Dear Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association Friend,

Thank you for your belief in the mission and work of the CSOA and the incomparable Orchestra at its core. Your role as an audience member, donor, advocate or volunteer is crucial as the CSO enriches, inspires and transforms lives through music in Chicagoland and around the globe.

Throughout the 2019/20 season, we celebrate Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti’s 10th season as the CSOA’s artistic leader. This year’s programs are brimming with the works of Ludwig van Beethoven, as we commemorate the 250th anniversary of his birth and the impact this legendary composer has had on the CSO and the musical world. Over the course of the season, the CSO and Maestro Muti perform all nine Beethoven symphonies, and guest pianists present the complete cycle of the composer’s 32 piano sonatas. Combined with five premieres, 30 guest conductors, 29 new guest artists, over 200 free concerts and over 15,000 free tickets and school bus transportation provided to CPS students and teachers, there are many reasons to be a proud member of the CSOA family.

The CSO also continues to transform the world through music outside of Chicago. In the past few months alone, the Orchestra completed three tours, with performances in New York City last fall at Carnegie Hall, the Orchestra’s and Maestro’s eighth European tour together in January and a week-long trip in February to three cities in Florida. In addition to presenting concerts garnering rave reviews, CSO members taught young musicians and engaged with local communities through various musical activities.

The final three months of the 2019/20 season feature nine conductors leading the CSO, highlighted by four weeks with Maestro Muti, culminating in what are sure to be breathtaking performances of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. These months also include the CSO debuts of six soloists including pianist Beatrice Rana and baritone Elliot Madore.

Critical to continuing these musical and community engagement accomplishments are the funds and legacy bequests provided by CSOA Theodore Thomas Society members—including gifts to the endowment—which make up a vital foundation for financial strength and future artistic growth. These investments allow the organization to embrace the future optimistically, buoyed by the security of a sound, mission-based fiscal plan. Please consider joining as one of the committed members of the Theodore Thomas Society, named after the CSO’s first music director.

Thank you again for all that you do in support of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Gorno  
CSOA Board of Trustees Vice Chair & Life Trustee  
Chair, Theodore Thomas Society
Join the THEODORE THOMAS SOCIETY

Named in honor of the founding music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Theodore Thomas Society recognizes those who make financial plans—in any amount—to benefit the CSO in the future. Stradivarian Associates, a unique group within the Society, are those members who provide documentation for an irrevocable planned gift of $50,000 or more or a revocable planned gift of $100,000 or more.

What are the benefits of general membership?

- Annual Theodore Thomas Society event in connection with a performance at Symphony Center
- Access to VIP ticketing services
- Listing in CSO program books throughout the season and in the Annual Report (those who wish to remain anonymous may certainly do so)
- Invitation for two to the CSOA Annual Meeting
- Invitation for two to CSO Open Rehearsals for Donors

Stradivarian Associates receive all membership benefits, plus:

- Full dining membership privileges in The Thomas Club at Symphony Center
- Invitation for two to attend Salon Series events each season
- Listing in the Donor Wall display on the historic Orchestra Hall main staircase

For more information on gift planning or the Theodore Thomas Society, contact the CSOA’s Development office at 312-294-3100 or gifts@cso.org or visit cso.org/plannedgiving.
Include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in your will or trust

Consider naming the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in your will or trust documents to receive a percentage of your estate or a certain gift amount.

Legal Name: Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Address: 220 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60604
Tax Id Number: 36-2167823

Sample Language:
○ For a remainder gift: “I hereby give and bequeath all (or _____%) of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, Chicago, Illinois for its general purposes.”
○ For a specific bequest: “I hereby give and bequeath $______, from my estate to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, Chicago, Illinois for its general purposes.”

Make the CSO a beneficiary of your Life Insurance or Retirement Plan

Naming the CSO as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy can create a substantial gift you otherwise might not have considered. Another option is a gift of your retirement assets, allowing for important tax savings during the administration of your estate. For these tax-efficient ways to make a gift, simply establish the CSO as a beneficiary on the policy or your plan’s beneficiary designation form.

Phil Turner, a former CSOA Governing Member, made an exceptional gift to the CSO after his lifetime since he had named the CSO as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, choosing to support his family through other resources. His wife Paula, who has continued as a Governing Member, shared:

“The CSOA and its profound impact on Chicago’s classical music culture were key considerations when my late husband and I considered, and ultimately decided, to relocate to Chicago. We spent many enjoyable afternoons and evenings at the CSO, and being able to support the CSOA as a life insurance policy beneficiary has been extremely meaningful and fulfilling. I would encourage other classical music lovers to consider a similar arrangement!”

Be sure to discuss any changes with your financial advisor.
Meet Members of the Theodore Thomas Society

Gene Kraus

What inspires your love of music? When I was growing up my mother bought me Little Golden Books on opera and since then I’ve always been interested in classical music. In college, when I was introduced to a broader range of music, I discovered that I liked Baroque music because of its mathematical precision and the Romantic period because, well, I’m a romantic.

What initially drew you to the CSO? One of the first things that drew me to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra was the opportunity to work as a telemarketer for a product that I loved and believed in. I also went to a lot of concerts and enjoyed getting to hear the CSO perform. Now, as an usher with the CSO, I enjoy being a part of the team, and the experience has inspired my planned gift to the CSO. My bequest to the CSO specifically will name a seat on the main floor with a message that I hope will make future ushers laugh, “Main Left, Again?!”

Why do you feel it’s important to support the CSO as a member of the Theodore Thomas Society? The CSO is a great organization and deserves our support. I’m happy to be a part of the Theodore Thomas Society. I also enjoy the benefits that I receive as a member of the Theodore Thomas Society including the annual luncheon.

Lisa Adelstein

What inspires your love of music? I was introduced to classical music at a very early age by my mother. She took us to symphony orchestra concerts in Cleveland, where I grew up. She also had me take private piano lessons—she thought I had talent, because the teachers told her so! I still love classical music, and listen to other types of music as well.

What initially drew you to the CSO? When I moved to Chicago, Symphony Center was undergoing a huge renovation, and I was very excited to see conductor Daniel Barenboim. I attended concerts with a friend (from St. Louis) who is a loyal subscriber of the CSO. We still enjoy seeing concerts together!

Why do you feel it’s important to support the CSO as a member of the Theodore Thomas Society? The opportunity to support young and aspirational musicians as they pursue their potential deeply resonated with me. The TTS makes it possible to dedicate my gift to school, family and outreach initiatives of the Negaunee Music Institute and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. The students who train and perform there are so grateful for the chance to accelerate their careers—I can’t imagine having a more powerful and indeed lasting impact on the future of the CSO and our community! I’m very confident in this organization and its mission.
Ludwig van Beethoven’s music was first commercially recorded by the CSO on July 22 and 24, 1942, when second music director Frederick Stock led sessions of the composer’s Fourth and Fifth piano concertos. Austrian pianist Artur Schnabel—the leading proponent of Beethoven’s piano works during the first half of the 20th century—was the soloist, and the recordings were made in Orchestra Hall for Victor Records.

Following the release of the Fourth Piano Concerto that November, Claudia Cassidy in the Chicago Tribune reported, “the performance is magnificent, with the boldness of authoritative style and the clairvoyance of ideal cooperation. It is recorded with superb accuracy, and with intelligent care for spacing, so the ear isn’t left hanging on a phrase while you turn a record [it was released on four 78 rpm discs, eight sides total] . . . the piano never has been more successfully recorded.”

Jack & Colleen Holmbeck

What inspires your love of music? I [Colleen] grew up in a family that wasn’t interested in classical music but somehow I have loved it as long as I can remember. The first classical music I heard was background music in children’s cartoon films—and later in movies (much later I learned that the music in the film “The Outlaw” was from Tchaikovsky’s Pathétique Symphony). Then a grade school music teacher suggested that we listen to Norman Ross’ classical music program on the radio and that was my introduction to so much of the music that I’ve loved all my life.

What initially drew you to the CSO? When I was in college, a friend took me to a CSO concert—my first time to hear one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Years earlier I had walked all the way downtown in Rockford to try to hear The Philadelphia Orchestra, innocently thinking there would be a free ticket. But there wasn’t, so I walked home. By the early 1960s I was married and could afford a CSO ticket in the balcony and eventually a season ticket. My husband came sometimes but he was building his career. Now we have significant funds in our estate for later distribution to the CSO and other non-profit organizations.

Why do you feel it’s important to support the CSO as a member of the Theodore Thomas Society? I know that arts groups are facing growing concerns about their futures. Many people in our country have chosen far different music sources, and audiences in many places are down. We are proud to be a part of this group of people who want the CSO to have a sustainable future. Maybe there are other kids out there like me who will discover classical music and who want to find the highest quality orchestra as well.
Imagine your legacy with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Your legacy can:

- honor or memorialize a loved one.
- preserve classical music for future generations.
- support the Orchestra and musical programs you love.

Inside you will find information to help shape your legacy at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra!

Legacy Gifts Enable Plans for the Future

NEWS AND PROJECTS FROM THE 2019/20 SEASON

- In September, Maestro Riccardo Muti and the CSO performed their annual free Community Concert at Lane Tech College Prep High School on the city’s northwest side. This all-Prokofiev program was one of the many free concerts the CSOA presents every year in Symphony Center, across Chicagoland and around the world.

- Five members of the CSO are performing as soloists with the Orchestra this season: Concertmaster Robert Chen, Associate Concertmaster Stephanie Jeong, Assistant Principal Cello Kenneth Olsen, Principal Percussion Cynthia Yeh and Bass Clarinet J. Lawrie Bloom.

- During their centennial celebration this season, CSO School and Family Concerts will feature a world premiere and CSO co-commission by former CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Mason Bates. This piece, Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra, which is made possible through the support of Helen Zell, is a modern successor to Benjamin Britten’s The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra and utilizes both the orchestra and animated film to explore instruments, sound and the orchestra as a whole.