continues to bring the best and brightest in contemporary music to Chicago audiences. This season includes the world premiere of newly commissioned works by rising stars Courtney Bryan, Wang Lu and LJ White, a celebration of the 55th anniversary of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians including a newly commissioned work by Nicole Mitchell and a world premiere by Wadada Leo Smith, a guest performance by vocal ensemble Quince, and many more surprises."

The 2019/20 MusicNOW concerts take place on four Monday evenings at 7 p.m.—[October 7](#), [December 2](#), [March 23, 2020](#), and [May 18, 2020](#)—at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph in Chicago. Each MusicNOW concert includes an opportunity for patrons to meet with CSO musicians and composers in an informal setting during post-concert receptions with complimentary food and beverages.

The concert on [Monday, October 7, at 7 p.m.](#), titled "Community Acoustics," kicks off the 2019/20 MusicNOW series with a program bookended by the world premieres of two

MusicNOW commissions: a fanfare by Chicago-based composer Wang Lu and an arrangement for chamber ensemble of LJ White's *Community Acoustics*, which is led by conductor Michael Lewanski and combines harmonic and linear musical events with material reminiscent of natural sounds and concludes with audience participation. The program also features CSO Principal Percussion Cynthia Yeh performing Italian composer Francesca Verunelli's *Magic Mauve*, a work that fuses acoustic percussion with electronic sounds to create a textural interplay of deep rumbles and sparkling metallics. The program also includes two works for strings, Eliza Brown's *Figure to Ground* for string trio and Finola Merivale's *The Language of Mountains is Rain* for string quartet.

The second program on the MusicNOW series, on [Monday, December 2, at 7 p.m.](#), is titled "Obscure Clues and Shiny Objects" and explores the dichotomies of large and small, and simple and complex. The program opens with David T. Little's *obscure clues and shiny objects* for solo violin—performed by CSO Assistant Concertmaster Yuan-Qing Yu—followed by works by two members of the Kinds of Kings composer collective, Emma O'Halloran and Gemma Peacocke. O'Halloran's *Vertical Fields* juxtaposes sonically disparate textures by pushing the limits of the piano trio's tonal palette, while Peacocke's string quartet *Shudder* creates hollow, otherworldly soundscapes through expansive open-string tremolos. Conductor Alan Pierson leads the final two works on the program, Brendon Randall-Meyers' *Chopsticks* from *Anthology* and Michael Gordon's *Hyper*. In his 2016 work for septet *Anthology*, Brooklyn-based composer Brendon Randall-Meyers brings together electronics and acoustic instruments to explore how the physical act of performance affects the contours of musical sound. The program closes with *Hyper* by Bang on a Can co-founder Michael Gordon. Inspired by the optical illusions of M. C. Escher, *Hyper* attempts to create "the musical equivalent of an impossible object" through a crystalline lattice of overlapping melodies that cycle through different key centers, yet improbably end up where they began.

The third MusicNOW concert, on [Monday, March 23, 2020, at 7 p.m.](#), is titled "Ecstatic Science" and features Quince Vocal Ensemble, a quartet of treble voices who perform contemporary music, in pieces that treat the human voice as its own instrument. Gilda Lyons' *Bone Needles* is an introspective duet that explores possibilities for direct communication between two voices even without words, stitching together abstract vocal sounds into a single, continuous musical tapestry. In Warren Enström's *Hushers* for vocal quartet, the voice becomes a percussion instrument, creating pulsating rhythms by layering dissonant harmonies and extended techniques with an accompaniment of hisses and shushes. The program features two world premieres that will be performed by Quince Vocal Ensemble—*The Pub* from *In Dreams* by Chicago-based composer David Reminick, and a major MusicNOW-commissioned work from rising star Courtney Bryan that features both Quince Vocal Ensemble and members from the CSO. The program is anchored by Missy Mazzoli's *Ecstatic Science*, a work for a sextet of wind and string instruments that imbues a meticulously crafted harmonic structure with a simmering, luminous melodic energy. Conductor Edwin Outwater leads the Mazzoli and Bryan works on this program.

The 2019/20 MusicNOW series concludes on [Monday, May 18, 2020, at 7 p.m.](#), with a program titled "Sounds from the Future: Musicians of the AACM." The program celebrates the 55th

anniversary of the founding of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) with works by some of its most distinguished members. Cellist and composer Tomeka Reid, one of the AACM's younger members, became a fixture of the city's jazz improvised music scene for her distinctive melodic sensibility and strong sense of rhythm in both her writing and performing. Reid's string quartet *Prospective Dwellers* mingles tuneful melodies with jazz-inflected harmonies backed by a propulsive groove. The program also features the world premiere of Wadada Leo Smith's *Delta Blues*, as well as a new CSO-commissioned work by flautist and former AACM chairwoman Nicole Mitchell. Conductor Michael Lewanski leads George Lewis' *Tales of the Traveler*, which features Tomeka Reid as soloist, improvising with musical noise that stands in stark relief against the harmonic backdrop of a large accompanying chamber ensemble.

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.

Subscriptions and single tickets for the four-concert MusicNOW series are on sale now. Subscriptions are \$80, with a student subscription available for \$36 with a valid student ID. Single tickets are \$28 for general admission and \$15 for students with a valid student ID.

Tickets for all MusicNOW 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.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra
MusicNOW
Harris Theater for Music and Dance
205 E. Randolph, Chicago

[Monday, October 7, 2019, 7:00 p.m.](#)
Musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Missy Mazzoli, Mead Composer-in-Residence
Michael Lewanski, conductor
Cynthia Yeh, percussion

WANG	<i>Code Switch</i> [World Premiere, MusicNOW Commission]
VERUNELLI	<i>Magic Mauve</i>
BROWN	<i>Figure to Ground</i>
MERIVALE	<i>The Language of Mountains is Rain</i>
WHITE	<i>Community Acoustics</i> [World Premiere of a new arrangement, MusicNOW Commissioned Arrangement]

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
MusicNOW

[Monday, December 2, 2019, 7:00 p.m.](#)
Musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Harris Theater for Music and Dance
205 E. Randolph, Chicago

Missy Mazzoli, Mead Composer-in-Residence
Alan Pierson, conductor
Yuan-Qing Yu, violin

LITTLE *obscure clues and shiny objects*
O'HALLORAN *Vertical Fields*
PEACOCKE *Shudder*
RANDALL-MYERS *Chopsticks from Anthology*
GORDON *Hyper*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
MusicNOW
Harris Theater for Music and Dance
205 E. Randolph, Chicago

[Monday, March 23, 2020, 7:00 p.m.](#)
Musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Missy Mazzoli, Mead Composer-in-Residence
Edwin Outwater, conductor
Quince Vocal Ensemble

LYONS *Bone Needles*
ENSTRÖM *Hushers*
REMINICK *The Pub from In Dreams*
[World Premiere]
MAZZOLI *Ecstatic Science*
BRYAN *New Work [World Premiere,*
MusicNOW Commission]

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
MusicNOW
Harris Theater for Music and Dance
205 E. Randolph, Chicago

[Monday, May 18, 2020, 7:00 p.m.](#)
Musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Missy Mazzoli, Mead Composer-in-Residence and piano
Michael Lewanski, conductor
Tomeka Reid, cello

REID *Prospective Dwellers*
SMITH *Delta Blues [World Premiere]*
MITCHELL *New Work [World Premiere,*
MusicNOW Commission]
LEWIS *Tales of the Traveler*

Tickets: \$28, General Admission
\$15, Students

CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence:

[Missy Mazzoli](#)

Featured Artists for these Performances:

[Michael Lewanski](#)

[Cynthia Yeh](#)

[Alan Pierson](#)

[Yuan-Qing Yu](#)
[Edwin Outwater](#)
[Quince Vocal Ensemble](#)
[Tomeka Reid](#)

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra: www.cso.org and www.csosoundsandstories.org

Founded by Theodore Thomas in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Since 2010, the pre-eminent conductor Riccardo Muti has served as its 10th music director. 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 30 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.