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2025 CHICAGO YOUTH IN MUSIC FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS MUSIC EDUCATION AND COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCES

Festival Presented by the Negaunee Music Institute at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

CHICAGO – The Negaunee Music Institute (NMI) at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra announces its 2025 Chicago Youth in Music Festival (CYMF), a monthlong celebration of music education and collaborative performances taking place throughout April. Building on the legacy of the inaugural Chicago Youth in Music Festival in 2009 to support and inspire young musicians through partnerships with local, national and sometimes international organizations, the 2025 CYMF continues this tradition by offering a series of impactful programs designed to inspire and empower young musicians from across Chicago and the nation. This year’s festival features rehearsals, masterclasses and performances that provide unparalleled opportunities for growth and connection.

The festival kicks off with the Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra Convening. The Negaunee Music Institute co-hosts this event in Chicago, welcoming over 60 high school musicians from pathways programs nationwide. These students, forming the Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra, participate in intensive rehearsals at Symphony Center, culminating in a performance at Orchestra Hall on [Sunday, April 6, at 2:00 p.m.](#) They are joined by over a dozen members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) and Civic Orchestra of Chicago, providing a unique opportunity for mentorship and collaboration. The program is led by assistant conductor of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and music director of the Memphis Youth Symphony program Kyle Dickson. The combined ensemble performs Coleridge-Taylor’s Ballade in A Minor, followed by Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4. During their time in Chicago, Pathways Orchestra

students will attend a CSO concert, and CSO musicians will lead sectional rehearsals with them before their April 6 performance.

As part of the 2025 Equity Arc Annual Convening, NMI and Equity Arc engaged approximately 10 musicians from professional orchestra fellowships to perform in the Civic Orchestra's program featuring Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7, led by conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto. The concert cycle culminates in a performance at Symphony Center on [Sunday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m.](#), following the Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra performance that afternoon in Orchestra Hall. The Civic Orchestra plus the professional fellows also perform a free community concert on [Saturday, April 5, at 2:00 p.m.](#) at Wentz Concert Hall in Naperville.

The festival also features the Community Youth Orchestra Convening on April 19, bringing together over 100 students from four Chicago community youth orchestras — [Chicago Arts and Music Project](#), [Chicago Metamorphosis Orchestra Project](#), [The People's Music School](#) and [Sistema Ravinia](#). These students will engage in side-by-side rehearsals and activities with members of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, fostering a sense of community and shared passion for music.

The Negaunee Music Institute also hosts Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Convenings (April 24-25), providing invaluable opportunities for local students. On Thursday, April 24, 100 CPS high school band students take part in side-by-side rehearsals with Civic Orchestra members. The participating schools are King College Prep, Lincoln Park High School, Mather High School and Northside College Prep. On Friday, April 25, 100 CPS high school string students engage in similar collaborative rehearsals. The participating schools are Amundsen High School, Kenwood Academy, Mather High School and Northside College Prep. In advance of the April convenings at Symphony Center, these students have received more than 250 visits from Civic Orchestra Mentors in recent months as part of the NMI's Connect School Partnership Program.

To further engage Chicago's advanced young musicians, the festival includes a series of CSO masterclasses, taking place throughout the month of April. Led by CSO musicians, these masterclasses are hosted at partner sites across the city, including [Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative](#), [Merit School of Music](#), [Music Institute of Chicago](#), [The People's Music School](#) and at Symphony Center.

More information about the 2025 Chicago Youth in Music Festival is available at cso.org/cymf.

Patron Information

To ensure audiences can experience the exceptional performances within the 2025 Chicago Youth in Music Festival, tickets for the public concerts are now available for reservation at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org). This includes the free community concert at Wentz Concert Hall in Naperville on Saturday, April 5, at 2:00 p.m., as well as the two performances at Orchestra Hall on Sunday, April 6: the Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra concert at 2:00 p.m., and the Civic Orchestra concert featuring professional fellows at 7:00 p.m.

Contact Patron Services for personalized assistance online at [cso.org/contact](https://www.cso.org/contact) or by calling [312-294-3000](tel:312-294-3000), Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. The walk-up Box Office at 220 S. Michigan Ave. is open Monday-Saturday 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

The Chicago Youth in Music Festival is generously sponsored by Megan and Steve Shebik and by Michael and Linda Simon.

Allstate is a Youth Education Program sponsor.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra: [cso.org](https://www.cso.org)

Founded by Theodore Thomas in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the world's great orchestras. In April 2024, Klaus Mäkelä was named the Orchestra's 11th music director, and he will begin an initial five-year tenure as Zell Music Director with the 2027/28 Season. Riccardo Muti, the Orchestra's distinguished 10th music director from 2010 until 2023, became Music Director Emeritus for Life at the beginning of the 2023/24 Season. Daniil Trifonov is the CSO Artist-in-Residence for the 2024/25 Season.

The CSO commands a vast repertoire, from baroque through contemporary music. Its renowned musicians perform more than 150 concerts annually, in Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center in downtown Chicago and each summer at the Ravinia Festival in suburban Highland Park. The ensemble regularly tours nationally, and since 1892, has made 64 international tours, performing in 29 countries on five continents.

Patrons around the globe enjoy weekly radio broadcasts of CSO concerts and recordings via the WFMT Radio Network and online at [cso.org/radio](https://www.cso.org/radio). Launched in 2007, [CSO Resound](https://www.cso.org/resound) is the ensemble's Grammy Award-winning independent record label, featuring live performances with world-class conductors and guest artists. Since 1916, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus have amassed an extensive discography that has earned 65 Grammy awards from the Recording Academy.

The CSO is part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA), which also includes the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Symphony Center Presents, and the Negaunee Music Institute. The [Chicago Symphony Chorus](https://www.cso.org/chorus), founded by Margaret Hillis in 1957, is the country's largest professional chorus. Founded by second music director Frederick Stock during the 1919/20 Season, the [Civic Orchestra of Chicago](https://www.cso.org/civico) is a training ensemble for emerging professionals with Ken-David Masur serving as its principal conductor. [Symphony Center Presents](https://www.cso.org/symphony-center-presents) features guest artists and ensembles across an expansive array of genres, including classical, jazz, world and contemporary. The

Negaunee Music Institute offers community and educational programs that annually engage more than 200,000 people of diverse ages and backgrounds throughout the Chicagoland area.

Through the Institute and numerous other activities — including annual free community concerts in Chicago neighborhoods — the CSO is committed to using the power of music to strengthen bonds with its longtime patrons and create connections with new audiences.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association is supported by thousands of patrons, volunteers and institutional and individual donors. The Negaunee Foundation provides generous support in perpetuity for the work of the Negaunee Music Institute.