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COVER PHOTO BY ANNE RYAN
Welcome to Symphony Center, where we find musicians who constantly amaze us with their talents and enrich our lives with their performances.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti recently returned from the Orchestra’s sixty-second international tour. In eight European cities, six countries, and ten sold-out concerts, they cemented their reputation as one of the foremost interpreters of classical music and a cultural treasure from Chicago that is respected the world over. As one reviewer put it, “There are good orchestras . . . there are great orchestras. And then there is the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.”

Riccardo Muti’s first Orchestra Hall concerts in 2020 include the highly anticipated performances of Mascagni’s Cavalleria rusticana, featuring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and a remarkable cast of soloists. Then Muti and the Orchestra depart for a tour of Florida, with concerts in Miami, Sarasota, and Naples. They return to continue the celebration of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth with performances of symphonies nos. 2 and 5. These concerts also include the world premiere of a CSO commission for solo bass clarinet and orchestra by Nicolas Bacri, entitled Ophelia’s Tears. In addition to concerts with Muti, the CSO welcomes to the podium several esteemed guest conductors this winter, including Hannu Lintu, Herbert Blomstedt, Valery Gergiev, André de Ridder, Nicholas Kraemer, Jakub Hrůša, Jaap van Zweden, and Emmanuel Krivine.

The Symphony Center Presents series also honors Beethoven in concerts with Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos, and Yo-Yo Ma performing three of his piano trios; Sir András Schiff in two recitals of Beethoven’s piano sonatas; and Mitsuko Uchida in a piano recital that includes the Diabelli Variations. In addition to the usual star-studded array of classical, jazz, and international artists, the SCP series presents, in collaboration with Lyric Opera of Chicago, soprano Renée Fleming and pianist Evgeny Kissin in a rare recital on April 19.

Our 2020–21 season has been announced, and you can review it in brochures available in the lobby and on cso.org. Subscribing allows you to take advantage of the best ticket prices and seats as well as special benefits such as discounts at the Symphony Store and Opus Restaurant and Café; access to special offers, presales, and events; preferred parking; and fee-free exchanges. Secure your seats for next season early, as tickets are selling fast!

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Helen Zell Chair, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association Board of Trustees

Jeff Alexander President, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association
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Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra recently completed a triumphant ten-concert tour that took them to eight cities in six countries, marking the CSO's sixty-second international tour, its thirty-fourth tour to Europe, and eighth European tour with Riccardo Muti. With their stellar reputation preceding them, Muti and the Orchestra found sold-out venues and enthusiastic audiences eager to hear them perform at each location.

The repertoire featured during the tour highlighted works performed by Muti and the CSO during his ten years as music director. Prokofiev's Symphony no. 3—a work that was included in Muti's first international tour with the CSO in 2007—and his Suite from Romeo and Juliet—a work featured on a 2014 CSO Resound recording—were part of several programs (they were also performed at Carnegie Hall on November 16, 2019). In addition, Dvořák's Symphony no. 9 (From the New World), Hindemith's Mathis der Maler Symphony, and Wagner's Overture to The Flying Dutchman, all performed during recent seasons, displayed the Orchestra's talents.

The following photographs and press quotes offer a glimpse of this memorable tour.

“The fabulous Chicago Symphony and Riccardo Muti are artistically heart and soul.”
—KURIER, VIENNA

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association is grateful to Bank of America, the International Tour Sponsor of the CSO for the 2019–20 season; United Airlines, the official airline of the CSO; and the Zell Family Foundation, which sponsored the Naples, Italy, performance on January 19.

Above: In a triumphant return to his native city, Muti and the CSO performed at the historic Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, Italy, for a capacity audience that included Italian dignitaries such as the mayor of Naples and the minister of cultural heritage and tourism on January 19, 2020. Here, Muti walks offstage as the CSO stands to take a bow.

All photos by Todd Rosenberg
“There are good orchestras . . . there are great orchestras. And then there is the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.”

—RHEINISCHE POST

“The Echo Chamber of the Soul”

—FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

LEFT: Marking its first performance there since 2000, the CSO began the tour with a concert in Cologne, Germany, on January 9. Here is a fish-eye view of the Kölner Philharmonie as Muti and the CSO perform Prokofiev’s Symphony no. 3.

SECOND STOP: Vienna, Austria | Musikverein

“What makes metal in the Golden Hall shimmer—not the gold gilding the stucco walls, but the brass, for whose splendid sound this orchestra is rightly world-famous.”

—SALZBURGER NACHRICHTEN

Muti’s interpretation is brilliant in every respect. . . .

—DIE PRESSE*

“Riccardo Muti brings salvation to the world . . . . If you hadn’t felt obliged to stand during the applause, you would have wanted to lie at his feet.”

—WIENER ZEITUNG

“Muti and the fabulous orchestra grandly paid homage to a pandemoniac ideal of beauty.”

—KURIER

LEFT TO RIGHT: Muti and the Orchestra returned to Vienna and the historic Musikverein to perform three concerts. The first, on January 11, included Wagner’s Overture to The Flying Dutchman, Wagner’s Mathis der Maler Symphony, and Prokofiev’s Symphony no. 3. Conductor Valery Gergiev and pianist Rudolf Buchbinder were two special guests in attendance.

Muti and the CSO also presented two performances of Verdi’s Messa da Requiem. The January 13 concert was part of a season-long celebration of the Musikverein’s 150th anniversary. In addition to multiple performances in Chicago, they have previously taken this work on international tours, performing it at the Musikverein in November 2014 and at Tokyo’s Bunka Kaikan in January 2019.

*See page 8 for an extended review from Die Presse.
“With a rich range of nuance and layering of voices, Muti and his orchestra offered a reading of exceptional clarity and sensitivity, emphasizing different instrumental timbres and underlining rhythmic games with a highly disciplined virtuosity that was flexible and full of playful liveliness.”

—LUXEMBURGER WORT

“An orchestra of astonishing unity, virtuosity, power, and refinement.”

—LE MONDE*

“The Chicago Symphony remains the most powerful orchestra in the world.”

—LE FIGARO

“Tonight, [Muti] offered a lesson in rigor, architecture, proportions, and articulation—as well as in what remains the maestro’s greatest secret: intensity through precision.”

—DIAPASON

TOP TO BOTTOM: On January 17, Muti conducted works by Wagner, Hindemith, and Dvořák at the Philharmonie de Paris. Organized by the CSO’s Negaunee Music Institute, ahead of their Paris concert at the Philharmonie de Paris, Concertmaster Robert Chen, Principal Percussion Cynthia Yeh, Principal Trumpet Esteban Batallán, Trombone Michael Mulcahy, and Principal Flute Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson (seen here) gave master classes at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse.

*See page 8 for an extended review from Le Monde.
“’I am 100% Italian and 200% a man of the south,’ and so Riccardo Muti addresses the audience, all standing, at the end of the concert. The applause that envelopes him at the [Teatro di] San Carlo comes like molten lava, but what happened a few hours earlier, at the Nisida juvenile prison, is an experience that will last.”

—CORRIERE DELLA SERA

LEFT TO RIGHT: After the concert at Teatro di San Carlo, Maestro Muti and Cristina Mazzavillani Muti hosted CSO musicians and distinguished guests at a postconcert dinner. Muti is seen here greeting CSO Concertmaster Robert Chen, Bass Robert Kassinger, Horn James Smelser, Assistant Principal Cello Kenneth Olsen, and Associate Concertmaster Stephanie Jeong.

Joined by CSO Flute and Piccolo Jennifer Gunn, Bass Trombone Charles Vernon, and Principal Tuba Gene Pokorny, Maestro Muti presented an informal recital for young men and women at a juvenile justice center on the islet of Nisida. During his CSO tenure, Muti has made it his mission to bring music to correctional facilities. The program was presented by the Negaunee Music Institute, assisted by the administrative staff of the Teatro di San Carlo.

“What was most striking was the dazzling milky transparency of its thick sound (of each section), the dense homogeneity, the tonal balance, the flesh and blood under a velvet skin, and above all the fervent tension released by every note, every phrase. . . . This, if anything, is a function of the overall architectural design. And if so, it is due to Muti . . . with the awareness that music is primarily a cultural fact, something urgent and vital for those who make it and listen to it.”

—LA REPUBBLICA

SEVENTH STOP: Naples, Italy | Teatro di San Carlo

It is a celebrated occasion when Riccardo Muti returns to Teatro alla Scala, where he was music director from 1986 to 2005. This January 22 performance with the CSO was no exception. See page 9.

EIGHTH STOP: Florence, Italy | Teatro Maggio Musicale

The tour concluded with a debut appearance for Muti and the Orchestra in Lugano, Switzerland, in LAC’s Sala Teatro, the center for contemporary art and culture that opened in 2015. The intimacy of the hall and its wooden interior makes for an exceptional acoustic experience.
Verdi’s Funeral Mass, Newly Interpreted by Muti
WALTER WEIDRINGER, DIE PRESSE, JANUARY 14, 2020

In his Messa da Requiem, Verdi expressed the fears and doubts of modern man in music. Muti and his orchestra were celebrated with standing ovations for their interpretation of the work in this manner.

When Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra interpret Verdi’s Requiem in the Musikverein, together with the Wiener Singverein and prominent soloists, then this not only turns into an event that is cheered by both voice aficionados and orchestral connoisseurs, but it also amounts to a musical reassessment of the often-played work in every possible regard. . . . In all of this, Muti sets the standards that he has meticulously derived from Verdi’s scores and commentaries—and of course, also from his operas.

. . . In another sense, we remain consistently attached to mother earth, when, as it were, the dramatically sublime and the deeply profound come together. Muti’s interpretation reveals the reason for this, namely that Verdi did not write this funeral mass to comfort the bereaved and to increase confidence in life after death, but to express the fears and doubts of modern man.

. . . The Chicago Symphony Orchestra—both brilliant and supple in all sections, with striking accompaniment from the strings and sobbing woodwinds—demonstrates how to roll out the red carpet for these voices without degenerating into a mere backdrop . . .

Translation by Marc Falkenberg

Triumph for Riccardo Muti at the Philharmonie de Paris
MARIE-AUDE ROUX, LE MONDE, JANUARY 18, 2020

. . . One expects every performance by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, one of the world’s most acclaimed ensembles—the best according to the rankings published by the highly respected Gramophone magazine—to feel like a jolt of electricity. And that was true from the opening bars of the Overture to The Flying Dutchman, Wagner’s opera about a ghostly sea captain eternally cursed to roam the stormy seas. Brassy waves smacked and splashed foam up to the ceiling of the Philharmonie de Paris, whose plush acoustics valiantly withstood the tempest.

At the battleship’s helm stood Riccardo Muti, casting a silhouette of a much younger man, despite his seventy-nine years (he was born in Naples in 1941), and commanding the elements with a ramrod-straight back and measured gestures. The CSO is capable of impressive strength, yes—but it’s also an orchestra that plays with astonishing unity, virtuosity, power, and refinement. . . .

Translation by Roderick Branch
At Teatro alla Scala, where all the illustrious orchestras have visited, there’s no doubt that today the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is the orchestra with the most magnificent and luxurious engine—and the most modern. Magnificence, perfection, and discipline are accomplished autonomously. . . . [The members of the Orchestra are] completely focused on the music. All this, even before the entrance of Concertmaster Robert Chen, as always, the perfect combination of stability and class. Impeccable. Even the tuning is a prediction of the end result. Essential, brief. No rowdy eagerness.

We see the wonderful 100 members in every detail. They’ve been on tour in Europe for two weeks, at their ninth concert in a row, and yet they sound fresh, overflowing with energy.

. . . This is the secret of the CSO: it’s a spaceship. It lands on the stage and distributes its treasures like a Pandora’s box. The excellence of its musicians is extraordinary. But its style is standard and sober, in the way it presents itself to the audience. In a time of hippy orchestras, with tiny, mosquito-like sounds, it’s the opposite: no effervescence, but a refined technique and an immense sound. It’s the result of its integrity, of every section, blending and balancing each other. These musicians are the most beautiful engine around. They teach all of us a lesson on the potential of being a team. A real team.

But the surge of “modernity” that this orchestra poured into the theater was the real revelation of the CSO concert at La Scala on Wednesday, the last stop of the Italian trio, after San Carlo in Naples and Maggio in Florence, and before the final stop at LAC in Lugano. Wagner, Hindemith, and Prokofiev seemed like music from another world. By listening to them, so expansive, rich, grandiose, one had the impression—especially with the two twentieth century pieces—of an unveiling of repertoire. Riccardo Muti alone piloted them here to the present, leaving the audience enchanted and transfixed (not a cough, unbelievably).

. . . Muti, with his Chicago orchestra, showed that some become more modern with time, probably because of their classical heritage. So, in each of the three pieces, a special feature emerged that identified it. In other words, every piece was the narrative of the composer, in that particular moment of his life. . . .

Translation by Claudia Zanella

OPPOSITE PAGE: Riccardo Muti conducting the CSO; guest vocalists Krassimira Stoyanova (soprano), Daniela Barcellona (mezzo-soprano), Francesco Meli (tenor), and Riccardo Zanellato (bass); and the Wiener Singverein, the Musikverein’s resident chorus, in Verdi’s Requiem in two performances on January 13 and 14 (seen here).

ABOVE: The CSO and Riccardo Muti returned to the Teatro alla Scala on January 22. As an encore, they performed the Intermezzo from Giordano’s opera Fedora. Written in 1898, Fedora enjoyed an era of popularity, then disappeared from the repertoire, until Antonino Votto, one of Muti’s teachers, reintroduced the work, making the encore a touching tribute to one of Muti’s most important mentors.
No. 4: National and International Tours

Riccardo Muti has embraced the Chicago Symphony’s touring legacy and reinforced the Orchestra’s reputation as a cultural ambassador on more than ten tours including several domestic tours, such as those to the East and West coasts, multiple visits to Carnegie Hall, among other national venues; five European tours; and two tours to Asia. Before assuming the role of music director, Muti returned to lead the CSO in September 2007 in a month-long residency that included subscription concerts and a triumphant seven-city, nine-concert European tour that featured the Orchestra’s first appearances in Italy in over twenty-five years. The renewed artistic partnership, one that began with Muti’s CSO podium debut at the Ravinia Festival in 1973, led to the appointment of Muti as the CSO’s tenth music director. Here is a selection of photographs and press quotes that reflect the incredible impact Muti and the Orchestra have made during their travels together.

Mutti made his first Carnegie Hall appearances as music director of the CSO between April 15–17, 2011, with three different programs. The April 15 performance of Otello with the Orchestra and Chorus was a complete sell-out.

“It was a privilege . . . to hear [Otello] performed in concert by this superb orchestra. The nuances of the playing came through vividly: the quartet of plush solo cellos during the love duet, the beautiful interplay of woodwinds in the mournful orchestral opening of act 4, and much more.”

—The New York Times

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

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is grateful to Bank of America for its generous support as the Maestro Residency Presenter.
From August 22 to September 7, 2011, Muti and the CSO traveled on their first European tour together since his appointment as music director. The tour included performances at the Salzburg, Lucerne, and Dresden music festivals and in Luxembourg at the Philharmonie, in Paris at the Salle Pleyel, and in Vienna at the Musikverein. Seen here is the August 26 concert at the Salzburg Grosses Festspielhaus.

“The audience response: foot-stomping on the wooden floor and, with Muti and the orchestra’s third bow, a standing ovation. ‘It wasn’t the usual reaction of the audience,’ [Jan] Vogler [director of the Dresden Music Festival] said. “It’s usually a conservative and quiet audience. I think they were really in heaven.’”
—Chicago Tribune

February 14–19, 2012, the CSO returned to California for the first time in twenty-five years for concerts in San Francisco, Costa Mesa, Palm Desert, and San Diego. The February 2012 tour included the West Coast premieres of pieces by CSO Mead Composers-in-Residence Mason Bates and Anna Clyne. Here Muti and Clyne take a bow at Davies Hall on February 15 following a performance of Night Ferry.

“Through both concerts, Muti’s marvelously hands-on, total and constant involvement with every element of the music, every member of the orchestra amazed and delighted.”
—San Francisco Classical Voice

The April 2012 European tour with Maestro Muti marked the CSO’s first appearances in Russia (Moscow and Saint Petersburg) in more than two decades and included debuts in Naples, Brescia, and Ravenna, Italy. Seen here, a standing ovation for Muti and the CSO following their performance in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory on April 18.

“The audience of nearly five thousand in the Pala de Andrè [Ravenna] was in paradise. One has the impression that the orchestra’s power and gradation of sound are limitless, to which Muti has added clarity and transparency of sound.”
—Il Giornale
Engaging with the public beyond the stage has always been a priority for Muti and the Orchestra. Here Muti shakes the hand of a young man in Tokyo at a CD signing during his first tour to Asia with the CSO, which included ten sold-out concerts in Taipei, Tokyo, Shanghai, Beijing, and Seoul in the winter of 2016.

“Such mastery!”
—Asahi Shimbun

On the Fall 2014 European Tour, Muti conducted the CSO’s debuts in Warsaw, Poland, and Geneva, Switzerland, in addition to performances in Luxembourg, Paris, and a week-long residency at the Musikverein in Vienna, which included two performances of Verdi’s Requiem and two additional orchestral programs. Seen here is the standing ovation following the October 20 debut in Warsaw.

“To say that this concert by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and its charismatic leader will find a place in our history books would be an understatement . . .”
—Tribune de Genève

On their fifth international tour together, Muti conducted the CSO’s debut in Spain’s Canary Islands—in Las Palmas (seen here, January 10, 2014), the capital of Gran Canaria, and in Santa Cruz de Tenerife—opening the thirtieth Canary Islands Music Festival.

“. . . and what concerts! Impressive, moving, radiant. . . I’m at a loss for words. The combination of Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is something close to miraculous.”
—El País

The Fall 2015 National Tour also included concerts at Carnegie Hall; the Carolina Performing Arts Memorial Hall in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and the Kauffman Center (seen here, October 27) in Kansas City, Missouri.

“Muti is a true genius of the podium.”
—The Kansas City Star
“Muti channeled that excitement into rapt, almost reverent attention with a searing performance of a dramatic work that is very close to his heart.”

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

“A probing performance of a work Muti rightly termed ‘a masterpiece.’”

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In February 2018, following concerts in New York and Washington, D.C., Muti and the CSO traveled to Florida. Seen here, Muti conducts at Hayes Hall in Naples, Florida, on February 12. The success of these concerts led to the foundation of an annual residency for the Orchestra with Artis—Naples.

“This ensemble commands strength in every instrumental department, and Muti has welded the players into a corporate unit that can turn on a dime.”
—South Florida Classical Review

In addition to concerts in Taipei, Shanghai, Beijing, and Osaka, Muti led the CSO, soloists, and the Tokyo Opera Singers chorus in two performances of Verdi’s Requiem during a residency at the Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo on January 31 (seen here) and February 2, following a performance of Brahms’s symphonies nos. 1 and 2 on January 30. Verdi’s Requiem was a dramatic conclusion to Muti’s second tour to Asia with the CSO in 2019.

“The CSO showcased its wide range of expression under the baton of Riccardo Muti. In sensitive movements, there were colors and nuances, and in tutti, glorious sounds filled the hall.” —Nikkei

Riccardo Muti embraces CSO Concertmaster Robert Chen and shares a laugh with the Orchestra during the first rehearsal of their second tour to Asia on January 18, 2019.

“It seems that after nearly ten years in the group, Muti and the orchestra have now established a kind of tacit understanding, and he has fully integrated his decades of artistic ideas into the deep tradition of the group.”
—Wenhui Daily News

Riccardo Muti conducted his 350th performance with the CSO on February 7, 2018, at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the first stop of the 2018 East Coast Tour.

“[An] evening that offered a taste of what a really great orchestra sounds like.”
—Washington Post
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During his tenure as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s eighth music director, Sir Georg Solti led the Orchestra and Chorus (under the direction of Margaret Hillis) in recordings of several of Beethoven’s works for London Records: two symphony cycles; the piano concertos with Vladimir Ashkenazy as soloist; the opera Fidelio; Missa solemnis; and the Coriolan, Egmont (twice), and Leonore no. 3 (twice) overtures.
In July 1942, second music director Frederick Stock led his final recording sessions with the Orchestra—Beethoven’s Fourth and Fifth piano concertos with Artur Schnabel, a foremost interpreter of the composer’s works—for Victor Records in Orchestra Hall.

Sixth music director Fritz Reiner led the Orchestra in sessions of the composer’s Third Symphony in 1954. He also conducted the ensemble in recordings of the First (1961), Fifth (1959), Sixth (1961), and Seventh (1955); along with the Ninth (1961), featuring the Chicago Symphony Chorus prepared by Margaret Hillis. Reiner also led the Orchestra in recordings of the Fourth and Fifth piano concertos with Van Cliburn, as well as the Coriolan and Fidelio overtures, all for RCA.
Celebrating a Century: The Civic Orchestra of Chicago Turns 100

Second music director Frederick Stock founded the Civic Music Student Orchestra during the 1919–20 season, and the original objective continues to resonate: “To give an opportunity to capable players to acquire orchestral routine and experience, fitting themselves for positions in the symphony orchestras of the country [and] to take orchestral concerts to outlying districts...”

This spring, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, still the CSO’s prestigious training ensemble, celebrates its 100th anniversary with special events. To mark its centennial, two programs will be led by Civic Orchestra Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur. On Sunday, March 1, the Civic Centennial Celebration Benefit Concert features cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Additionally, there will be a special Anniversary Concert on Sunday, March 29, that includes Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony, which was performed on the Civic Orchestra’s inaugural concert on that same date, 100 years ago.

Civic Centennial Celebration Benefit Concert March 1, 2020
Presented by the Negaunee Music Institute, the League, and the Women’s Board of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, the Civic Centennial Celebration celebrates all those that comprise the fabric of the Civic community, including alumni, supporters, leadership, and, of course, the current musicians.

“I congratulate the Civic Orchestra of Chicago on its centennial and commend all who are part of its legacy—past, present, and future,” said Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti. “Providing a strong future for music has
remained at the core of this ensemble of young artists. They are the hope for the preservation of our culture and represent its highest ideals.”

The concert features Yo-Yo Ma as soloist in Dvořák’s Cello Concerto. Ma served as the CSO’s Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant from 2010 through 2019 and has long advocated for the Civic Orchestra’s musicians and mission. “I have had the wonderful experience of working with so many young people through the Civic Orchestra,” said Ma. “Together, we have thought through the stage in between student and professional life and explored what it means to be a musician, a citizen, and to serve our communities. We have talked about what it means to be a member of a larger group that truly, deeply collaborates, and at the same time act as an individual leader to start something new.”

The weekend also features Masur leading a private reading session where past and current members will gather onstage in Orchestra Hall with Ma as the special guest. Other alumni weekend events include attending a CSO concert as well as a Q&A session with notable alumni, such as violinist Rachel Barton Pine and current members of the CSO.

**CIVIC ANNIVERSARY CONCERT**

**March 29, 2020**

Ken-David Masur leads the Civic in its Anniversary Concert, held 100 years to the day of the ensemble’s first performance. This special program opens with *Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)*, a 2013 work by CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Missy Mazzoli, which mimics the shape of a solar system. CSO Horns Oto Carrillo, Daniel Gingrich, David Griffin, and James Smelser—all are Civic Orchestra alumni—appear as soloists in Schumann’s virtuosic *Konzertstück* for Four Horns and Orchestra, and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony no. 5 closes the program with its colorful orchestration and popular second-movement theme.

“I was fortunate enough to be a member of the Civic Orchestra for three years,” said CSO
Associate Principal Horn Daniel Gingrich. “It was a tremendous opportunity for me. As a member of Civic, I was coached by Dale Clevenger, long-time principal horn of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Being able to study with Chicago Symphony musicians really catapulted my career, beyond what I could have expected anywhere else.” The kismet of his current mentorship role with Civic is not lost on Gingrich. “I love that things have come full circle and I am able to be the horn coach. [It’s great to] see more young people learning and getting this experience and, hopefully, being able to go on and enjoy a life in music, the way I have.”

**THE CIVIC ORCHESTRA’S LEGACY**

More than 7,000 musicians have been members of the Civic Orchestra, and many have gone on to perform with the finest ensembles in the world. Over 160 alumni have become members of the CSO—including fourteen in the current roster.

Today’s Civic members experience an in-depth study of orchestral repertoire, perform as an orchestra and in chamber ensembles, and participate in the co-creation and implementation of their own musical projects throughout the community. It is a curriculum designed to produce well-rounded musicians for the modern orchestral landscape—a philosophy emphasized under the leadership of Riccardo Muti.

“That the word ‘civic’ is part of this orchestra’s name is symbolic. It indicates that the musician is both a reflection of his or her society and one who can serve and lead within the community,” said Muti, who will lead his sixteenth open rehearsal with the orchestra on April 27. “Music has the ability to bring people together: people who do not speak the same language and otherwise would not understand each other in terms of culture, ethnicity, or religion. Music is our greatest tool. In this orchestra, musicians are instilled with the fundamental civic principles of a participatory, respectful society. All contribute to the total harmony.”

To learn more about the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, visit [cso.org/civic](http://cso.org/civic).
whether in Orchestra Hall or in your own home. At Montgomery Place, residents plan their own concerts and lectures—and still find time for Maestro Muti.

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Fall in Love with Music
November 8, 2019

The atmosphere was festive as the League of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association celebrated the tenth annual Fall in Love with Music fundraising event on November 8, 2019, in the Lincoln Ballroom of the Union League Club. CSO Associate Concertmaster Stephanie Jeong and Assistant Principal Cello Kenneth Olsen performed Handel’s Passacaglia, a virtuoso piece for violin and cello arranged by Johan Halvorsen. Next, guests enjoyed a fascinating discussion with the featured speaker, Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti, and Phillip Huscher, the CSOA’s Scholar-in-Residence and Program Annotator. Under the leadership of co-chairs Cheryl Istvan and Amy Boonstra, this season’s Fall in Love with Music exceeded its goal and raised over $75,000. Event proceeds support the many outstanding educational and community engagement programs of the Negaunee Music Institute at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the League of the CSOA, such as Adventures in Music, CSO open rehearsals for seniors and veterans, to name a few.

Clockwise from top: CSO Associate Concertmaster Stephanie Jeong and Assistant Principal Cello Kenneth Olsen embrace following their performance. Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti and Phillip Huscher, the CSOA’s Scholar-in-Residence and Program Annotator, engage with the audience. Sue Bridge, President, League of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, addresses the room.
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J. Lawrie Bloom Bass Clarinet

BEETHOVEN
Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 36
Adagio molto—Allegro con brio
Larghetto
Scherzo: Allegro
Allegro molto

BACRI
Ophelia’s Tears, Op. 150
Tragedy—
Madness—
Death

World premiere
Commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra through the generous support of Helen Zell

J. LAWRIE BLOOM

INTERMISSION

BEETHOVEN
Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67
Allegro con brio
Andante con moto
Allegro—
Allegro—Presto

This concert is made possible with the generous sponsorship of Josef and Margot Lakonishok.
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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
Born December 16, 1770; Bonn, Germany
Died March 26, 1827; Vienna, Austria

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 36

A young man doesn’t expect to go deaf. And so Beethoven was both surprised and frightened when he admitted to himself a musician’s worst nightmare—that he was having trouble hearing. We can’t be certain when he first acknowledged his cruel fate, but he apparently kept it a secret for a number of years. In June 1801, he finally confessed to his dear friend Franz Wegeler, who also happened to be a doctor: “For almost two years I have ceased to attend any social functions, just because I find it impossible to say to people: I am deaf.”

By then, Beethoven was worried. He had already sought treatment from a number of doctors who prescribed hot and cold baths, olive oil, pills, and infusions, to no avail—his ears continued to hum and buzz. Young Carl Czerny, on his first visit to Beethoven, probably in 1800, noticed “with the visual quickness peculiar to children,” as he later recalled, “that he had cotton, which seemed to have been steeped in a yellowish liquid, in his ears.” Czerny didn’t think of this again until he, like much of the music world, heard rumors that Beethoven was hard of hearing.

Beethoven found no relief until he turned to Dr. Johann Adam Schmidt, a professor of general pathology and therapy, who seemed full of sympathy and optimism. Apparently, it was Dr. Schmidt, who, among his other prescriptions, recommended that Beethoven abandon Vienna for rural Heiligenstadt. In late April 1802, Beethoven left for the pastoral suburb that to this day is known for the document he wrote there some six months later. The Heiligenstadt Testament, as it has come to be called, was begun on October 6 and finished four days later. It’s addressed to the composer’s brothers, Carl and Johann. Although Beethoven’s hearing would deteriorate considerably in later years, 1802 marked the moment of crisis: the Heiligenstadt Testament includes Beethoven’s admission that his malady was permanent and incurable. He didn’t fail to see the horrible irony of “an infirmity in the one sense which ought to be more perfect in me than in others.”
This, surprisingly, is the background for Beethoven’s Second Symphony—one of his most energetic, cheerful, and outgoing works. Beethoven surely had begun the D major symphony before he packed for Heiligenstadt that spring. He finished it there sometime that autumn, in a setting very like the one he would later depict in the Pastoral Symphony. When his student Ferdinand Ries came to visit Beethoven, he

. . . . called his attention to a shepherd who was piping very agreeably in the woods on a flute made of a twig of elder. For half an hour Beethoven could hear nothing, and though I assured him that it was the same with me (which was not the case), he became extremely quiet and morose.

The D major symphony, like other music written at the time, shows no signs of Beethoven’s obvious despair. It’s possible that Beethoven put the finishing touches on the confident, rollicking finale of his Second Symphony only days before he confessed thoughts of suicide in the letter to his brothers.

After Beethoven returned to Vienna, his hearing and his spirits both unimproved, he began to make plans for a major concert of his music, to be held on April 5, 1803, which would include not only his new symphony, but also the premieres of his Third Piano Concerto and the oratorio Christ on the Mount of Olives. That concert, conducted by the composer, achieved the combination (not unknown in our own time) of mixed reviews and a box-office bonanza.

Although Beethoven and his audience considered Christ on the Mount of Olives the main attraction, the Second Symphony would ultimately triumph. One reporter decided on the spot that “the first symphony is better than the later one,” although he did acknowledge that Beethoven seemed to be “striving for the new and surprising.” Around this time, Beethoven said to a friend, “I am only a little satisfied with my previous works. From today I will take a new path.” That path was forged primarily by the daring venture of the Eroica Symphony, but the Second Symphony is already a sign of fresh things to come, and it’s a great advance over the First. The influential Beethoven biographer Maynard Solomon calls it “both retrospective and prospective.”

It’s still Haydn’s orchestra—pairs of winds, with horns, trumpets, timpani, and strings—and the layout of his last twelve symphonies—four movements, with a slow introduction and a rondo finale—that serve as Beethoven’s starting point. This is music that Haydn would have understood but couldn’t have written. Beethoven’s slow introduction is a full thirty-three measures of powerful, expansive music, rich in the kind of dramatic gesture he would later exploit so famously. The ensuing Allegro con brio crackles with a nervous energy
and maintains an all-business edge unprecedented in symphonic music.

The Larghetto, on the other hand, moves at a gracious and easy pace that’s rare for this composer. Leisure wasn’t to Beethoven’s taste; several years later, when he devised the misguided notion of arranging this symphony for piano trio, he added “quasi andante” to the largo marking to keep things moving.

Instead of the minuet-and-trio combination third movement of the Haydn model (it served Beethoven well in his own First Symphony), Beethoven now writes scherzo, forever changing the complexion of the standard symphonic design. Beethoven’s scherzo, more compact than many of Haydn’s minuets, is wildly playful, with just enough weight to suggest the drama that’s always present in Beethoven, even when he’s playing games. The explosive finale is what we now call pure Beethoven, although audiences in 1803 didn’t yet know what that meant, and no doubt found it shocking and unpredictable, with its coltish movement and energy, and its uninhibited, nose-thumbing sense of humor.

**Nicolas Bacri**
Born November 23, 1961; Paris, France

**Ophelia’s Tears, Concertante Elegy for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra, Op. 150**

When Nicolas Bacri was a teenager, he heard Aaron Copland’s Clarinet Concerto on the radio. Not knowing what this “wonderful music” was, he listened until the very end, and then waited for the announcer to tell him what he had just heard (Benny Goodman was the soloist). He asked his parents for the record for Christmas. For the next few months, he listened to it over and over again. Then, a year or so later, he discovered Brahms’s two clarinet sonatas, written for Richard Mühlfeld, whose playing inspired Brahms to give up retirement and return to composing. “These were the first three works for clarinet that I really loved,” he said in an interview last year, reflecting on his own output as a composer and its abundance of music featuring the clarinet.

Bacri started taking piano lessons at the age of seven, and eventually studied musical analysis and composition, privately at first and then at the Paris Conservatory, from which he received first prize in 1983. By then, his career as a composer had already begun. Today, he is one of France’s most successful and prolific composers, with seven symphonies and ten string quartets in his extensive catalog, which spans four full decades of composition. To date, Bacri has written some thirty works that feature the clarinet in a solo role, from the 1985 bagatelles for clarinet and piano to Ophelia’s Tears, the new score for bass clarinet and orchestra.

**Composed**
2019

**Instrumentation**
solo bass clarinet, two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two trombones and tuba, timpani, bass drum, strings

**Approximate Performance Time**
15 minutes

These are the world premiere performances.

Commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra through the generous support of Helen Zell

*above*: Nicolas Bacri, photographed by © Olivier M. Palade, 2017
orchestra that is receiving its first performances at these concerts.

Bacri’s first clarinet concerto, *Capriccio notturno*, was composed in the mid-1980s, at the very end of what he calls his “orthodox modernism” period. (Earlier, Elliott Carter, the pioneering American composer, had singled him out as one of the most important voices of the French avant-garde; Bacri’s First Symphony is dedicated to Carter.) But then, realizing how few performers liked the path contemporary music was taking, he returned to a more tradition-based language, highly dependent on melodic line and tonality, and relegating atonality to the role of an expressive device. It marked the turning point in his career, liberating him to write his most compelling and most personal music. Like many of the composers of our time, he has fashioned his own language out of many disparate, yet compatible, parts. It is a mirror, in a sense, of the complex, multifaceted time we live in. As he wrote in his first book, *Notes étrangères* (Foreign notes), in 2004,

My music is not neoclassical, it is classical, for it retains the timeless aspect of classicism: the rigor of expression. My music is not neoromantic, it is romantic, for it retains the timeless aspect of romanticism: the density of expression. My music is modern, for it retains the timeless aspect of modernism: the broadening of the field of expression. My music is postmodern, for it retains the timeless aspect of postmodernism: the mixture of techniques of expression.

Now describing himself as a “conservative” composer, Bacri continued to explore the expressive potential of the clarinet. He still considers the *Concerto da camera* of 1998 as the most ambitious of these many scores, coming at a time when symphonic thinking was becoming clearer in his mind. But there are many other pieces, including an *Elegy for A.C.*, written to pay homage to Aaron Copland a year after his death (in 1990), and the *Sonata da camera*, composed first for the viola and then transcribed for clarinet (reversing Brahms’s procedure of transforming his clarinet sonatas into works for the viola).

For many years, Bacri has been attracted to the character of Ophelia, the tragic young noblewoman who is driven to insanity in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. He first composed *Ophelia’s Mad Scene*, for voice and solo clarinet, in 2018—it is a kind of modern-day counterpart to the grand mad scenes of nineteenth-century opera, although the virtuosity of Bacri’s writing bears little resemblance to the soprano’s empty coloratura roulades in Ambroise Thomas’s once-popular opera, *Hamlet*. (Bacri’s more immediate inspiration was the vocal work of Cathy Berberian, the pioneering singer who was married to Luciano Berio.) In that score, the clarinet played a role as important as the soprano; Bacri described the part as the synthesis of all the musical content in the piece. *Ophelia’s Mad Scene* has led to two subsequent works on the same theme: *Ophelia’s Solo*, for clarinet, also dating from 2018; and now *Ophelia’s Tears*, for bass clarinet and orchestra, completed last year.

**Nicolas Bacri on Ophelia’s Tears**

Ophelia’s *Tears* (Concertante Elegy, op. 150), for bass clarinet and orchestra, was composed in 2019 and finds its inspiration in my *Ophelia’s Mad Scene*, op. 146.

The work is divided into three sections: the first, Tragedy, is a kind of prelude (Adagio maestoso—Dolcissimo cantabile) and fugue (Doppio movimento). It presents thematic ideas that vary throughout the work. The prelude has the character of a solemn opening and puts the emphasis on the interval of a fifth, as if to recall the archaic feeling of the royal palace of Shakespeare’s play, a crossroads of powers mixed with the absurd and the rational, as is often the case in politics. The fugue that follows evokes the violence of political stakes and the threat of a foreign military invasion. It is already a development of the thematic motifs introduced in the prelude.

The second part, Madness, continues the development of ideas heard previously, evokes the confusion reigning in the mind of an Ophelia torn between her love for Hamlet, the sadness
of being rejected by him, and the overwhelming knowledge of her father's murder by the one she loves in a sort of grotesque homicide. Shakespeare's heroine thus offers us the sad picture of a soul having suffered the pangs of the most complete absence of meaning and, in the fit of madness that precedes her suicide, seems to appeal to a memory of this meaning, but in a completely disorderly fashion. This provokes in her a heartbreaking back-and-forth between blame and dignity, lamentation and feigned gaiety. As for the gigue (in the form of a passacaglia), it corresponds, in its lighter passages, to Ophelia's feigned gaiety (“Good night, ladies!”) but also, and above all, in its most dramatic passage, to the progressive intensification of the role that Hamlet must play until the final outcome of Shakespeare's play.

After a melodic interlude by the soloist, the third section, entitled Death, offers a return of the elements of the “Opening” on a D pedal followed by an intensely dramatic song by the strings (Adagio sconsolato) taken up more calmly by the soloist with a simple harmonic support of the strings, while the woodwinds superimpose elements of the gigue in a fast tempo (Con nostalgie). The work ends in a dreamlike climate (Sognando) in hieratic chords based on fifths on a semitone oscillation (E-flat–D) of the soloist in the instrument's low register.

_Ophelia's Tears_ was commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and is dedicated to Lawrie Bloom and to the memory of Oliver Knussen.

**Brussels, Belgium; May 2019**

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**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**

**Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67**

This is the symphony that, along with an image of Beethoven, looking agitated and disheveled, has come to represent greatness in music. In fact, many people know only the very opening seconds, just as they may remember vividly and accurately no more than the *Mona Lisa*’s smile, or the first ten words of Hamlet's soliloquy. It's hard to know how so few notes, so plainly strung together, could become so popular. There are certainly those who would argue that this isn't even Beethoven's greatest symphony, just as the *Mona Lisa* isn't Leonardo's finest painting—Beethoven himself preferred his *Eroica* to the Fifth Symphony. And yet, it's hardly famous beyond its merits, for one can't easily think of another single composition that, in its expressive range and structural power, better represents what music is all about.

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony has spoken forcefully and directly to many listeners—trained and untrained—over the years; we each listen and understand in our own way. We can probably find ourselves somewhere here, among the characters of E.M. Forster’s *Howard's End*:

> Whether you are like Mrs. Munt, and tap surreptitiously when the tunes come—of course not so as to disturb the others; or like Helen, who can see heroes and shipwrecks in the music’s flood; or like Margaret, who can only see the music; or like Tibby, who is profoundly versed in counterpoint, and holds

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**ABOVE**: Ludwig van Beethoven, detail from an oil portrait by Joseph Willibrord Mähler (1778–1860), 1804–05. Archive for Art and History Collection, Berlin
the full score open on his knee; or like their cousin, Fräulein Mosebach, who remembers all the time that Beethoven is “echt Deutsch”; or like Fräulein Mosebach’s young man, who can remember nothing but Fräulein Mosebach: in any case, the passion of your life becomes more vivid, and you are bound to admit that such a noise is cheap at two shillings.

That is why we still go to concerts, and, whether we see shipwrecks or hear dominant sevenths, we may well agree, when caught up in a captivating performance, “that Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into the ear of man.”

For a while, this piece was somewhat overshadowed by the Ninth Symphony, which seemed to point the way to the rest of the nineteenth century and emboldened generations of composers to think differently of the symphony, or of music in general. But the Fifth has never really lost its appeal. Robert Schumann, whose musical predictions have often come true, wrote that “this symphony invariably wields its power over men of every age like those great phenomena of nature. . . . This symphony, too, will be heard in future centuries, nay, as long as music and the world exist.” It is surely no coincidence that Theodore Thomas, the first music director of the Chicago Symphony, included this symphony on the Orchestra’s inaugural concert in 1891, as well as the concert given in 1904 to dedicate Orchestra Hall. “I care not from what the station in life come the thousands who sit before me,” Thomas once told a reporter. “Beethoven will teach each according to his needs.”

A familiarity earned by only a handful of pieces in any century has largely blunted much of the work’s wild power for our ears today. And, knowing the many works that couldn’t have been written without this as their example has blinded us to the novelty of Beethoven’s boldest strokes: the cross-reference between the famous opening and the fortissimo horn call in the scherzo, the way the scherzo passes directly—and dramatically—into the finale, and the memory of the scherzo that appears unexpectedly in the finale—all forging the four movements of the symphony into one unified design. The idea of a symphony tracing the journey from strife to victory is commonplace today, but Beethoven’s Fifth was an entirely new kind of symphony in his day.

There’s no way to know what the first audience thought. For one thing, that concert, given at the Theater an der Wien on December 22, 1808, was so inordinately long (even by nineteenth-century standards), and jammed with so much important new music, that no one could truly have taken it all in. J.F. Reichardt, who shared a box with Prince Lobkowitz, later
wrote: “There we sat from 6:30 till 10:30 in the most bitter cold, and found by experience that one might have too much even of a good thing.”

Reichardt and Lobkowitz stayed till the end, their patience frequently tried not by the music—to which these two brought more understanding than most—but by the performance, which was rough and unsympathetic. Surely some in the audience that night were bowled over by what they heard, though many may well have fidgeted and daydreamed, uncomprehending, or perhaps even bored. Beethoven’s was not yet the most popular music ever written, and even as great a figure as Goethe would outlive Beethoven without coming to terms with the one composer who was clearly his equal. As late as 1830, Mendelssohn tried one last time to interest the aging poet in Beethoven’s music, enthusiastically playing the first movement of the Fifth Symphony at the piano. “But that does not move one,” Goethe responded, “it is merely astounding, grandiose.”

Take the celebrated opening, which Beethoven once, in a moment he surely regretted, likened to Fate knocking at the door. It is bold and simple, and like many of the mottoes of our civilization, susceptible to all manner of popular treatments, none of which can diminish the power of the original. Beethoven writes eight notes, four plus four—the first ta-ta-ta-TUM falling from G down to E-flat, the second from F to D. For all the force of those hammer strokes, we may be surprised that only strings and clarinets play them. Hearing those eight notes and no more, we can’t yet say for certain whether this is E-flat major or C minor. As soon as Beethoven continues, we hear that urgent knocking as part of a grim and driven music in C minor.

But when the exposition is repeated, and we start over from the top with E-flat major chords still ringing in our ears, those same ta-ta-ta-TUM patterns sound like they belong to E-flat major. That ambiguity and tension are at the heart of this furious music—just as the struggle to break from C minor, where this movement settles, into the brilliance of C major—and will carry us to the end of the symphony.

If one understands and remembers those four measures, much of what happens during the next thirty-odd minutes will seem both familiar and logical. We can hear Fate knocking at the door of nearly every measure in the first movement. The forceful horn call that introduces the second theme, for example, mimics both the rhythm and the shape of the symphony’s opening. (We also can notice the similarity to the beginning of the Fourth Piano Concerto—and, in fact, ideas for both works can be found in the same sketchbooks, those rich hunting grounds where brilliance often emerges in flashes from a disarray matched by the notorious condition of the composer’s lodgings.)

Although the first movement is launched with the energy and urgency of those first notes, its
progress is stalled periodically by echoes of the two long-held notes in the first bars; in the recapitulation a tiny, but enormously expressive oboe cadenza serves the same purpose. The extensive coda is particularly satisfying not because it effectively concludes a dramatic and powerful movement, but because it uncovers still new depths of drama and power at a point when that seems unthinkable.

The Andante con moto is a distant relative of the theme and variations that often turn up as slow movements in classical symphonies. But unlike the conventional type, it presents two different themes, varies them separately, and then trails off into a free improvisation that covers a wide range of thoughts, each springing almost spontaneously from the last. The sequence of events is so unpredictable, and the meditative tone so seductive that, in the least assertive movement of the symphony, Beethoven commands our attention to the final sentence.

Beethoven was the first to notice his scherzo’s resemblance to the opening of the finale of Mozart’s great G minor symphony—he even wrote out Mozart’s first measures on a page of sketches for this music—but while the effect there is decisive and triumphant, here it is clouded with half-uttered questions. Beethoven begins with furtive music, inching forward in the low strings, then stumbling on the horns, who let loose with their own rendition of Fate at the door. At some point, when Beethoven realized that the scherzo was part of a bigger scheme, he decided to leave it unfinished and move directly, through one of the most famous passages in music—slowly building in tension and drama, over the ominous, quiet pounding of the timpani—to an explosion of brilliant C major. Composers have struggled ever since to match the effect, not just of binding movements together—that much has been successfully copied—but of emerging so dramatically from darkness to light. The sketchbooks tell us that these fifty measures cost Beethoven considerable effort, and, most surprisingly, that they weren’t even part of the original plan. Berlioz thought this transition so stunning that it would be impossible to surpass it in what follows. Beethoven, perfectly understanding the challenge—and also that of sustaining the victory of C major once it has been achieved—adds trombones (used in symphonic music for the first time), the piccolo, and the contrabassoon to the first burst of C major and moves forward toward his final stroke of genius.

That moment comes amid general rejoicing, when the ghost of the scherzo quietly appears, at once disrupting C major with unexpected memories of C minor and leaving everyone temporarily hushed and shaken. Beethoven quickly restores order, and the music begins again as if nothing has happened. But Beethoven still finds it necessary to end with fifty-four measures of the purest C major to remind us of the conquest, not the struggle. ■

Philip Huscher has been the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1987.
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for its generous support as the Maestro Residency Presenter.
Born in Naples, Italy, Riccardo Muti 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 had more than forty years of experience at the helm of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (1968–1980), the Philharmonia Orchestra (1973–1982), the Philadelphia Orchestra (1980–1992), and Teatro alla Scala (1986–2005).

Muti studied piano under Vincenzo Vitale at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella in Naples and subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan. 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 in Milan in 1967, Muti’s career developed quickly. 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. He has received the distinguished Golden Ring and the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal from the Philharmonic for his outstanding artistic contributions to the orchestra. He also is a recipient of a silver medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum and the Golden Johann Strauss Award by the Johann Strauss Society of Vienna. He is an honorary member of Vienna’s Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Vienna State Opera.

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, Japan’s Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Star and Praemium Imperiale, 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 twenty honorary degrees from universities around the world.

Passionate about teaching young musicians, Muti founded the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in 2004 and the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in 2015. Through Le vie dell’Amicizia (The roads of friendship), a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, he has conducted in many of the world’s most troubled areas in order to bring attention to civic and social issues.

Riccardo Muti’s vast catalog of recordings, numbering in the hundreds, ranges from the traditional symphonic and operatic repertoires to contemporary works. He also has written three books, _Verdi, l’italiano_ and _Riccardo Muti: An Autobiography: First the Music, Then the Words_, both of which have been published in several languages, as well as _Infinity Between the Notes: My Journey Into Music_, published May 2019 and available in Italian.

riccardomutimusic.com
Exemplary Beethoven in Vienna and Quintessential Italian in Rome

In December, following his previous CSO residency in November, Muti led a series of sold-out concerts with the Vienna Philharmonic and renowned pianist Rudolf Buchbinder in Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto, Stravinsky's Divertimento from The Fairy's Kiss, and Respighi's Pines of Rome at the Musikverein. During the 2019–20 season, Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of Friends of Music) celebrates the 150th anniversary of its hall with a high-profile subscription series, exhibitions, and many other activities. The December performances were part of the celebration, as was the January 13 performance of Verdi's Requiem by Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra during its sixty-second international tour. The Kurier described December concerts as “exceptional . . . the best possible contenders in terms of exemplary Beethoven interpretation.” On January 1, the Vienna Philharmonic also announced that Muti will return for his sixth appearance in the New Year’s Day concert at the Musikverein in 2021.

Riccardo Muti conducted the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in the annual Christmas concert at the Italian Senate in Rome on December 15. That program included works by Italian composers Vincenzo Bellini, Alfredo Catalani, Umberto Giordano, Giuseppe Martucci, Gioachino Rossini, and Giuseppe Verdi. Distinguished guests in the audience included Sergio Mattarella, president of Italy, and Giuseppe Conte, the nation’s prime minister. Elisabetta Casellati, president of the Senate, hailed Muti for his cultural advocacy. “The Christmas concert, entrusted to the main representative of Italian culture in the world, Maestro Riccardo Muti, is an exceptional opportunity to celebrate the art, history, and beauty of Italy,” she said. Proceeds from the concert went to support cleanup efforts in flood-ravaged Venice.

A new commercial featuring Riccardo Muti brings to life the Mausoleum of Augustus through the potential of 5G with TIM, a major Italian telecommunications company. It premiered on Italian television before President Mattarella gave his traditional end-of-year speech. In the commercial, a little girl, guided by Muti, visits the archaeological site in the heart of Rome to discover the many “lives” of the mausoleum, thanks to TIM’s cutting-edge technology. Mascagni’s Cavalleria rusticana plays in the background while augmented reality allows the girl to immerse herself in the changes to the mausoleum as they happened: from the burial site of Augustus, to the Italian garden of the Soderini family in the 1500s, to its transformation into the Amphitheatre Corea site, until its conversion into the Augusteo Auditorium in the 1900s, the largest symphony hall of its time, hosting conducting greats such as Arturo Toscanini, Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, and Pietro Mascagni.

Following his February CSO residency, Muti returns to lead his second annual Opera Academy in Tokyo.

What follows is an excerpt from Vincent Agrech’s review of Muti and the CSO’s January 17 performance at the Philharmonie de Paris that was featured in the international classical music journal Diapason.

Time has at last dispelled the misunderstanding that attached itself to Riccardo Muti half a century ago, or even three decades ago. The finger can be pointed squarely at the virtuosic haste of youth for his past image as a Dionysian Latin—spontaneous and emotional—when, in fact, the slowing down of tempos over the years has finally revealed what he has been all along: a Jansenist, in the style of the great Neapolitan moralists, who emphasized the need for divine grace and human discipline to reestablish freedom as a result of the primordial fall. Tonight, he offered a master class in rigor, architecture, proportions, and articulation—as well as in what remains the maestro’s greatest secret: intensity through precision. Others know how to make the same kinds of scalpels cuts, but too often in a way that results in affectation or mannerism. Who else today can do it with such earth-shattering power? The rhythmic and harmonic armor that Muti offers, moreover, is used in the service of an art of phrasing that is more moving, touching, and overwhelming than ever, sustaining and punctuating a cantabile line of admirable flexibility that searches for truth through emotion. . . .

Translation by Roderick Branch
J. Lawrie Bloom Bass Clarinet

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
January 12, 13, 14, and 17, 1995, Orchestra Hall. Krouse’s Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Large Orchestra, James DePreist conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
October 13, 14, 15, and 18, 2011, Orchestra Hall. Musgrave’s Autumn Sonata, A Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra; Susanna Mälkki conducting

J. Lawrie Bloom began studying piano at the age of four and switched to clarinet at nine. As a student at the Columbus Boychoir School, he came under the clarinet guidance of Roger McKinney. He later studied with Anthony Gigliotti.

Founder and artistic codirector of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival and Competition, Bloom frequently performs on the Northwestern University Winter Chamber Music Festival and both the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Chamber Music series and its contemporary MusicNOW series. During the 2011–12 season, he presented the U.S. premieres of Thea Musgrave’s Autumn Sonata with the Orchestra under the baton of Suzanna Mälkki and the “mini clarinet concerto” Towards the Blue at the Chesapeake Festival.

Bloom is a founding member of the Chicago-based chamber group the Civitas Ensemble. He has performed at the Ambler, Grand Teton, Ravinia, Skaneateles, Spoleto, and Mostly Mozart festivals. He toured with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and collaborated with the Chester, CSO, and Mendelssohn string quartets and members of the Ridge, Orion, and Vermeer string quartets. He often performs live on 98.7 WFMT and the Australian Broadcasting Company.

In 1980, Sir Georg Solti invited Bloom to join the CSO on clarinet and solo bass clarinet. He previously held similar appointments with the Phoenix Symphony, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

A senior lecturer at Northwestern University, J. Lawrie Bloom has presented master classes throughout the world. In addition, he is an artist performer for clarinet makers Buffet Group USA and woodwind reed makers RICO International.
Now celebrating its 129th season, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the world's leading orchestras. In September 2010, renowned Italian conductor Riccardo Muti became its tenth music director. His vision for the Orchestra—to deepen its engagement with the Chicago community, to nurture its legacy while supporting a new generation of musicians, and to collaborate with visionary artists—signals a new era for the institution.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra's distinguished history began in 1889, when Theodore Thomas, then the leading conductor in America and a recognized music pioneer, was invited by Chicago businessman Charles Norman Fay to establish a symphony orchestra here. Thomas's aim to establish a permanent orchestra with performance capabilities of the highest quality was realized at the first concerts in October 1891. Thomas served as music director until his death in 1905—just three weeks after the dedication of Orchestra Hall, the Orchestra's permanent home designed by Daniel Burnham.

Frederick Stock, recruited by Thomas to the viola section in 1895, became assistant conductor in 1899, and succeeded the Orchestra's founder. His tenure lasted thirty-seven years, from 1905 to 1942—the longest of the Orchestra's music directors. Dynamic and innovative, the Stock years saw the founding of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the first training orchestra in the United States affiliated with a major symphony orchestra, in 1919. Stock also established youth auditions, organized the first subscription concerts especially for children, and began a series of popular concerts.

Three distinguished conductors headed the Orchestra during the following decade: Désiré Defauw was music director from 1943 to 1947; Artur Rodzinski assumed the post in 1947–48; and Rafael Kubelík led the ensemble for three seasons from 1950 to 1953. The next ten years belonged to Fritz Reiner, whose recordings with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra are still considered performance hallmarks. It was Reiner who invited Margaret Hillis to form the Chicago Symphony Chorus in 1957. For the five seasons from 1963 to 1968, Jean Martinon held the position of music director.

Sir Georg Solti, the Orchestra's eighth music director, served from 1969 until 1991. He then held the title of music director laureate and returned to conduct the Orchestra for several weeks each season until his death in September 1997. Solti's arrival launched one of the most successful musical partnerships of our time, and the CSO made its first overseas tour to Europe in 1971 under his direction, along with numerous award-winning recordings.

Daniel Barenboim was named music director designate in January 1989, and he became the Orchestra's ninth music director in September 1991, a position he held until June 2006. His tenure was distinguished by the opening of Symphony Center in 1997, highly praised operatic productions at Orchestra Hall, numerous appearances with the Orchestra in the dual role of pianist and conductor, twenty-one international tours, and the appointment of Duain Wolfe as the Chorus's second director.

From 2006 to 2010, Bernard Haitink held the post of principal conductor, the first in CSO history. Pierre Boulez's long-standing relationship with the CSO led to his appointment as principal guest conductor in 1995. He was named Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus in 2006, a position he held until his death in January 2016. Only two others have served as principal guest conductors: Carlo Maria Giulini, who began to appear in Chicago regularly in the late 1950s, was named to the post in 1969, serving until 1972; Claudio Abbado held the position from 1982 to 1985. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma served as the CSO's Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant from 2010 to 2019. In this role, he partnered with Riccardo Muti, staff, and musicians to provide development for the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO.

Mead Composer-in-Residence Missy Mazzoli was appointed by Riccardo Muti and began her two-year term in the fall of 2018. In addition to composing, she curates the contemporary MusicNOW series.

Since 1916, recording has been a significant part of the Orchestra’s activities. Current releases on CSO Resound, the Orchestra's independent recording label, include the Grammy Award–winning release of Verdi's Requiem led by Riccardo Muti. Recordings by the CSO have earned sixty-two Grammy awards from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.
Assistant concertmasters are listed by seniority.

The Louise H. Benton Wagner Chair currently is unoccupied.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra string sections utilize revolving seating. Players behind the first desk (first two desks in the violins) change seats systematically every two weeks and are listed alphabetically. Section percussionists also are listed alphabetically.
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Founded by former CSOA Life Trustee, Ken M. Davee and his wife, Adeline Barry Davee, The Davee Foundation incorporated on November 5, 1964, as a not-for-profit family foundation, making annual year-end gifts to organizations they supported. Under the direction of Ken Davee’s second wife, Ruth Dunbar Davee, the Foundation became a leader in the philanthropic community throughout Chicago and beyond, providing significant grant funding in the fields of medicine, arts and culture, science, public affairs, and education.

The Davee Foundation dissolved in 2019, making final endowment grants to keep the memories of the Davees alive. The CSOA is greatly honored to be the recipient of a gift to its endowment, establishing the Ruth D. and Ken M. Davee Fund for Orchestral Excellence.

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